How States and Systems Can Support Practitioner Efforts to Strengthen Dual Enrollment

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Introduction

More than one million high school students enroll in some type of dual enrollment (DE) college coursework in partnership with a college or university every year.

The benefits of participating in one of these programs have been well documented, but so too have the gaps in participation among Black and Hispanic students, English learners, students with disabilities, and other groups not well served in the high school-to-college transition.

Furthermore, there is uneven access to well-taught dual enrollment coursework that is aligned with postsecondary academic and career pathways that high school students may want to pursue. With the expansion of DE programs in recent years, researchers have documented how college and K–12 practitioners are reforming DE to focus on broadening its benefits for all students, with a focus on students who have been underrepresented in DE. Champions of dual enrollment reform have sought to increase program access, better align curriculum, and expand student advising. The idea is to help motivate and better prepare students to pursue a program of study in a field that they are interested in during high school. This matters for states not only because DE is increasingly understood as a critical component for establishing students' college and career readiness but also because effective DE programs can accelerate progress toward statewide postsecondary attainment goals and fuel economic development.

In this report, we offer guidance for state leaders drawn from the implications of what we are learning from college and K–12 practitioners working to broaden the benefits of dual enrollment. Informed by findings from The Aspen Institute and the Community College Research Center's Dual Enrollment Playbook as well as more recent site visits to Title 1 high schools and their community college partners in Texas and Florida,[1] we present policy recommendations pertaining to three areas of practice that describe how practitioners are working to improve DE: (1) expanding access to DE, (2) strengthening DE as an on-ramp to high-opportunity postsecondary pathways, and (3) building and sustaining DE partnerships between K–12 leaders and colleges that are grounded in a shared vision emphasizing access, quality, and success. For each area of practice, we offer policy recommendations and highlight sample approaches that states across the country have taken to aid practitioners in their reform efforts.

A RECENT DUAL ENROLLMENT CONVENING

▶ The College in High School Alliance and the Community College Research Center (CCRC) convened state policymakers in December of 2022 to consider dual enrollment. During the convening, CCRC shared research from the *Dual Enrollment Playbook*[2] and Dual Enrollment Equity Pathways (DEEP) research. Nearly 100 participants from 19 states discussed ideas and approaches for supporting practitioner efforts to broaden the benefits of dual enrollment through the lens of policy and non-policy approaches. This report includes some of the recommendations and approaches for advancing state-level efforts discussed at that convening.

To supplement this report, we have also made available an accompanying *State Policymaker Strategy Development Guide.* We recognize that there is a vast public education landscape with abundant variation in context among states; we encourage policymakers to use this guide to reflect on the recommendations and sample approaches provided here. The guide can help policymakers think critically about the best approaches—undertaken through either policy or non-policy mechanisms that we describe—to advance dual enrollment for their residents.

Six Types of Mechanisms for States

State leaders can use different mechanisms for strengthening dual enrollment offerings throughout their state; importantly, these are not limited to policy-only mechanisms. These six policy and non-policy mechanisms are illustrated with examples throughout the report.

FUNDING

The recommendations in this report are accomplished more easily through the provision of additional funding to dual enrollment programs for specific purposes. Funding can provide incentives for changing program practices so that they align with what the state wants to see.

REGULATION

Regulation by state education agencies can provide state policymakers with a targeted tool that can often address specific challenges more quickly than a legislative solution. Regulation can drive statewide changes in practice and elevate the state's expectations for dual enrollment as a whole.

LEGISLATION

Legislation can provide the clearest statewide mechanism for creating consistent program design and practice with broad legitimacy. In addition, legislation creates an accountability mechanism through which actors who are not abiding by its requirements can be brought into compliance.

GUIDANCE

Even if legislation or regulation is not an option, states can use agency-issued guidance documents to describe the kinds of practices that the state wants to see prioritized in DE programming. Guidance can also take the form of tools or other resources to help practitioners understand and achieve what the state wants prioritized.

RESOURCES

State policymakers can empower other actors within the state to provide technical assistance to DE programs. They can work directly with programs to assess their current practices and make recommendations for improvements, offer tools and resources for programs to use on their own through self-guided technical assistance, or endorse a state or national organization with expertise to provide those services.

