



ON-RAMPS TO COLLEGE

WORKING GROUP

March 25, 2020

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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**Thank you to the New Jersey Department of Education for providing additional support
to this Working Group.**

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.



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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March 25, 2020

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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.¹

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.

¹ “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.”² 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),³ and college completion rates are low (less than half of first-time college students complete degrees in NJ),⁴ 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.⁵

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

² “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/>.

³ 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/>

⁴ 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/>.

⁵ 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.⁶

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 Plan⁷ and the State of Texas’ Blueprint for Dual Enrollment.⁸

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

⁶ 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>.

⁷ 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>.

⁸ “The Early College High School Blueprint.” Texas Education Agency. Accessed December 9, 2019. 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.⁹

(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.¹⁰

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:

⁹ "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

¹⁰ 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,¹¹ 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);¹²
- (2) **CARVER Early College & Career Pathways** (Atlantic, Cumberland, Mercer, & Salem counties) (established in 2017);¹³
- (3) **P-TECH (Pathways in Technology Early College High School)** (Burlington City, New Brunswick, & Paterson) (established in 2018);¹⁴

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

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

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

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

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

opportunities for low-income students.¹⁵ 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.¹⁶

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,¹⁷ 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.¹⁸

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 settings¹⁹

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

¹⁵ “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.

¹⁶ 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>.

¹⁷ 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>.

¹⁸ 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>.

¹⁹ “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 Ohio²⁰ and the Transitional G Certificate in New York²¹ 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.²²

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

²⁰ "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>.

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

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

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

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.²⁴ Models of this framework with a funding formula can be seen in Texas²⁵ and Colorado.²⁶

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.²⁷

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).

²³ “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>.

²⁴ 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; 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/>.

²⁵ 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).

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

²⁷ 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;*³⁴
- 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.



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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March 25, 2020

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Introduction

A critical component of the New Jersey [State Higher Education Plan](#)¹ is providing early exposure to college and career pathways to students, which includes the opportunity to take college-level coursework. As part of this state plan, this working group was charged with developing innovative solutions to addressing equity gaps in college attendance. Within the framework of investigating opportunities to earn college credit outside of the classroom and finding innovative solutions for addressing equity gaps, the group examined alternative models for demonstrating college-level mastery.

Using a student-centered and equity-focused approach, the working group compiled an inventory of models, including exam-based pathways to college credit (such as College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Advanced Placement (AP), and International Baccalaureate (IB) exams). The group further explored what score equivalences are accepted at New Jersey institutions (see Appendix A). The group also explored programs that promote the participation and use of competency-based models, such as the Modern States Educational Alliance and the potential use of the New Jersey Department of Education “Option 2.”

The Working Group further explored innovative models at institutions of higher education to glean lessons learned. These institutions include Southern New Hampshire University: College for America, University of Massachusetts Amherst: University Without Walls, and Western Governor’s University. This inventory provides further details on each of these programs, including types of courses, students served, costs, and program information, allowing administrators, practitioners and community leaders to better understand these unique approaches to delivering academic programs and measuring students’ mastery of material. The emphasis on affordability and accessibility supports the goals of the higher education plan to improve college attainment by introducing college to students earlier and to provide opportunities to earn credit for students returning to school. The reader is encouraged to learn more about additional options, such as dual enrollment further explored by the On-ramps to College Working Group

(https://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/workinggroups/onramps_to_college/deliverable1) and prior learning models further explored by the Student Success Working Group (https://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/workinggroups/student_success/deliverable3).

In investigating programs, the group used the definition of a competency-based program from the 2018 National Survey of Postsecondary Competency-Based Education, which defines a competency-based program as meeting one of the following criteria:

1. Learning is measured in competencies, and this can be evaluated based on seat time OR without seat time.

2. Students complete the course and move through the program based on acquiring required competencies.
3. Students pace themselves through courses and programs.²

Exam Pathways to College-Level Credits

The following programs were identified as leading to college credits by demonstrating competency in an area through an assessment measure:

1. Advanced Placement (AP), administered by the College Board
2. College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), administered by the College Board
3. International Baccalaureate (IB), administered by the International Baccalaureate Organization

A description of each of these programs is provided below. In addition, Appendix A includes a preliminary inventory of IB, AP, and CLEP score equivalency policies at New Jersey's senior publics, community colleges, and independent four year colleges. Scores transfer differently across institutions and information on course equivalencies is not always easy to locate on websites.

Advanced Placement (AP)

Program: The AP program offers 38 courses which provides college content typically serving traditional aged high school students who are often high achievers. A student will take an AP exam, typically after completing an AP course and pending score, could receive college credit.

For additional information and resources about AP, visit:
<https://ap.collegeboard.org/>.

Funding: To establish the program, schools must complete an AP Course Audit, which includes providing a course syllabus and audit form. In addition, an exam fee is charged.³ Costs for schools to administer the program can vary and could include: professional development for teacher/faculty; location; and textbooks.⁴

Additional Considerations: While the program provides college credit, students are not eligible for federal or state financial aid and the course could come with costs (test fee, etc) that could be a barrier for students to participate. In addition, access to AP courses may vary depending on school. Postsecondary institutions may or may not accept AP scores and often require a certain score to obtain credit (see Appendix A). While the AP exam is typically tied to a course, students could only complete the AP exam- see 'Modern States Educational Alliance' described later in this document.

College-Level Examination Program (CLEP)

Program: CLEP exams "help students earn college credit for what they already know, for a fraction of the cost of a college course" (CollegeBoard, 2019). Thirty

four CLEP exams are available on a range of subjects corresponding to a college-level course. While anyone could take a CLEP test, the ability to test for what you know could be a benefit to adult students and those with military backgrounds.

For additional information about CLEP, including benefits, descriptions of the tests, and a validity study research brief, visit: <https://clep.collegeboard.org/about-clep/key-exam-information>.

Funding: Cost of CLEP exams for students is \$89 for each test, with potential discount for military service members.⁵

Additional Considerations: Students should check with their postsecondary institutions to determine if- and at what cut-off score- their school accepts CLEP. Additionally, organizations like the Modern States Educational Alliance (described in more detail below) could help with the costs of exams.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

Program: IB is a college preparatory program aimed at traditional aged students. The curriculum focuses on inquiry and critical thinking that results in an examination at the end of the course to measure their learning.

For more specific information about IB, including benefits, research on the impact of IB, and curriculum components, visit: <https://www.ibo.org/>.

Funding: Schools must be authorized to become an IB school and in addition pay annual fees.⁶

Additional Considerations: Schools have to be authorized to teach IB programs. Access to IB courses appears to be limited within New Jersey (see Appendix B for a list of NJ schools that had students participate in a course and/or exam; see also [state search feature](#) on IBO website). Based on Appendix A, not all IB scores are accepted uniformly across institutions of higher education.

Innovative Degree Programs

The following schools and/or program at institutions of higher education were selected for further exploration because of the innovative approach taken in delivering competency-based education.

1. Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU): College for America
2. University of Massachusetts Amherst: University Without Walls
3. Western Governors University

By learning more about their approaches, administrators can glean best practices and lessons learned, particularly in reaching out to targeted populations, such as adult learners.

