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Teachers College, Columbia University

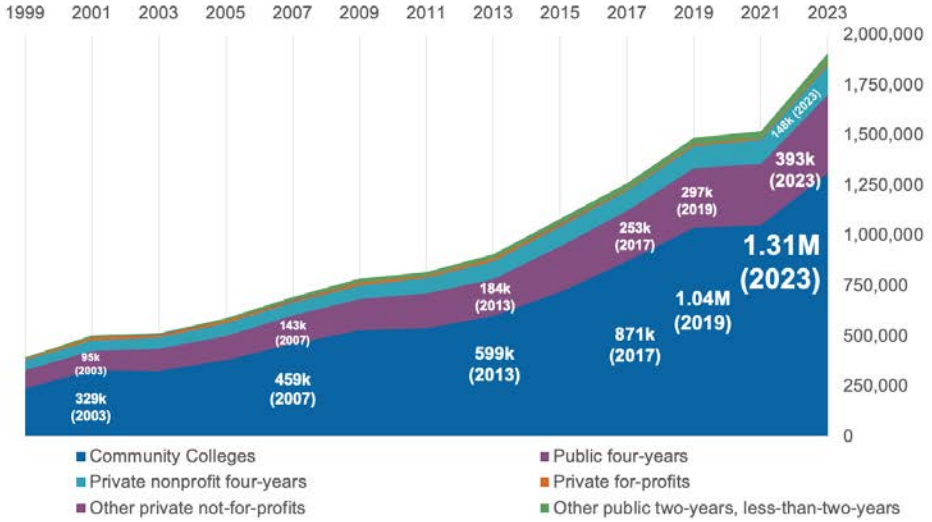
Purposeful Pathways: Leveraging FAST and HB8 to strengthen the impact of dual credit

John Fink, Community College Research Center
Dr. Marissa Moreno, Lee College

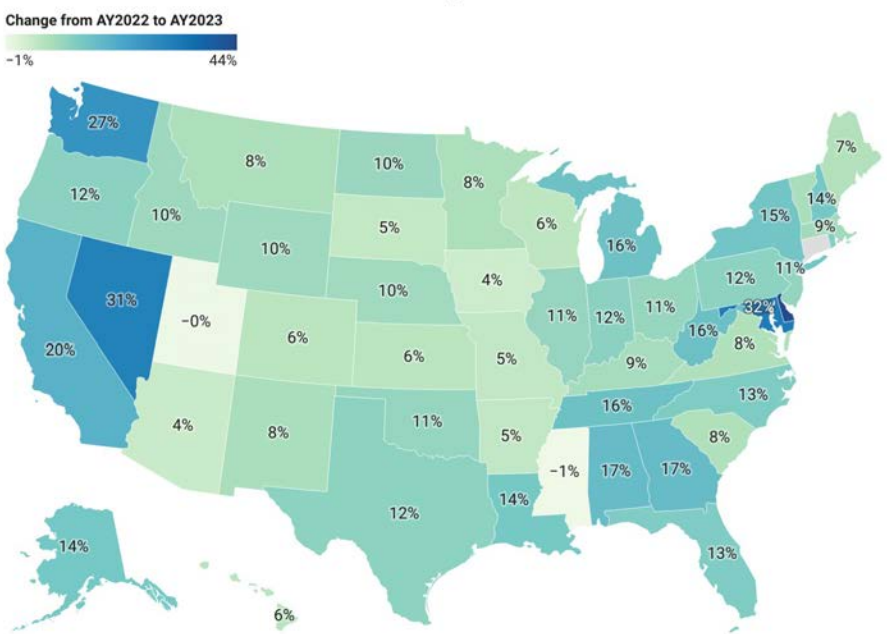
Talent Strong Texas Pathways Institute #1: November 13, 2025

Dual enrollment has doubled in the past decade and grew 13% in the past year from 2.5 to 2.8 million

Growth of Dual Enrollment, Fall Enrollments 1999-2023



One-Year Growth of Dual Enrollment, 2022-23 to 2023-24



Connecticut excluded from this analysis due to known issues with underreporting in AY2022 that appear to be corrected in AY2023

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CCRC analysis of IPEDS Data
https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/easyblog/high-school-dual-enrollment-grows.html

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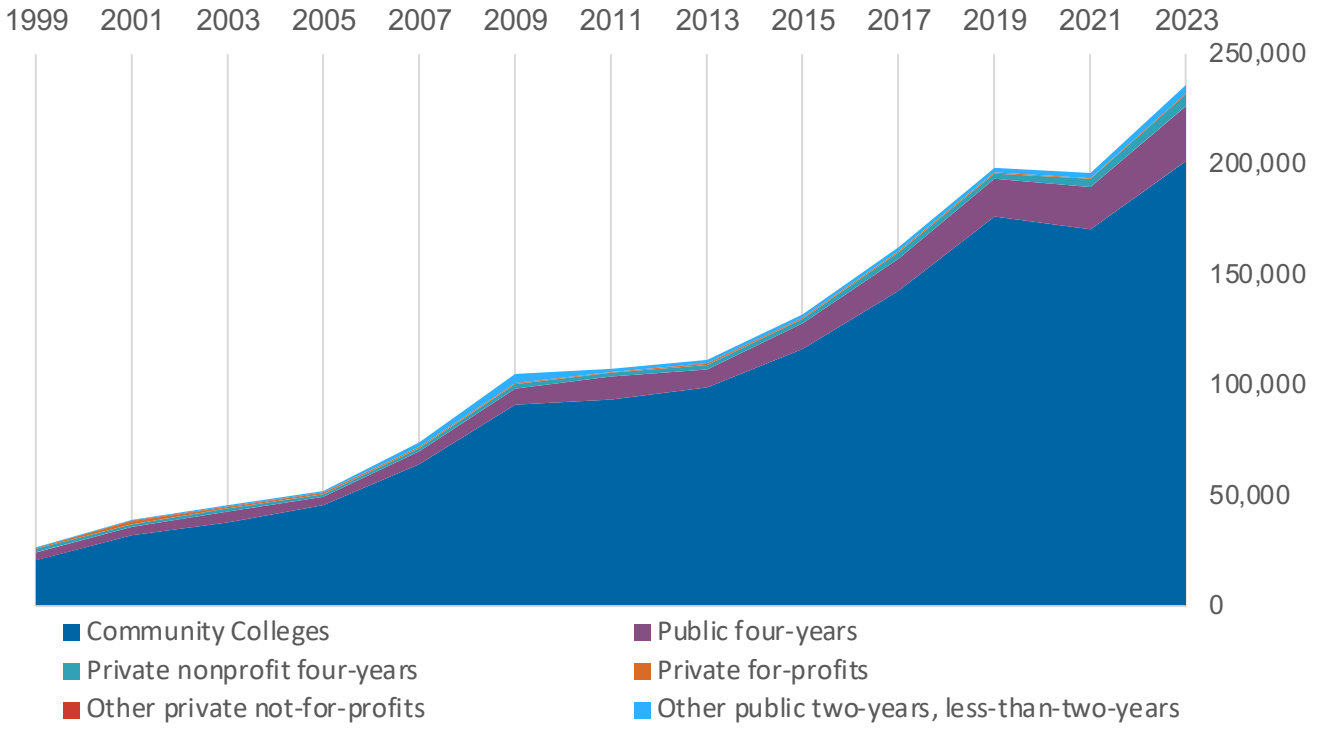
Texas Dual Credit

1999-2023

IPEDS Fall Enrollments

Fall Undergraduate Enrollments among Students Aged 17 or Younger



Expansion of Texas Dual Credit Concentrated at Community Colleges

New research on the college and earnings trajectories of Texas high school students who take accelerated coursework