ENGAGEMENT

Beyond formal guidance, policymakers can also communicate with a variety of stakeholders about their vision and goals for dual enrollment. There is significant power in convening DE stakeholders promoting collaboration and communication on key issues. Whether formalized through a governance structure like a dual enrollment advisory council or through a community of practice, these forums allow policymakers to hear about issues and communicate goals and expectations.

Policy Mechanisms

Non-Policy Mechanisms

Supporting Practitioner Efforts in Three Areas

Expanding Access

What practitioners are doing

Across the country, college and K–12 practitioners are taking steps to increase access to dual enrollment opportunities that offer students well-taught college coursework relevant to their longer term goals and that come with the proper support to ensure they succeed. Practitioners are focusing outreach efforts in underserved communities and schools (e.g., communities of color, rural communities, and Title I high schools) to build early awareness and preparation so as to increase DE participation. Yet costs, transportation difficulties, and overly stringent eligibility requirements create barriers to participation. Colleges and their K–12 partners are thus also working to make transportation, textbooks, tuition, and related fees free or affordable for all families. And educators working to expand access are trying to limit the impact of placement testing as a barrier to DE participation. To do so, they are providing boot camps and other test-prep support, offering re-testing at no cost to students, or using alternative or multiple measures (e.g., high school grades) for placement into DE courses.

How states and systems can help

The following recommendations present ways that states and systems can better support practitioner efforts to expand access to high-quality dual enrollment for students traditionally underserved in the high school-to-college transition. We illustrate them with some examples from the field. We recognize that these recommendations are neither exhaustive nor applicable to all state contexts.

Recommendation 1:
Set statewide goals and measure progress.[3]

Increasing access to high-quality dual enrollment statewide should be driven by a clear vision for increased participation and success among traditionally underserved students. States and systems should provide easy-to-use public data for practitioners to track progress toward goals. Data should include metrics focused on access and success of underrepresented populations enrolled in DE. Statewide messaging should emphasize these goals.

Sample approaches:

● **REGULATION (KY)**
In March 2023, the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (Council) approved a new Dual Credit Attainment Goal for the state, which aims to increase the percentage of high school students who complete one dual credit course by the time of graduation to 50% by 2030. The goal was developed with a clear vision of the role that dual credit plays in the state's education system.[4]

● **GUIDANCE (MT)**

The state of Montana's guidelines for dual enrollment stipulate equity of access as a priority. According to the 2021 guidelines, "Equality of access to dual enrollment programs should be assured through outreach efforts and tuition assistance to targeted populations—e.g., rural students, low-income students, minority students."[5]

● **LEGISLATION (CA)**

California's 2016 AB 288, which created formal dual enrollment mechanisms in California, highlights in the preamble the benefits of dual enrollment for students beyond the most academically qualified. It states, "Dual enrollment has historically targeted high-achieving students; however, increasingly, educators and policymakers are looking toward dual enrollment as a strategy to help students who struggle academically or who are at risk of dropping out."[6]

Recommendation 2:
Rethink eligibility requirements.[7]

States should reconsider eligibility requirements and allow practitioners to use alternatives to high-stakes placement testing, which is cited among practitioners and researchers as creating unfair barriers to DE participation.[8] During the COVID-19 pandemic, states and colleges shifted away from placement testing and primarily used high school grades to determine eligibility for DE coursework. Descriptive evidence from state-agency analysis in Ohio and Florida suggests that changing from placement testing to high school grades to determine eligibility occurred alongside an expansion of access to DE without substantial changes in DE course pass rates. These results align with the main finding of a rigorous evaluation of Ohio's Innovative Waiver program: DE participation among Black and Hispanic students increased without effects on DE course pass rates among colleges and K–12 partners that were granted waivers of placement testing requirements.[9]

Sample approaches:

● **REGULATION (OH)**

The Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Higher Education established a waiver of the requirements of the state's dual enrollment program, College Credit Plus (CCP), in 2017. The CCP 2018 Report highlighted 16 Innovative Programs, the first of which to be approved through the regulatory change. These waivers are granted to selected school districts and college partnerships that apply and show how their program will exclusively address the needs of underrepresented students in accessing DE.[10] In 2022, following a statewide review of more inclusive eligibility measures for dual enrollment, the Ohio used regulation to modify its eligibility requirements statewide for College Credit Plus to align with lessons learned from the Innovative Programs and from the use of different eligibility criteria during the pandemic.