Based on the information gathered, the following analysis presents the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of these innovative degree programs that should be taken into consideration.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility in schedule helps postsecondary learners • Provides more affordable pathways • Flexibility in awarding credit for prior coursework and life experiences, such as up to 90 credits at SNHU • Ability to offer a more personalized enrollment experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often requires action to internet for online material • Appropriate level of time management skills needed for distance programs • Academic programs may be limited • Direct assessment model presents challenges for implementation • Conflicting message of affordability and disparity in graduation rate for Pell and non-Pell recipients • Securing approvals from DOE for Title IV aid and from accreditor to offer high-quality programs
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential development of competency-based programs at NJ institutions • Partnerships with employers to address skills gaps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency-based education necessitates changing current operations • Implementation of competency-based program could impact enrollment at NJ institutions

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU): College for America⁷

Program: College for America offers online, competency-based programs where students work on real-world projects to build skills. The program targets working adults. College for America offers associate and bachelor’s degrees in general studies, communications, management, and healthcare management with options to complete a set path with due dates or a personalized path where you set your time frame.⁸ They also promotes partnerships with employers emphasizing the relevance of their programs.

For more information about the specific College for America plan, visit:

<https://collegeforamerica.org/>

Funding: Students can be eligible for federal aid; receive grants, loans, military benefits, and employer reimbursement. For some programs, such as College for America, SNHU provides tuition discounts based on employer, reporting that 60% of students graduate debt-free.

Strengths: Affordable, accessible education through innovative online platform that allows students the option to progress at their own pace. In addition, the website shares that each student "... has their own personal advisor, plus an industry-best academic support team to provide subject matter coaching, peer tutoring and other services..." (Southern New Hampshire University, 2019).

Challenges: There are a limited number of degree programs offered.

Additional Comments: SNHU is one of the fastest growing institutions, growing by 1,312.6% from fall 2007 to fall 2017; this represents an increase in students from 6,439 to 90,955, of which a portion are students enrolled in competency-based programs.⁹ SNHU is heavily marketed spending roughly \$139 million in marketing in 2018.¹⁰

*University of Massachusetts Amherst: University Without Walls (UWW)*¹¹

* Note: This is not a competency-based program; however, the flexibility given for prior learning assessments and evaluations makes it noteworthy.

Program: Self-designed program of study allowing for online, blended or on-campus courses. The program targets adults, particular those who have not finished their degree and notes that many of their students are also parents.¹² The average age of a student in the program is 37. Students work with a degree planning instructor to create their plan offering flexibility in awarding credit for prior coursework, portfolios, life experience, professional training, military training, and credit exams.

For more information, visit: <https://www.umass.edu/uww/>

Funding: Students are eligible for federal aid; receive grants, loans, military benefits, and employer reimbursement. Cost varies, but are roughly \$390 per credit for core courses; other credits could cost as much a \$475 per credit with a flat \$1190 fee for prior learning credits.¹³

Strengths: Flexibility in earning credits through alternative methods (including up to 105 credits for prior coursework) and incorporation of portfolio preparation into student's program of study. The program also provides flat fee for prior learning portfolios, which could reduce costs based on number of credits earned. Students still have the option to utilize online, hybrid, or traditional courses.

Challenges: Because of traditional credit hour program, it does not offer the same flexibility as competency-based programs.

Additional Comments: Graduation rate is not available from National Center in Educational Statistics for University Without Walls; however, the University of Massachusetts Amherst reports a graduation rate of 80%. Pell grant recipient graduation rate is 71.1% and non-recipient of Pell grant graduation rate is 81.1%.¹⁴

*Western Governors University (WGU)*¹⁵

Program: University offers online competency-based education for undergraduate and graduate degrees within their schools of Business, Education, Information Technology and Health Professions. They target working adults, who want to pursue degree without boundaries of time or place, with classes beginning at the start of every month.

For more information, visit: <https://www.wgu.edu/about/competency-based-education.html#close>

Funding: Students are eligible for federal aid; receive grants, loans, military benefits, and employer reimbursement. Tuition is charged flat rate each term and covers all coursework completed in that time (cost is approximately \$3,520 per term).

Strengths: Flexible (available 24/7), low cost, and serves diverse student populations

Challenges: Graduation rate is 32%. Pell grant recipient graduation rate is 21.0% and non-recipient of Pell grant graduation rate is 37.0%.¹⁶

Additional Comments: WGU is also a fast-growing institution, which grew by 993.2% from fall 2007 to fall 2017.¹⁷ WGU spent close to \$75 million in advertising in 2016.

Because competency-based education models represent a change from traditional methods for delivering higher education, it would be worthwhile to follow the progress of programs like Southern New Hampshire University and Western Governors University, especially to learn how to better serve adult learners. This includes consideration of factors related to start-up and operational costs, student expenses, student success measures and outcomes. In addition, programs like the University Without Walls, and more recently, California's online Calbright College¹⁸ (not explored here, as it just began in 2019), provide additional insight into how we can remove barriers for students and expand how we traditionally think of education.

Other Considerations: Modern States Educational Alliance and New Jersey Department of Education Option Two

Modern States Education Alliance

Modern States Education Alliance is a non-profit organization that delivers course content to prepare students to take a CLEP exam or AP exam.¹⁹ Similar to New Jersey's state higher education plan, Modern States is focused on increasing access to postsecondary education and making it more affordable through programs such as "Freshman Year for Free."²⁰

Program: Content is delivered online and is self-paced for students. Every seven minutes there is a quiz to ensure students are learning. Videos can be watched at different speeds, and transcripts of faculty content can be downloaded. The organization promotes courses taught by leading faculty on subject matter.

For additional information, including list of courses, visit their website at: <https://modernstates.org/>

Admission Process: Modern States Educational Alliance is open to all, as students simply elect to take an online course and complete coursework and practice questions. There is no formal admission process, however, students do have to request a test voucher and register to take the appropriate exam paying with the voucher received.

Title IV Eligibility: N/A

Funding: The online courses are free to students and funding for CLEP and AP exams at completion of course is provided through private organizations. Vouchers go directly to the student. In some cases, Modern States has established partnerships with school districts and higher education systems to guarantee a certain number of vouchers for students.²¹

Strengths: 76% success rate in CLEP exam, which is approximately 10% over national average, as reported by David Vise, Executive Director of MSEA. Data is not available on AP tests. Modern States provides a flexible, no-to-low cost option for students to earn credits on their own time. Online resources and practice exams are free for students. If an AP subject matter is not available in a high school, Modern States presents an opportunity for students to still take the AP exam, for potential credit at both the high school and college-level.

Challenges: Not all institutions accept CLEP scores or accept the same score equivalencies, so students will need to check with their intended institution to ensure acceptance of credit (see Appendix A).

Additional Considerations: Modern States is working towards integrating advising/tutoring into their model and coordinating with institutions of higher education would could be integral to its impact. In addition, Modern States is open to forming more memorandums of understanding with schools, districts, and/or the state to promote the model.

