



# ON-RAMPS TO COLLEGE

## WORKING GROUP DELIVERABLE

The **On-ramps to College Working Group** focused on strategies to increase postsecondary access for all students in the state by developing innovative solutions for addressing equity gaps in college attendance by race and socioeconomic status. Specially, the group was charged with:

- ➔ **Creating a coordinated approach to offering fee-free dual enrollment and piloting other models for demonstrating college-level mastery, such as the Modern States Educational Alliance, which prepares students for College Level Examination Program exams.**
- ➔ **Exploring, and then working to address, the factors affecting New Jersey student decisions to attend higher education institutions outside of the state.**

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# OVERVIEW

In March of 2019, New Jersey unveiled a **state plan for higher education** with a bold vision that “every New Jerseyan, regardless of life circumstances, should have the opportunity to obtain a high-quality credential that prepares them for life after college.” The implementation of this plan and common goal required the input and expertise of various stakeholders, including the On-ramps to College Working Group (hereafter referred to as “Working Group”).

Over the past six months, this Working Group focused on one component of the state plan in order to make the vision a reality, which was to create on-ramps to college so that all New Jersey students regardless of age are exposed to postsecondary opportunities. Specifically, the group was charged with increasing postsecondary access for all students in the state by developing innovative solutions to addressing equity gaps in college attendance by race and socioeconomic status. The specific charges included:

1. Creating a coordinated approach to offering fee-free dual enrollment and...
2. Piloting other models for demonstrating college-level mastery, such as the Modern States Educational Alliance, which prepares students for College Level Examination Program exams.
3. Exploring, and then working to address, the factors affecting New Jersey student decisions to attend higher education institutions outside of the state.

While the time frame was daunting for addressing large-scale and longstanding issues, the Working Group is proud to share initial action steps and engage in continued conversations that will continue to move New Jersey towards the goal.

## OFFERING FEE-FREE DUAL ENROLLMENT

Dual enrollment provides a way for students to earn college credits while still in high school. While dual enrollment programs exist across the state, not all students have access. Despite discounted costs, some students are still not able to afford to participate, so the Working Group focused on funding particularly for low-income students. The deliverable gives policy guidance for creating a coordinated approach to dual enrollment focused on equity in access and participation. This deliverable should help inform the newly created Dual Enrollment Study Commission.

## PILOTING COMPETENCY MODELS

Another innovative way for students to demonstrate college-level mastery earning them college credit in advance is through competency-based models. These models may be less familiar than dual enrollment, so the deliverable focuses on creating an inventory of competency-based programs that administrators could consider in order to help provide accessibility and affordability to higher education. The inventory also includes information about where these programs exist and where credit is accepted across the state.

## EXPLORING OUTMIGRATION

New Jersey has a long-standing history of being a top exporter of students, but data surrounding this topic can be flawed or non-existent. The deliverable included here takes a snapshot of outmigration by looking at specific

New Jersey districts to begin to understand college choice, and provides a proposal for further research on the topic. In addition, proposals for current and suggested programs to help address outmigration and promote higher education in New Jersey are presented.

## CONSIDERATIONS

The Working Group brought together stakeholders of all backgrounds to utilize their expertise to investigate the challenges surrounding college access from a variety of perspectives. As a result of these conversations, the Working Group acknowledges limitations in the work:

- The Working Group was looking at only one piece of the puzzle and many discussions led to related issues. For example, a student's reasons for leaving the state (outmigration) could tie to tuition costs in-state. Nevertheless, the deliverables are focused directly on the charges given to the working group.
- Some of the discussions regarding possible solutions could lead to unintended consequences that should be discussed before implementation. For example, if we are able to provide NJ students with more college credits prior to enrollment, will this lead to unintended outmigration of students? These considerations are addressed in our end products.
- There are already good programs and work happening both in the state and the nation that can be shared, especially given the limited resources of time and money. The deliverables include some exemplars of programs, but this is not a comprehensive and exhaustive list, but provides an avenue to continue to share best practices.
- The deliverables should be viewed as living documents that serve as a foundation to continued conversations around addressing the equity gaps in access to college.

