

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

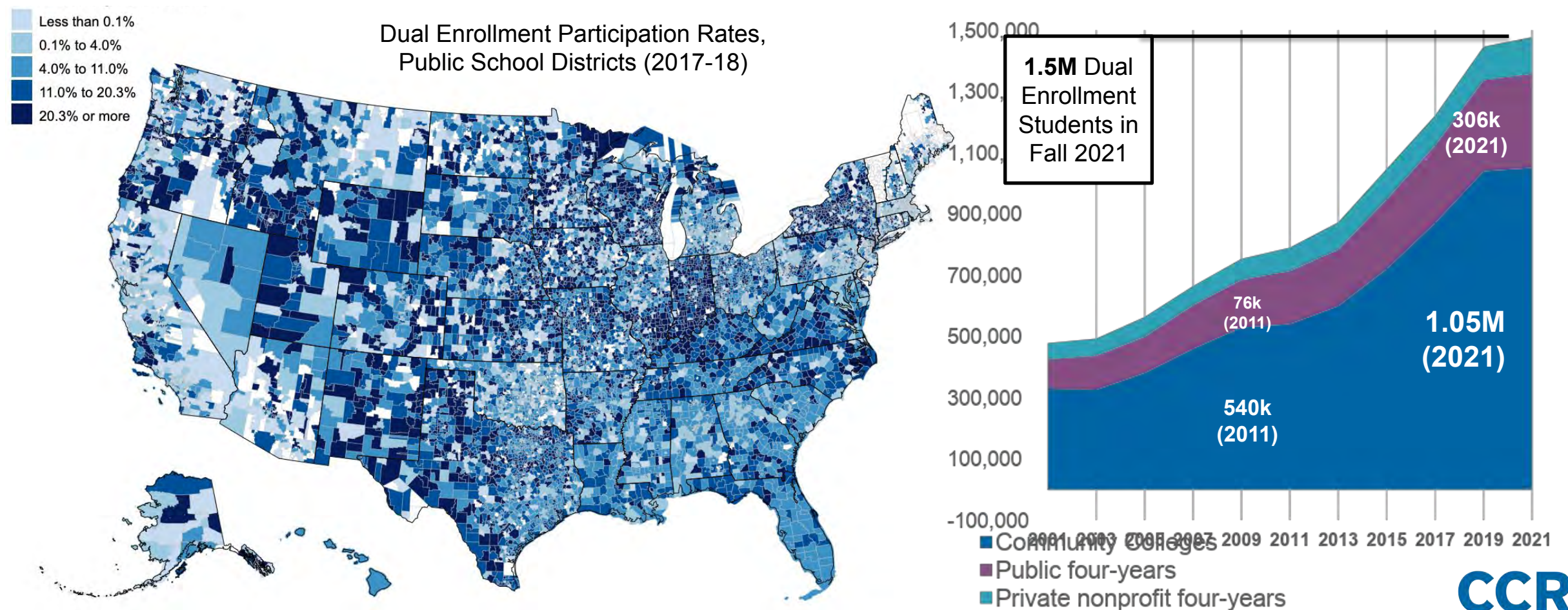