New Jersey Department of Education, Option 2

In keeping with competency-based education for college credit, N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)1ii, otherwise known as “Option Two” for academic & professional standards,²² served as an alternative to traditional high school courses and involved comprehensive experiences that enhance student achievement and fulfill the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. As described on the NJ Department of Education archives:

Option Two may include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following: interdisciplinary or theme-based programs, independent study, magnet programs, student exchange programs, distance learning, internships, community service, co-curricular or extra-curricular programs, and/or other structured learning experiences (New Jersey Department of Education, 2017).

In addition, N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)1ii (3) permits the recognition of the successful completion of an accredited college course that assures achievement of the knowledge and skills outlined in the Core Curriculum Content Standards.²³

Next Steps for Further Development and Implementation of Competency-Based Programs

Based on the working group’s exploration, the following next steps are suggested to continue to develop the use of competency-based models in New Jersey:

Practitioners (both at high schools and postsecondary institutions)

- Share and explore best practices in competency-based opportunity, perhaps through the creation of an online platform/expanded inventory of statewide programs
- Consider how competency-based programs can help scale up opportunities to earn college credit and/or target special populations, such as students entering school from the workplace
- Establish an advising model that incorporates alternative methods of earning credit into guided pathways, mapping pathway to end goal, including options like Modern States Educational Alliance CLEP courses and prior learning assessments
- Promote Modern States Educational Alliance with administrators, personnel, and students to inform about opportunities to earn college credit for low or no cost
- Make information about acceptance of and course equivalencies for competency-based exams easily available to students

State Leaders

- Recommend greater consistency of minimum test scores accepted for AP, IB and CLEP at New Jersey institutions; similar in concept to the Lampitt law, a statewide agreement to assist students in transfer from a community college to four-year public institution
- Review and republish guidelines offered for Option 2, NJ Statute 6A:8-5.1- Graduation requirements, as a general strategy for competency-based assessment at the secondary level, which offers a way for students to progress toward high school completion
- Develop an online platform/expanded inventory of alternative ways to earn credit for both high school students with AP, CLEP and dual enrollment, and for postsecondary students with CLEP and prior learning assessments
- Develop communication materials detailing competency-based programs or organizations like Modern States Educational Alliance, which could provide college credits for free
- Investigate the possibility of a competency-based credential for the high school teacher to expand the pool of faculty in high school who can teach dual enrollment courses

Additional Resources on Competency-Based Programs

- Competency-Based Education Network (2018). Quality framework for competency-based education program: A user's guide. Retrieved from <https://www.cbenetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/2nd-button-Quality-Framework-Users-Guide-Final.pdf>
- Department of Education (2019). Federal Student Aid Handbook. Retrieved from <https://ifap.ed.gov/ifap/byAwardYear.jsp?type=fsahandbook&awardyear=2019-2020>
- Fain, P. (2019). Slow growth for competency-based education, but survey finds interest and optimism about it. *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved from <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2019/01/28/slow-growth-competency-based-education-survey-finds-interest-and-optimism-about-it>
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- Soldner, M. & Parsons, K. (2016). Making the case for competency-based education: Early lessons from the field. *American Institutes for Research*. Retrieved from <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Making-the-Case-for-Competency-Based-Education-May-2016.pdf>
- Uranis, J., Erskine, M., Cullum, A., & DeBate, R. (2019). Moving from the legacy student hour toward a comprehensive measure of student learning: Examining benefits of a competency-based taxonomy of learning. *Lumina Foundation*. Retrieved from <https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/moving-from-the-legacy-student-hour.pdf>

Appendix A: Score Equivalencies at NJ Institutions for IB, AP, and CLEP

The purpose of this table is to show a preliminary collection of competency score equivalencies for public and independent institutions of higher education in New Jersey. This table is based on a preliminary search and may not be comprehensive. Additionally, higher education institutions may change their policies or website links, so some links only lead to the most recent academic catalogs for each school. Please make sure to navigate the webpage for the most recent academic catalog. The reader should use this appendix as a jumpstart for future research for policy evaluation.

The information presented here is not binding, as information may have additional caveats further detailed in the institution’s website. For example, some information may only apply to incoming freshman students as there may be different policies regarding transfer or adult students. Some programs within a higher education institution may have different policies regarding awarding of credit or institutions may limit the total number of credits that can transfer. Additionally, institutions may limit the time period in which credits can transfer or may have referred to the other credits using alternative search terms from this Working Group.

Colleges	IB	AP	CLEP
The College of New Jersey	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Kean University		<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Montclair State University		<u>Yes</u> *	
New Jersey Institute of Technology	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	Yes*
New Jersey City University		<u>Yes</u> *	<u>Yes</u> *
Ramapo College of New Jersey	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	Yes
Rowan University	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Rutgers, The State University of N.J. - New Brunswick**	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	
Rutgers, The State University of N.J. - Newark	<u>Yes</u> *	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Rutgers, The State University of N.J. - Camden	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Stockton University	Yes	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Thomas Edison State University		<u>Yes</u> *	<u>Yes</u>
William Paterson University of New Jersey		<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Atlantic Cape Community College	<u>Yes</u> *	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Bergen Community College		<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Brookdale Community College		<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Rowan College at Burlington County	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Camden County College		<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>

Rowan College of South Jersey			Gloucester- Yes Cumberland- Yes
Essex County College		Yes	Yes
Hudson County Community College	Yes *	Yes *	Yes *
Mercer County Community College	Yes	Yes *	Yes *
Middlesex County College		Yes *	Yes *
Morris, County College of		Yes	Yes
Ocean County College		Yes *	Yes *
Passaic County Community College		Yes *	Yes *
Raritan Valley Community College		Yes	Yes
Salem Community College		Yes *	Yes *
Sussex County Community College			Yes *
Union County College		Yes *	Yes
Warren County Community College		Yes	Yes
Bloomfield College		Yes *	Yes
Caldwell University	Yes	Yes	Yes
Centenary University	Yes *	Yes *	Yes *
Drew University	Yes	Yes	
Fairleigh Dickinson University	Yes *	Yes	Yes
Felician University		Yes *	Yes *
Georgian Court University	Yes	Yes	Yes
Monmouth University	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pillar College		Yes *	Yes *
Princeton University	Yes *	Yes	
Rider University	Yes	Yes	Yes *
College of Saint Elizabeth		Yes *	Yes *
Saint Peter's University	Yes *	Yes *	Yes *
Seton Hall University	Yes	Yes	
Stevens Institute of Technology	Yes	Yes	

*The school does not list a strict class-to-class transference policy online. Students need to first contact the school's academic advising office prior to taking the exam to see if it's accepted and how the credits would transfer.

** Rutgers University – New Brunswick has several undergraduate schools within it, each with different policies on credit acceptance and transference.