With these acknowledgments, the Working Group is proud to present three deliverables for further discussion, development, and implementation across the state in order to further the work of the State Plan and to help New Jersey reach the goal of 65% of working age residents with a high quality credential by 2025 (65 by 2025). New Jersey stakeholders are committed to the success of students across the Garden State.

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**Disclaimer:**

The views expressed in this document belong to the Working Group and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the State of New Jersey. The content provided is intended to serve as a resource to help develop strategies to increase support for students at New Jersey's colleges and is provided in good faith. Due to time constraints, the Working Group notes the information may not be comprehensive and readers should take into account context for how the deliverable is used as well as further research that may be available after publication.

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## Executive Summary

The primary objective of this charge was to position dual enrollment (DE) as a mechanism to increase college access, affordability, and completion for New Jersey students. The following policy guidance provides action steps and considerations for the state in designing a tuition and fee-free (hereafter referred to as ‘fee-free’) DE initiative that would enable every high school graduate to earn approximately one college semester (between 12 to 15 college credits) concurrently with a high school diploma, with limited or no financial burden to the student or the student’s family, particularly for low-income students. Research demonstrates that accruing college credits while in high school significantly increases the likelihood that the student will pursue and complete a college degree or industry-valued credential.<sup>1</sup>

Common courses found in most existing DE programs involve “general education” courses, primarily in the humanities, sciences (e.g. biology, chemistry) and mathematics (e.g. algebra, calculus). As part of the approach, high school and college partners should be incentivized to work together to offer DE programs. The delivery of DE varies as it may be delivered in the high school by a properly credentialed high school teacher or by an instructor from the college; at the college, by a collegiate instructor; online (generally offered by the college); or through a hybrid model. Credentials of the instructors are critical, and determined by the partner institution’s standards and requirements (typically a master’s degree in the subject area, or at least 18 relevant graduate credits or an equivalent credential in the case of career and technical education). Quality controls on the part of the college are essential to ensure courses offered at the high school meet academic standards.

Currently in New Jersey, DE tuition and other costs are handled in multiple ways: the family pays, the school district pays, the college pays, or some combination thereof. One recommendation is for the costs to be shared equally among the student, the school district, and the state, with the caveat that students who qualify for the free and reduced lunch program should not be responsible for any contribution and should be covered by the state.

New Jersey has the opportunity to offer every high school student one semester’s worth of college credits, an investment that could pay off in reduced need for remedial education, increased completion rates, faster time to degree for students. Such DE partnerships, especially when fee-free, allow students to reduce their higher education costs and student loan debt burdens. These savings are particularly important for lower- and middle-income students and their families. State funding will be key to sustaining and scaling any fee-free DE approach.

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<sup>1</sup> “Evidence of Success.” College in High School Alliance. Accessed December 9, 2019. <https://www.collegeinhighschool.org/evidence-of-success>.

This proposal includes a roadmap for how to move forward, although further study is necessary to determine the most effective and viable mechanisms for ensuring that every New Jersey high school student has the opportunity to graduate with college credits. We strongly believe a coordinated DE approach is needed to achieve the State's goal to have 65% of New Jersey residents hold a postsecondary degree or credential by 2025.

## Statement of Need

Dual enrollment is defined as “an agreement between a public institution of higher education and a school district pursuant to which instruction is provided to high school students through courses offered by the institution of higher education on its campus or on the campus of the public high school for college credit or credit toward a career certificate.”<sup>2</sup> In 2018, a new law (P.L. 2018, c.145) was passed creating a Dual Enrollment Study Commission, which could build on the work delivered here.

Traditionally, the principal audience for DE programs was often high school students seeking to bolster their applications to colleges and universities with selective admissions. However, today a strong case can be made for the value of DE programs for *all* high school students. At a time when postsecondary degrees and credentials are increasingly important for employment (65% of jobs will require postsecondary training by 2020),<sup>3</sup> and college completion rates are low (less than half of first-time college students complete degrees in NJ),<sup>4</sup> particularly for disadvantaged students, new approaches are needed to improve student success in postsecondary education. Robust research demonstrates a positive relationship between DE participation, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment and completion. Consequently, New Jersey should strive to ensure that all high school students have an opportunity to participate in quality DE programs.<sup>5</sup>

## Challenges to Scale

There are considerable challenges to DE access and expansion, including funding to offset costs, qualified instructors, and student readiness. While student readiness is briefly mentioned, the following guidance focuses on funding and qualified instructors.

