



## REL Appalachia Ask A REL Response

College and Career Readiness, Postsecondary  
March 2019

### Question:

Which states are expanding early postsecondary opportunities for high school students (for example, dual credit courses, Advanced Placement courses, International Baccalaureate programs)? What policies, practices, and funding mechanisms are critical to their success?

### Response:

Thank you for your request to our REL Reference Desk regarding evidence-based information about the expansion of early postsecondary opportunities for high school students. Ask A REL is a collaborative reference desk service provided by the 10 Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs) that, by design, functions much in the same way as a technical reference library. Ask A REL provides references, referrals, and brief responses in the form of citations in response to questions about available education research.

Following an established REL Appalachia research protocol, we searched for peer-reviewed articles and other research reports on the expansion of early postsecondary opportunities for high school students. We focused on identifying resources that specifically addressed the implementation and expansion of such programs at the state level. The sources included ERIC and other federally funded databases and organizations, research institutions, academic research databases, and general Internet search engines. For more details, please see the methods section at the end of this document.

The research team did not evaluate the quality of the resources provided in this response; we offer them only for your reference. Also, the search included the most commonly used research databases and search engines to produce the references presented here, but the references are not necessarily comprehensive, and other relevant references and resources may exist. References are listed in alphabetical order, not necessarily in order of relevance.

### References

Barnett, E., Maclutsky, E., & Wagonlander, C. (2015). Emerging early college models for traditionally underserved students. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 169, 39–49. Abstract retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1053081>; full text available at

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/ncrest/publications--resources/final-Barnett-Maclutsky-Wagonlander-copy.pdf>

*From the abstract:* “Emerging early college models are providing opportunities for high school students to accrue college credits and experience themselves as successful college students. The states of Michigan and New York are at the forefront of state-level efforts to offer early college models to a wider range of high school students. This chapter features early college models and describes the variety of programmatic designs and student experiences.”

Holstead, M. S., Spradlin, T. E., McGillivray, M. E., & Burroughs, N. (2010). *The impact of Advanced Placement incentive programs: Education policy brief*. Bloomington, IN: Center for Evaluation and Education Policy. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED510967>

*From the introduction:* “In this current economic environment both students and school administrators alike are feeling the need for education to become more efficient and effective. Programs such as the International Baccalaureate program, the Advanced Placement program, and dual credit courses, which can streamline and improve the transition between high school and college, have thus become increasingly appealing. This Education Policy Brief will examine, in particular, the incentive programs for the most popular and widespread of the accelerated education programs, the Advanced Placement (AP) program. After a brief historical overview of the AP program and a discussion of its merits, the brief will look into the various types of incentive programs found in the U.S. today, highlighting, in particular, several prominent or notable incentive programs. The Policy Brief will also examine some of the scholarly research that has been conducted regarding the effectiveness of the various incentive programs. Finally, conclusions and recommendations will be made to improve AP incentive programs.”

Karp, M. M., Hughes, K. L., & Cormier, M. (2012). *Dual enrollment for college completion: Findings from Tennessee and peer states*. New York, NY: Columbia University Teachers College, Community College Research Center. Retrieved from <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/dual-enrollment-college-completion-TN-peer-states.pdf>

*From the executive summary:* “In early 2012, a consortium of stakeholders, including the Committee for Economic Development, the Kresge Foundation, the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, the Tennessee Business Roundtable, the Tennessee College Access & Success Network, and the Tennessee State Board of Education, commissioned the Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University, to conduct a study of dual enrollment in Tennessee and a sample of peer states. Motivated by Tennessee’s college completion agenda and a belief that helping high school students gain access to college coursework can set them on a path to postsecondary credential completion, the Chamber aimed to (1) develop an understanding of the potential benefits to dual enrollment, (2) gain information about and generate lessons from peer states’ dual enrollment experiences, and (3) present possible modifications to Tennessee’s current dual enrollment policies. This

report presents finding from the first phase of the study, an examination of dual enrollment research and peer state policies.”