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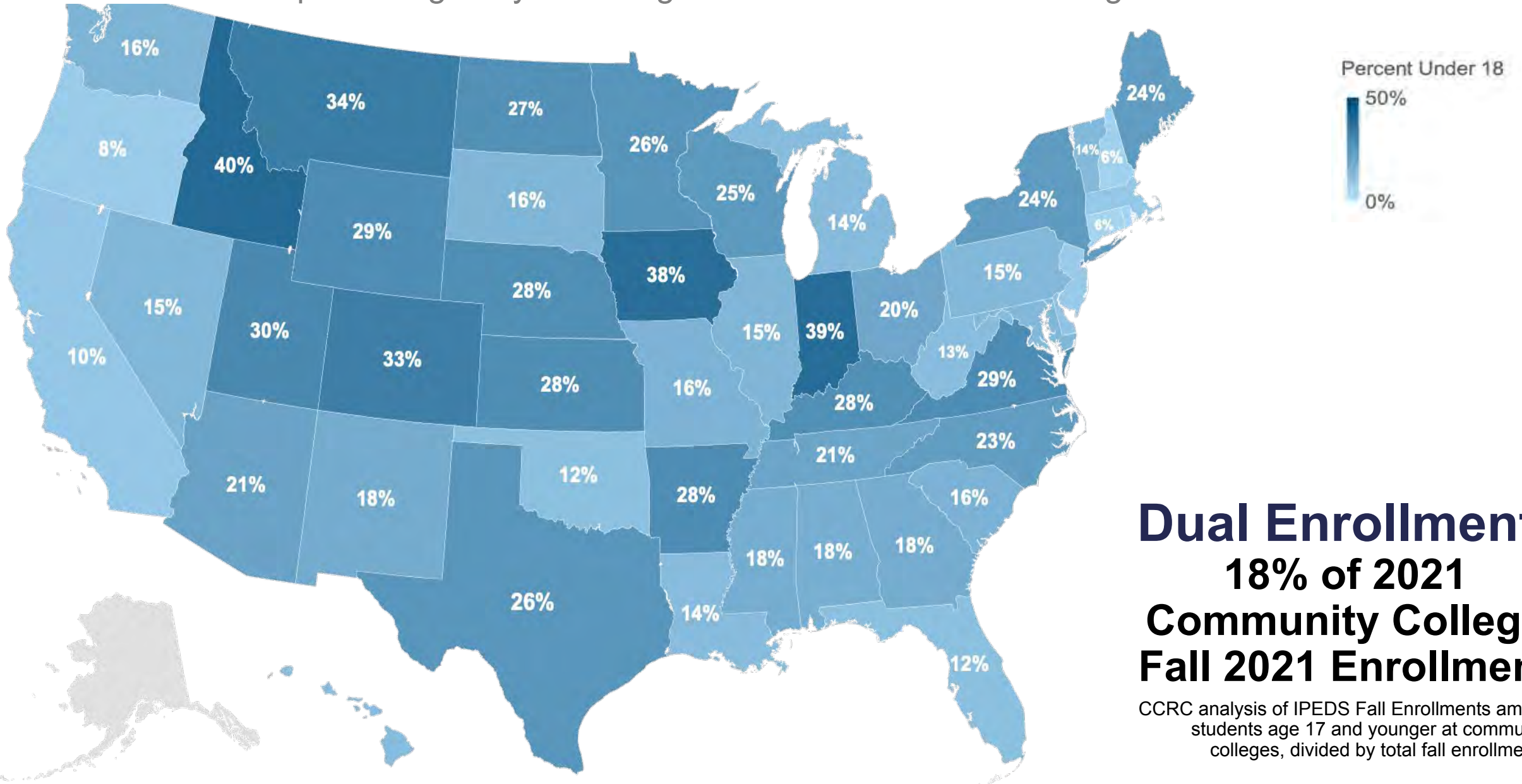
Alex Perry