### *Funding to Offset Costs*

The State of New Jersey currently provides limited funding for DE programs, such as PTECH and College Readiness Now, which are limited in size and participation. It’s important to note DE programs have a cost and even at the discounted rate of \$50 per

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<sup>2</sup> “2017 New Jersey Revised Statutes: TITLE 18A - EDUCATION: Section 18A:61C-10 - Dual Enrollment Agreement.” Justia Law. Accessed December 9, 2019. <https://law.justia.com/codes/new-jersey/2017/title-18a/section-18a-61c-10/>.

<sup>3</sup> Carnevale, Anthony P., Nicole Smith and Jeff Strohl. “Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements through 2020.” Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. Accessed December 9, 2019. <https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/recovery-job-growth-and-education-requirements-through-2020/>

<sup>4</sup> Sitrin, Carly. “N.J. has weak system of state support for black and Latino college students.” WHYY. Accessed December 9, 2019. <https://whyy.org/articles/n-j-has-weak-system-of-state-support-for-black-and-latino-college-students-report-shows/>.

<sup>5</sup> Cassidy, Lauren, Kaeli Keating, and Viki Young. “Dual Enrollment: Lessons Learned on School-Level.” SRI International. Accessed December 9, 2019. <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/slcp/finaldual.pdf>.



credit, it would cost \$600 of tuition for a student to take a 12 credit program of study. Not every high school student can afford the cost of tuition, in addition to fees, books, and other costs of participation. Robust fee-free dual enrollment program costs include: tuition; fees; textbooks, IT, equipment, and other course materials; academic advising and support services (including tutoring and mentoring); transportation, professional development; outreach and recruitment; and program coordination. In order to increase access to dual enrollment, particularly for low-income students, dual enrollment programs need consistent, recurring funding to cover costs for students who do not have the ability to pay.

### *Qualified Instructors*

In order to teach college credit-bearing courses, instructors must meet the requirements for faculty teaching at the credit-granting institution, per accreditation standards and best practices for academic integrity. This typically means at least a master's degree in the content area to be taught, or, in the case of career and technical education, an equivalent credential that would satisfy any relevant regional or program accreditation requirements. Many DE courses in New Jersey are taught at the high school by instructors approved by the partnering college, thereby reducing the financial, logistical, and transportation barriers of having students travel to take courses on the college campus. However, the supply of teachers at the high school with the requisite qualifications to teach a college course can be limited. Therefore, teacher preparation and professional development programs are an important strategy for expanding the pool of properly credentialed and trained DE teachers.

### *Readiness*

While not the focus of this policy guidance, it is important to note that readiness to engage in college-level coursework is another challenge that the state should investigate as it expands DE, to promote equity of access to programs and maximize impact. Students who have limited access to college preparatory programs and/or those who are behind grade level may struggle to succeed in college courses without appropriate preparation, scaffolding, and support. To address this, the State of New Jersey should consider investing in evidence-based pathway programs, such as early college high schools, P-TECH, and other supported on-ramps to credit-bearing courses, to ensure that a wide range of students can participate and succeed. For the same reason, the state should also allow for flexibility in deciding when postsecondary pathways begin and how students are determined eligible. As a next step, the state should obtain better data on the fraction of potential DE students who have the requisite academic mastery and exploring possible pathways for expanding that number.

## Possible Solutions for Fee-Free Dual Enrollment

The following section details possible solutions for fee-free DE with a focus on funding and qualified instructors.