●● **LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE (CT)**

Connecticut established in 2019 via state statute that dual enrollment eligibility must be determined through multiple measures and not exclusively on academic performance.[11] The state regularly updates College Career Pathways Guidelines, which help counselors statewide consider who may be eligible for dual enrollment courses.[12]

● **RESOURCES (KY)**

Kentucky's Early Postsecondary Opportunities Toolkit published in 2023 encourages dual credit practitioners to "[w]ork collaboratively to provide early interventions … and use multiple measures for eligibility."[13]

Recommendation 3:
Reduce tuition and non-tuition costs to students and families through state funding.[14]

DE is an effective way to help students get a jump start on accessing college or preparing for a career. But if low- and moderate-income students and families bear substantial costs to take DE courses, it will be challenging to achieve equitable access. In addition to providing funding to make DE free or low in cost to students from lower income families, states can push against cost barriers by, for example, showing students and families the potential cost savings from DE compared with the full tuition and fees that non-DE college students pay. States can address the significant cost of college textbooks by supporting the expansion of open educational resources (OERs), and they can subsidize transportation costs for students.

Sample approaches:

Reducing tuition costs

●● **FUNDING AND LEGISLATION (ID)**

Idaho developed a funding model in 2015, which is now called Advanced Opportunity, that allocates $4,125 to students for use in grades 7–12. The funds can be used for overloading courses (or taking more than the normal credit load), dual credit, or relevant examinations.[15]

●● **FUNDING AND LEGISLATION (TX)**

Developed via statute in 2023, Texas's Financial Aid for Swift Transfer (FAST) program offers scholarships to low-income students at participating institutions of higher education so they can take dual credit courses at no cost.

Reducing non-tuition costs

● **LEGISLATION (FL)**

Florida has recently addressed textbook costs for students with the passage of SB 2524, which became law in the 2022 legislative session. The bill requires instructional materials to be made available to all dual enrollment students free of charge. In addition, HB 5001, which also became law in 2022, appropriated $11 million to reimburse the costs of instructional materials for institutions of higher education.

●● **LEGISLATION AND FUNDING (MN)**

Minnesota's Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO), adopted in 1985 via state statute offers transportation reimbursement so students do not have to incur costs while traveling to and from college campuses.[16]

Strengthening On-Ramps to Postsecondary Pathways

What practitioners are doing

Practitioners commonly use phrases like "random acts" to describe how a lack of intentionality in DE course offerings limits DE's potential to improve the high school-to-college transition. As a way to address declines in college enrollment and in college-going rates among high school graduates, colleges and their K–12 partners are redesigning DE to function more intentionally as an on-ramp to postsecondary degree programs. A key shift is from offering à la carte DE to offering DE courses that align with specific college programs students are excited to pursue after high school—and advising students to explore and develop a program-specific college plan. Implementing DE as an on-ramp to credentials of value aligned with students' interests can bolster college access efforts by better leveraging students' motivation for continuing along their pathway in college after high school.

How states and systems can help

States and systems can reinforce practitioners' efforts by incentivizing and encouraging the implementation of DE as an on-ramp to postsecondary programs of study. States and systems should ensure that policies and initiatives enable rather than impede mutually beneficial DE partnerships across school districts and colleges/universities.

Recommendation 4:
Align and promote credit transfer.

States can support practitioners and students by providing the necessary oversight for and facilitating cross-sector collaboration to guarantee credit articulation and transfer of applicable DE credits. Taking DE courses can yield significant benefits for students, including making college more affordable and shortening the time to a degree. Students need their credits to be transferable toward their general education requirements, but for students to graduate with minimal excess credits, their DE coursework must also all apply toward their degree program. Ensuring the transferability and applicability of DE courses requires a high degree of coordination between school districts, community colleges, and four-year institutions; states and systems can serve as an intermediary to facilitate efficient credit mobility.