Lowe, A. I. (2010). *Promoting quality: State strategies for overseeing dual enrollment programs*. Chapel Hill, NC: National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED537071>

*From the abstract:* “Few states have established systems for overseeing dual enrollment programs to encourage institutions to align their practices with quality standards. Five states (Arkansas, Indiana, Minnesota, Iowa, and South Dakota), have established incentives or requirements for post-secondary concurrent enrollment providers to pursue the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) accreditation as one quality assurance mechanism. NACEP’s peer-review accreditation process promotes the implementation of policies and practices to ensure that concurrent enrollment courses offered in the high school are the same as the courses offered on the sponsoring college campus. A number of states are currently designing or redesigning dual enrollment oversight systems, including Indiana, Colorado, Kentucky, Ohio, Oregon, Montana, and Wyoming. While prior studies by the Education Commission of the States, the Community College Research Center, and the Western Interstate Compact for Higher Education have examined dual enrollment policies across the 50 states, none have looked in depth at the processes by which states conduct program oversight. This report is designed to fill that void, by illuminating dual enrollment oversight and review strategies among the following state-level entities: (1) Florida Department of Education; (2) Illinois Community College Board; (3) Oregon Dual Credit Oversight Committee; (4) South Dakota Board of Regents; (5) Utah System of Higher Education and Utah Office of Education; and (6) Virginia Community College System. The report presents these six as in-depth case studies, and does not evaluate or judge the practices. NACEP does not take a position favoring a particular form of dual enrollment program oversight, and instead offers this report to help further knowledge and understanding of state-level policies and practices that advance the goal of seamless education through secondary and post-secondary collaborations.”

Piontek, M. E., Kannapel., P. J., Flory, M., & Stewart, M. S. (2016). *The implementation of dual credit programs in six nonurban Kentucky school districts*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute for Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Education Laboratory Appalachia. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED566740>

*From the introduction:* “A key strategy of the Kentucky Department of Education’s and Council on Postsecondary Education’s College and Career Readiness Delivery plan is to provide opportunities for high school students to earn college credit. Districts across Kentucky are implementing dual credit programs, but there is little sharing of information about the implementation of these programs. REL Appalachia researchers identified six districts in consultation with Kentucky College and Career Readiness Alliance representatives. Profiles describing each district’s dual credit programming were created using data from 45 individual interviews conducted with seven distinct stakeholder groups.

Each of the six districts offered dual credit programs, with variations in configuration, course offerings, costs, and student supports. Each of the six districts partners with at least one two-year and one four-year postsecondary institution to offer dual enrollment courses. The most prevalent configuration of courses is where courses are offered at a high school and taught by credentialed high school teachers. In cases where high schools are located near postsecondary institutions, this geographic proximity enhances the ability of school districts to offer a variety of courses and program configurations. Assurance of program quality was limited and varied across postsecondary institutions. Dual credit programs offer students the opportunity to earn college credit at reduced costs, but costs and funding support vary by district, postsecondary institution, and program design. Dual credit programs were viewed favorably and heavily promoted in each district, but their expansion is limited by key challenges. These challenges include needing to (1) increase the number of instructors credentialed to teach dual credit courses; (2) increase access to dual credit opportunities, especially in remote, rural locations; (3) ensure student readiness for college coursework; (4) make dual credit programs affordable for all eligible students across the state; (5) ensure course quality; and (6) provide adequate staffing to effectively manage dual credit programs.”

Struhl, B. (2013). *Rewarding dual enrollment in performance-based funding formulas: How states can create incentives for college to high school partnerships*. Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED561309>

*From the introduction:* “Far too few students who enter college succeed in earning a certificate or degree. States are developing a range of strategies to increase college completion rates. Performance-based funding is an increasingly popular way for states to fund public colleges and universities: Produce more graduates; get more funding. The author suggests that in addition, states should invest this funding in colleges that partner with high schools on dual enrollment programs that better prepare future college goers. This report makes the case for using this particular funding to sustain these programs and highlights how four states are already doing so. Most performance-based funding strategies target improved outcomes for students already enrolled in college, and do not create incentives for reaching back to work with high school students to prepare them for college without the need for remediation. However, four innovative states have incorporated incentives for colleges to collaborate with high schools on college readiness. This report looks at the experiences of these four states—Indiana, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Texas—and their performance-based funding.”