### *Funding*

To create a DE system that promotes equitable access for all students who can benefit, regardless of income, we recommend that New Jersey devise an approach to DE that ensures no student is turned away because of cost. The clearest way to accomplish this is to build the costs of DE programs into state funding allocated to participating postsecondary institutions and/or K-12 districts. The essential focus of these state-supported DE programs would be to offer courses to low-income students on a “fee-free” basis. New Jersey should also build in incentives for those DE students who go on to attend a New Jersey public or private institution of higher education, for example through scholarships, tuition discounts, or tax credits. A fee-free approach has the potential to significantly increase the number of high school students enrolled in DE programs.<sup>6</sup>

### *Funding Mechanisms.*

Recognizing the need to keep costs at a reasonable level, policymakers should consider the three best-practice models described below for creating on-ramps to college through a fee-free DE initiative.

(1) *State Funding for Fee-Free DE Programs:* State funding should be allocated to state approved (by NJDOE and/or OSHE) DE programs to offer students an authentic college course of study (at least one semester, or a minimum of 12-15 credits worth of core, transferable courses). Approved programs would have to demonstrate a commitment to quality (e.g. accredited program with qualified instructors) and equity (e.g. by providing the program free of charge to low-income students). To receive state funding, New Jersey could require additional programmatic criteria, such as providing advising and support services and recruiting students at risk of not completing postsecondary education. State examples to reference include the Massachusetts State Plan<sup>7</sup> and the State of Texas’ Blueprint for Dual Enrollment.<sup>8</sup>

State funding should offset the costs of tuition and fees not paid by the income-eligible students, as well as other costs the programs incur, such as textbooks and course

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<sup>6</sup> Cassidy, Lauren, Kaeli Keating, and Viki Young. “Dual Enrollment: Lessons Learned on School-Level.” SRI International. Accessed December 9, 2019. <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/slcp/finaldual.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Massachusetts Department. “Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Partnership.” Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Partnership / Strategic Initiatives / Massachusetts Department of Higher Education. Accessed December 30, 2019. <http://www.mass.edu/strategic/cdep.asp>.

<sup>8</sup> “The Early College High School Blueprint.” Texas Education Agency. Accessed December 9, 2019. [https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/ECHS\\_Blueprint.pdf](https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/ECHS_Blueprint.pdf).

materials, support services, transportation, recruitment, and program administration, thereby allowing the programs to sustainably serve low-income students free of charge. Ideally, the funding from the state would be based on an **established per student rate indexed to tuition costs** at public institutions of higher education in NJ, to reflect the true costs of offering the fee-free college course of study. Programs could continue to charge fees for students in higher income brackets, based on current practice and/or agreements with their school system partners.

(2) *Differentiated or Sliding Scale Payment*: The state could establish **separate reimbursement rates** allocated to approved colleges/universities for programs offered on the high school and college campuses, respectively, and could provide more funding to programs offering more than one semester of college credits (e.g. a sliding scale payment system based on the number of semesters or credits offered), thereby encouraging programs of study up to an Associate's degree or credential.<sup>9</sup>

(3) *Supplemental or Targeted Grants*: The state could also supplement the dual enrollment funding with **grants for specific types of dual enrollment models** that target high-need populations and offer fee-free degrees and credentials, such as early college high school models (i.e. see "Exemplars for Dual Enrollment" below).

#### *Other Considerations.*

An advisory board or the forthcoming Dual Enrollment Study Commission should explore the ideal reimbursement rate, based on reasonable costs not payable by the students' families or the school districts, and what **cost sharing** between the three parties (state, district/institution, and student/family) should look like.<sup>10</sup>

Students in the lowest socio-economic groups should be permitted to participate in dual enrollment on a fee-free basis. The advisory board should determine whether a long-term policy should establish a cost structure for families who do not fall into this lower income tier. A **graduated, cost-sharing scale**, based on family income, could be developed to ensure that all students are able to participate.

The state may also consider including funding (e.g. scholarships, tuition discounts) to incentivize students to attend in-state public or independent institutions of higher education, addressing the concerns of outmigration, which is further explored by the On-ramps to College Working Group in:

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<sup>9</sup> "Career & College Promise (CCP) FAQs for Parents of Students Attending North Carolina Community Colleges." North Carolina Community Colleges. Accessed December 9, 2019. [https://www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/sites/default/files/basic-pages/academic-programs/attachments/ccp\\_parent\\_faq\\_8.11.14v3.pdf](https://www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/sites/default/files/basic-pages/academic-programs/attachments/ccp_parent_faq_8.11.14v3.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Students May Take Developmental/Remedial Courses Through Dual Enrollment Program. Education Commission of the States. Accessed December 9, 2019. <http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/MBQuestNB2?Rep=DE1509N>.