College in High School Alliance

# High School Dual Enrollment: Widespread and Growing



What percentage of your college's enrollment comes from high school dual enrollment?



# 20+ Years of Research: Dual Enrollments Benefits Students

CCRC COMMUNITY COLLEGE RESEARCH CENTER  
TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

RESEARCH OVERVIEW / FEBRUARY 2012

## What We Know About Dual Enrollment

### What Is Dual Enrollment?

In dual enrollment (DE), high school students are enrolled in a college course and the assignments that would normally be completed as part of the course. At the end of the course, they are given a final grade on a college transcript and course credit that can be applied toward a college degree. Dual enrollment programs differ from Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs in that students take college courses rather than high school courses at the college level.

DE programs vary widely in terms of how many and what college courses they offer, where the courses take place (on college or high school campuses), and who teaches them (college or high school teachers who qualify as college adjuncts).

The most recent national data (2002-2003) show that 7.1% of high schools offer dual enrollment opportunities and that 800,000 high school students take at least one college course during their high school year.

### Why Dual Enrollment?

Colleges and school districts have begun to embrace dual enrollment as a strategy to increase college attendance and persistence among students who might lack sufficient preparation for college. Participation in DE can help these students succeed in higher education by providing them with a realistic idea of what college requires and giving them a head start on college-level coursework. This may reduce the need for developmental coursework. Second, dual enrollment programs offer discounted or free tuition, which reduces the overall cost of college and may increase the number of low socioeconomic status students who can attend and complete college.<sup>2</sup>

### Who Benefits from Dual Enrollment?

In some places, dual enrollment programs continue to target more advanced students, but the national and state focus has moved toward recruitment of disadvantaged, first-time, and middle-achieving students. Nevertheless, some dual enrollment programs set a minimum GPA for students to participate.

What Works Clearinghouse™ U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## WWC Intervention Report

A summary of findings from a systematic review of the evidence

### Transition to College

## Dual Enrollment Programs

#### Program Description<sup>1</sup>

Dual enrollment programs allow high school students to take college courses and earn college credits while still attending high school. Such programs, also referred to as dual credit or early college programs, are designed to boost college access and degree attainment, especially for students typically underrepresented in higher education. Dual enrollment programs support college credit accumulation and degree attainment via at least three mechanisms. First, allowing high school students to experience college-level courses helps them prepare for the social and academic requirements of college while having the additional supports available to high school students; this may reduce the need for developmental coursework. Second, students who accumulate college credits early and consistently are more likely to attain a college degree. Third, many dual enrollment programs offer discounted or free tuition, which reduces the overall cost of college and may increase the number of low socioeconomic status students who can attend and complete college.<sup>2</sup>

#### Research<sup>3</sup>

The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) identified five studies of dual enrollment programs that both fall within the scope of the Transition to College topic area and meet WWC group design standards. Two studies meet WWC group design standards without reservations, and three studies meet WWC group design standards with reservations. Together, these studies included 77,249 high school students across the United States.

The WWC considers the extent of evidence for dual enrollment programs to be medium to large for the student outcome domains—degree attainment (college), college access and enrollment, credit accumulation, completing high school, and general academic achievement (high school). The WWC considers the extent of evidence for dual enrollment programs to be small for the following student outcome domains—staying in school, college readiness, attendance (high school), and general academic achievement (college). There were no studies that met WWC group design standards in the five other domains eligible in the Transition to College topic area. This intervention report does not report on the effectiveness of dual enrollment programs for those domains. (See Effectiveness Summary on p. 6 for more details of effectiveness by domain.)

#### Effectiveness<sup>4</sup>

Dual enrollment programs were found to have positive effects on students' degree attainment (college), college access and enrollment, credit accumulation, completing high school, and general academic achievement (high school), with a medium to large extent of evidence. For the staying in high school, college readiness, and attendance (high school) domains, dual enrollment programs had potentially positive effects with a small extent of evidence.

Report Contents

- Overview
- Program Information
- Research Summary
- Effectiveness Summary
- References
- Research Details for Each Study
- Outcome Measures for Each Domain
- Findings Included in the Rating for Each Outcome Domain
- Supplemental Findings for Each Outcome Domain
- Endnotes
- Rating Criteria
- Glossary of Terms

This intervention report provides findings from a systematic review of dual enrollment programs or using the WWC Procedures Standards Handbook, version 3.2 and the Transition to College protocol, version 3.2.

Dual Enrollment Programs February 2017 Page 1

## What Happens to Students Who Take Community College “Dual Enrollment” Courses in High School?

September 2017



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NATIONAL STUDENT CLEARINGHOUSE RESEARCH CENTER

JOURNAL OF EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS PLACED AT RISK (JESPAR)  
https://doi.org/10.1080/10824669.2022.2100394

Routledge  
Taylor & Francis Group

## Should Students Falling Behind in School Take Dual Enrollment Courses?

Han Bum Lee<sup>a</sup> and Michael U. Villarreal<sup>b</sup>

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**ABSTRACT**  
This study examined the effect of dual enrollment (DE) on college enrollment and degree completion for students with lower prior academic achievement who attended public high schools in Texas. We employed a propensity score matching method to reduce selection bias arising from DE participation and supplemented the analysis with a bounds test. The results showed that DE students were predicted to have a higher likelihood of entering college immediately after high school by 20 percentage points and completing a degree within four and eight years of high school graduation by 7 and 14 percentage points, respectively, compared to similar students who did not take DE courses. This evidence suggested that DE programs contributed to a reduction in educational inequities in college access and degree attainment for students at risk of academic failure. On the other hand, students who were racial or ethnic minorities and students from low-income families were not only less likely to participate in DE programs but were also predicted to have smaller participation effects on college degree attainment than their counterparts, stressing the need for higher education institutions and partnering school districts to provide more robust support to these underserved students for participating in DE programs and making a successful transition into college.