Appendix B: High Schools in NJ with Students Enrolled in an IB Course or took an IB Exam in 2017-2018

County	School District
BERGEN	BERGEN COUNTY VOCATIONAL
BERGEN	CARLSTADT-EAST RUTHERFORD
BERGEN	FORT LEE BORO
BERGEN	TEANECK TWP
BURLINGTON	BURLINGTON CITY
BURLINGTON	BURLINGTON TWP
ESSEX	EAST ORANGE
ESSEX	NEWARK CITY
ESSEX	NEWARK CITY
ESSEX	SOUTH ORANGE-MAPLEWOOD
HUDSON	HUDSON COUNTY VOCATIONAL
HUDSON	JERSEY CITY
HUDSON	UNION CITY
MIDDLESEX	MIDDLESEX CO VOCATIONAL
MIDDLESEX	PERTH AMBOY CITY
MIDDLESEX	SOUTH AMBOY CITY
MIDDLESEX	SOUTH BRUNSWICK TWP
MONMOUTH	FREEHOLD REGIONAL
MONMOUTH	MONMOUTH CO VOCATIONAL

MONMOUTH	RED BANK REGIONAL
MONMOUTH	SHORE REGIONAL
MORRIS	JEFFERSON TWP
MORRIS	MORRIS HILLS REGIONAL
MORRIS	MORRIS SCHOOL DISTRICT
MORRIS	WEST MORRIS REGIONAL
MORRIS	WEST MORRIS REGIONAL
OCEAN	BRICK TWP
OCEAN	BRICK TWP
PASSAIC	CLIFTON CITY
PASSAIC	PASSAIC CITY
PASSAIC	PATERSON CITY
SALEM	SALEM CITY
UNION	LINDEN CITY
WARREN	HACKETTSTOWN

Source: New Jersey Department of Education. (2018). NJ school performance report: 2017-2018. Retrieved from <https://rc.doe.state.nj.us/SearchForSchool.aspx>

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- ¹ State of New Jersey. (2019). *Where opportunity meets innovation: A student-centered vision for New Jersey higher education*. Retrieved from <https://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/documents/pdf/StateEducationplan.pdf>
- ² American Institutes for Research, & Eduventures Research. (2019). *Findings from the 2018 National Survey of Postsecondary Competency-Based Education (NSPCBE)*. Retrieved from <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/National-Survey-of-Postsec-CBE-2018-AIR-Eduventures-Jan-2019.pdf>
- ³ College Board. (2019). Start & grow AP. Retrieved from <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/about-ap/start-grow-ap/start-ap/how-your-school-can-offer-ap>
- ⁴ College Board, AP. (2019). *Consider the costs*. Retrieved from <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/about-ap/start-grow-ap/start-ap/how-your-school-can-offer-ap/consider-costs>
- ⁵ College Board CLEP. (2019). *Register for CLEP exams*. Retrieved from <https://clep.collegeboard.org/register>
- ⁶ International Baccalaureate. (2019). How to become an IB school. Retrieved from <https://www.ibo.org/become-an-ib-school/how-to-become-an-ib-school/>
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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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March 25, 2020

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Executive Summary¹

The primary objective of the Working Group's charge regarding outmigration was to explore factors – and potentially stem – the outmigration of New Jersey's college-going population. Outmigration is persistent issue in New Jersey, which is one of the top states for exporting students, and this issue could cause a detrimental economic impact on New Jersey, as students represent the innovation and drive that supports our state's success.

The state's plan for New Jersey Higher Education sets forth a bold vision for all New Jersey residents and highlights the need for all students to have access to college opportunities and the need to reestablish New Jersey as leader in research, innovation, and talent. To reach New Jersey's goal that 65% of residents have a high quality credential by the year 2025 (65% by 2025), stakeholders are being called upon to implement innovative and aggressive strategies to retain students. While state incentives such as tuition-grant programs and dual enrollment could foster in-state enrollment and help stem outmigration, there is a need to draw attention to the pragmatic value of remaining in-state for a college education.

The following report details efforts to bolster the knowledge and awareness of the benefits of attending college in New Jersey, and to show students and families why choosing a NJ college is a premium choice for their future- a message they hear too infrequently. This deliverable focuses on three specific elements to address the outmigration and bolster the state's economic growth:

- 1) **A proposal for further research.** In order to find solutions for the outmigration challenge, the State must first understand the root issues leading to outmigration. Included is an analysis of snapshot data on student college choice at specific NJ districts to begin to understand student college choice and address reasons why students leave NJ for college, including:
 - attitudes about NJ colleges,
 - proximity to nearby high-quality out-of-state institutions, and
 - a market of top-educational candidates produced by NJ K-12 systems that provides an enticing recruitment market for out-of-state institutions.
- 2) **A marketing campaign** that communicate the values, assets, and strengths of NJ colleges. This could be accomplished through a recurring schedule of state-wide college fairs that would educate and inform constituents of the benefits of attending college in NJ.
- 3) **A review of high-impact student experiences.** Experiential learning is an effective segue into the workforce. Providing and promoting high-impact experiences and immersive learning opportunities exposes NJ students to NJ colleges with positive and favorable experiences to serve as an introduction to the plethora of benefits within NJ.

Finally, potential next steps are provided, including implementation plans to reach students and their families. While the focus of this report is on outmigration, the reciprocal connection between outmigration and in-migration (college students from other states and other countries choosing New Jersey institutions) should not be overlooked.

Introduction and Background

In the spring of 2019, the Governor of New Jersey (NJ) released the state plan, [Where Opportunity Meets Innovation: A Student-Centered Vision for New Jersey Higher Education](#), creating a clear direction for higher education centered around the needs of students. This included a focus on creating on-ramps to college, bringing together stakeholders from across the Garden State to participate in a Working Group addressing college access. One of the charges given to this group was to explore and address the factors affecting NJ student decisions to attend higher education institutions outside the state.

The working group sought to provide information on why students leave New Jersey for postsecondary educational endeavors, and outline action steps for state decision makers and stakeholders, colleges and universities leaders, K-12 leaders and counselors, and businesses. The final outcome resulted in this report, which includes background on NJ's outmigration, key results from exploratory research, and key takeaways that aim to address the outmigration of college students in NJ and highlight the value of New Jersey's postsecondary ecosystem.

The challenge of outmigration and its economic impact is not a new phenomenon in the Garden State, as New Jersey has been a top exporter of college-going students for decades. NJ students migrate out of state for their higher education for many reasons. Anecdotally, three reasons appear to be based on perceptions of attitude, geography of the State, and the high-ranking K-12 education which NJ provides to its students.

1. First, although there is a need for research to validate this hypothesis, anecdotal reports led the Working Group to the concept of a generalized attitude that students should apply to colleges outside of New Jersey, including reports that parents, high school college counselors, and other influencers feed this attitude with students.
2. Second, New Jersey is in close geographic proximity to states with diverse educational opportunities, including large public universities, Ivy League institutions, and many liberal arts institutions.
3. Finally, it appears that a large driver of NJ's outmigration is due in part to the fact that NJ's K-12 education system is nationally known for its high quality and high rankings. This fact in and of itself makes NJ a fertile ground for the recruitment efforts of other states, often with very attractive financial aid packages.

These potential factors (both independently and combined) lead to over 30,000 NJ students choose to attend a postsecondary institution outside of the State.

