Within Reach

A Policy Roadmap for Dual Credit in Indiana

Jennifer Zinth  |  June 2022
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*Within Reach: A Policy Roadmap for Dual Credit in Indiana*
Executive Summary

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE) 2021 Early College Credit Report notes ever-increasing numbers of Hoosier graduates earning dual credit, resulting in significant potential tuition cost savings to families, and greater rates of on-time or early college graduation for participating students. However, the report also identifies inequities in dual credit participation by student race and ethnicity, family income and geographic region of the state.

To support efforts to address these challenges, the Joyce Foundation engaged Jennifer Zinth, a nationally recognized dual credit state policy expert, to develop the present report synthesizing the insights of statewide dual credit stakeholders on barriers to equitable dual credit access, participation and success in Indiana, as well as recommendations to address identified challenges. The six policy categories in the College in High School Alliance Unlocking Potential report served as a framework for these discussions. The goal is for state and local policymakers to use this report to inform future policy actions to enhance equity in dual credit availability, access and success.

Three cross-cutting policy levers emerged from this research:

1. **Indiana Dual Credit Advisory Council:** A reconvened council could consider ways for programs to receive the funding necessary to ensure program integrity and assess viable alternatives to the current dual credit funding model.

2. **A statewide equity goal for dual credit participation:** A statewide equity goal would be a critical tool in efforts to identify and address equity gaps in dual credit access and participation and apply college course-taking in high school to further efforts to decrease demographic gaps in postsecondary success measures.

3. **Scaling the Indiana College Core in high school:** The Indiana College Core establishes 30 college credit hours guaranteed to transfer to public institutions statewide. While awareness of the program is growing with key audiences such as high school students, parents, teachers, counselors and administrators, many such individuals are as of yet minimally aware or not aware of Indiana College Core opportunities and advantages.

Leading recommendations also came forward from each Unlocking Potential policy category:

1. **Equity Goal and Public Reporting**
   Provide and utilize more detailed student participation and outcomes data: Such data can shed light on geographic disparities in equitable dual credit course availability; and student participation, success and future employment outcomes.

2. **Program Integrity and Credit Transfer**
   Enhance and broadly communicate the TransferIN website: Stakeholders noted a lack of awareness of the TransferIN website among many students, parents, teachers and counselors, and particularly among first-generation students and their families.

3. **Finance**
   Enhance communication to legislators on the value and benefit of dual credit courses: State funding does not cover institutions’ dual credit course delivery costs. Sustaining or increasing the state’s financial commitment to dual credit implies ensuring that legislators
understand the return on the state’s biennial investment in priority and Career and Technical Education (CTE) dual credit courses.

4. Course Access and Availability

Develop and disseminate tools for local secondary and postsecondary partners to identify and address root causes contributing to inequities in course availability, participation and success: To date no statewide tools have been developed to help local stakeholders identify and address root causes of lower participation rates among some student subgroups.

5. Instructor Capacity

Create a menu of additional state and local up-credentialing strategies: Approaches in addition to STEM Teach and Teach Dual Credit Indiana could support dual credit credentialing of individuals not yet in – or working their way through – the teacher credentialing process or pursuing (or even considering) a master’s degree to move up on step and lane salary schedules.

6. Navigational Supports

Create a menu of additional state and local up-credentialing strategies: Approaches in addition to STEM Teach and Teach Dual Credit Indiana could support dual credit credentialing of individuals not yet in – or working their way through – the teacher credentialing process or pursuing (or even considering) a master’s degree to move up on step and lane salary schedules.

Introduction

Last year, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education reported that sixty percent of Indiana’s graduating high school Class of 2018 earned dual credit, making Indiana a national leader in the number of high school students completing college credits. Over the last decade, Indiana has also seen significant growth in the number and percentage of underrepresented students taking dual credit, and the number of Indiana Core Credentials being earned.

Yet in spite of this growth, state data identify disparities in dual credit participation by student background. As noted in CHE 2021 Early College Credit report, low-income students and Black and Hispanic/Latino students are less likely than white students to take dual credit courses. While 38 percent and 50 percent of Black and Hispanic/Latino students in the high school Class of 2018 graduated having earned at least one college course, respectively, 65 percent of white 2018 high school graduates had earned dual credit. Forty-nine percent of low-income members of the high school class of 2018 had earned dual credit, compared to 66 percent of non-low-income high school graduates.

In addition, state data also bear out notable differences in who participates in dual credit courses. There are:

- Geographic disparities in the percentage of Indiana high school students graduating with dual credit. Although state statute requires all high schools to offer at least two dual credit courses and at least two Advanced Placement (AP) courses, the percentage of students by school district earning AP or dual credit by high school graduation ranged from 49 percent to 86 percent for the Class of 2018.

- Demographic disparities in students earning technical-only versus priority liberal artsonly dual credit. Thirty-two percent of dual credit-earners completed technical-only dual
credit, 38 percent earned priority-only dual credit, and 30 percent earned both technical and priority dual credit. However, technical-only dual credit students are more likely to be Black or Hispanic/Latino than their peers, and significantly more likely to be low-income.

Research has consistently demonstrated that dual credit courses help students get ready for the next chapter after graduating high school, so high school Hoosiers have a lot to gain by participating in dual credit and taking courses that help them cultivate skills and interests that will allow them to fully contribute to the local economy and 21st century society. State and local policymakers and administrators in Indiana can and do play a critical role in making this happen. Informed by interviews and input from dozens of leaders in Indiana education who are deeply engaged in dual enrollment policy and practice, this report summarizes recommendations on how to move forward. These recommendations underscore three key actions that the Commission for Higher Education and the Indiana Department of Education can take in partnership with state and local policymakers and administrators:

- Reconvene Indiana’s Dual Credit Advisory Council.
- Set a statewide equity goal for dual credit participation.
- Continue to promote the value of the Indiana College Core for high school students.