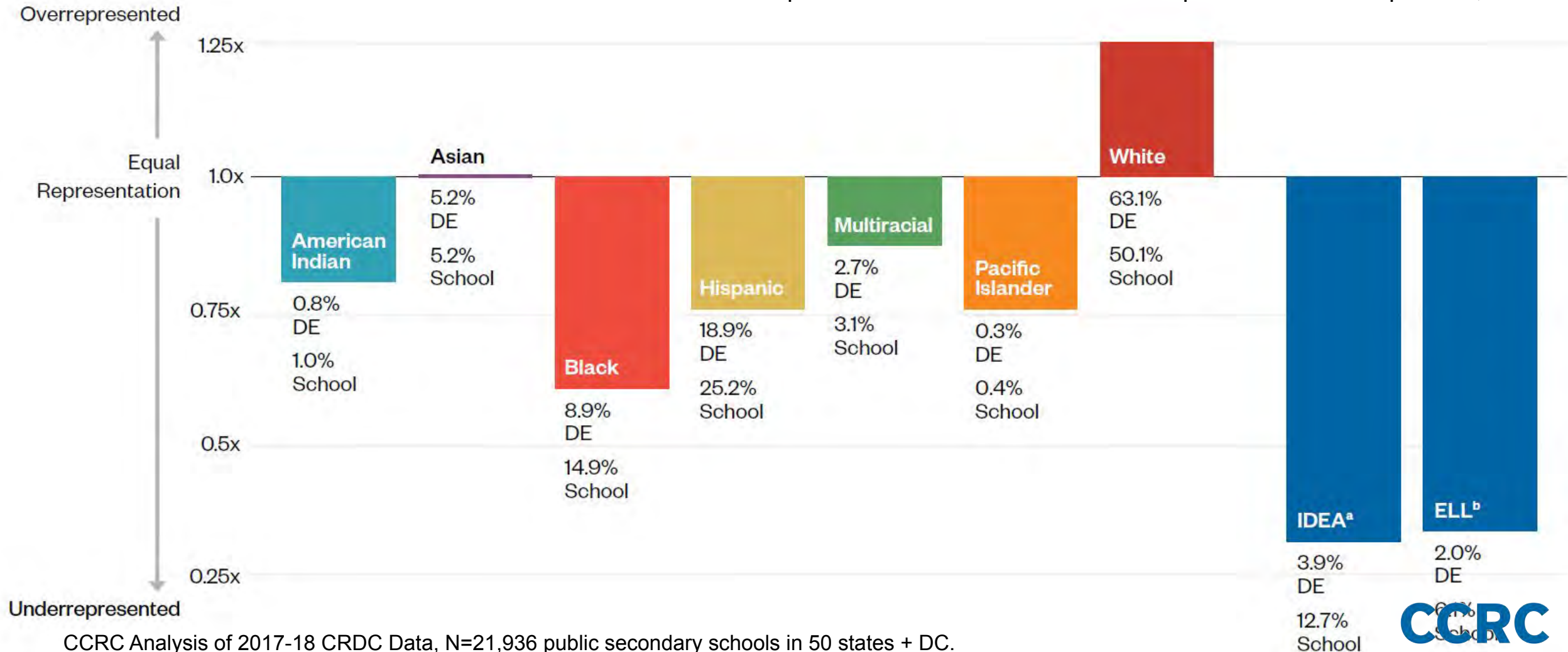
Dual enrollment (DE) programs, also known as dual credit or concurrent enrollment, provide high school students with an opportunity to take college-level courses and simultaneously earn high school and college credits (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). Proponents of the programs claim that DE participation can i) increase a student's self-efficacy and confidence in ability to complete college-level coursework and succeed in college (Attewell, Heil, & Reisel, 2012); ii) offer an opportunity to engage in a wider variety of academic and career courses, enabling to expand students' knowledge on new or particular fields of interest; iii) expose students to college norms, rules, and practices, making college familiar (Karp, 2012); iv) reduce the financial and time costs of attaining college degree by earning college credits while in high school (Karp, Calcagno, Hughes, Jeong, & Bailey, 2007), and v) signal to colleges that the student is capable and will be successful in college (Hoffman, Vargas, & Santos, 2008). A comprehensive