While outmigration may be a flawed metric where data is still needed, its impact results in a myriad of socioeconomic issues for New Jersey. If a student does not stay in New Jersey, it creates a negative return on investment for NJ taxpayers – who paid on average

\$20,849 per pupil for K-12 education in 2017 through tax dollars.² The State also loses the potential for increased economic contributions through tax revenues when the student graduates. Preliminary data discussed below show that New Jersey’s highest achieving students are the most likely to leave the state. Moreover, these students are more likely to come from affluent families³, and recent nationwide trends show that the parents of this generation are increasingly likely to retire where their children and grandchildren live.⁴ This has potential to drain New Jersey’s economy bigenerationally. In addition, NJ’s postsecondary institutions may be losing opportunities in regards to capacity. Finally, NJ businesses are losing their future talent pipeline. In many facets, attracting and retaining postsecondary students is a crucial component to New Jersey’s future economic success.

There are many innovative programs across NJ’s postsecondary institutions that are delivering notable educational outcomes. Unprecedented partnerships are taking place among educators, employers, government, and nonprofits in order to build workforce skills and create career pathways, whether it is on campus, at a business location, or in the local community. And yet despite a State with an ideally centralized location between urban centers, nationally recognized high school academics, quality higher education institutions, and a highly educated, highly skilled workforce, NJ struggles to retain people, particularly high school graduates, to the state.

Outmigration by the Numbers

NJ has historically been one of the highest outmigration states in the country for young adults (ages 18-34). An analysis of estimates from the American Community Survey finds that from 2007-2017, NJ experienced a total net loss of 205,824 individuals between the ages of 18-34. A further analysis of these data finds that college-aged young adults (ages 18-24) accounted for nearly 60% of young adult outflow from New Jersey during the same time span. On the contrary, college-aged young adults accounted for only 36% of young adult inflow, when accounting for domestic and international migration patterns.⁵

Regional States	Net Migration of First-Time College Students
Connecticut	-5,243
Delaware	+1,649
Maryland	-8,374
Massachusetts	+9,071
New Jersey	-27,641

New York	+7,156
Pennsylvania	+16,959
<i>Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Fall 2016</i>	

A large segment of young adult “outmigrators” are graduating high school seniors and college-aged individuals (ages 18-24) who are continuing their education at traditional four-year higher education institutions. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, NJ continues to have one of the largest net losses of first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates (who graduated high school in the last 12 months).⁶ In the fall of 2016, 32,014 first-time college students left NJ to attend a postsecondary institution in another state.⁷ Meanwhile, only 4,496 first-time students migrated into NJ for postsecondary education, resulting in a net loss of 27,518 young adults⁸.

Additionally, young adults are facing unprecedented college debt as NJ tuition rates have risen over the past decade while state funding for public colleges and universities has remained relatively flat despite increases in enrollment.⁹ According to an analysis of State Higher Education Executive Officers Association data, between 1991 and 2016, state appropriations per full-time student at NJ’s public colleges and universities decreased 40% while the institutions’ full-time enrollment increased by 63%. In addition, during the same time span, the cost of tuition per full-time students increased by 142%.¹⁰ As a result, in academic year 2018-2019, NJ had the fourth highest tuition and fees costs for public four-year institutions in the nation. According to the Institute for College Access & Success, due to the high cost of tuition and fees, 61% of NJ’s college/university Class of 2017 graduates who attended a four-year public or private institution acquired an average debt \$32,247¹¹.

Regional States	Cost of Public 4-yr Education*	% of Students Graduating with Debt	Average Debt for All Students at All Institutions
Connecticut	10 th	57%	\$38,510
Delaware	11 th	62%	\$29,314
Maryland	25 th	56%	\$29,314
Massachusetts	8 th	59%	\$32,065
New Jersey	4th	61%	\$32,247
New York	42 nd	30%	\$30,931
Pennsylvania	3 rd	67%	\$36,854
<i>Source: College Board & The Institute For College Access & Success</i>			

Proposal for Research Exploring Outmigration

Migration Patterns by NJ School Districts

In order to shed some light on the differences in migration patterns between districts in New Jersey, the working group invited school counselors from all high schools in New Jersey to provide non-identifying data of postsecondary plans for high school graduates 2015 through 2019. The data were pulled from the school student information system (SIS) and included: class graduation year, college attending, GPA, and high SAT/ACT score. The data analyzed included a sample population of 10,220 students who attended school district factors DE, FG, GH, I and J (as defined by the [New Jersey Department of Education](#)) as well as two private religious-based schools, a private boarding high school and one public magnet high school. School districts in New Jersey are categorized by the [New Jersey Department of Education](#) into [District Factor Groups](#), which describe the socioeconomic characteristics of the local district. From lowest socioeconomic status to highest, the categories are A, B, CD, DE, FG, GH, I and J.

Not represented in the analysis were District Factor Groups A, B, or CD, which includes the lowest socioeconomic districts. Despite requests, information was not forthcoming from these schools, particularly as the Working Group had a quick turnaround time for this deliverable. In this study, analysis was performed using GPA by school district factor and students’ postsecondary education selections. The analysis of this limited data indicates that students with the highest GPAs (A+>4.0 GPAs) are most likely to go to college out-of-state. The majority of “A” & “B” students, that is, those with better than

average GPAs (2.7 through 3.9 GPA) were more likely to go to college out-of-state. While the majority of “C” students, those with an average GPA (1.7 through 2.6 GPA) were more likely to remain in-state for college. (Further analysis of the districts analyzed can be found in Appendix A). This snapshot survey should be replicated (and expanded) to learn more about outmigration and which student populations may be the most affected. In addition, investigating the rate of students returning to New Jersey vs. staying out of state is another key data set that should be collected in order to further study the implications of outmigration on New Jersey’s economy.

Future Study

Moving forward, extended research and data collection is needed, in particular to better inform a long-term public relations strategy of highlighting the values of in-state education thereby changing the hearts and minds of all New Jersey students, families, and residents.

Based on earlier research presented and subsequent analysis, as detailed previously in this report, it was concluded that further research is needed in order to create a well-informed campaign that will resonate with the target audiences. The available data collected helped to narrow the focus of recommendations for future research.

What we do not know: We need to determine fully why students attend college outside New Jersey, but also why other students choose to remain in New Jersey for their college choice. Through improved research and additional data, understanding the “why” of behaviors and mindset of both students and families throughout the college selection process, as well as external influences/ers, will enable efforts to enact behavioral change.

What we know: College counselors reported to the Working Group that many residents are unfamiliar with in-state higher education institutions, the programs they offer, or their importance to the state. Many misconceptions remain, including around the quality, value, and diverse offerings of NJ institutions. It is critical to collect more data on these observations. Also, today’s consumers are concerned about the value proposition a commodity offers - and many view education as a commodity. Education for education’s sake is a passé concept. What is important to today’s students and families is the end result¹² - for what kind of job is this education preparing the student and how are they going to be successful?

Theories on College Selection

To answer the question of why students in New Jersey opt to attend colleges outside the state, an understanding of the college selection process is essential. The choice of college attendance does not begin with deciding which school to attend. Researchers have

developed multiple college choice theories, which can help understand outmigration factors and frame future studies.

Behavioral models of college choice establish that students cultivate thoughts and decisions about college before beginning the college search process, and that students begin to explore their college choices and their official college search based on those standing attitudes. Other studies demonstrate the role that individual student/family characteristics contribute to college choice behavior, including social, economic, and habitus factors. Institutional characteristics, including size, ranking, programs of study, and institution name recognition are also variables in the decision process for students.