By taking these steps, Indiana leaders can help ensure that dual credit, and by extension, postsecondary preparedness is within reach for high school students across the state.

**Terminology**

**Early college credit** is college credit that is earned while a student is in high school. These credits can be earned through "college in high school" programs like Dual Credit, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate.

**Dual credit courses** are taught at a high school by a high school teacher for early college credit through a formal agreement with the high school and a college or university. There are two types of state-funded dual credit courses:

- **Priority Liberal Arts**, which includes English, mathematics, science, and world languages
- **Technical**, which includes health sciences, information technology, and manufacturing

**Dual enrollment** courses are also taken by high school students for early college credit but are taken at a college campus or online and are taught by faculty at the college or university.

**Indiana College Core** is a 30-hour block of general education courses that transfers at all public colleges and universities in Indiana.
within Reach: A Policy Roadmap for Dual Credit in Indiana

The goal of this report is to identify a menu of recommendations from which state and local leaders can choose to adopt and implement to expand opportunities for students, particularly underrepresented in rigorous coursework, to access and succeed in dual enrollment courses. This report was underwritten with generous support from the Joyce Foundation, and provided extensive staff support by Ken Sauer, Senior Associate Commissioner and Chief Academic Officer and Tari Lambert, Director, Transfer Indiana, of the Indiana Commission for Higher Education.

The recommendations in this report were informed by numerous secondary and postsecondary dual credit stakeholders from across Indiana. Stakeholders include state agency staff and local stakeholders engaged in dual credit policymaking and implementation efforts.

Development of This Report

The recommendations in this report were informed by numerous secondary and postsecondary dual credit stakeholders from across Indiana. Stakeholders include state agency staff and local stakeholders engaged in dual credit policymaking and implementation efforts.

Dual Credit Stakeholder Group Members

- **Andy Allen**, Principal, Batesville High School
- **Michael Beam**, Assistant Vice President for School Partnerships and Senior Assistant Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, Indiana University
- **Patrick Biggerstaff**, Director of Career and Technical and Adult Education, Area 31 Career Center
- **Janet Boyle**, Director of RECN, Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL), University of Indianapolis
- **Jason Callahan**, Assistant Secretary of Student Pathways and Opportunities, Indiana Department of Education
- **Carey Dahncke**, Executive Director, CELL, University of Indianapolis
- **Drew Findlay**, Dean of CTE Early College, Vincennes University
- **Tony Harl**, Assistant Director of Career and Technical Education, Governor’s Workforce Cabinet
- **Odelet Nance**, Assistant Dean of Instruction, Vincennes University
- **Audra Peterson**, Director of Porter County Career and Technical Education, Porter County Career and Technical Education
- **Rebecca Rahschulte**, Vice-President of K-14 Initiatives and Statewide Partnerships, Ivy Tech Community College
- **Nicole Shankle**, Dean of Academic Early College, Vincennes University

Each stakeholder group member participated in a one-hour virtual interview to elicit their thoughts on dual equity opportunities and challenges on each of the six policy components in the Unlocking Potential framework for high quality, equity-centered dual credit policy. The challenges and opportunities elevated in these interviews were synthesized into draft recommendations that stakeholders responded to during a January 2022 virtual meeting. The draft challenges and recommendations were revised based on feedback gathered during this meeting. Stakeholder group members and members of a broader dual credit Resource Group (listed below) were invited to review and invite members of their networks to review and provide feedback on the draft report.
An overview of the draft report was also presented to leaders of the Indiana Department of Education and the Indiana Commission for Higher Education in a virtual February 2022 meeting and revised again based on feedback gathered from these leaders.

This report provides:

- A description of each Unlocking Potential policy component and a call to action that states should be working towards to achieve equity and quality for high school programs in their state

- Where applicable, a reference to an aligned recommendation from CHE’s most recent Early College Credit Report

- A summary of Indiana policies relevant to the Unlocking Potential policy component State and local policy recommendations

Recommendations in this report reflect stakeholder input. However, this is not a consensus report.
Equity Goal and Public Reporting

Unlocking Potential’s Call to Action
States set an equitable, statewide public goal for increasing the participation and success of traditionally underserved student groups in college in high school programs, with clear, disaggregated public reporting and accountability for progress toward the goal.

2021 CHE Early College Credit Report Recommendation
Emphasize transparency and data collection at the high school level.

Define “Equity” for Purposes of Dual Credit Participation
To address the recommendations presented below, Indiana should define “equity” for purposes of dual credit participation, including by diverse geography, low-income, and students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. The Funding for Equity report notes: “Dual enrollment equity means that the student population in a state’s dual enrollment program mirrors the demographic, socioeconomic and geographic diversity of the state’s overall K-12 student population. If a state’s K-12 population is 20 percent African American, 30 percent rural, and 50 percent eligible for free and reduced-price lunch, the dually enrolled student population in a state that has achieved dual enrollment equity is 20 percent African American, 30 percent rural, and 50 percent eligible for free and reduced-price lunch.”

Indiana Policies That Relate to These Metrics

- **Postsecondary Attainment Goal**
  - Indiana has set a [postsecondary attainment goal](#): By 2025, 60 percent of working-age Hoosiers will have a quality degree or credential
  - The Commission for Higher Education (CHE) 2020 [strategic plan](#) includes dual credit among strategies to increase postsecondary attainment
  - The [21st Century Scholars Program](#) which provides up to four years of tuition to income-eligible students who meet certain requirements throughout high school

- **Public Reporting**
  - CHE’s biennial [early college credit report](#) provides valuable information on dual credit accumulation and postsecondary outcomes
  - CHE publishes institution-level attainment data
  - Indiana [Graduates Prepared to Succeed (GPS) Initiative](#)
    - Proposes AP/IB/Dual Credit/Cambridge AICE/CLEP as headline indicators
    - A related Indiana Department of Education dashboard is currently under development
Recommendations

- **Establish a statewide equity goal on dual credit participation**
  
  **Rationale:** Indiana currently lacks a statewide dual credit equity goal. A statewide equity goal would be a critical tool in efforts to identify and address equity gaps in dual credit access and participation and apply college course-taking in high school to efforts to decrease demographic gaps in postsecondary aspirations, matriculation, and on-time completion.