[https://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/workinggroups/onramps to college/deliverable 3.](https://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/workinggroups/onramps%20to%20college/deliverable3)

To measure the effectiveness of the statewide DE initiative, a system for data and reporting should be developed, in which all DE programs receiving state funding would report key metrics to the State on an annual basis, such as student participation; student demographic information (race/ethnicity, gender, income); college credit attainment; high school graduation; postsecondary enrollment within 18 months of high school graduation; remedial education rates; postsecondary persistence and retention rates; and postsecondary completion (4-year and 6-year graduation rates). This data should be compiled and submitted in a joint report by the NJDOE and OSHE to stakeholders, including the Governor and Legislature, on an annual basis.

#### *Exemplars of Dual Enrollment Programs in New Jersey.*

Many of New Jersey's colleges & universities (2-year & 4-year) have already begun developing strong DE partnerships with their local school districts that provide either a fee-free option or significantly reduced rate for low-income students. Notable programs have been developed at Stockton University, with the High School Dual Credit Program where the tuition is discounted and fees are waived,<sup>11</sup> and several of the county colleges, where tuition is reduced. These programs can be expanded with a more comprehensive state funding plan.

In addition, New Jersey school districts currently have access to three exemplar models that have proven results and provide DE to students who qualify for DE, but may not have the financial means to participate in their local programs. These three New Jersey programs are:

- (1) **BARD Early Colleges** (Newark) (established in 2011);<sup>12</sup>
- (2) **CARVER Early College & Career Pathways** (Atlantic, Cumberland, Mercer, & Salem counties) (established in 2017);<sup>13</sup>
- (3) **P-TECH (Pathways in Technology Early College High School)** (Burlington City, New Brunswick, & Paterson) (established in 2018);<sup>14</sup>

As early college programs, ***none of the three programs charge the student or parent for tuition or fees.*** A combination of waived or reduced college tuition, school district support funding (i.e. Title & CTE funding), and/or grant funds are used to guarantee fee-free

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<sup>11</sup> "High School Dual Credit Program." Stockton University. Accessed December 9, 2019. <https://stockton.edu/admissions/high-school-dual-credit.html>

<sup>12</sup> BARD Early Colleges. "Our School." Accessed December 9, 2019. <https://bhsec.bard.edu/newark/>.

<sup>13</sup> Carver Early College & Career Pathways. "Home." Accessed December 9, 2019. <https://www.mycarver.org>.

<sup>14</sup> P-Tech. "Why is P-TECH Important?" P-TECH. Accessed December 9, 2019. <http://www.ptech.org/>.

opportunities for low-income students.<sup>15</sup> Sustainably expanding this design to include more students, however, will require a larger state funding plan as mentioned above. Bard, Carver, and P-TECH can model best practices for low-income districts and provide data to inform a long-term funding plan for legislators in New Jersey.<sup>16</sup>

Examples of national frameworks for free-free DE that New Jersey leaders may want to consider can be found later in this document.

### *Qualified Instructors*

In addition to funding, developing a pool of qualified instructors is the other key challenge to expanding DE across the Garden State. Three innovative ideas to expand the pipeline of instructors qualified to teach dual enrollment courses, particularly at the high school, while maintaining academic standards,<sup>17</sup> include:

1) Create programs to assist high school teachers in completing the graduate training required to become qualified as adjunct instructors at the partnering college, with efforts to increase diversity among the staff of highly prepared, qualified adjuncts.<sup>18</sup>

These programs could include grants or other financial incentives to offset the costs to teachers of taking the requisite graduate courses and/or creating a request for proposals to pilot low-cost graduate programs in the content area for certified high school teachers seeking to teach DE courses.