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# “Programs of Privilege”

## Access to Dual Enrollment Uneven

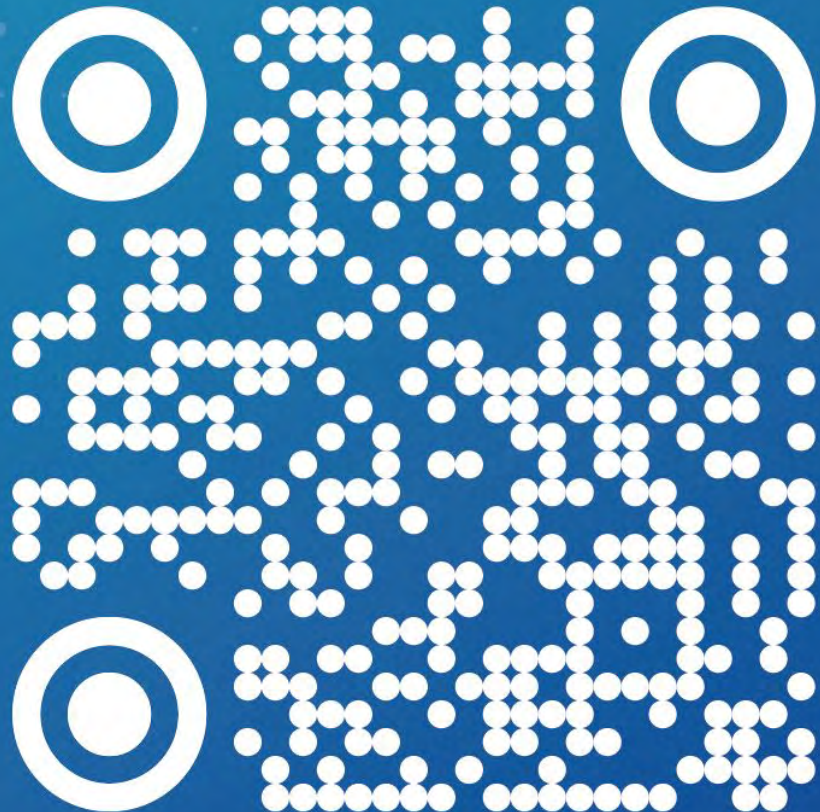
Representation in Dual Enrollment compared to School Population, 2017-18



CCRC Analysis of 2017-18 CRDC Data, N=21,936 public secondary schools in 50 states + DC.

# DEEP@CCRC

Resources on dual enrollment equity pathways for K-12 and college practitioners.



## Rethinking Dual Enrollment as an Equitable On-Ramp to a Career-Path College Degree Program After High School

By John Fink and Davis Jenkins

In this report, we present a model for rethinking dual enrollment—through which over 1.5 million high school students take courses for college credit each year—as a more equitable on-ramp to college degree programs that prepare students to secure well-paying, career-path employment in their 20s. We describe emergent efforts by early adopter institutions of whole-college guided pathways reforms to expand access to dual enrollment for students from groups underrepresented in college and to redesign dual enrollment offerings and supports so that students can more readily pursue a postsecondary degree program in a field they are interested in directly after high school. This model, which we call dual enrollment equity pathways (DEEP), reflects a change in mindset from colleges' and high schools' conventional approach to dual enrollment. Conventional dual enrollment programs are sometimes described as "programs of privilege" because of uneven access and barriers to participation or as "random acts" because of insufficient intentionality (and advising) in terms of how the coursework can fit into postsecondary pathways aligned to students' interests.