Sample approaches:

LEGISLATION AND REGULATION (FL)
Florida streamlines course articulation through the Statewide Course Numbering System (SCNS), which was mandated by legislation in the 1960s. Managed by the FL Department of Education, the SCNS offers a database to assist students in determining how their credits transfer. This system is integral to facilitating a seamless transition through the K–20 education system.[17]

● **REGULATION (MA)**

Massachusetts aligned its MassTransfer courses with the Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Partnerships (CDEP) when the program was restored in 2009 and was further enhanced in 2015. Through this alignment, Massachusetts has streamlined the process for awarding articulated credit for courses under the MassTransfer Block, those traditionally considered as general education requirements. This reinforces the seamless transfer of dual enrollment credits for students attending participating public institutions in the state.[18]

● **LEGISLATION (OH)**

Ohio mandated the College Credit Plus Pathways in 2015, outlining a set of courses totaling 15 or 30 credit hours organized by major or career path/professional certification. In addition, Ohio created the Ohio Transfer 36 (OT36) and the Ohio Guaranteed Transfer Pathways (OGTPs). The OT36 outlines a set of courses generally satisfying a subset or the entire set of general education requirements for all Ohio public two- and four-year institutions. The OGTPs detail major-specific transfer course sequences—created from state-led, discipline-specific faculty convenings—to promote the applicability of transfer credits to students' intended bachelor's degree programs. Through the OT36 and OGTPs, Ohio has created statewide infrastructure to support students and their counselors and advisors in developing a plan to ensure that all their DE credits will count toward their postsecondary degree.[19]

Recommendation 5:
Prioritize advising and navigational supports.

Navigational supports are essential to fully leveraging the potential of DE to build student college-going motivation and momentum. These supports include all types of advising—career, academic, and social-emotional—and other resources—tutoring and mentoring—that may not otherwise be available to students. Students who are historically underrepresented among DE coursetakers, such as first-generation college students, may particularly benefit from advisors making clear the unofficial norms and practices that advantage students when acted upon, of higher education. States can play a leading role in prioritizing and supporting advising and other supports to help students view DE courses as a jump start to a college degree program after high school.

Sample approaches:

● **ENGAGEMENT (AR)**

Arkansas developed the College and Career Coach program, in which counselors work with middle and high school students to develop postsecondary goals and plans. Initially funded as a pilot in 2010 for the most economically disadvantaged counties, the statewide program establishes evaluation metrics for counselors and coaches to support an equitable approach to serving the navigational needs of students. The coaches provide support in areas such as academic tutoring, career counseling, college preparation and admission, financial aid guidance, and mentoring.[20]

● **RESOURCES (OH)**

The Ohio Department of Higher Education's (ODHE) College Credit Plus (CCP) program provides professional development and resources to high school staff to support the needs of CCP students. The ODHE CCP website also makes available a variety of toolkits and resources for higher education institutions, secondary schools, and families and students that help stakeholders across sectors access support to maintain high-quality CCP offerings. These include FAQ documents targeting common areas of concern like eligibility/participation, registration, grading/school policy, and funding/payment.[21]

● **RESOURCES (LA)**

The Louisiana Dual Enrollment Task Force created an online web portal, LA Dual Enrollment, which provides Louisiana students, parents, and practitioners with information about dual enrollment, including course options and availability.[22]

● **FUNDING (CA)**

California provided $500 million to create the Golden State Pathways program, to promote pathways to high-wage, high-skill, and high-growth fields. The program commits to strengthening wraparound support and funding for counselors, helping to ensure that students have access to high-quality navigational and advising support.[23]

Recommendation 6:
Promote FAFSA completion before graduation.[24]

Adopting universal FAFSA completion policies may be critical for high school students from lower income families.[25] Such a policy may include making completion of the financial aid form a requirement for graduation while offering support for doing so. An opt-out feature could be included for students who may not be considering college. States and systems may be key in educating students on the importance of FAFSA completion.

Sample approaches:

● **LEGISLATION (LA, TX, AND IL)**

Louisiana was the first state to adopt a mandatory FAFSA completion policy during the 2017–2018 academic year. In the first year of this policy, Louisiana saw a nearly 26% increase in high school seniors (7,778) completing the FAFSA. Texas and Illinois recently adopted similar mandates for the 2020–2021 school year and have seen FAFSA completion for high school seniors increase accordingly.[26]

● **ENGAGEMENT (NY)**

New York State (NYS) partnered with the Education Trust—New York in developing a FAFSA Completion Initiative. They identified 12 high schools as "winners" of the initiative: These schools were recognized for their efforts to improve FAFSA completion and postsecondary enrollment.[27]

Recommendation 7:
Provide support to strengthen the quality of instruction.