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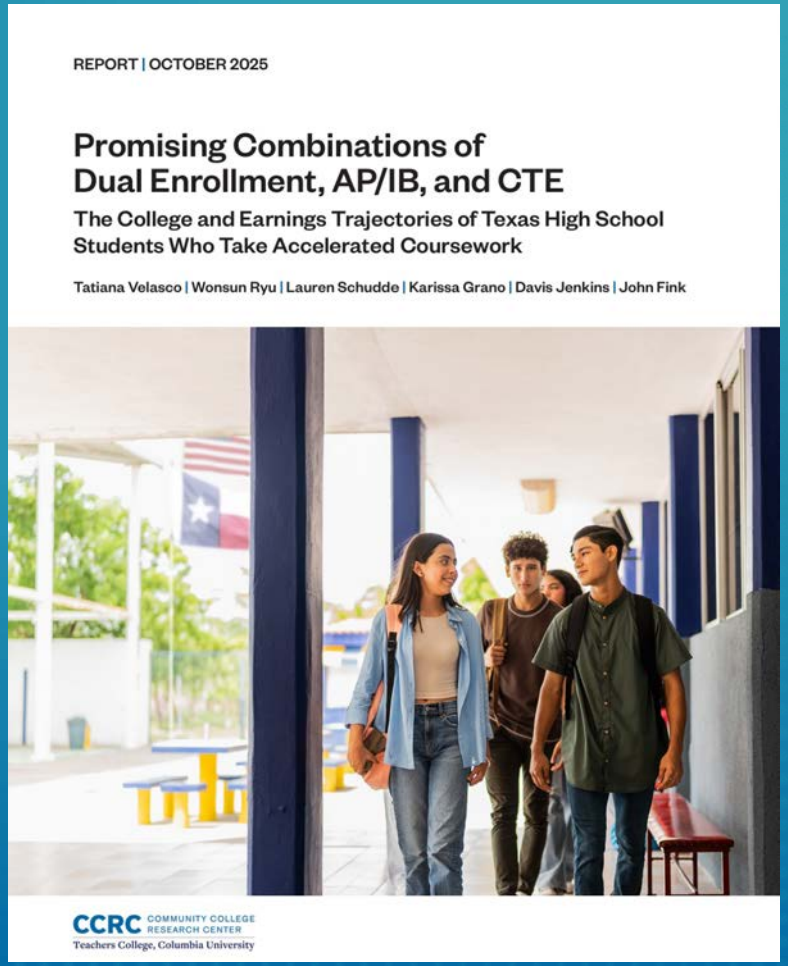
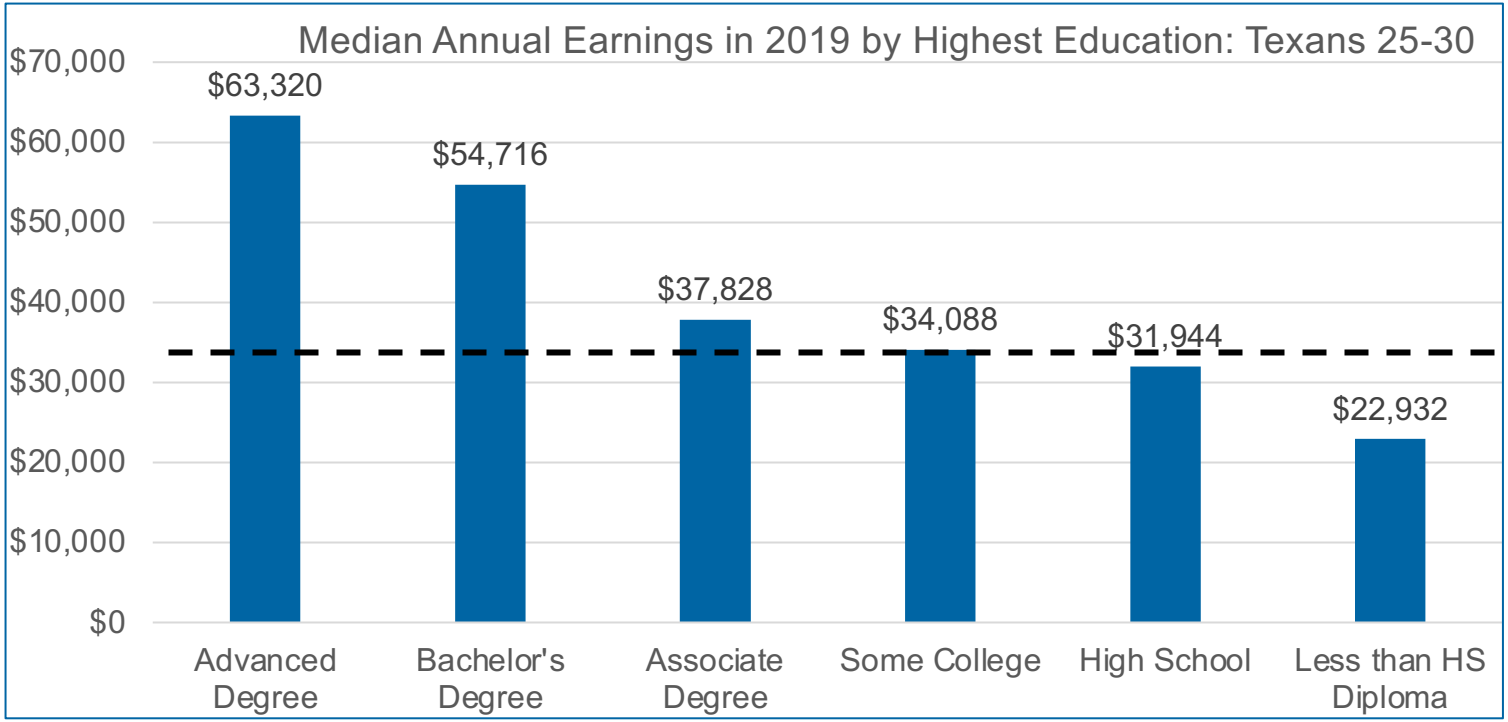
TEXAS
The University of Texas at Austin

With the support of Strada EDUCATION FOUNDATION



Even at entry-level, family-supporting, career-path jobs in Texas require at least an AAS, if not a bachelor's degree.



TX avg. living-wage=$34,900 (2019$)

Source: TPEIR, https://www.texaseducationinfo.org/ViewReport.aspx

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High school students have access to diverse college-and-career accelerated coursework options, and prior research shows these can lead to different outcomes post-high school.

High school students can take:

- ✓ A la carte Dual Enrollment (DE)
- ✓ Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses
- ✓ Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate (AP/IB)
- ✓ Early College High School / P-TECH

And these courses can shape student trajectories

In postsecondary education

- Increased postsecondary enrollment
- Increased credential completion
- Shorten time to a credential

In the workforce

- Better earnings
- Increased employment
- Better chances of a good job

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We defined six college-and-career accelerated coursework as mutually exclusive categories characterizing how students combined DE with AP/IB and CTE courses.

Profile name	Accelerated Coursework Attempted		
	DE (1+ course attempted)	AP/IB (1+ course attempted)	CTE focus (10+ courses attempted)
DE-only takers	X		
DE takers with CTE focus	X		X
DE and AP/IB takers	X	X	Some
AP/IB takers, no DE		X	Some
CTE focus only			X
No acceleration			

Texas Public High School Students

- Cohorts expected to graduate in 2015–16 and 2016–17
- Tracked college attainment and earnings up to 6 years after high school

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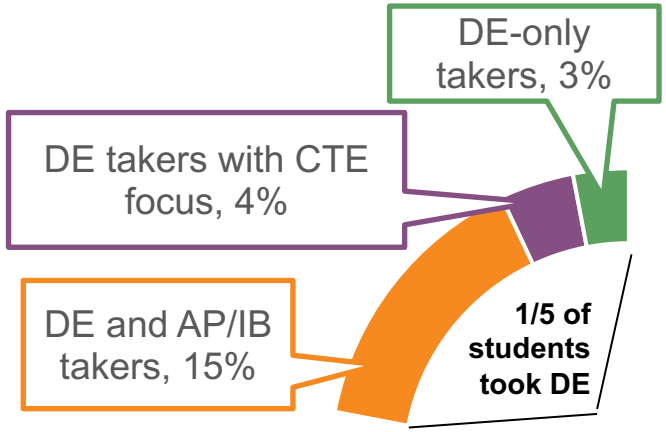
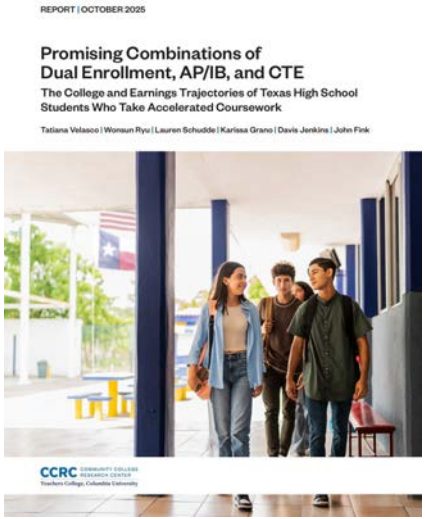
Promising Combinations, Untapped Potential



Texas High School Class of 2022 (n=374k)



Velasco et al., 2025

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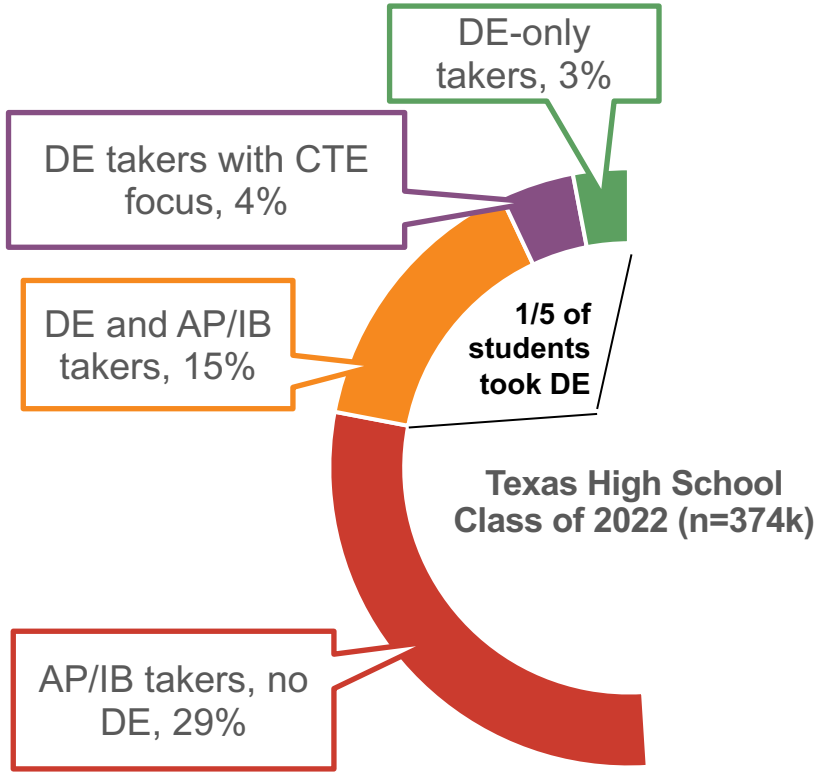
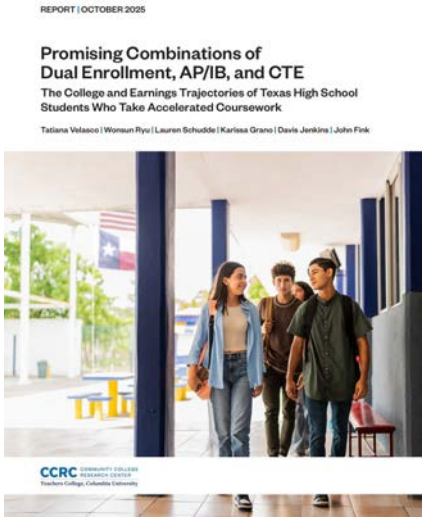
Promising Combinations, Untapped Potential