Wakelyn, D. (2009). *Raising rigor, getting results: Lessons learned from AP expansion*. Washington, DC: NGA Center for Best Practices. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED507635>

*From the executive summary:* “Advanced Placement (AP), which enables high school students to take introductory college-level courses, is the nation’s oldest example of a rigorous, common curriculum. Students who score well on AP exams are more likely to persist in college and earn a degree. The Advanced Placement Expansion project of the

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) was one component of a large-scale initiative launched in 2005 to redesign the American high school. Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maine, Nevada, and Wisconsin received funding to expand Advanced Placement (AP) courses to minority and low-income students at 51 pilot high schools in rural and urban school districts. The NGA Center, working in partnership with the College Board, has demonstrated that it is possible for states to raise rigor and get results at scale. Nationwide, the potential for AP expansion is considerable. Hundreds of thousands of students have the ability, but lack the opportunity, to take and succeed in AP courses. Governors interested in increasing this opportunity can start by setting new goals for Advanced Placement, so one-third of all high school students take an AP course and one-quarter of them score at mastery. Pursuing the strategies presented in this report and setting these goals would enable states to grow Advanced Placement courses to serve as many as 1 million students by the class of 2014.”

Wozniak, C., & Palmer, L. B. (2012). Stakeholder perceptions of barriers and solutions to significant expansion of postsecondary enrollment options for high school students. *International Journal of Education Policy and Leadership*, 8(1), 1–17. Abstract retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1006557>; full text available at <http://journals.sfu.ca/ijep/ijep/index.php/ijep/article/view/418/126>

*From the abstract:* “Post-secondary experiences for students still in high school have been promoted as a means to increase academic rigor and create a better-trained workforce. Yet little is known regarding supports needed to significantly increase such options. This study obtained input from 411 stakeholders in one Midwestern state, including 201 district superintendents, 181 high school principals, and 23 college dual enrollment officers regarding their use of these options, their perceptions of barriers to program expansion, and their ranking of possible solutions to overcome the barriers. Findings demonstrate that all parties find postsecondary options of value, with traditional dual enrollment the most used option. Although all groups identified funding as a primary barrier, other systemic barriers were of great concern. Participants suggest that expansion of Advanced Placement and early and middle college programs, financial assistance for dually enrolled students, and increased program availability for career and technical options would be beneficial.”

Zinth, J. (2014). *Advanced Placement: Model policy components. Policy analysis*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED565896>

*From the abstract:* “Advanced Placement (AP), launched in 1955 by the College Board as a program to offer gifted high school students the opportunity to complete entry-level college coursework, has since expanded to encourage a broader array of students to tackle challenging content. Students may sit for an AP exam whether or not they have taken the related year-long course. Though policies vary from institution to institution, many colleges and universities will award entry-level, discipline-specific college course credit for an AP exam score of three or higher (out of five). This Education Commission of the State’s Policy Analysis identifies key components of a comprehensive state AP policy, as well as model state policies, primarily from Arkansas, that align with each component. This analysis also

provides a brief summary of subject areas in which AP courses and exams are currently offered, reasons states and districts are expanding AP access, and research supporting expansion of AP opportunities.”

Zinth, J. D. (2014). *Increasing student access and success in dual enrollment programs: 13 model state-level policy components*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED561913>

*From the abstract:* “Dual enrollment or concurrent enrollment programs allow eligible high school students to take postsecondary courses for college and, usually, high school credit. Programs are nearly ubiquitous—in 2014, courses for dual or concurrent enrollment credit are offered in every state and the District of Columbia. Statewide policies govern these programs in 47 states and D.C., and local policies or agreements oversee programs in Alaska, New Hampshire, and New York. While programs have various names in different states, the term ‘dual enrollment’ will be used throughout this report. Findings are based on an Education Commission of the States (ECS) analysis of state dual enrollment policies and a review of relevant academic research. Among some of the findings: (1) The number of U.S. public high schools offering dual enrollment programs is growing, with 82 percent providing such opportunities in 2011–12, the most recent national data available; (2) Academic research and state experience highlight the benefits of dual enrollment programs for improving college completion rates, particularly for minority and/or low-income students and (3) However, with the possible exception of Massachusetts, minority and/or low-income students tend to be underrepresented in statewide dual enrollment programs. Recent analyses in Illinois, Ohio and Washington show white and/or more affluent students are overrepresented in these programs. ECS identified 13 model state-level policy components that may increase student participation and success in dual enrollment programs. These components fall under four broad categories: (1) access (2) finance; (3) ensuring course quality; and (4) transferability of credit. Examples of state laws containing these components are incorporated throughout this report.”