High-quality instruction in DE coursework can build students' confidence as college learners and ignite their interest in pursuing a particular program of study or career field. Developing a framework for high-quality DE instruction, such as the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) Standards (which may also be used for accreditation purposes),[28] helps states and systems prioritize statewide standards for secondary education and align them with the rigorous standards of postsecondary coursework. Opportunities for professional development and curriculum-development support can also promote DE instruction that meets standards required by both secondary and postsecondary sectors.

Sample approaches:

🔵 **LEGISLATION**

Ten states have so far adopted National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) standards for strengthening program quality and enforcing consistency across dual enrollment programs.[29] These standards serve not only as a model for programs but also as the basis for program accreditation. The standards promote policies and practices that aim to ensure the following: College courses for high school students are high quality and rigorous; high school students are held to the same standard as college students; concurrent enrollment instructors meet the academic and professional requirements and criteria to teach college courses to high school students; and concurrent enrollment programs prioritize accountability through program evaluation.

🟡 **GUIDANCE (MT)**

In 2019, the Montana Board of Regents approved updated Montana University System (MUS) Operational Guidelines for Dual Enrollment (originally adopted in 2010).[30] This document outlines the role of the MUS's Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) in the oversight of Montana's DE programming. These guidelines state that institutions must perform an "annual program evaluation that meets or exceeds the evaluation standards for accreditation by NACEP."

🟠 **ENGAGEMENT (MN)**

The Minnesota State College and University System conducts and disseminates biannual systemwide surveys of the qualifications of concurrent enrollment instructors and disseminates findings on gaps by institution and by subject area. These data have informed institutions' efforts to develop graduate courses and programs for high school teachers who need additional coursework to meet credentials.

Building and Sustaining Strong Partnerships

What practitioners are doing

College and K–12 practitioners cannot implement effective dual enrollment programs without developing strong cross-sector partnerships. Effective partnerships are guided by a shared vision for dual enrollment, fueled by the partners' commitment and goodwill and distinguished by the partners' success in identifying and resolving challenges. College and K–12 leaders (namely, presidents, superintendents, and principals) are key players in developing and sustaining partnerships across sectors, and leaders are effective when they work toward identifying win-wins to ensure that DE offerings are beneficial and financially sustainable across sectors. College and K–12 practitioners sustain their partnerships by communicating regularly, collaborating on shared professional development, clarifying partner roles and responsibilities, and cross-training school counselors and college advisors to develop a shared understanding of policies and procedures.

How states and systems can help

Successful DE requires strong partnerships between K–12 and college practitioners; state-level leaders can support this work through efforts to develop stronger K–12–college networks. While particular colleges and school districts are focused on their partnerships, often maintained through bilateral articulation agreements or memoranda of understanding (MOUs), states and systems can help to develop supportive infrastructure to facilitate and systematize K–12–college DE partnerships.

NACEP-AFFILIATED STATE CHAPTERS

▶ **Funding models for dual enrollment programs.** The College in High School Alliance published Funding for Equity: Developing State Dual Enrollment Funding Models to Close Equity Gaps in 2019. Author Jennifer Zinth identifies three models for states to consider: (1) Students pay no tuition; (2) students pay reduced tuition; and (3) students may pay anywhere from no to full tuition. Zinth also provides an equity rationale for each model.[31]

▶ **Incentives for colleges to strengthen dual enrollment as an on-ramp to postsecondary education.** In many states, colleges offer dual enrollment at a reduced rate, so DE students in these states generate less revenue than DE students elsewhere. In How Can Community Colleges Afford to Offer Dual Enrollment College Courses to High School Students at a Discount?, released in early 2023, CCRC researchers conducted an economic analysis of the revenues and costs for DE coursework. The results show that even in cases where colleges offer DE courses at a discount, these costs can be recouped if colleges achieve economies of scale and implement DE strategically to expand the pool of potential college-goers, thereby increasing future revenues from former DE students who return to the college after high school.[32]

Recommendation 8:
Align college and K–12 incentives to promote dual enrollment access and success.[33]

With a national focus on educational attainment, states and systems are looking for ways to boost college completion rates. Through performance-based funding formulas, states aim to incentivize or reward colleges for improving course success and graduation rates. Because current and former DE students complete coursework and graduate at relatively high rates, performance funding can incentivize a strategic approach to dual enrollment by encouraging colleges to use DE as a way to develop a supply of future enrollees (post-high school).[34] For high schools, state accountability metrics such as school report cards can incentivize expanded access to dual enrollment by counting DE participation toward points for career and college readiness. These incentives can be particularly powerful when they include extra points for low-income and underrepresented minority student enrollment and success.