2) Create licensure pathways for faculty to teach in secondary school settings<sup>19</sup>

To help instructors make the transition to teaching DE courses at the secondary level, the State could establish a DE/early college educator license that would allow eligible candidates (those with an advanced degree in the field to be taught, prior teaching

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<sup>15</sup> “How To Scale College in High School.” College in High School Alliance. Accessed December 9, 2019. [https://jfforg-prod-prime.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/Gates\\_ESSA\\_Report-021516.pdf](https://jfforg-prod-prime.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/Gates_ESSA_Report-021516.pdf).

<sup>16</sup> Fink, John, Davis Jenkins, and Takeshi Yanagiura. “What Happens to Students Who Take Community College ‘Dual Enrollment’ Courses in High School?” Community College Research Center, September 27, 2017. <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/what-happens-community-college-dual-enrollment-students.html>.

<sup>17</sup> Horn, Aaron S., Reinhart, Leah, Jan Sung Tae and Zinth, Jennefer Dounay. Faculty Qualification Policies and Strategies Relevant to Dual Enrollment Programs: An Analysis of States and Regional Accreditation Agencies.” Accessed December 18, 2019. <https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/Faculty-Qualification-Policies-and-Strategies-Relevant-to-Dual-Enrollment-Programs-An-Analysis-of-States-and-Regional-Accreditation-Agencies-2.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> Horn, Aaron S., Jennifer L Parks, Jennifer Dounay Zinth, and Lauren Sisneros. “Increasing the Supply of Qualified High School Teachers ...” Accessed December 18, 2019. <https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/Increasing-the-Supply-of-Qualified-High-School-Teachers-for-Dual-Enrollment-Programs.pdf>.

<sup>19</sup> “Become an Instructor.” Indiana State University, March 31, 2016. <https://www.indstate.edu/extended-learning/college-challenge/info/educators/become-instructor>.

experience, and intent to hire on the part of the host public school) to teach DE courses at a public high school, avoiding the current cost and time barriers associated with currently available teacher certification routes. This approach is similar to comparable licensure pathways such as the Early College License in Ohio<sup>20</sup> and the Transitional G Certificate in New York<sup>21</sup> that streamline and facilitate the transition between postsecondary and secondary teaching for dual enrollment instructors. In addition, the state could consider investing in low-cost pedagogy programs geared towards these instructors to support their transition to secondary settings.

3) Explore ways of mentoring, credentialing, and overseeing high school teachers with less than a master's degree in the subject area.

The primary challenge with this is ensuring there are enough faculty from the higher education partners to pair with the high school teachers. Consequently, colleges and universities may need to develop dual credit consortia, such as at Stockton University, to bring teachers together to share best practices and to receive coaching from a staff member whose work is largely devoted to the DE program (while also remaining linked to and working closely with the departments providing the course credit). These consortia may require additional funding to be established and sustained regionally.

If New Jersey implements these recommendations and invests in dual enrollment-focused teacher preparation and professional development, that will go a long way towards advancing the expansion of DE with a quality and equity focus, thereby increasing the number of students prepared to complete postsecondary degrees and enter the workforce.

#### *Exemplars of Teacher Preparation.*

There are several exemplary teacher preparation programs throughout the country. A teacher preparation program that has shown promise in increasing the number of high school teachers who qualify to teach DE courses was developed in Indiana.<sup>22</sup>

Indiana State University manages the state's College Challenge program and encourages high school teachers to become certified to teach DE courses, offering them a "unique opportunity to enhance their curriculums and careers through more demanding and

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<sup>20</sup> "4-Year Early College High School License." Ohio Department of Education. Accessed December 18, 2019. <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Teaching/Licensure/Audiences/4-Year-Early-College-High-School-License>.

<sup>21</sup> "Transitional G Certificate : Types of Certificates." Office of Teaching Initiatives. Accessed December 18, 2019. <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/typesofcerts/transg.html>.