Velasco et al., 2025

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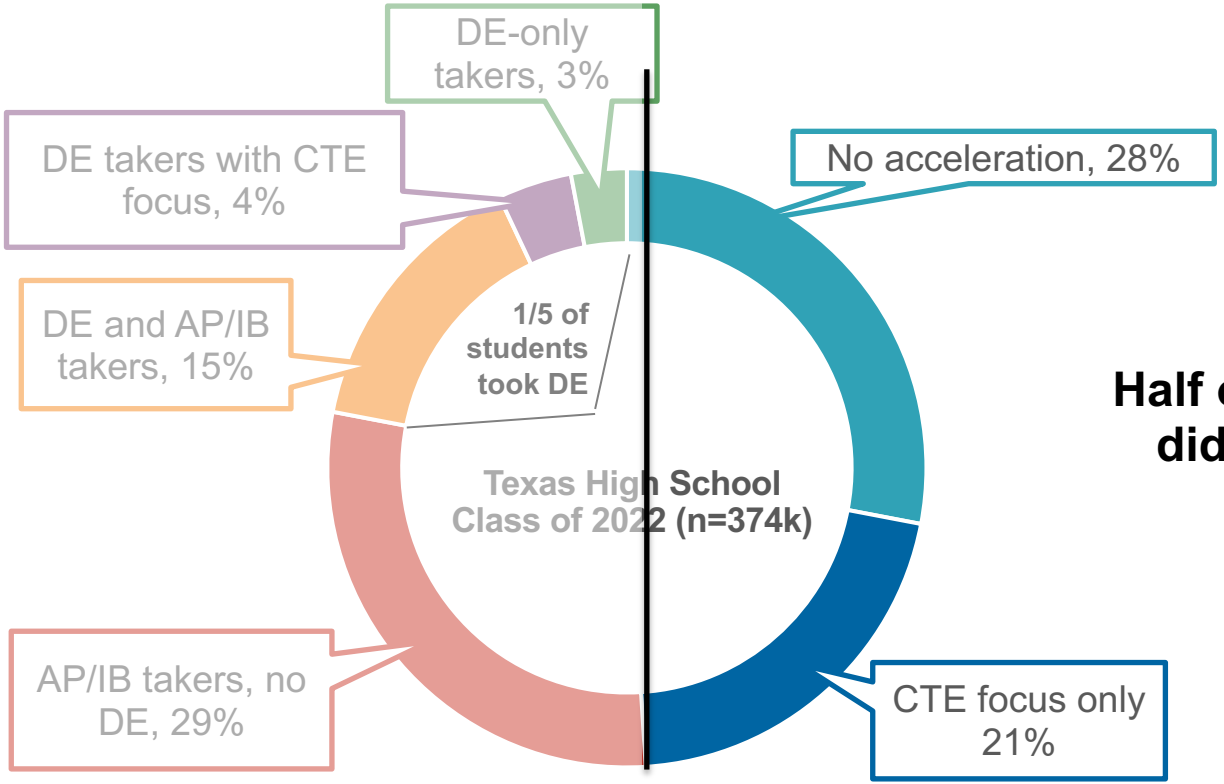
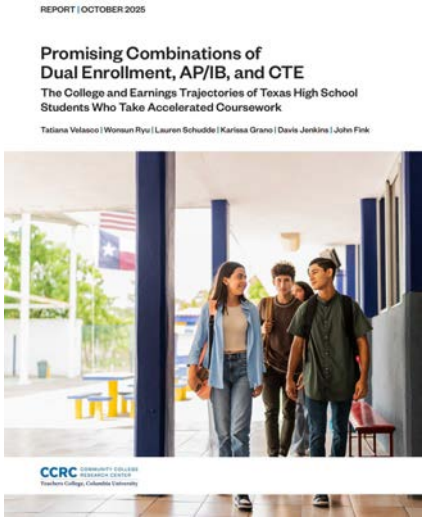
Promising Combinations, Untapped Potential





Velasco et al., 2025

Half of Texas HS Students did not take DE or AP/IB

Overrepresented:
Men, Black, & low-income students
56-57% men (51% baseline)
14-18% Black (13% baseline)
62-65% low-income (54% baseline)

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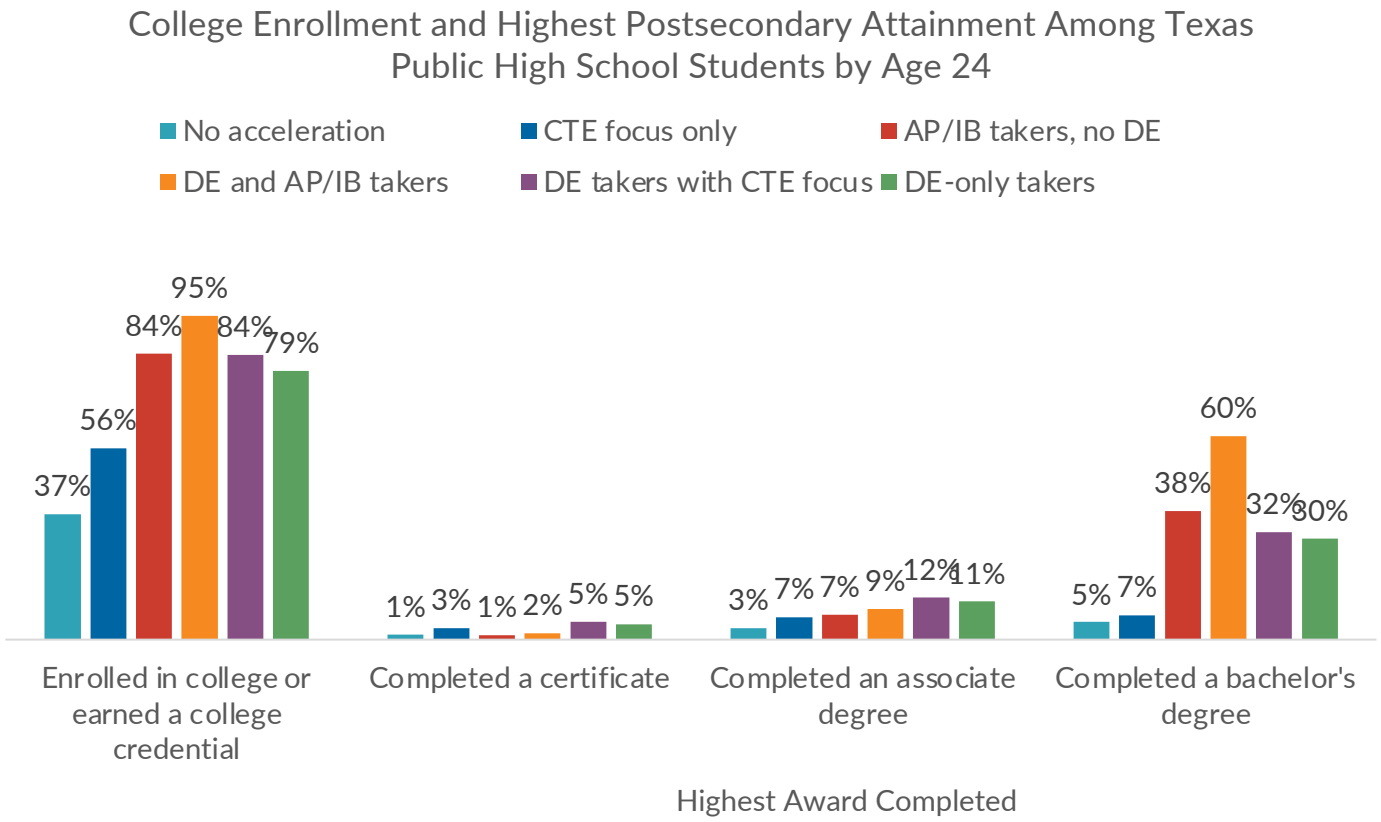
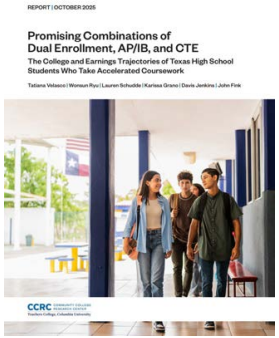
Students who took college-and-career accelerated coursework have high postsecondary attainment by age 24, especially when combined with DE.