Today, the current college search environment has become overwhelming, anxiety-ridden and stress-filled for students and families- even if you only consider the rise of electronic communication. This has spawned a new industry of private “counselors” guaranteeing entrance to competitive colleges while charging exorbitant fees for those families willing and able to pay. While not at the level of Operation Varsity Blues 2019¹³, NJ has deep pockets of wealth. Out-of-state colleges and universities have seats to fill and create a competitive culture of recruitment taking NJ students out of state.

Understanding the college choice process for potential college-goers and the persuasive influences/ers involved in that process is critical to addressing NJ’s outmigration challenge. Compiling data that capture the individual/familial characteristics that contribute to this choice is also critical. Necessary parties have to do more than invest in fleeting services to increase in-state enrollment, but rather seek to understand what students are thinking, feeling, and doing as it relates to understanding the postsecondary options within NJ.

Next Steps for Research

- **Gather additional data** to inform messaging for any state stakeholder constituencies implementing related public relations/marketing activities, including providing additional support to the upcoming New Jersey President’s Council campaign.
- **Continue to strengthen data collection on outmigration at the state level**, including through utilization of the State’s longitudinal data system (NJEDS).
- Allocate resources to **hire a graduate student/intern or propose an RFP** to delve deeper into data gathering and analysis related to the issue.
- Have the State provide **annual feedback reporting** of high school graduates’ college attendance choice with final GPA data, perhaps making this a component of the NJ School Report Card annual performance report.
- Use **data-driven decision making to inform** attitudinal and behavioral change messaging through public relations/marketing efforts.¹⁴

- **Coordinate with state professional organizations** for data source outreach, correspondence and facilitation, such as the New Jersey School Counselor Association, New Jersey Association for College Admission Counseling.
- Recommended resources for stakeholders and data that could contribute to the outmigration conversation:
 - Directors of Guidance/Counseling, Principals and Supervisors at all NJ high schools and middle schools, to include public, private, religious, independent, boarding, charter, public magnet.
 - Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA) through possible reporting on all NJ students applying for federal financial aid to include TAG eligible students turning down TAG to attend out of state; NJCLASS and Parent PLUS loan applicants with college/university of disbursement.
 - Regional focus groups (in person or virtually) to determine student and family attitudes/interests/concerns and counselor attitudes/background. Topics of the focus groups should include:
 - characteristics of students leaving the state versus staying in-state
 - student/parent perceptions of higher education in NJ relative to other states; attitudes towards “rankings” or “big name” out of state institutions
 - counselors’ knowledge of NJ higher education opportunities
 - out of state institution(s) recruiting practices
 - Undocumented students attending NJ high schools who attend out of state institutions based on aid or “scholarship” offered
 - Projection data for number of high school graduates, capacity at postsecondary institutions, projected enrollment at postsecondary institutions; Utilize upcoming census data.

Marketing the Value of NJ Higher Education

In addition to learning more about the factors influencing outmigration, New Jersey should also strengthen its communication of the value, assets, strengths and benefits of choosing to complete postsecondary education at a New Jersey college or university.

In addition to outmigration, the ‘Creating On-ramps to College’ Working Group also explored dual enrollment opportunities:

(https://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/workinggroups/onramps_to_college/deliverable1). Dual enrollment, when diffusely and equitably implemented, will result in more students beginning college with a head start and a clear on-ramp to their credential. However, it could also lead to the unintended consequence of making traditional-aged New Jersey students even more attractive to national recruiters.

Independent of detailed findings on attributes and attitudes discussed in the previous section, New Jersey could do a much better job statewide of acquainting New Jersey students and influencers with New Jersey colleges and universities. The New Jersey President's Council has already taken the lead on this issue through the creation of a Marketing and Branding Taskforce. We hope that this report, and subsequent data collected through its recommendations can inform the branding plan and its future iterations. Through a comprehensive and coordinated strategy, the State and stakeholders should aim to create a greater awareness of New Jersey higher education opportunities, including for traditional-aged students, adult learners, families, K-12 and higher education stakeholders, employers and community leaders. This strategy should arm these key constituent groups with information early and often.

Creating a New Jersey College Fair

Stakeholders, including State leaders, higher education institutions, and K-12 leaders, should collaborate to institute a statewide college fair program to acquaint higher education-seeking students, counselors, parents, and other influencers with the diverse set of opportunities in New Jersey early in their college-seeking careers. This statewide program of college fairs with the theme "New Jersey Colleges and Universities for New Jersey Students," along with other marketing approaches advocated in this deliverable, would ensure that students are armed with real comparative information about New Jersey offerings, specific signature programs, and the financial benefits of attending college in New Jersey.

For four-year colleges and universities, and regional community colleges, instituting an annual program of two New Jersey for New Jersey College Fairs, which should include the following considerations:

- **Timing.** Two annual regional fairs, both in early fall before the recruiting season reaches its peak, or hosting one in spring and one in fall.
- **Geographic location.** One fair in the Central or Northern part of New Jersey, easily accessible to RT 287, and one fair in the Southern part of New Jersey, easily accessible to the Garden State Parkway; or alternatively, one fair in Central New Jersey and one fair in either Northern New Jersey or Southern New Jersey, alternating annually. Access to public transportation should also be considered.
- **Institutional hosts and participants.** One public and one independent institution would serve as hosts each year, to be rotated among those institutions who volunteer to host. All colleges and universities would be strongly encouraged to participate in both fairs.
- **Audience.** Prospective students, school/college counselors, independent counselors, parents, civic and industry partners, community-based organization leaders who work with students would be able to attend.
- **Two Session Format.** Each fair would have two sessions, one for school/independent counselors, and one for students and parents. The student and parent session would have a traditional college fair structure. The counselor

session would operate in a structured format in which each counselor would be expected to rotate through all colleges' and universities' booths for short periods (2-3 minutes) to hear prepared presentations with a unified format. This approach would ensure that counselors would be exposed to information from institutions with which they are not already familiar, and would therefore deepen their knowledge of New Jersey institutions.

- **Additional resources in attendance** would include HESAA, EOF, Gear Up/College Bound, Governor's school, NJ STEM Pathways, and other organizations, including information and resources for undocumented students. Professional organizations (e.g., NJ Association for College Admission Counseling, NJ School Counselor Association, etc.) would be encouraged to attend.
- **Fees.** Institutions would likely pay a small fee covering costs for general fair marketing, tables, display space, and other incidental costs at the venue. Institutions would be responsible for their own individual marketing materials provided at the fair.
- **Costs.** There would be no New Jersey state costs as host institutions would offer the venue rental, and registration and logistics support at a reduced or complimentary rate; other costs (e.g. general marketing, Internet, audio visual, parking, security, etc.) would be covered by the fees described above.
- **Pilot program.** Stockton University and Drew University have volunteered to partner to host the first two fairs in calendar year 2020 or FY 2021.
- **Other considerations.** For leadership, management, and sustainability of the program, it is recommended that the pilot year institutions develop a proposal for on-going leadership and sustainability as part of the assessment of the pilot year.