- **A statewide equity goal might serve as a catalyst for:**
  
  - **State and local discussions between secondary and postsecondary stakeholders on resource allocation and support:** Such discussions would increase the number of students of color, low-income, and first-generation students succeeding in dual credit course offerings.

  - **More endorsed early colleges in urban communities:** Dual credit participation and postsecondary matriculation are particularly lagging in Indiana’s urban communities. A statewide equity goal might provide a rationale for the establishment of more urban early colleges, which in turn would support postsecondary aspirations, preparation, and participation among historically underserved students. IDOE is funding the Urban College Acceleration Network, an initiative of the University of Indianapolis’ Center for Education of the Leadership of Learning (CELL) to increase the number of early colleges in underserved urban communities.

  - **State and local efforts to identify and address the root causes of the “leaky postsecondary pipeline”:** According to the Indiana Department of Education, while 79 percent of Indiana high school seniors expect to go on to postsecondary education, just 59 percent of recent high school graduates do so. Of those, only 1 in 4 complete any postsecondary credential four years after high school graduation.

  - **Help students connect the dots between students’ career goals while increasing certificate or two-year degree completion:** Many students perceive of “college” only as educational experiences in a four-year institution. These students may not be pursuing a postsecondary education at all, when a certificate or associate’s degree would help them achieve their career goals and help Indiana achieve its postsecondary attainment goal. Efforts to enroll such students in applicable dual credit courses of interest would help them. A statewide equity goal with a sub-focus on dual credit as a pathway to certificate associate degree completion might enhance efforts to define career paths in terms of stackable credentials.
    - Invest in and publish state-level research identifying root causes contributing to inequities in dual credit access, participation, and success

- **Provide and utilize more detailed student participation and outcomes data.**

  **Rationale:** Such data can shed light on geographic disparities in equitable dual credit course availability; and student participation, success and future employment outcomes.

  **Potential uses of more detailed public-facing information might include:**

  - Sustaining financial support and demonstrating the return on investment for dual credit.
Program Integrity and Credit Transfer

Unlocking Potential’s Call to Action

States support and promote high-quality college in high school programs through effective oversight and cross-sector collaboration between the K-12 and postsecondary sectors, as well as ensuring credit articulation.

2021 CHE Early College Credit Report Recommendations

Emphasize transparency and data collection at the high school level. Utilize search tools (such as the Learn More Indiana School Finder Tool, the Indiana Credential Registry and Indiana Career Explorer) to seek out postsecondary credential opportunities.

Indiana Policies That Relate to These Metrics

- Enabling credit transfer and equivalency with college courses.
  - The Core Transfer Library identifies courses that will transfer across public institutions statewide.
  - The Indiana College Core establishes 30 college credit hours guaranteed to transfer to public institutions statewide.
  - The Transfer Single Articulation Pathways (TSAPs) are “competency-based degree tracks designed to promote seamless transfer from a public 2-year to a public 4-year degree program. These were aligned with program areas that have significant enrollment numbers by students who may first obtain an associate of science or an associate of arts degree. In most cases, completion of a TSAP also involves completion of the Indiana College Core.”
  - AP/IB/CLEP/Cambridge postsecondary equivalencies
Next Level Programs of Study (NLPS) allow students to experience greater consistency and quality in CTE programming statewide.

- **Ensuring program quality and rigor.**
  - Public postsecondary institutions are eligible for a biennial partial reimbursement from the legislature based on credit hours successfully earned in priority and Career and Technical Education (CTE) dual credit courses – but only if programs are accredited by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) or successfully undergo a similar review process by CHE.
  - The CHE/CELL [early college endorsement process](#) ensures program quality and provides support to programs seeking endorsement.

- **Cultivating cross-system collaboration.**
  - The [NACEP standards](#) – which all Indiana dual credit programs adhere to – require an agreement to be established between secondary and postsecondary partners identifying the roles and responsibilities of each partner.
  - To be approved as an [Indiana College Core delivery site](#), an agreement must be in place between the high school and primary postsecondary partner, in accordance with the state criteria for designating a high school as a delivery site for the Indiana College Core.

**Recommendations**

**PROGRAM INTEGRITY**

- **Engage the Dual Credit Advisory Council and CHE, DOE leadership to re-evaluate the secondary and postsecondary funding structure necessary to ensure program integrity.**

  - **Rationale:** While vital, institutional efforts to maintain program integrity are time- and resource-consuming. As of May 2022, postsecondary institutions receive roughly $45 per credit hour to partially reimburse costs associated with delivering priority and CTE dual credit courses. This reimbursement falls far short of the actual costs postsecondary institutions incur in supporting dual credit coordinators and faculty liaisons in delivering NACEP-required teacher professional development and site visits, and providing academic and non-academic supports to students, to name just a few expenses postsecondary partners incur in delivering dual credit. Secondary partners receive no additional funding but must cover additional costs as well in providing dual credit coursework.

- **Establish and highlight statewide best practice guidelines for collaborative partnerships.**

  - **Rationale:** While all public postsecondary institutions must adhere to the NACEP guidelines, significant variation exists, for example, in faculty liaisons’ engagement with high school teachers over the course of the school year, presenting the potential for uneven support for high school teachers and jeopardizing course rigor. Statewide guidelines might identify best practices in delivering high school teacher professional development (including the duration and quality measures of those professional learning opportunities); facilitating faculty/high school instructor collaboration; and a checklist of key responsibilities for faculty liaisons.
● Establish a standard dual credit MOU template.
  - **Rationale:** While the specifics of which partner covers which programmatic aspects (and how) may vary, a standard dual credit MOU template can ensure that programs ensure rigor and are clear on the respective roles and responsibilities of the K-12 and postsecondary partners.

