

Senate Education Committee and Higher Education Committee Discuss Dual Credit

09.13.2018— The Senate Education Committee met jointly with the Senate Higher Education Committee on Wednesday, September 12, to take up and consider the following interim charge:

Dual Credit: Review dual credit opportunities throughout the state, examining the impact of HB 505 (84th Legislature) on students in particular. Look at the outcomes of statewide studies completed in Texas regarding dual credit, and examine the current rigor of dual credit courses, as well as how to improve advising for students in dual credit.

The committees first heard from panels of invited testimony. The first panel included a representative for TEA ([see TEA's presentation](#)), the Legislative Budget Board, and Commissioner of Higher Education Raymund Paredes.

Paredes made three legislative recommendations, which can be found on [page 3 of his materials](#). His recommendations were based on findings of the American Institutes for Research (AIR) study commissioned by the [Texas Higher Education Foundation](#) for which the commissioner serves as a member of the executive team. Senate Education Committee Chair Larry Taylor expressed concern that the same issues continue to be discussed without progress in recommendations to remedy the issues, and Senate Higher Education Committee Vice-Chair Royce West expressed similar frustrations.

The next panel included testimony from David Troutman, associate vice chancellor, Institutional Research and Decision Support, The University of Texas System, which also produced a [study on dual credit](#) that tracked students over a six-year time period. Among other positive findings, the UT study found a correlation between students enrolled in dual credit and four-year graduation rates.

Following Troutman, Trey Miller, principal researcher with AIR, shared the [results of his institutes' dual credit report](#). Senate Higher Education Committee Chair Kel Seliger asked several pointed questions of Miller about the AIR report findings that insinuated dual credit courses are not rigorous enough. Miller's explanations were not clear. Vice-Chair West questioned Miller on the population sample used in the AIR report and asked whether it was significant enough to be used in making recommendations to the Legislature, specifically regarding the academic preparation of minority students. Sens.

Seliger, West, and Bettencourt all noted that the exemption of Early College High School students in the AIR report negatively skewed the results of the study.

The second panel concluded with Jacob Fraire, president and CEO, Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC), who noted TACC and the UT System convened a statewide task force last year to delve deeply into the complex issues of dual credit. Fraire highlighted the [report findings of the taskforce](#), whose members include TASA members HD Chambers, Alief ISD; Jodi Duron, Elgin ISD; and Brian Woods, Northside ISD.

The committee hearing continued with other invited and public testimony surrounding dual credit topics, including: rigor, access, cost, transferability, and proximity. [Testimony from the College Board](#) was also given that supports AP alongside dual credit as essential to providing all students opportunities to succeed in college and achieve the 60x30TX goals.