While college fairs exist, there is not a New Jersey focused one and this provides an opportunity to highlight the opportunities available within the Garden State.

Scaling High-Impact Learning Opportunities

High-impact practices and immersive learning opportunities have moved from being add-on enrichment experiences to necessary résumé-builders that contribute to positive student outcomes during and after college.¹⁵ These include research, internship, and apprenticeship opportunities, undergraduate research, entrepreneurial and innovative projects, community-based research and civic engagement, study abroad, New York and City Semesters, fine art and performance experiences, and mentored work on campus. In addition to these specific kinds of experiential learning, pre-college bridge programs and college readiness programs for students who are economically and educationally disadvantaged also provide an immersive engagement with college work and/or college life.

Besides providing quality learning experiences for prospective students, immersive learning experiences have the potential to be strong recruitment tools that engage students more deeply and give them quality contact with professors, mentors, employers, and industries outside the classroom.

We know that such programs offer excellent outcomes for college and university students, and they do (in the case of college readiness programs) or could (in the case of other immersive experiences) offer excellent outcomes for high school students who participate in versions specifically designed for them. If more high school students were routinely exposed to these opportunities at our New Jersey colleges and universities, it would not only give them a favorable impression of postsecondary offerings, but it may encourage them, their parents, and counselors to not only consider New Jersey schools, but to see them among the most desirable options.

Overview of Existing Models

Currently, there are many such programs in the state, either directly state associated, or “home-grown” at institutions. These programs span all sectors of higher education, and they are diverse and heterogeneous in terms of the students they serve. Various attempts to collect data on these programs suggest that there are many dozens of such programs, but there is at present no comprehensive database.

Types of programs include, but are not limited to:

- **State-supported campus-based exposure or college support programs** with some pre-college residential or immersive experience, for example, the EOF program.
- **State discretionary grant programs**, targeting low-income and middle and high school students, focused on early exposure and readiness for college, for example, GEAR UP.
- **Public-private coalitions designed to encourage and advance a pipeline of access to a particular field** through a variety of initiatives including direct exposure to the field, for example, NJSPN, the New Jersey STEM Pathways Network.
- **State and privately funded Governor’s School programs for high-achieving students**, potentially in all disciplines. New Jersey offers two programs: Governor’s School of Engineering and Technology at Rutgers, and Governor’s School in the Sciences at Drew University. These tuition-free programs enable talented students of all income levels to experience college-level content and on-campus residential life.
- **Individual college and university partnership programs with school districts**, not-for-profits, foundations, and individual donors, designed to either meet some of the same goals as the State-supported programs above, or to provide summer enrichment in a variety of disciplines including the sciences, humanities, the arts, and technology. There are dozens of these in New Jersey, and no comprehensive list is available.
- **Individual college and university programs** designed specifically to engage students in their own recruitment processes.

Potential Challenges

There are many challenges to putting these programmatic resources to good effect with the goal of limiting out-migration.

- While there are many and varied approaches, **there is no comprehensive notion or set of goals for pre-college immersive programs**, with the exception of New Jersey programs focused on economically disadvantaged students. More data is needed to determine how to target the programs.
- While an informal survey revealed a significant number of related programs in the state, there is **no comprehensive database** of pre-college immersive or enrichment experiences, making it difficult to assess cumulative impact and total resources directed towards these programs.
- While these experiences could be a natural recruitment tool (both for New Jersey and for individual institutions), most **do not have a specific goal to recruit students into New Jersey institutions**. Indeed, some programs, like EOF, begin the enrichment activities after a student has committed to a specific institution.
- A review of the limited database suggests that in many cases programs are **targeted towards mutually exclusive groups of students**, because eligibility or recruitment practices are correlated with either socioeconomic status (which is correlated with other factors including geography and high school) or test scores and high school achievement (which is correlated with geography and high school). While not technically mutually exclusive, immersive enrichment programs for very high achieving students, like the Governor's Schools, are focused on application or nominating populations that do not overlap significantly with those programs that are focused on compensatory enrichment. This means that the students with the greatest need could be unintentionally excluded from participation in programs that will have the greatest impact on their desirability as a college applicant.
- Unlike dual enrollment programs, immersive programs often **do not award college credit**.
- Many enrichment programs take place in the summer when students may otherwise need to work. While such programs are often "free," students with limited means have to face the **opportunity cost of losing income** from summer jobs in order to participate.
- Many individual and partnership programs offer similar emphases and/or target similar groups of students, **possibly creating impact and expense inefficiencies**.
- Programs designed to attract very high achieving students who already have many options, or who may have an ability to pay, **may actually help improve their chances of being recruited out of state, possibly with significant merit awards**.

Potential Opportunities

All these challenges notwithstanding, a systemic program providing diverse forms of immersive programming for high school and middle school students would not only complement dual enrollment course-based programs, but could offer enhanced learning

opportunities and create a strong lever for encouraging high performing diverse cohorts of students of all socioeconomic backgrounds to stay in New Jersey for their postsecondary credential.

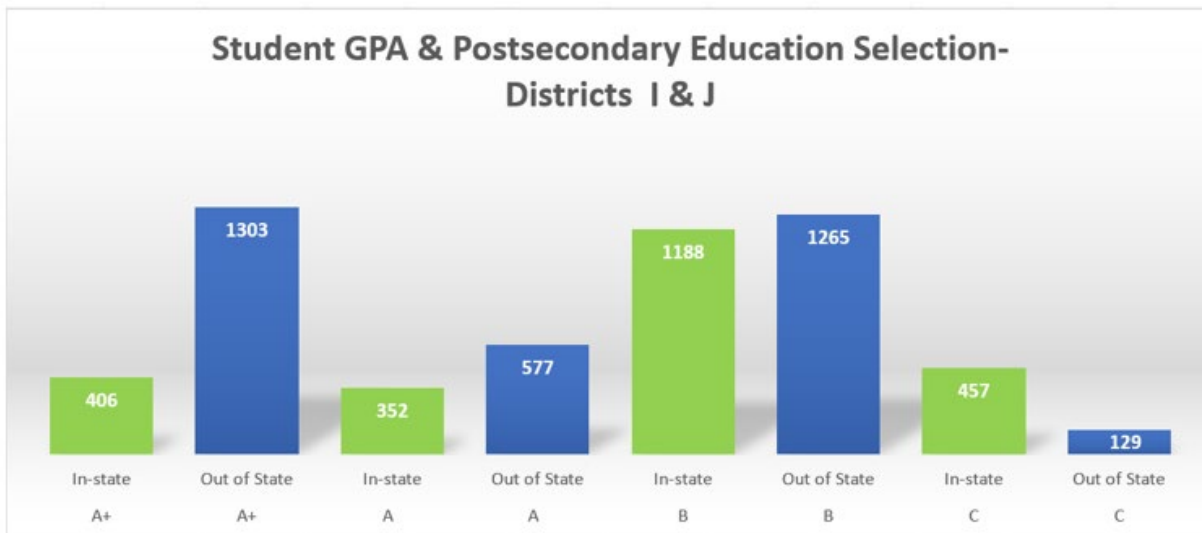
The program must be goal-driven, coordinated, and not redundant. In addition, programs should be varied in terms of disciplinary focus, where possible be college-credit bearing, contain deliberate and clear information about higher education opportunities in New Jersey, along with financial information for parents, and that ensure that diverse populations of students are afforded access to these programs.