Sample approaches:

● **REGULATION (MANY STATES)**
Through the use of a college and career readiness indicator, 35 states have included dual enrollment in their federally required state accountability systems under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).[35]

●● **REGULATION AND FUNDING (TX)**
The Texas College and Career Readiness School Models (CCRSM) provide incentives for K–12 schools to implement P-TECHs and ECHSs academies following blueprints developed by the state. The blueprints all require partnerships with postsecondary institutions and, in some cases, employers. All blueprints have outcome measures that K–12 schools are required to meet to receive additional funding.[36]

●● **LEGISLATION AND FUNDING (TX)**
In 2023 the Texas Legislature passed a comprehensive bill signed by the governor that aims to ensure that all community colleges receive adequate funding based on a formula focused on high-need students and that provides low-income students with new aid to participate in dual credit coursework.[37] Up to 15 dual credit courses can be applied to a program pathway. The bill's framework was largely based on the recommendations of the Texas Commission on Community College Finance.[38]

● **ENGAGEMENT (LA)**
The Louisiana Department of Education and Board of Regents published their Dual Enrollment Task Force Report in 2020. The report identifies how the two agencies streamline state goals and align incentives by incorporating dual enrollment.[39]

Recommendation 9:
Diversify, expand, and support further credentialing of the instructor pool.[40]

Practitioners commonly cite the lack of qualified instructors as a barrier to expanding access to DE, particularly within underserved rural and urban Title I high schools. Developing strategies to support diversifying and expanding the instructor pool can encourage K–12 and college partners to collaborate in offering quality and equitable DE programs at scale. This includes considering how to leverage funding at the state and federal levels to better support partners. Under Title II, Part A of ESSA, offering professional development for DE programs and teacher credentialing is an allowable use of federal funding. Offering tuition assistance to teachers enrolled in graduate coursework can help train them as dual credit instructors.

Sample approaches:

● **FUNDING (MN)**
Minnesota State developed Pathway to 18 in 2018, an opportunity for teachers to earn credentials for concurrent enrollment quickly and affordably. All seven Minnesota State universities currently participate in Pathway to 18 and offer a variety of programs, including online options, ensuring that teachers have access throughout the school year.[41]

● **LEGISLATION (IN)**
Indiana legislation that became law in 2022 authorizes school districts to provide extra compensation for teachers who have earned a master's degree in a content area directly related to a dual credit course they are teaching.[42]

● **LEGISLATION (OR)**
Oregon enacted the Accelerated College Credit Instructor Grant Program in 2019 alongside two other grant programs to support high school-college partnerships. Through the Accelerated College Credit Instructor Grant program, the Department of Education gives school districts grants to cover tuition costs for high school teachers pursuing dual enrollment credentialing. Moving forward, the Oregon Department of Education has flexibility about which of the three grant programs to fund in a given year, absent legislative directive.[43]

● **RESOURCES (MN)**
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities are supporting efforts to develop and implement a system to validate equivalent graduate level experience by awarding graduate-level Credit for Prior Learning for prospective concurrent enrollment teachers, reducing their need to take graduate courses.[44]

● **ENGAGEMENT (IL)**
In 2020, the Illinois Board of Higher Education published a list of graduate coursework opportunities available to teachers to pursue the content-specific credit hours needed to become credentialed to teach a dual credit course.[45]

Recommendation 10:
Maximize K–12–college partnership potential through relationships and communities of practice.

Organizing teams and developing relationships among practitioners and students is one way to maximize the potential impact and success of DEEP programming. States and systems can develop a toolkit for schools to learn more about launching a dual enrollment program. Moreover, they can support getting programs off the ground by creating a repository of state, school district, and college contacts and outlining relevant timelines for faculty, staff, and students to reference. States and systems have the power to bring DE educators together on a regular or occasional basis so they can discuss the challenges and successes of their programs.