**CREDIT TRANSFER**

● Enhance and broadly communicate the TransferIN website.
  - **Rationale:** Stakeholders noted a lack of awareness of the TransferIN website among many students, parents, teachers, and counselors, and particularly a lack of awareness among first-generation students and their families. Stakeholders added that the website is not very user-friendly to students, parents, and guidance counselors. They also observed that while TransferIN is regularly updated, it is unclear to external users how often the website is updated.
  - **A revised TransferIN website might include** tools for students to advocate for themselves when seeking to confirm whether and how a specific course might transfer to an institution.

● Highlight best practices on institutional transfer websites.
  - **Rationale:** Stakeholders pointed to significant variation on Indiana institutions’ transfer websites and encouraged greater transparency and consistency on institution websites on how courses will transfer. CHE can play a role in identifying and elevating examples of websites that clearly and effectively communicate to students and other stakeholders whether and how dual credit courses will transfer and apply to programs of study.

**Finance**

**Unlocking Potential's Call to Action**

States design funding mechanisms that remove financial barriers for low-income and moderate-income students to participate and excel in college level work in high school.

**Indiana Policies That Relate to These Metrics**

● State policy caps dual credit tuition at $25 per credit hour for priority liberal arts and CTE courses and does not limit the number of courses or credits students may take at this tuition rate.

● State policy waives dual credit tuition for low-income students. Institutions are authorized to waive dual credit tuition for non-low-income students.

● Ivy Tech does not charge dual credit tuition to any students, regardless of family income.

● The state funding model creates student “skin in the game.” Requiring students to pay modest costs incentivizes them to take seriously the opportunity to complete college courses in high school.
Public postsecondary institutions receive a biennial allocation based on reported successful student course completion in priority and CTE dual credit courses. These funds are intended to defray the cost of lost tuition revenue, professional development, and program oversight costs.

The state disburses funds to postsecondary institutions for each high school student who completes an approved certificate or degree.

Career centers and institutions may apply Perkins funds towards various CTE dual credit course expenses, including teacher professional development, equipment, facilities, curriculum, tutoring, textbooks, and speakers.

Like other postsecondary certificates, Indiana College Core completions are included in the postsecondary incentive funding model.

Recommendations

STATEWIDE

- **Promote the value and benefit of dual credit courses.**
  - **Rationale:** State funding does not cover institutions’ dual credit course delivery costs. Sustaining or increasing the state’s financial commitment to dual credit implies ensuring that legislators understand the return on the state’s biennial investment in priority and CTE dual credit courses.

- **Encourage:**
  - **The Dual Credit Advisory Council and CHE, DOE leadership to assess viable alternatives to the current dual credit funding model.**
    - **Rationale:** CHE’s 2021 Early College Credit report notes gains in the percentage of high school students earning college credit. Yet the state dual credit appropriation has dropped from $50 per credit hour to $45 per credit hour in the 2021-23 biennium. Institutions’ dual credit expenses are manifold. Rising dual credit enrollments should be matched by increased funding to sustain equitable access while maintaining program quality.
      - **A CHE annual report and recommendations** could lay the foundation for increased biennial appropriations. An annual report might document the funds institutions apply towards administration, program oversight and dual credit instructor professional development. CHE recommendations based on local expenditures could make the case for increased state funds to continue to support program growth while maintaining program quality.
  - **Increased funding for school districts, while sustaining support for postsecondary partners.**
    - **Rationale:** High schools receive no additional state funding for dual credit offerings, including for early college certificate and degree completions. Yet dual credit courses are more costly to offer than traditional high school courses.
    - **What this might look like:** Increased funding to reimburse an amount to postsecondary providers absorbing the tuition costs for low-income students.
  - **Consider incentives to districts for high school students completing a postsecondary credential of value.**
**Rationale:** District financial incentives to increase the number of students completing a credential could incent advising students into course sequences that lead to a credential, including the Indiana College Core, postsecondary certificates, and industry-recognized credentials. These incentives would be similar to those already provided for academic honors and technical honors diploma completion.

**What this might look like:** Additional state incentive funds for secondary and postsecondary partners for completion of postsecondary credentials by low-income and underrepresented students.

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**SECONDARY**

- **Rethink secondary funding reimbursement for dual enrollment students.**
  - **Rationale:** Depending upon the community, dual enrollment tuition may be covered by community foundations, grants, private donors, students and their families, and school districts; districts must also fund equipment upgrades, implement wraparound supports, and arrange transportation. Although high school teachers do not teach dual enrollment courses, districts nevertheless incur a financial loss when they must cover the same staffing and facilities costs while a small number of dual enrollment students travel to the postsecondary institution campus. In addition, secondary partners delivering CTE dual credit courses may have additional expenses including equipment upgrades, wraparound supports, transportation, and possibly textbook and fee expenses not covered by Perkins dollars or external funders.
  - **What this might look like:**
    - State funds follow the high school student to the postsecondary institution
    - Create a flag in the InTERS data management system to indicate when a CTE student is completing a course on a college campus.

- **Increase state financial support (or dedicate Perkins funds) for CTE certification exam fees.**
  - **Rationale:** Districts and career centers cannot cover certification exam fees for all students. As a result, students completing course sequences preparing them for a certification exam might not sit for the certification exam. Indiana already pays AP exam fees for select subject areas; Indiana should consider broadening this appropriation to ensure return on investment for CTE students positioned to take certification exams.

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**POST SECONDARY**

- **Establish statewide guidelines on waiving students’ on-campus student fees.**
  - **Rationale:** Dual credit students are likely not using services (e.g., recreation, health center, transportation services) they are assessed for; dual enrollment students may be assessed fees for services their school district is providing (e.g., a technology fee when the student is using a district-provided laptop and using minimal on-campus internet). Ivy Tech’s only on-campus fees are technology fees for non-hardware services (e.g., Learning Management System, tutor.com access, etc.).