Next Steps for High-Impact Learning Opportunities

The following section includes recommended action steps for institutions and the State in order to increase the desirability of attending college in New Jersey by ensuring that students of all socioeconomic backgrounds are exposed to the high-impact and immersive programs and opportunities at New Jersey colleges and universities. A cohesive system of offering these experiences to students would provide direct exposure to the “value-add” of these experiences for post-college outcomes, experience with college life outside the classroom, equipping students with real examples of how they can receive the best education in New Jersey by offering a “show, don’t tell” marketing opportunity to host institutions. Next steps should include:

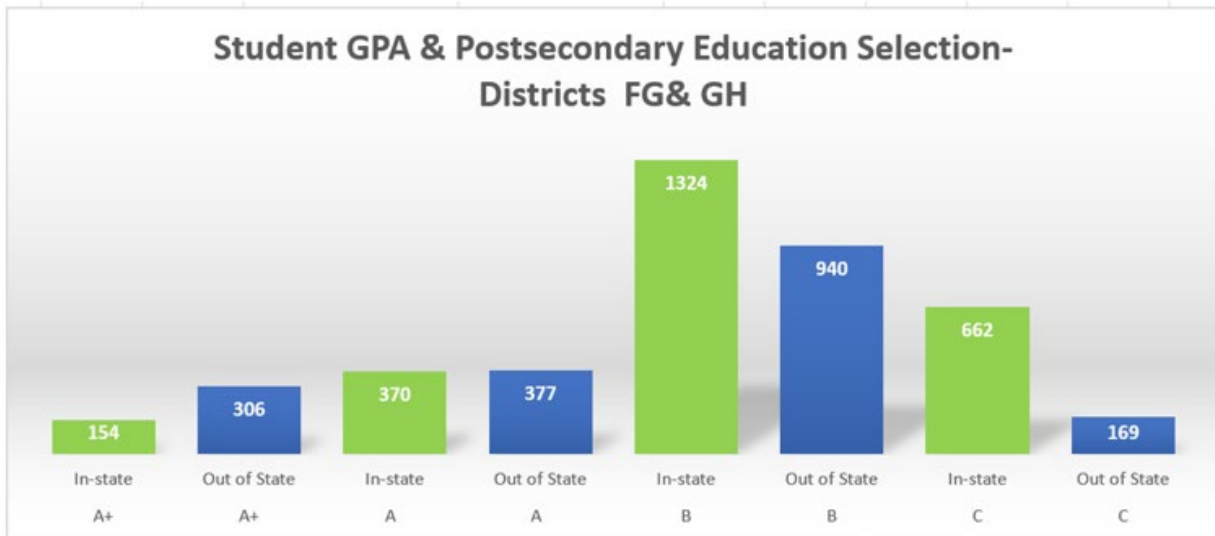
- **Compile an exhaustive inventory of high-impact learning opportunities in New Jersey**, including their mission and purpose, goals, oversight, funding sources, content focus, format, outcomes and extent of immersive learning and high-impact practices, including but not limited to: undergraduate research in all fields, technology, civic engagement, city semesters, performance and fine art intensive programs, internships, language immersions, residential engagement, career exposure, and outcomes (including college choice) where available.
- **Research the outcomes of immersive learning and high-impact practices** for college students and pre-college students in for the purposes of determining which practices are most conducive to student success in college.
- **Develop a state-wide systematic plan offer participation in high-impact, immersive practices** at our colleges and universities to students while they are in middle school and college. The plan should incorporate the research in the first two charges, capitalize on already occurring and successful programming, create efficiencies and reduce duplication, encourage for credit options, create a feasible funding model that while not necessarily free to students and families, provides financial aid to ensure equitable access, and offer incentives for participating students to apply to and attend New Jersey colleges.

Appendix A: Student GPA & Postsecondary Education Selection



I & J District Factor Group Findings:

- 76 percent of A+ (>4.00) students chose a postsecondary institution outside of New Jersey, while only 24 percent stayed in-state;
- 62 percent of A (3.7-4.0) students chose a postsecondary institution outside of New Jersey, while 38 percent stayed in-state;
- 52 percent of B (2.7-3.6) students chose a postsecondary institution outside of New Jersey, while 48 percent stayed in-state;
- 22 percent of C (1.7-2.6) students chose a postsecondary institution outside of New Jersey, while 78 percent stayed in state.



FG & GH District Factor Group Findings:

- 67 percent of A+ (>4.00) students chose a postsecondary institution outside of New Jersey, while only 33 percent stayed in-state;
- 50 percent of A (3.7-4.0) students chose a postsecondary institution outside of New Jersey, while 50 percent stayed in-state;
- 42 percent of B (2.7-3.6) students chose a postsecondary institution outside of New Jersey, while 58 percent stayed in-state;
- 20 percent of C (1.7-2.6) students chose a postsecondary institution outside of New Jersey, while 80 percent stayed in state.

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- ¹ The group would like to acknowledge and thank Maura Bigelow for her analyses of data for this document.
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- ⁶ National Center for Education Statistics. (Fall 2016). *Residence and migration of all first-time degree/certificate seeking undergraduates in degree-granting postsecondary institutions*. [online] Available at: https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d17/tables/dt17_309.20.asp [Accessed 4 November 2019].
- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ State of New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education. (2018) *Where Opportunity Meets Innovation*. Available at <https://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/documents/pdf/StateEducationplan.pdf> [Accessed 5 December 2019].
- ¹⁰ State Higher Education Executive Officers Association. (2017). *SHEEO State Higher Education Finance (SHEF) Date: FY 1991- FY 2016*. Available at [http://www.sheeo.org/sites/default/files/SHEF State by State Wave Charts FY16 0.xlsx](http://www.sheeo.org/sites/default/files/SHEF%20State%20by%20State%20Wave%20Charts%20FY16%200.xlsx) [Accessed 4 November 2019]
- ¹¹ The Institute for College Access & Success. (September 2018). *Student Debt and the Class of 2017*. Available at https://ticas.org/sites/default/files/pub_files/classof2017.pdf [Accessed 4 November 2019]
- ¹² Public Agenda. (2016). *With their whole lives ahead of them*. Available at <https://www.publicagenda.org/pages/with-their-whole-lives-ahead-of-them-reality-1>. [Accessed 5 December 2019].
- ¹³ Medina, J., Benner, K. & Taylor, K. (March 2019). *Actresses, Business Leaders and Other Wealthy Parents Charged in U.S. College Entry Fraud*. The New York Times. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/12/us/college-admissions-cheating-scandal.html> [Accessed 30 December 2019].
- ¹⁴ Using a Data Based Decision Making process shifts the work from a reactive or crisis driven process to a pro-active, outcomes driven process, and sets the stage for continuous improvement. (*Institute of Education Sciences, 2009*).
- ¹⁵ Baenninger, M. (2018). *Learning everywhere: The end of the "extracurricular."* *Liberal Education*, Vol. 104 (4).