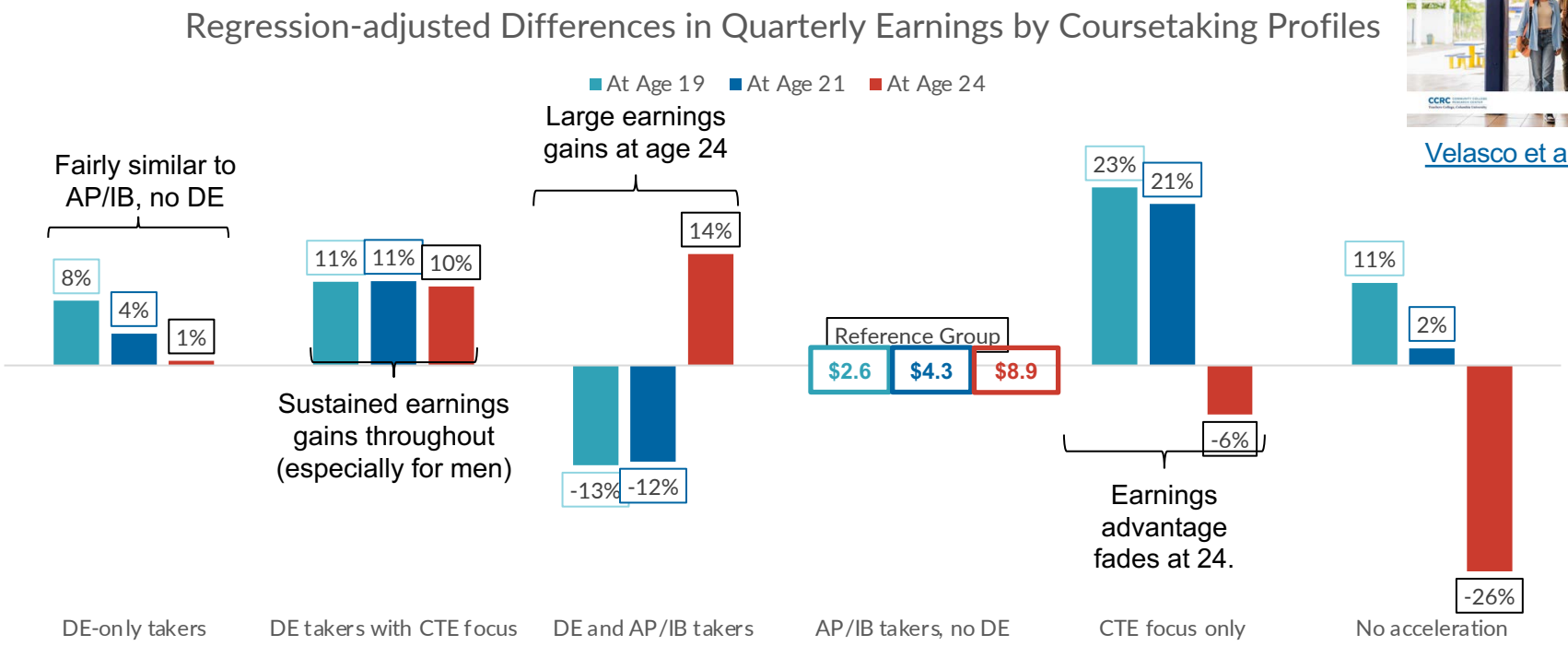
By age 24:

- Only 10% of students with no accelerated coursework had accrued a credential. This rate is lower among men (8%), Black and Hispanic students (8% each).
- 60% of DE and AP/IB students earned a bachelor's degree – the highest of all groups.
- 32% of DE takers with a CTE focus had earned a bachelor's, compared to 7% among the CTE focus only.

DE in combination with other accelerated coursework is associated with significant earnings gains by age 24



Velasco et al., 2025



Regression-adjusted estimates of the average quarterly earnings by each age group. All estimates are in reference to "AP/IB takers, no DE" earnings. Controls: gender, race, income background, TAKS test scores, student ranking, and high school characteristics.

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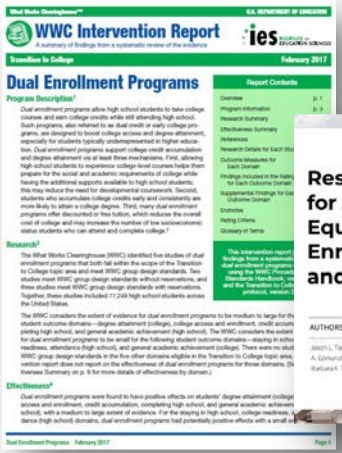
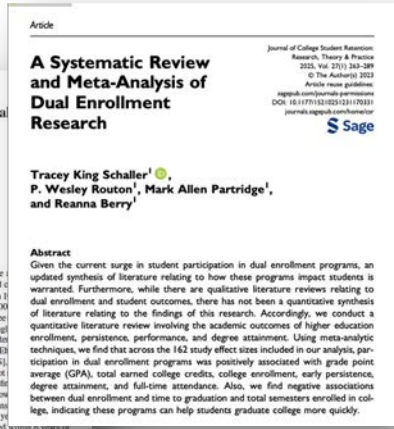
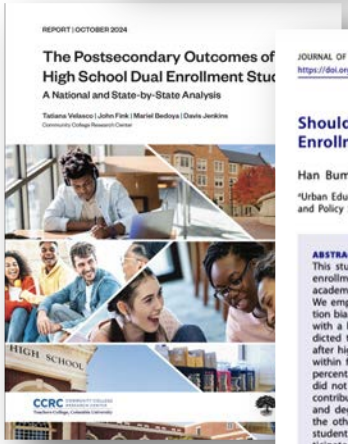
A large body of research shows that DC works as a lever for expanding college access & attainment…

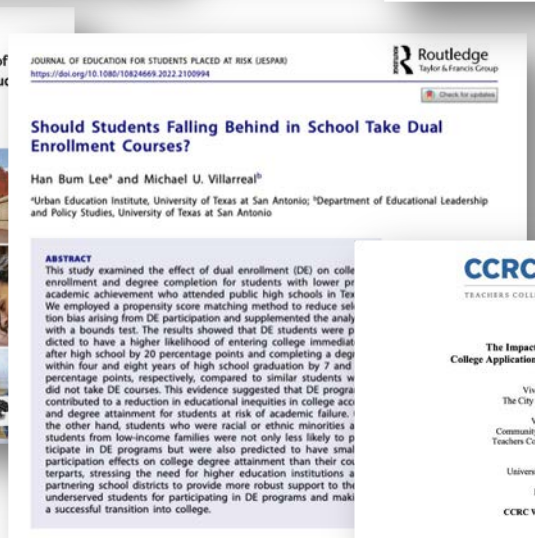
…and that shows that DC benefits underserved students.

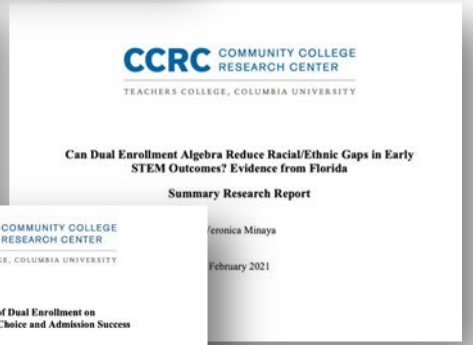
Reviews & Meta-Analyses

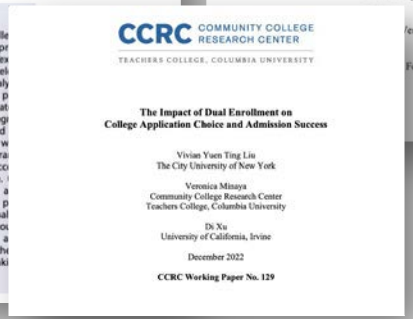












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Reflection Questions

- What are your big-picture goals for dual credit? What are you trying to achieve for your students and communities?
- What challenges do you face in expanding access to high-quality dual credit offerings connecting to pathways?
- What new opportunities or challenges have emerged with the implementation of HB8 and FAST?

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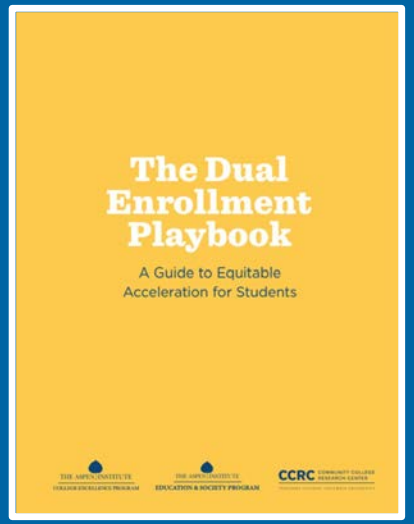
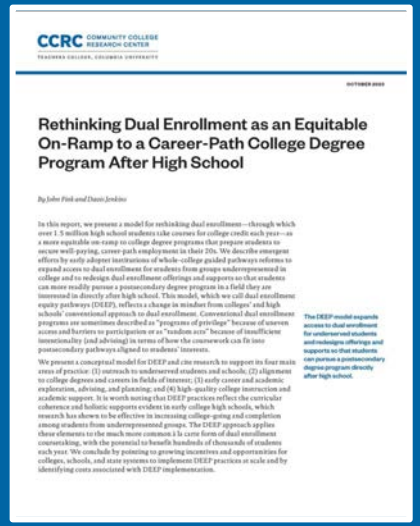
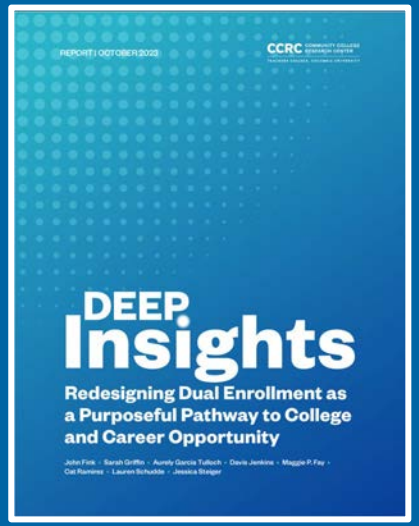
Our Research Focus: Expanding College Access and Success Through Dual Enrollment