- **Explore models to reduce barriers posed by textbook costs:**
Rationale: College textbooks are typically more expensive than high school textbooks – particularly expensive for STEM courses; changes to textbook selections for a given course are more frequent in postsecondary settings than in secondary schools. Strategies to lower textbook costs borne by external partners, districts, or families could broaden course availability and access. Ivy Tech’s Ivy+ model for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 academic years covers textbook costs for both matriculated students and dual credit students.

- **Encourage use of open educational resources (OER) in on-campus and dual credit offerings.**
  - **Rationale:** OER are available at low to no cost and enhance academic freedom by allowing faculty to customize course content to specific learning outcomes. Dual credit courses must use the same or comparable textbook as used in the on-campus offering; broader institutional adoption of OER could minimize or eliminate textbook costs in dual credit classrooms.

## Course Access and Availability

### Unlocking Potential’s Call to Action

States ensure that students are able to access college in high school courses, regardless of geography, with pathways that maximize opportunities for students to earn multiple credits and facilitate students exploring academic and career areas of interest while ensuring that those courses count toward high school graduation requirements.

### Indiana Policies That Relate to These Metrics

- All public high schools are required to offer at least two dual credit courses
- CHE/IDOE are working to make Indiana College Core available statewide. Currently, 1 in 5 high schools offer the Indiana College Core.
- The Governor Workforce Cabinet’s [Next Level Programs of Study](https://www.idoe.in.gov/about/next-level-programs) (NLPS), which are new CTE course offerings that will be available starting in the 2022-2023 school year.
  - NLPS programs and courses are aligned directly to postsecondary courses and programs
  - NLPS programs lead to postsecondary credentials and industry certifications
- University of Indianapolis’ CELL has efforts underway to increase access to early colleges in rural and urban communities.
- Per NACEP and Higher Learning Commission requirements, the same admissions and placement requirements are in place for dual credit and regularly matriculated students.
- Ivy Tech Knowledge Assessment readiness and placement tool provides a holistic, low-stakes placement approach. This tool permanently replaces Accuplacer at all Ivy Tech campuses.
- Dual credit courses apply towards the honors diploma, graduation pathways, and increased postsecondary educational attainment.
Recommendations

RESOURCES

- Develop and disseminate tools for local secondary, postsecondary partners to identify and address root causes contributing to inequities in course availability, participation, and success.
  - **Rationale:** While resources such as the CHE’s 2021 Early College Credit report identify lower dual credit participation rates among low-income, Hispanic/Latino, and Black students and in some counties in the state, to date no statewide tools have been developed to help local stakeholders identify and address root causes of lower participation rates among some student subgroups. One stakeholder group member commented that every local root cause discussion she had been engaged in identified different root causes for inequities in dual credit participation – in one partnership, it may be lack of program access among English language learners, in another, placement tests that reflect cultural biases, and elsewhere, a lack of credentialed teachers.

- **Conduct a landscape analysis on ICC availability.**
  - **Rationale:** This statewide analysis would identify which course areas each non-ICC high school or district needs to provide in order to offer the ICC.

COMMUNICATION

- **Launch state K-16 or K-to-career efforts to communicate dual credit availability and participation benefits.**
  - **Rationale:** Stakeholders commented that all too often, many local stakeholders familiar with dual credit tend to view dual credit course completion as an end unto itself, and not understand dual credit as a means to the actual end of postsecondary credential completion. Meanwhile, as the new graduation pathways are raising dual credit awareness among more students and parents, many families remain unfamiliar with the benefits of dual credit participation. And even if families are aware of the availability and participation benefits of dual credit, students, parents and teachers are all too often unfamiliar with public-facing dual credit resources.
    - **What this might look like:**
      - Communicating that dual credit is in service to credential completion, and the benefits of credential completion
      - Convoking focus groups of student, parents, and counselors to hone dual credit messaging and communications

- **Develop a transparent ongoing communication plan to communicate to students and parents the local menu of postsecondary completion pathways that align with Indiana’s new graduation pathways.**
  - **Rationale:** It is unclear if and how districts are clarifying the various paths to postsecondary completion.
  - **What this might look like:**
* Communicating the numerous types of pathways (e.g., design technology pathway, pre-nursing pathway, Indiana College Core pathway, etc.) that may align with students’ career goals.
* Making clear that the goal isn’t dual credit participation in and of itself, but rather, dual credit as a means to postsecondary completion.
* Beginning this communication ideally starting in the middle grades, and including program eligibility requirements in these communications.
* Ensuring secondary partners are using various means (e.g., school website, course catalog, etc.) to communicate dual credit availability and pathways.

**Establish customizable state-level templates for high school and postsecondary partners to coordinate communications to parents.**

- **Rationale:** One stakeholder commented that even as a parent “in the know,” he found communications about dual credit enrollment, billing processes, and timelines confusing. CHE, DOE, and the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet (GWC) could coordinate to develop clear, easy-to-understand, locally customizable templates for parent communications on these and other topics, that may support greater course-taking particularly among first-generation college-goers, whose parents cannot rely on personal experience to navigate these issues.

**Promote student, parent, and administrator awareness of and access to secondary and postsecondary partners’ non-academic and academic supports.**

- **Rationale:** NACEP standards require institutions to offer high school students access to the same academic and non-academic supports as to matriculated students, but counselors may be unaware these services are available (and as such not spread the word to students); dual credit students may not know how to access these services.

**SYSTEMS CHANGE**

- **Rethink the 11th and 12th grade year to promote access to dual credit coursework leading to postsecondary credential completion by high school graduation.**
  
- **Rationale:** During their final semester of high school, seniors may be enrolled in a light course load or in electives that do not advance them in achieving college and career goals. Some options would allow them to complete credits applicable to their desired program of study while allowing them to participate in extracurricular high school activities and walk with their class at high school graduation.