<sup>22</sup> "Dual Credit Educator Preparation Program." Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Accessed December 9, 2019. <http://www.siue.edu/dual-credit/>.

intellectually challenging coursework.” Indiana requires that all high schools offer at least two DE courses to their students.<sup>23</sup>

### National Frameworks for Fee-Free Dual Enrollment

There are three distinctive national frameworks for implementing a fee-free DE policy with demonstrated success, particularly in low-income communities that can be learned from as a statewide dual enrollment initiative is developed.

The first framework is the national **Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI)** established in 2002, which provides underserved students with exposure to and support in college while they are in high school, and partners with colleges and universities to offer all students an opportunity to earn an associate’s degree or up to two years of college credits toward a bachelor’s degree during high school at no or low cost to the students.<sup>24</sup> Models of this framework with a funding formula can be seen in Texas<sup>25</sup> and Colorado.<sup>26</sup>

The second framework is the **Career Pathways Framework**, created to provide a direct pathway to the workforce through industry-recognized credentials. Many states are beginning to expand their career technical education (CTE) opportunities that include college credits, career certifications, and licenses. Delaware has a great model for this framework that includes a state funding component.<sup>27</sup>

The third distinctive pathway is a **state-wide and state-funded DE Framework** that aids local school districts in expanding their current DE opportunities to include pathways for underserved students to earn college credits while in high school (see “Possible Solutions for Fee-Free Dual Enrollment” section above for more details).

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<sup>23</sup> “Frequently Asked Questions.” Indiana Dual Credit. Indiana Department of Education & Commission for Higher Education, January 2019. <https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/student-assistance/doe-che-dual-credit-faqs-1419.pdf>.

<sup>24</sup> Song, Mengli and Kristina Zeiser. “Early College, Continued Success: Long-Term Impact of Early College High Schools.” September 12, 2019. <https://www.air.org/resource/early-college-continued-success-longer-term-impact-early-college-high-schools>; Zinth, Jennifer and Elisabeth Barnett. *Promising Practices: Rethinking Dual Enrollment to Reach More Students*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States, 2018. [https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/Rethinking\\_Dual\\_Enrollment\\_to\\_Reach\\_More\\_Students.pdf](https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/Rethinking_Dual_Enrollment_to_Reach_More_Students.pdf); and “What Is the Cost of Planning and Implementing Early College High School?” JFF, October 29, 2013. <https://www.jff.org/resources/what-cost-planning-and-implementing-early-college-high-school/>.

<sup>25</sup> Texas Administrative Code. Accessed December 9, 2019. [https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p\\_dir=&p\\_rloc=&p\\_tloc=&p\\_ploc=&pg=1&p\\_tac=&ti=19&pt=1&ch=4&rl=85](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=19&pt=1&ch=4&rl=85).

<sup>26</sup> Colorado Department of Education. “Concurrent Enrollment.” Accessed December 9, 2019. <https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/concurrentenrollment>.

<sup>27</sup> Delaware Pathways. “Welcome to Delaware Career Pathways.” Accessed December 9, 2019. <https://delawarepathways.org/>.

## Next Steps

The administration's higher education goal is that 65% of New Jersey adults attain a high-quality postsecondary degree or certificate by 2025. A fee-free state-wide DE will help New Jersey to advance and meet this 2025 goal by encouraging postsecondary enrollment and completion.

The following are suggested next steps:

- The Dual Enrollment Study Commission (or a similar advisory board) composed of higher education and high school leaders should be launched in the beginning of 2020 to create a DE "blueprint" of implementation, which would include, among other things, a detailed funding plan, expansion guidelines, and strategies for teacher preparation.
- State funding should be allocated to support this implementation with a clear focus on measures to provide fee-free dual enrollment to low-income students. *Note: This could include an incentive element to encourage DE students to attend New Jersey public and private institutions of higher education;*<sup>34</sup>
- Create a state grant with funding to expand current state DE programs that can serve as models for local school districts to effectively implement the new fee-free dual enrollment policy and inform the State's plan for long-term expansion (see "Exemplars of Dual Enrollment" above).
- New Jersey should designate or create a point of contact within the State to oversee a statewide coordinated DE initiative.

The State and stakeholders should move quickly to implement a more coordinated approach to DE, which is an evidence-based strategy that could have a big impact on the success of the Garden State's students.