NACEP-AFFILIATED STATE CHAPTERS

▶ The National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) supports several affiliated chapters in states across the country. These chapters function as communities of practice for the states that policymakers can use as communication channels, places to get feedback for policy work underway, and a forum for dialogue with dual enrollment programs in the state. NACEP-affiliated state chapters are located in Arkansas, California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Michigan, New England, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Utah.[46]

Sample approaches:

🟠 **ENGAGEMENT (LA)**
In 2019, the Louisiana legislature mandated the creation of the Louisiana Dual Enrollment Framework Task Force, which brings key stakeholders together to develop a strategic framework for implementing dual enrollment statewide.[47]

🔴 **RESOURCES (LA)**
In 2022, the Louisiana Board of Regents partnered with NACEP to provide Louisiana dual enrollment practitioners with "three in-person workshops and three webinars specific to rigorous and consistent dual enrollment programming and student success."[48]

Recommendation 11:
Encourage a culture of equity in dual enrollment programming.

As access to dual enrollment increases, state leaders are focused on extending the benefits of DE to all students. In addition to the recommendations already discussed in this report, state leaders should build a culture of inquiry about which student groups are and are not benefiting from DE offerings and support the regular practice of disaggregating data on DE participation and success rates. State leaders can also share messaging about DE's ability to not only provide an affordable jump-start on college but also foster workforce and economic development. As data providers, conveners, and communicators of state priorities, state leaders can signal the importance of DE for expanding college and career opportunities and driving economic mobility.

Sample approaches:

● LEGISLATION (IL)

The Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Community College Board developed a Model Partnership Agreement in 2019 according to the Dual Credit Quality Act (DCQA). This agreement provides a model of recommended practices at scale and ensures access to quality dual credit courses.[49]

● GUIDANCE (WA)

The Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) worked with Education Northwest in 2018 to develop a Dual Credit System Improvement Guide so practitioners in the state can assess dual enrollment and other dual credit opportunities available to students and collaboratively develop plans to improve them.[50]

● ENGAGEMENT (CA)

The California Department of Education created the Exemplary Dual Enrollment Award in AY 2022–2023 to highlight DE programs that are implementing the practices the state would like to see all programs in California adopt.[51]

Conclusion

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While dual enrollment programs can be transformative for students, not everyone is benefiting, and this prevents communities from realizing the potential of DE in expanding college and career success.

In this report, we have provided recommendations for how state leaders can broaden the benefits of DE by responding to the efforts among college and K–12 practitioners to strengthen DE in three areas:

AREA 1. expanding access to DE,

AREA 2. strengthening DE as an on-ramp to high-opportunity postsecondary pathways, and

AREA 3. building and sustaining DE partnerships between K–12 leaders and colleges.

We also showcased sample approaches from various states for policy and non-policy interventions. State and local contexts vary substantially, but state leaders can be influential in setting statewide goals for DE and marshaling progress toward those goals. Even when proposing new legislation or funding is not realistic in the near term, this report shows how states across the country are supporting the essential work of college and K–12 practitioners to broaden the benefits of dual enrollment coursework by means. With every new school year, practitioners make strides to better deliver on the potential of DE for expanding college opportunity. State leaders need not wait for landmark legislation to step up with non-policy approaches to support these efforts. Students—and the colleges and K–12 schools that serve them—are counting on it.

ENDNOTES

1   Findings in this report describing how practitioners are working to advance equitable dual enrollment are drawn from CCRC and The Aspen Institute's *Dual Enrollment Playbook* (https://highered.aspeninstitute.org/%20the-dual-enrollment-playbook/), from a recent convening of state policymakers sponsored by the College in High School Alliance and CCRC, and from additional CCRC research. With support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, CCRC is studying how community colleges and their K–12 partners in Florida and Texas are implementing dual enrollment equity pathway (DEEP) practices, their costs and incentives, and metrics used to inform and motivate DEEP reforms. The research focuses on effective college partnerships with Title I comprehensive and technical high schools. The research reported here is informed by site visits to six colleges and 12 high schools in Texas and Florida that were identified as having strong results in terms of access and success for Black, Hispanic, and low-income dual enrollment students and that were further along in implementing guided pathways reforms. For more, see Fink, J., Griffin, S., Garcia Tulloch, A., Jenkins, D., Fay, M., Ramirez, C., Schudde, L., & Steiger, J. (2023). DEEP Insights: Redesigning Dual Enrollment as a Purposeful Pathway to College and Career Opportunity. New York, NY: Community College Research Center. https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/deep-insights-redesigning-dual-enrollment.html

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