- **What this might look like:**
  
  - Encourage a “semester 8” option allowing seniors who have fulfilled graduation requirements to enroll nearly full-time or full-time on-campus during their last semester of high school.
  
  - Revitalize local high school master schedules to support postsecondary credential completion.
  
  - Developing and scaling successful online delivery of dual credit courses to broaden access for students in rural areas.
Instructor Capacity

Unlocking Potential's Call to Action
States develop strategies to recruit, support, and diversify the pool of instructors with the qualifications to teach college in high school while encouraging collaboration between K-12 and postsecondary partners as college in high school programs are scaled.

2021 CHE Early College Credit Report Recommendation
Ensure more high school teachers have the academic preparation and credentials required to teach dual credit.

Indiana Policies That Relate to These Metrics
- STEM Teach, Teach Dual Credit Indiana, Rural Early College Network (RECN), and other funded efforts are in place to credential more – and more diverse – dual credit teachers
- CHE collects dual credit supply-and-demand data from institutions for current dual credit teachers
- State policy allows districts to offer credentialed dual credit teachers a pay incentive
- All Indiana dual credit postsecondary preferred providers are NACEP-accredited, or Indiana-approved
  - NACEP accreditation faculty standards require:
    - First-time teacher orientation
    - Annual discipline-specific PD and ongoing collegial interaction
- Institutions are making strides in making dual credit professional development more collaborative
  - Convening committees of high school and postsecondary instructors to learn best practices from one another
- The first phase of the DOE Educator Supply-and-Demand Marketplace was launched in March 2022

Recommendations

RECRUITMENT
- Initiate a statewide teacher recruitment campaign.
  - Rationale: The shortage of adjunct-eligible high school teachers, especially in rural and urban areas, is part of a broader preK-12 teacher recruitment and retention challenge. A single campaign could engage prospective teachers and encourage secondary teacher candidates to pursue credentialing to teach dual credit courses.
- Launch a “Just Apply” marketing campaign for career center director, high school principals, and high school CTE instructors unsure if CTE teachers hold the credentials to teach dual credit.
• **Rationale:** Some high school CTE instructors eligible to be dual credit instructors believe themselves to lack the credentials to teach college coursework. A statewide “Just Apply” marketing campaign, perhaps as a partnership among IDOE, CHE, GWC, and the Indiana Association for Career and Technical Education (IN-ACTE) could invite secondary CTE teachers to “just apply” – to submit their resumes to their local college – to see if in fact they hold the qualifications to serve as CTE dual credit instructors.

• **Coordinate with institutional administrators, teacher professional organizations to clearly and consistently communicate about dual credit credentialing opportunities to individuals already considering or in master’s coursework.**

• **Rationale:** High school teachers are already pursuing master’s degrees in education fields (e.g., curriculum and instruction) in order to meet continuing education unit (CEU) requirements or to make step and lane increases in their district’s salary schedule. Communications from teacher professional organizations such as the Indiana State Teachers Association, department heads, or graduate advisors to teachers considering or in the early stages of a master’s degree about the value of teaching dual credit could persuade those educators to complete the graduate credits needed to be credentialed to teach dual credit. Communications from education and discipline-specific faculty to undergraduate teacher candidates could persuade preservice teachers to pursue obtain dual credit credentialed before entering the classroom.

**Credential**

• **Consider a menu of additional state and local up-credentialing strategies.**

  • **Rationale:** Approaches in addition to STEM Teach and Teach Dual Credit Indiana could support dual credit credentialing of individuals not yet in – or working their way through – the teacher credentialing process or considering – or pursuing – master’s degree to move up on step and lane salary schedules.

  • **What this might look like:**

    - **Strengthen, diversify teacher pipeline:** Expanding existing (or launching new) Grow Your Own programs that prepare candidates for secondary certification and credential them to teach dual credit courses, or extending the offering of entry-level education major offerings through dual credit programs.

    - **Encourage institutional adoption of alternative master’s degree programs:** Alternative master’s degree programs could be modeled after efforts at institutions such as Southwest Minnesota State University’s Graduate Credit for Prior Learning for English and math, or SMSU’s Master’s in Science in Education program that bundles courses with discipline-specific content and pedagogical content into a single graduate degree.

• **More broadly promote to secondary audiences the graduate course and degree options available through funded programs.**

  • **Rationale:** Just because programs exist doesn’t mean that all secondary teachers are aware the programs exist, or the benefits of their making dual credit opportunities available to students.
- **What this might look like:** Collaborations with IDOE, the Indiana State Teachers Association, and other partners to message the opportunities available through STEM Teach and Teach Dual Credit Indiana to (1) veteran teachers; and (2) Minority Teacher Scholarship and Student Teaching Stipend for Minorities program awardees.

- **Encourage higher education institutions to enhance communication to local high school teachers on credentialing options.**

- **Invite two- and four-year institutions statewide to establish partnerships creating seamless transitions from associate’s to bachelor’s to master’s degree programs.**
  - **Rationale:** Seamless transitions can save teacher candidates time and money and provide a clear through-line for the ultimate goal of becoming dual credit-credentialed.
  - **What this might look like:** In fall 2021, Ivy Tech and Marian University launched a partnership creating a pathway for students to complete an associate’s degree at Ivy Tech (including through dual credit courses), and transfer to Marian University to earn a bachelor’s degree (including teacher certification requirements) and discipline-specific master’s for $45,000 not factoring in financial aid, potentially greatly reducing the cost.