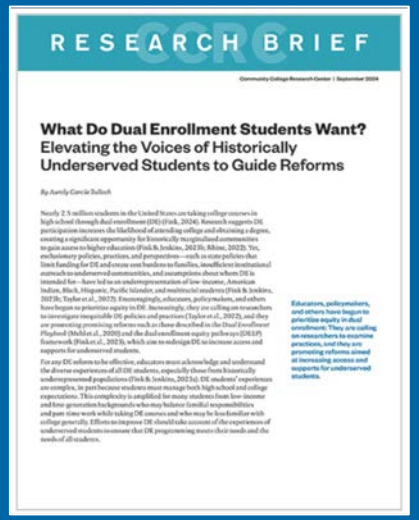
The Dual Enrollment Playbook: A Guide to Equitable Acceleration for Students (October 2020)



Rethinking Dual Enrollment as an Equitable On-Ramp to a Career-Path College Degree Program After High School (October 2023)



DEEP Insights: Redesigning Dual Enrollment as a Purposeful Pathway to College and Career Opportunity (October 2023)



What Do Dual Enrollment Students Want? Elevating the Voices of Historically Underserved Students to Guide Reforms (September 2024)

From “Random Acts” to Purposeful Pathways

Conventional Approach

Who is it designed for?	Primarily students who are already headed to college after high school
What courses are offered?	Primarily gen eds or whatever is easy to offer based on teacher availability
What is the approach to teaching?	Reliance on qualified HS teachers with limited quality control and professional development
What academic supports are provided?	Ad hoc, if students reach out for help
What college advising is provided?	Advising from the college available to students who seek it out
Business model	Lower costs, lighter supports, less re-enrollment after high school

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From "Random Acts" to Purposeful Pathways

	Conventional Approach	DEEP Approach
Who is it designed for?	Primarily students who are already headed to college after high school	All students, especially those who might not otherwise pursue further education after high school
What courses are offered?	Primarily gen eds or whatever is easy to offer based on teacher availability	Foundational coursework (including general education courses) aligned to college degree programs in fields of interest to students
What is the approach to teaching?	Reliance on qualified HS teachers with limited quality control and professional development	Strong quality control and professional development through collaboration with college faculty and programs
What academic supports are provided?	Ad hoc, if students reach out for help	Unavoidable and proactive academic support, frontloaded for new DE students
What college advising is provided?	Advising from the college available to students who seek it out	College-provided advising for all students at key checkpoints to help explore interests and create an individualized post-high school learning plan
Business model	Lower costs, lighter supports, less re-enrollment after high school	Higher costs, more supports, greater downstream revenues

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DEEP Framework Extends Guided Pathways to High School through Dual Enrollment

Outreach

Outreach to Underserved Students & Schools

Support

Support Students by Delivering High-Quality Instruction

Alignment

Align DE to College Degrees & Careers

Advise

Advise Students to Explore Interests and Develop Plans

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Outreach to Underserved Students and Schools

Focus outreach on underserved high schools, students, and communities.

Start outreach before high school.

Leverage community connections to build awareness.

Build trust with and educate parents and families.

Use high school grades as an alternative to placement testing for eligibility.

Background Image: Miami Dade College
Big Brother Big Sister Kickball Game and Dual Enrollment Information Session

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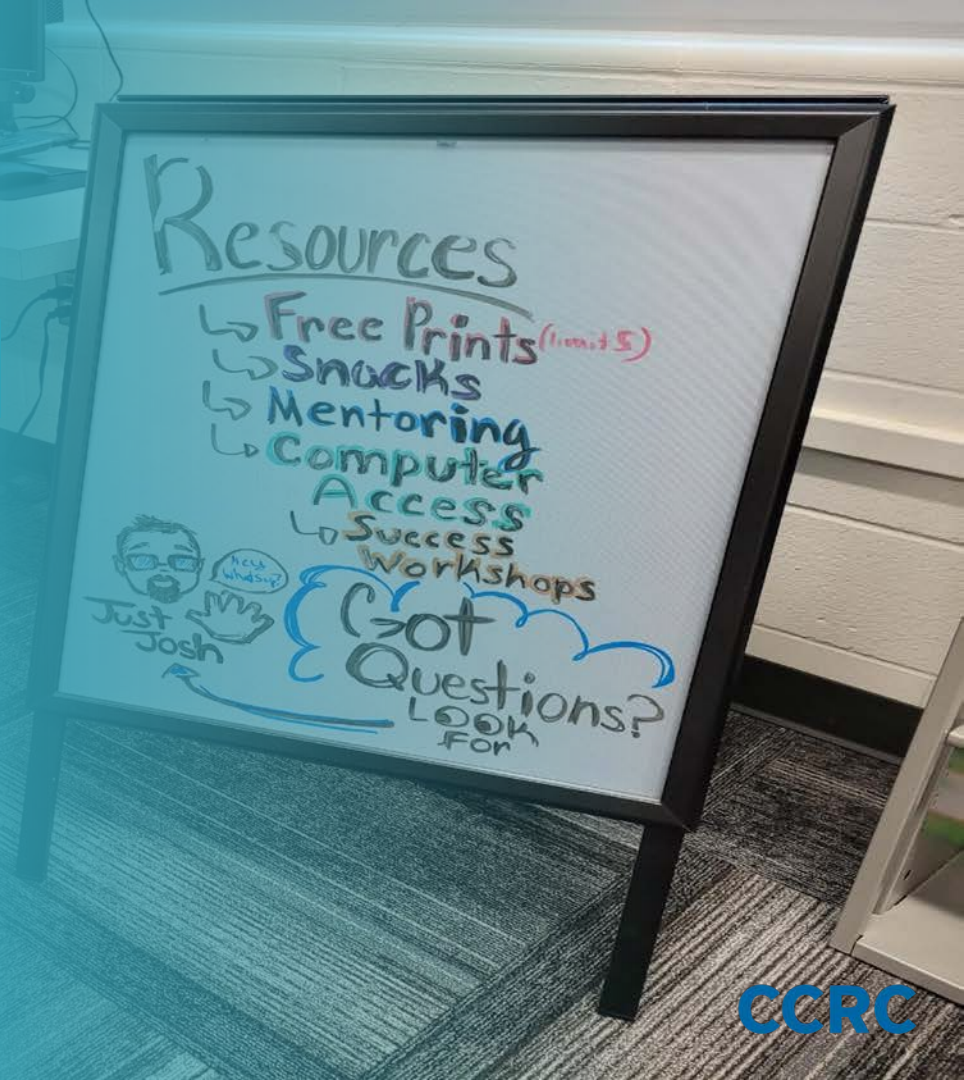
Support Students by Delivering High-Quality Instruction

Scaffold coursework and front-load supports.

Respond quickly when students are struggling.

Provide additional, structured support for online classes.

Support DE instructors and monitor quality.



Background Image: San Jacinto College
Resources for Online Dual Enrollment Students

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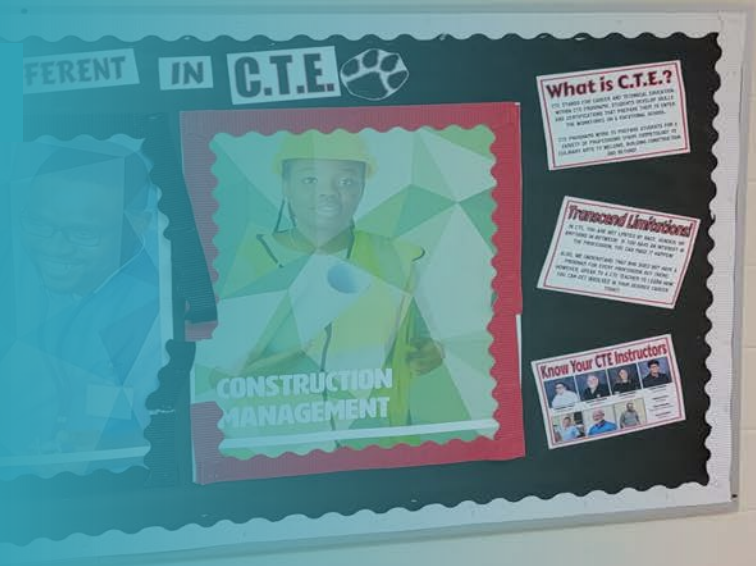
Align DE to College Degrees and Careers in Fields of Interest

Inventory current DE offerings.

Map DE offerings to college degree programs in fields of interest.

Embed DE offerings in career-connected high school programs.



Background Image: Blountstown High School (in partnership with Chipola College)
Bulletin Board Advertisement of CTE Career Pathways

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Advise Students to Explore Interests and Develop Career Path Plans

Showcase DE to support exploration.

Coordinate advising roles across sectors.

Help students develop a college program plan and provide checkpoint advising.