Zinth, J. D. (2016). *50-State comparison: Advanced Placement policies*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States. Retrieved from <https://www.ecs.org/advanced-placement-policies/>

*From the web page:* “Education Commission of the States has researched Advanced Placement (AP) policies in all states to provide this comprehensive resource. Click on the questions below for 50-state comparisons showing how all states approach specific AP policies. Or, choose to view a specific state’s approach by going to the individual state profiles page.”

Zinth, J. D. (2016). *50-State comparison: Dual/concurrent enrollment policies*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States. Retrieved from <https://www.ecs.org/dual-concurrent-enrollment-policies/>

*From the web page:* “Education Commission of the States has researched dual/concurrent enrollment policies in all states to provide this comprehensive resource. Click on the

questions below for 50-state comparisons showing how all states approach specific dual/concurrent enrollment policies. Or, choose to view a specific state's approach by going to the individual state profiles page."

### **Additional Ask A REL Responses to Consult**

Ask A REL Appalachia at SRI International. (2018). *What strategies have state policymakers and other state agency staff implemented to improve college access and success?* Retrieved from <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/appalachia/askarel/aar35.asp>

Ask A REL Northeast and Islands at Education Development Center, Inc. (2017). *What is known about the benefits of accountability systems that include AP and dual enrollment? What are the effects of AP enrollment and performance on post-secondary outcomes, such as preparedness? What number of AP or dual enrollment courses leads to such efforts?* Retrieved from <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/AskAREL/Response/6>

### **Additional Organizations to Consult**

Education Commission of the States: <https://www.ecs.org/>

*From the website:* "Education Commission of the States serves as a partner to state policymakers by providing personalized support, unbiased information and opportunities for collaboration. Through our programs and services, policymakers gain the insight and experience needed to create more effective education policy."

Jobs for the Future: <https://www.jff.org/>

*From the website:* "We work at the national, state, and local levels to bridge education, workforce, and policy within regions of all sizes. We bring together stakeholders that share the goal of expanding economic opportunity and help them collaborate effectively."

National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships: <http://www.nacep.org/>

*From the website:* "NACEP works to ensure that college courses taught by high school teachers are as rigorous as courses offered on the sponsoring college campus. As the sole national accrediting body for concurrent enrollment partnerships, NACEP helps these programs adhere to the highest standards so students experience a seamless transition to college and teachers benefit from meaningful, ongoing professional development. To advance the field and support our national network of members, we actively share the latest knowledge about best practices, research, and advocacy."

### **Methods:**

#### **Keywords and Search Strings**

The following keywords and search strings were used to search the reference databases and other sources:

- (“dual enrollment” OR “co-enrollment” OR “early college” OR “advanced placement” OR “international baccalaureate”) AND (state OR policy) AND (expan\* OR fund OR implement OR scale)

## **Databases and Resources**

We searched ERIC, a free online library of more than 1.6 million citations of education research sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), for relevant resources. Additionally, we searched the academic database ProQuest, Google Scholar, and the commercial search engine Google.

## **Reference Search and Selection Criteria**

In reviewing resources, Reference Desk researchers consider—among other things—these four factors:

- Date of the publication: Searches cover information available within the last ten years, except in the case of nationally known seminal resources.
- Reference sources: IES, nationally funded, and certain other vetted sources known for strict attention to research protocols receive highest priority. Applicable resources must be publicly available online and in English.
- Methodology: The following methodological priorities/considerations guide the review and selection of the references: (a) study types—randomized controlled trials, quasi experiments, surveys, descriptive data analyses, literature reviews, policy briefs, etc., generally in this order; (b) target population, samples (representativeness of the target population, sample size, volunteered or randomly selected), study duration, etc.; (c) limitations, generalizability of the findings and conclusions, etc.
- Existing knowledge base: Vetted resources (e.g., peer-reviewed research journals) are the primary focus, but the research base is occasionally slim or nonexistent. In those cases, the best resources available may include, for example, reports, white papers, guides, reviews in non-peer-reviewed journals, newspaper articles, interviews with content specialists, and organization websites.

Resources included in this document were last accessed on March 1, 2019. URLs, descriptions, and content included here were current at that time.

This memorandum is one in a series of quick-turnaround responses to specific questions posed by education stakeholders in the Appalachia region (Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia), which is served by the Regional Educational Laboratory Appalachia (REL AP) at SRI International. This Ask A REL response was developed by REL AP under Contract ED-IES-17-C-0004 from the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, administered by SRI International. The content does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.