- **Encourage partnerships with minority-serving institutions to support dual credit credentialing of diverse teacher candidates and graduate degree-seeking students.**
  - **Rationale:** A 2022 report notes: “According to a 2021 report citing 2017 research: ‘Although MSIs represent just 13 percent of educator-preparation providers in the United States, they produce more than 50 percent of the nation’s teachers of color, including more than half of the bachelor’s degrees in education earned by Latinos, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders and nearly 40 percent of the bachelor’s degrees in education earned by African Americans.’ To increase the number and diversity of high school teachers credentialed to teach college courses, state and local initiatives might consider explicit partnerships with MSIs.”
  - **What this might look like:** An Ivy Tech and Martin University partnership guarantees admission to Martin University’s School of Education and financial aid to students earning Ivy Tech associate degrees in elementary and secondary education.

**Incentives**

- **Leverage Title II Part A ESSA funds to support efforts to expand the pool of credentialed dual credit instructors.**
  - **Rationale:** Tapping existing federal funds would supplement the allocations the state and private partners are already making to expand the dual credit teacher pool.
  - **What this might look like:** Before committing Title II Part A funds to teacher up-credentialing efforts, the IDOE would need to assess the current usage of such funds to evaluate the impact of redirecting some funds to dual credit credentialing initiatives.

- **Establish financial and hiring incentives for dual credit teachers.**
Rationale: Messaging the financial and employment benefits might persuade not only veteran teachers, but pre-service teacher candidates, to pursue dual credit credentialing.

What this might look like: Districts and local collective bargaining units might create teacher career ladders that incent educators to become credentialed to teach dual credit. Local efforts might also provide bonuses to dual credit-credentialed teachers who commit to teaching dual credit courses in high-need high schools.

- **Encourage local collective bargaining agreements and district hiring practices to offer non-financial incentives for dual credit teachers and teachers seeking to be credentialed.**
  - Rationale: Non-financial incentives can be as persuasive as financial incentives.
  - What this might look like: Incentives for dual credit-credentialed teachers may include additional planning time and a lower prep load. Teachers pursuing dual credit credentialing might receive a flex period at the end of the day and/or a lower prep load.

**Innovation**

- **Explore co-teaching models with the Higher Learning Commission.**
  - Rationale: Co-teaching models are already being applied in other states. Why not in Indiana?
  - What this might look like: State-developed standards governing Oregon’s Sponsored Dual Credit model resemble NACEP standards but require a faculty member to serve as the instructor of record, and a high school teacher to provide instruction under the faculty member’s guidance. The faculty member leads in course design and delivery.

- **Expand CTE co-ops to share instructor availability across schools**
  - Rationale: Sharing teachers is built into the co-op model. Why not share dual credit teachers through the same model?

- **Establish a state-level summer externship program to help HS CTE teachers gain recent industry experience**
  - Rationale: Dual credit credentialing requirements typically require instructors to hold professional certification or licensure in their field and/or two years of related work experience (see for example the Faculty Credential Standards in section 7.1 of Ivy Tech’s Academic Support and Operations Manual. Summer externships may be the only opportunity for some full-time CTE teachers to gain recent industry experience.

- **Further leverage eligible third-party training providers to expand CTE course offerings**
  - Rationale: The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) maintains a list of eligible third-party training providers approved to offer CTE dual credit courses. Leveraging these training providers, particularly in high-need occupations such as health care, could fill gaps in the number of credentialed high school teachers in these fields while also providing students with valuable real-world experience.

- **Enhance state, regional, local supports for remote course delivery**
- **Rationale**: Synchronous and asynchronous dual credit course delivery are already being used by CELL’s Rural Early College Network and local dual credit partnerships using teacher share models (such as the COSMOS partnership among three high schools in southern Indiana). Additional approaches could further extend the reach of dual credit-credentialed teachers.

- **Establish CHE policy or guidelines for dual credit teacher professional development**
  - **Rationale**: Stakeholder group members indicated that while institutions must meet NACEP accreditation standards, which require ongoing dual credit teacher professional development, the intensity and quality of such professional development is highly variable from campus to campus statewide. CHE could play a valuable role in highlighting best practice or encouraging local dual credit programs to adhere to policy or guidelines reflecting best practice.

  - **What this could look like**: CHE policy or guidelines would specify best practice in the content and delivery of dual credit teacher professional development. At a minimum, such policy or guidelines would require that professional development be ongoing and facilitate collaboration between high school and postsecondary instructors, define dual credit professional development quality measures, and elevate examples of local dual credit instructor professional learning practices that reflect CHE-defined quality measures.

**Navigational Supports**

**Unlocking Potential’s Call to Action**
States prioritize the student navigational supports and advising needed to ensure student success in college in high school courses, particularly for those students historically underserved by these programs.

**2021 CHE Early College Credit Report Recommendation**
Use communications and marketing tools to increase the number of high school students who earn a high-value technical certificate or the Indiana College Core.

**Indiana Policies That Relate to These Metrics**

- Indiana College Core provides a set of applicable, transferable dual credit courses
  - The Indiana College Core educator guide and toolkit will be released in spring 2022

- Program information available via:
  - The Learn More Indiana website provides tools to support students, parents, educators, and other dual credit stakeholders in career exploration and planning, postsecondary institution exploration and application supports, and postsecondary financial planning. More supports are available through the Learn More Indiana Educator Guide and the Learn More Indiana School Finder Tool.

  - The Indiana Credential Registry identifies high schools offering the Indiana College Core.
Within Reach: A Policy Roadmap for Dual Credit in Indiana

- **TransferIN.net** provides a wealth of information, including on which liberal arts and CTE dual credit courses are offered at the maximum $25 per credit hour tuition rate, and how liberal arts and CTE dual credit courses will transfer among public postsecondary institutions statewide.

- **Next Level Programs of Study** identify CTE course sequences that include dual credit courses and lead to a postsecondary technical certificate at Ivy Tech or certificate of graduation at Vincennes University.