Background Image: San Jacinto College
iConnect Center

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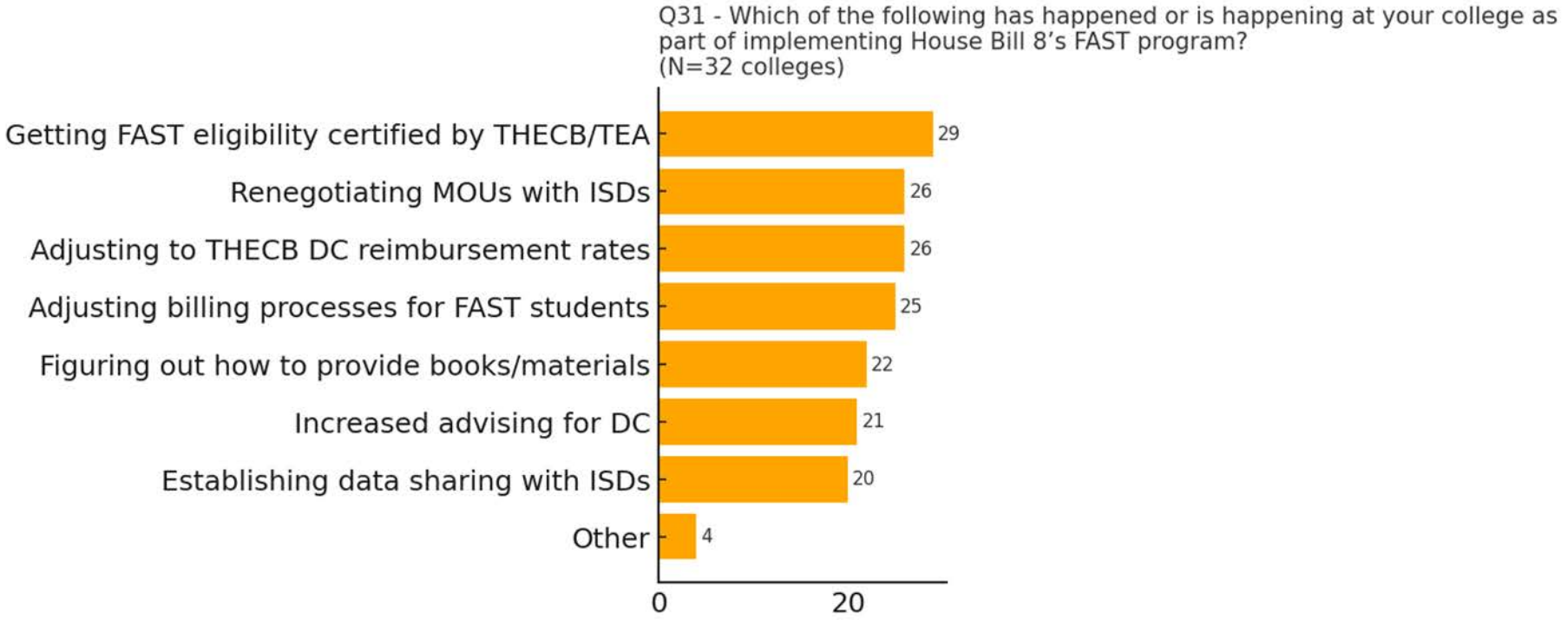
March 2025

How are colleges responding to FAST?



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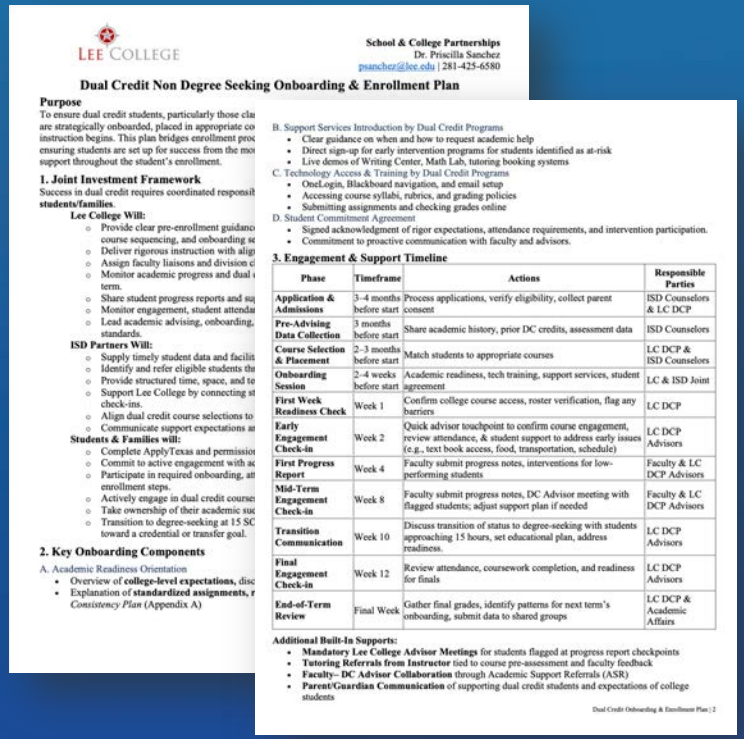
Leveraging State Policy Changes to DEEPen the Impact of Dual Credit

Dr. Marissa Moreno
Associate Vice President of Transfer & Educational Partnerships,
Lee College



LEE COLLEGE

School & College Partnerships
Dr. Priscilla Sanchez
psanchez@lee.edu | 281-425-6580

Dual Credit Non Degree Seeking Onboarding & Enrollment Plan

Purpose
To ensure dual credit students, particularly those cla
are strategically onboarded, placed in appropriate co
instruction begins. This plan bridges enrollment proc
ensuring students are set up for success from the mo
support throughout the student's enrollment.

1. Joint Investment Framework
Success in dual credit requires coordinated responsi
students/families.

Lee College Will:
- Provide clear pre-enrollment guidanc
course sequencing, and onboarding s
- Deliver rigorous instruction with alig
- Assign faculty liaisons and division c
- Monitor academic progress and dual
term.
- Share student progress reports and su
- Monitor engagement, student attenda
- Lead academic advising, onboarding,
standards.

ISD Partners Will:
- Supply timely student data and facilit
- Identify and refer eligible students th
- Provide structured time, space, and te
- Support Lee College by connecting st
check-ins.
- Align dual credit course selections to
- Communicate support expectations a

Students & Families will:
- Complete ApplyTexas and permissio
- Commit to active engagement with ac
- Participate in required onboarding, at
enrollment steps.
- Actively engage in dual credit course
- Take ownership of their academic suc
- Transition to degree-seeking at 15 SC
toward a credential or transfer goal.

2. Key Onboarding Components

A. Academic Readiness Orientation
- Overview of **college-level expectations**, disc
- Explanation of **standardized assignments,** *Consistency Plan* (Appendix A)

B. Support Services Introduction by Dual Credit Programs
- Clear guidance on when and how to request academic help
- Direct sign-up for early intervention programs for students identified as at-risk
- Live demos of Writing Center, Math Lab, tutoring booking systems

C. Technology Access & Training by Dual Credit Programs
- OneLogin, Blackboard navigation, and email setup
- Accessing course syllabi, rubrics, and grading policies
- Submitting assignments and checking grades online

D. Student Commitment Agreement
- Signed acknowledgment of rigor expectations, attendance requirements, and intervention participation.
- Commitment to proactive communication with faculty and advisors.

3. Engagement & Support Timeline

Phase	Timeframe	Actions	Responsible Parties
Application & Admissions	3–4 months before start	Process applications, verify eligibility, collect parent consent	ISD Counselors & LC DCP
Pre-Advising Data Collection	3 months before start	Share academic history, prior DC credits, assessment data	ISD Counselors
Course Selection & Placement	2–3 months before start	Match students to appropriate courses	LC DCP & ISD Counselors
Onboarding Session	2–4 weeks before start	Academic readiness, tech training, support services, student agreement	LC & ISD Joint
First Week Readiness Check	Week 1	Confirm college course access, roster verification, flag any barriers	LC DCP
Early Engagement Check-in	Week 2	Quick advisor touchpoint to confirm course engagement, review attendance, & student support to address early issues (e.g., text book access, food, transportation, schedule)	LC DCP Advisors
First Progress Report	Week 4	Faculty submit progress notes, interventions for low-performing students	Faculty & LC DCP Advisors
Mid-Term Engagement Check-in	Week 8	Faculty submit progress notes, DC Advisor meeting with flagged students; adjust support plan if needed	Faculty & LC DCP Advisors
Transition Communication	Week 10	Discuss transition of status to degree-seeking with students approaching 15 hours, set educational plan, address readiness.	LC DCP Advisors
Final Engagement Check-in	Week 12	Review attendance, coursework completion, and readiness for finals	LC DCP Advisors
End-of-Term Review	Final Week	Gather final grades, identify patterns for next term's onboarding, submit data to shared groups	LC DCP & Academic Affairs

Additional Built-In Supports:
- **Mandatory Lee College Advisor Meetings** for students flagged at progress report checkpoints
- **Tutoring Referrals from Instructor** tied to course pre-assessment and faculty feedback
- **Faculty– DC Advisor Collaboration** through Academic Support Referrals (ASR)
- **Parent/Guardian Communication** of supporting dual credit students and expectations of college students

Dual Credit Onboarding & Enrollment Plan | 2

Access Lee College's Non-Degree Seeking Plan

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FAST Scholarship
+ HB8 Performance Funding
+ Non-Degree Seeking TSI Exemption

Access Lee College's Non-Degree Seeking Plan

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How Are We Going to Pay For This?

A New Business Model

New Research From CCRC

Find the report at ccrc.tc.columbia.edu.