We present a conceptual model for DEEP and cite research to support its four main areas of practice: (1) outreach to underserved students and schools; (2) alignment to college degrees and careers in fields of interest; (3) early career and academic exploration, advising, and planning; and (4) high-quality college instruction and academic support. It is worth noting that DEEP practices reflect the curricular coherence and holistic supports evident in early college high schools, which research has shown to be effective in increasing college-going and completion among students from underrepresented groups. The DEEP approach applies these elements to the much more common à la carte form of dual enrollment coursetaking, with the potential to benefit hundreds of thousands of students each year. We conclude by pointing to growing incentives and opportunities for colleges, schools, and state systems to implement DEEP practices at scale and by identifying costs associated with DEEP implementation.

The DEEP model expands access to dual enrollment for underserved students and redesigns offerings and supports so that students can pursue a postsecondary degree program directly after high school.

# DEEP Insights

Redesigning Dual Enrollment as a Purposeful Pathway to College and Career Opportunity

John Fink • Sarah Griffin • Aurely Garcia Tulloch • Davis Jenkins • Maggie P. Fay • Cat Ramirez • Lauren Schudde • Jessica Steiger

# DEEP Practice Areas



## Outreach

*Outreach to Underserved Students & Schools*



## Alignment

*Align DE to College Degrees & Careers*



## Advise

*Advise Students to Explore Interests and Develop Plans*



## Support

*Support Students by Delivering High-Quality Instruction*

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





## 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.

### Policy Mechanisms

### Non-Policy Mechanisms

## 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.

**AREA 1****Expanding Access**

Supporting the expansion of access to DE requires deliberate efforts by states and systems to address the state- and system-wide barriers most difficult for individual programs to solve. This involves establishing a data-informed statewide vision for the role of these programs (which includes a clear understanding of who is currently participating in DE and who is not), creating conditions for greater access and participation, and reducing the cost burden for students.

**Recommendation 1:** Set statewide goals and measure progress.

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**Recommendation 2:** Rethink eligibility requirements.

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

## Strengthening On-ramps to Postsecondary Pathways

States and systems can reinforce practitioners' efforts by encouraging and incentivizing and the implementation of DE as well-designed, well-aligned on-ramps to postsecondary programs of study that high school students are interested in. States and systems support DE programs by ensuring 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.

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**Recommendation 5:** Prioritize advising and navigational support.

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**Recommendation 6:** Promote FAFSA completion before graduation.

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

## Building and Sustaining Strong Partnerships

Successful DE requires strong partnerships between K–12 and college practitioners. State-level leaders can help to develop stronger K–12–college networks. While particular colleges and school districts are focused on their own partnerships, often maintained through bilateral articulation agreements or memoranda of understanding, states and systems can provide supportive infrastructure to facilitate and systematize these partnerships.

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

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**Recommendation 9:** Diversify, expand, and support further credentialing of the instructor pool.

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

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

## Questions for State and System Leaders

This report is accompanied by a State Policymaker Strategy Development Guide to help states and systems consider what recommendations are most important to them and what new approaches might be the most effective. It introduces a simple three-step process to (1) review the report's recommendations and sample approaches, (2) inventory current state efforts, and (3) plan new efforts. The following are broad related questions that may facilitate state policy discussion on strengthening dual enrollment.

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**What policy and non-policy mechanisms are available to your state or system to support practitioner efforts to expand equitable DE access? To strengthen DE as an on-ramp to a postsecondary pathway? To build and sustain strong equity partnerships?**

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**What approaches are your state or system already implementing to advance efforts to expand equitable DE access? To strengthen DE as an on-ramp to a postsecondary pathway? To build and sustain strong equity partnerships?**

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**What new approaches might your state or system pursue to expand equitable DE access? To strengthen DE as an on-ramp to a postsecondary pathway? To build and sustain strong equity partnerships?**

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**How does your state or system plan to engage with stakeholders and practitioners to adequately address the questions above?**

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

STATE POLICYMAKER DEVELOPMENT GUIDE



State policymakers have several policy and non-policy mechanisms and associated approaches available to them that can advance the recommendations outlined in the accompanying report. Each state's political, fiscal, and governance constraints may affect what approaches will work best.

This guide is designed to help state policymakers consider which approaches will be most effective for them and develop action steps for supporting practitioners in strengthening DE programs.

Recommendations are organized by how state leaders can support DE improvement efforts in these three areas:

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.

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

## *State Policymaker Development Guide*



**Thank you!**

**Please stay in touch.**

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