**Recommendations**

**COMMUNICATION**

- **Enhance state and local communication on dual credit.**
  
  **Rationale:** Stakeholders noted the need to communicate the availability and benefits of dual credit opportunities in the middle and elementary grades, particularly to help students and families understand how middle school math course selections may impact student eligibility for dual credit math and science offerings. Stakeholders also noted that while high school students, parents, teachers, counselors, and administrators are increasingly aware of the availability and benefits of the Indiana College Core, many such individuals are as of yet minimally aware or not aware of Indiana College Core opportunities and advantages.

  **What this might look like:** State communication might include a database or other tool allowing students and others to see which courses they need to complete the Indiana College Core and Next Level Programs of Study. Marketing might also communicate the availability and benefits of courses, including online courses, that lead to postsecondary certifications. These platforms might advise students – or support high school counselors in advising students – by defining career paths in terms of stackable credentials.

- **Launch Indiana Graduates Prepared to Succeed (GPS)**
  
  **Rationale:** To be launched by IDOE in 2022, [Indiana GPS](#) will provide data on credential completion among secondary education providers statewide, hopefully minimizing “random acts of dual credit.”

**RESOURCES**

- **Create shared state CHE/IDOE one-pager templates for local customization**
  
  **Rationale:** State-developed templates amenable to local customization could be designed for each of multiple audiences – e.g., students, parents, teachers, counselors, and administrators. These one-pagers could provide clear answers to basic questions on the benefits of taking early college coursework, and the differences between early college and AP, among other topics. These could be published in other languages for parents unable to access resources available only in English.

- **Consider menu of approaches to ensure all elementary, middle, and high school students access to high-quality early career awareness and exploration.**
- **Rationale:** Indiana Career Explorer offers a career interests assessment and career exploration tools.

- **What this might look like:** Indiana may wish to pursue additional strategies that allow all K-12 students to assess real versus perceived strengths and weaknesses in career aptitudes, and receive real-world, hands-on learning experiences related to high-wage, in-demand occupations in Indiana.

### TRAINING

- **Offer in-depth state-level training to high school counselors and college advisors on a variety of dual credit topics.**
  - **Rationale:** Stakeholders commented that high school counselors are a key point of contact for all students and significantly influence student course selections and decisions that impact students' transition to postsecondary education and employment. Stakeholders also noted high turnover rates among college advisors, and the need for ongoing training to keep both high school counselors and college advisors up-to-date on policy and research related to dual credit.

  - **What this might look like:** In-depth high school counselor and college advisor training might be delivered – in person, online, both, or in a hybrid format – during the summer or during an annual state workshop at the beginning of each school year. Such training might be offered in three strands – one exclusively for high school counselors, one just for college advisors, and a third combining both audiences. These trainings could be coordinated by a third-party entity and reflect cross-agency collaboration in the development and delivery of training content. Topics covered in the training might place dual credit information in the context of the ecosystem of opportunities to earn college credit in high school including, dual credit, AP, International Baccalaureate (IB), CLEP, and the Cambridge AICE Diploma. Trainings might also offer clarity on the differences between and relative student advantages and credential applicability of priority dual credit, CTE dual credit, early college and CTE early college. Trainings might additionally communicate:
    - The value of postsecondary attainment and how completing ICC and CTE certificates contributes to students' postsecondary attainment
    - The transferability and applicability of dual credit courses
    - The financial implications of dual credit participation
    - The availability of resources such as TransferIN.net
    - The value and application of Next Level Programs of Study

### SYSTEM CHANGES

- **Explore efforts to extend counseling capacity beyond high school counselors.**
  - **Rationale:** As stakeholders noted, high school counselors are understaffed and overworked, especially dealing with student academic and mental health issues related to the pandemic.
Within Reach: A Policy Roadmap for Dual Credit in Indiana

What this might look like: Indiana might explore the adoption of policies and/or programs such as those in Arkansas, Iowa, and North Carolina that establish dedicated career and college advisors who provide regular one-on-one or small group advising on dual credit course selections across multiple high schools within a region. These college and career advisors are typically housed at a local college or university. Although not to scale, Ivy Tech employs over 40 College Connection Coaches throughout the state. Alternatively, Indiana might consider ensuring that work-based learning coordinators and CTE instructors have access to (or are required to participate in) training on providing students with meaningful and effective career and college coaching.

- Develop and issue state guidance/best practices/training for high school administrators, teachers, and counselors on partnering with two or more institutions to offer the same or similar dual credit course.
  - Rationale: Multiple stakeholders commented on high schools offering the same or similar dual credit course through two or more postsecondary partners. Students enroll in identical or nearly identical course offerings, not realizing that one credit will apply towards general education or major requirements, and the other will apply as elective credit. These practices dampen state return on investment in priority and CTE dual credit tuition.

- Offer a single honors diploma designation with various means to earn it.
  - Rationale: Stakeholders commented that under the current model offering an academic and technical endorsement to the high school diploma, parents typically advise students toward the coursework they are most familiar with themselves. Stakeholders also observed that the “academic” and “technical” designations create a false dichotomy, as all technical fields require mastery of academic skills and vice versa.

- What this might look like: Stakeholders encouraged the state to consider a single honors diploma designation, that students might earn by demonstrating academic mastery and the attainment of CTE and/or non-CTE knowledge and skills.

- Establish state guidelines to facilitate more effective local collaboration between secondary and postsecondary partners in enrollment and data sharing.

Conclusion

Indiana has emerged as a national leader in dual credit course access and participation. That said, the 2021 CHE Early College Credit report noted lower dual credit participation rates among low-income students, students of color, and students lacking geographic access to dual credit opportunities. The present report identifies state policy challenges and related recommendations that, if addressed, could greatly enhance equitable access to and participation in high-quality dual credit programming for all Hoosier students. It is hoped that state and local policymakers across role groups, representing K-12 and the two-year and four-year higher education sectors, will apply the recommendations presented in this report to further establish Indiana as a national leader in equitable dual credit participation and quality.