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Conventional Versus DEEP Approaches

DEEP Practice Area	Example Practice	Associated Costs
Outreach efforts to promote dual enrollment	Proactive marketing and recruitment to underserved K-12 schools and communities	Adequate staff to provide single point of contact and support for numerous partner high schools
Alignment of dual enrollment coursework	DE offerings mapped to postsecondary CTE degrees and bachelor's major pathways	Adequate staff time to plan course offerings and instructor availability by high school to avoid "random acts"
Advising provided by the college	College provides advising to all students in collaboration with high school counselors;	Adequate staffing to provide individualized advising and planning assistance
High-quality ***instruction*** *and* ***support***	DE students exposed to instruction by college faculty on college campuses and where possible in classes with post-high-school students Proactive academic and nonacademic support for DE students	Extensive quality control, professional development, and support for instructors who are high school teachers Faculty or staff time to proactively identify and support struggling students Learning management, early alert, and online tutoring systems for DE students
Close working ***partnerships*** with K-12	Day-to-day communication with K-12 partners to support planning, operations, and troubleshooting	Adequate staff time to coordinate planning and operations and to troubleshoot with numerous, often widely dispersed schools

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Potential Incentives for DEEP Investments

K-12 schools	• Can offer new and attractive programs in partnership with colleges • Can attract students and families looking for college acceleration options • Improved high school graduation, college-going and other student outcomes, particularly for underserved populations and schools • Gains in state performance reporting and funding
Employers	• "Grow-your-own" talent development strategy: Generates a reliable supply of employees with specific knowledge and skills catered to industry needs that also better reflect the specific make-up of the local community • Helps students gain early awareness and exploration of career opportunities that can promote better matching with jobs, more career advancement opportunities, and less employee turnover
Colleges	• Expands the pool of potential college-going students after high school • Downstream benefits to retention, completion, and statewide performance funding by increasing re-enrollment of former DE students after high school • Reputational benefits (generating public support to sustain or increase local funding)

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Conventional DE and DEEP Business Models

Lower costs: Minimal investments made to cover DE program operations

Lighter supports, designed for students who are already college-bound

Less re-enrollment after high school means lower downstream revenues

Higher costs: More investments to scale DEEP practices to implement DE as an on-ramp to college and career pathways

More supports, designed for all high school students

Greater downstream revenues from more students re-enrolling after high school instead of not pursuing any postsecondary education and training

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Key Strategies

1. Establish a “DEEP” mindset by committing to dual enrollment as an accessible pathway to college and careers for every student

2. Leverage the college’s core staff, facilities, and technology resources to support a DEEP experience for students

3. Partner with K-12 schools to maximize available resources for DEEP

4. Strategically invest financial resources to scale DEEP practices

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4. Invest financial resources strategically

Such as:

- Measure and closely monitor dual enrollment costs
- Implement a sustainable pricing model that balances variable costs and returns
- Keep costs low and prioritize investments in underserved students and schools
- Capitalize on state and local workforce development funding
- Generate performance funding and reinvest in strengthening dual enrollment program supports
- Generate downstream revenue by increasing post-high-school matriculation of DE students

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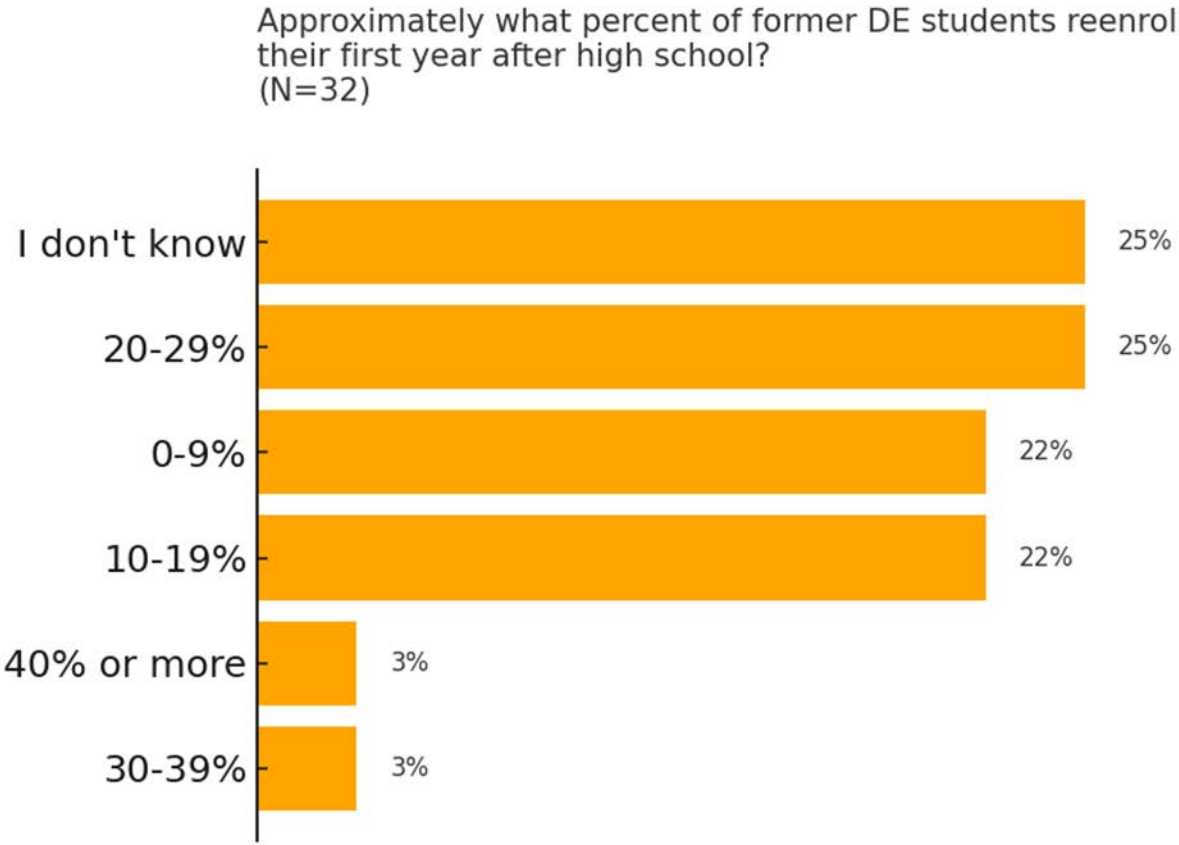
TX Colleges: Re-enrollment (yield) rates rarely above 30%



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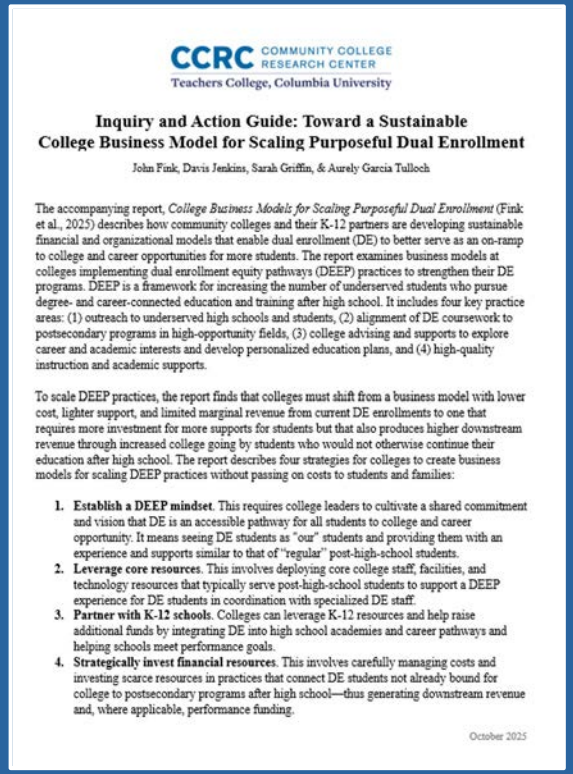
Take Action Using the Inquiry & Action Guide



CCRC COMMUNITY COLLEGE RESEARCH CENTER
Teachers College, Columbia University

Inquiry and Action Guide: Toward a Sustainable College Business Model for Scaling Purposeful Dual Enrollment

John Fink, Davis Jenkins, Sarah Griffin, & Aurely Garcia Tulloch

The accompanying report, *College Business Models for Scaling Purposeful Dual Enrollment* (Fink et al., 2025) describes how community colleges and their K-12 partners are developing sustainable financial and organizational models that enable dual enrollment (DE) to better serve as an on-ramp to college and career opportunities for more students. The report examines business models at colleges implementing dual enrollment equity pathways (DEEP) practices to strengthen their DE programs. DEEP is a framework for increasing the number of underserved students who pursue degree- and career-connected education and training after high school. It includes four key practice areas: (1) outreach to underserved high schools and students, (2) alignment of DE coursework to postsecondary programs in high-opportunity fields, (3) college advising and supports to explore career and academic interests and develop personalized education plans, and (4) high-quality instruction and academic supports.

To scale DEEP practices, the report finds that colleges must shift from a business model with lower cost, lighter support, and limited marginal revenue from current DE enrollments to one that requires more investment for more supports for students but that also produces higher downstream revenue through increased college going by students who would not otherwise continue their education after high school. The report describes four strategies for colleges to create business models for scaling DEEP practices without passing on costs to students and families:

1. **Establish a DEEP mindset**. This requires college leaders to cultivate a shared commitment and vision that DE is an accessible pathway for all students to college and career opportunity. It means seeing DE students as "our" students and providing them with an experience and supports similar to that of "regular" post-high-school students.
2. **Leverage core resources**. This involves deploying core college staff, facilities, and technology resources that typically serve post-high-school students to support a DEEP experience for DE students in coordination with specialized DE staff.
3. **Partner with K-12 schools**. Colleges can leverage K-12 resources and help raise additional funds by integrating DE into high school academies and career pathways and helping schools meet performance goals.
4. **Strategically invest financial resources**. This involves carefully managing costs and investing scarce resources in practices that connect DE students not already bound for college to postsecondary programs after high school—thus generating downstream revenue and, where applicable, performance funding.

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Find the guide at ccrc.tc.columbia.edu.

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Overview of Action Steps

Action Steps Presented in This Guide

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Resource Mapping

Table 5. Resource Mapping for DEEP Practice Implementation

Example responses in italics

DEEP practice implementation goal: *We will increase advising and development of college program plans such that more than 80% of our DE students have completely mapped out an individualized college program plan by the end of next academic year.*

Area	Current resources & unmet need	Opportunities to redeploy core college resources	New resources needed
Staffing	*Currently, 2 staff advise 2,000 students; need 2–3 more for reasonable caseloads. Most DE students take a college success course, but planning and advising is limited as a part of the course.*	*College advising office has 10 staff, with declining enrollments and caseloads. College success course could include group advising and planning time.*	*Hire 2–3 more advisors if we cannot redeploy other college advisors. DE staff and college advisors need time to work with college success course instructors to redesign course elements.*
Technology and systems/processes	*No system to track DE advising notes.*	*College advising portal could also be used for DE students.*	*Need to figure out how to also give access to school counselors.*
Facilities or other resources	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*

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Table 6. Projecting Future Revenues From Dual Enrollment Matriculation After High School

(a) High school graduation year	(b) Observed/ projected	(c) Number of graduates who took DE	(d) Re-enrollment rate	(e) Number of DE students who re-enrolled after high school	(f) Average credits enrolled per student in year 1 post-high-school for (e)	(g) Total tuition/fee revenue for (f)
2022	observed	# graduates	% re-enrolled	# re-enrolled	# credits per student	$ tuition/fees
2023	observed	#	%	#	#	$
2024	mixed	# (obs.)	% (proj.)	# (proj.)	# (proj.)	$ (proj.)
2025	projected	# (proj.)	% (proj.)	# (proj.)	# (proj.)	$ (proj.)
2026	projected	# (proj.)	% (proj.)	# (proj.)	# (proj.)	$ (proj.)
2027	projected	# (proj.)	% (proj.)	# (proj.)	# (proj.)	$ (proj.)
2028	projected	# (proj.)	% (proj.)	# (proj.)	# (proj.)	$ (proj.)
2029	projected	# (proj.)	% (proj.)	# (proj.)	# (proj.)	$ (proj.)
Calculations for projections		Prior year number * expected % growth of DE	Expected re-enrollment rate. This can be based on prior years ([e] / [c]) or set as a new target rate.	Projected number of graduates who took DE (c) * expected re-enrollment rate (d)	Total credits enrolled in year 1 post-high-school among (e), observed or projected based on prior years / number of students (e)	Number of students (e) * Avg. credits enrolled per student (f) * tuition/fee revenue per credit

Projecting ROI from scaling DEEP Practices

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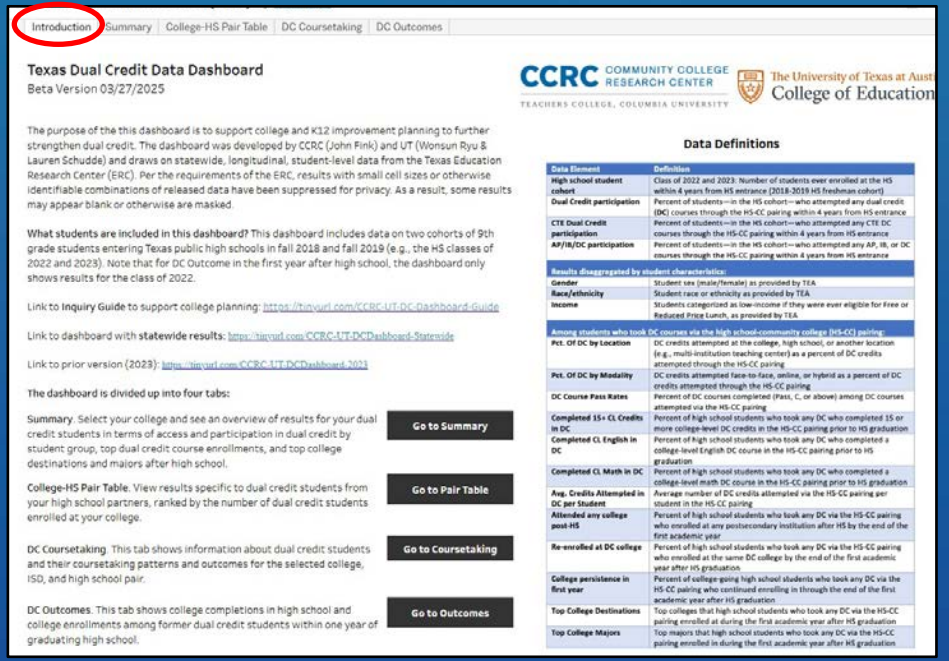
CCRC Resource: Texas Dual Credit Data Dashboard

The Texas Dual Credit Dashboard tracks Texas high school students':

- Access to DC
- DC course location and modality
- DC course pass rates
- DC credit and gateway course momentum
- Post-HS college enrollments and persistence

The Dashboard's Homepage



Dashboard: https://tinyurl.com/TXDualCreditDashboard

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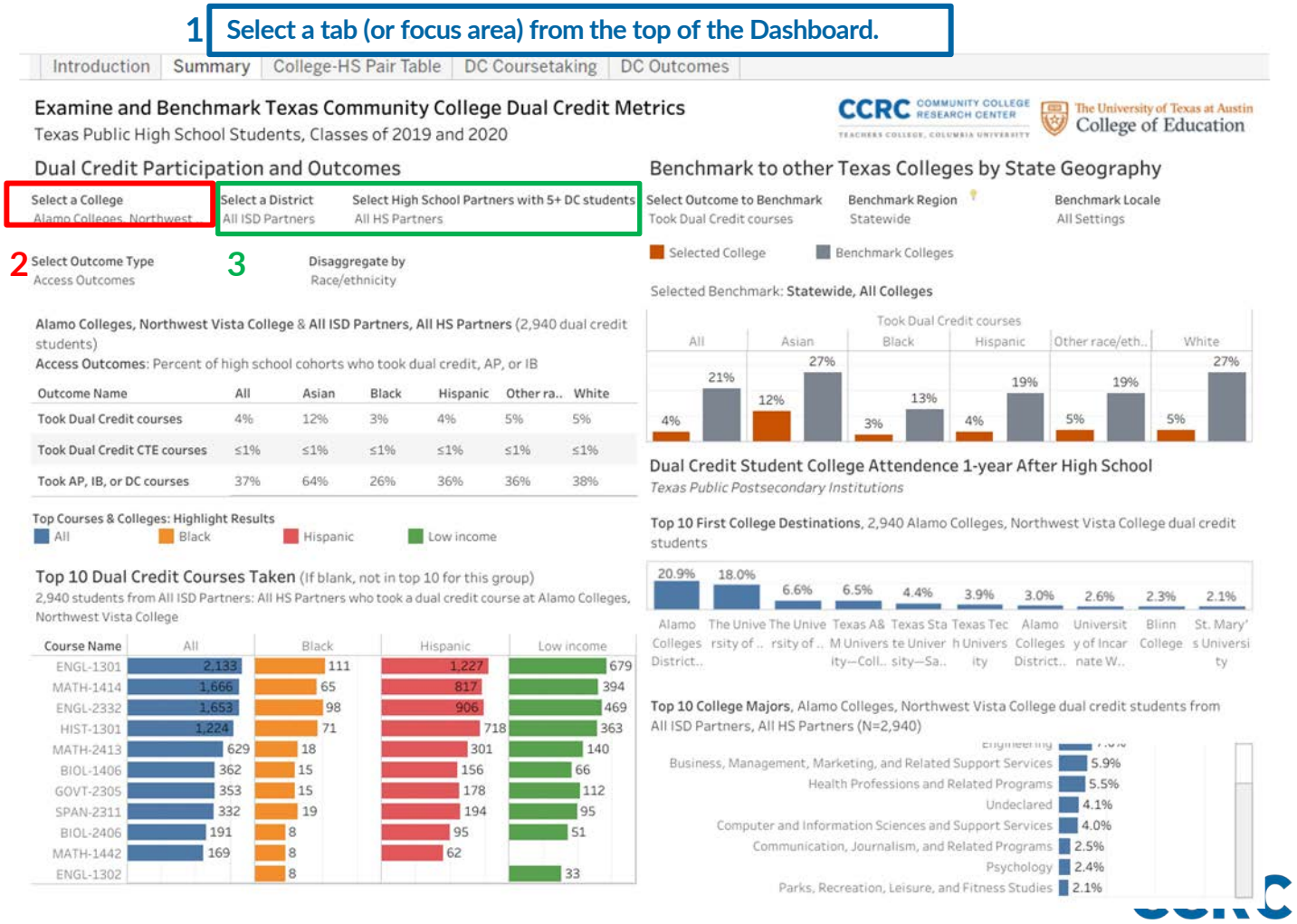
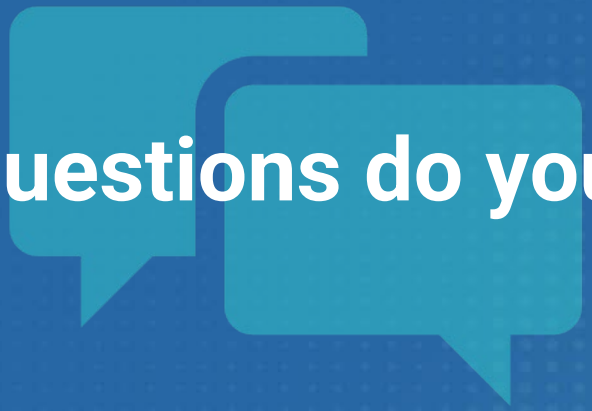
How to Navigate the Dashboard

1. Select the area you want to explore from the tabs at the top of the dashboard.
2. Select a college partner.
3. Select an ISD and the high school or high schools of interest.



What questions do you have?



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Thank you!

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