Advancing Equitable Dual Enrollment

Initial Findings from
*the Dual Enrollment for
Equitable Completion Initiative*

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Rogéair Purnell, PhD

Diane Rodriguez-Kiino, PhD

Ashley Redix, PhD

Darla Cooper, EdD

Kelley Karandjeff, EdM

Acknowledgments

Hartnell College Partnership

Yeraldiny (Geri) Alonzo
Program Assistant, College Readiness
Hartnell College

Jennifer Elemen, EdD
Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Salinas Union High School District

Melissa Gonzalez
Counselor
Salinas Union High School District

Romero Jalomo, PhD
Vice President, Division of Student Affairs
Hartnell College

Brock Ketterling
English Instructor
Salinas Union High School District

Dr. Juan Mendoza-Romero
Counselor/Pupil Personnel Specialist
Salinas Union High School District

Martha Pantoja
Assistant Principal, Soledad High School
Soledad Unified School District

Sergio Tavizon
Counselor
Salinas Union High School District

Laurencia Walker
Director, Career Ladders Project
(Former Director, College Readiness, Hartnell College)

David Wirth
English Instructor
Salinas Union High School District

Madera Community College Partnership

Rheanna Andrews, MA
English Teacher
Madera South High School

Stephanie Hamblen, MA
Dean, Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
Madera South High School

Kristin McKenna, MS
Director, College and Career Readiness
Madera Unified School District

Jeffrey Moosios, MA
Social Science Teacher
Madera South High School

Laura Moosios, MA
Counselor
Madera South High School

Amanda Ramirez
Counselor
Madera High School

Cindy Rodriguez
Counselor
Madera High School

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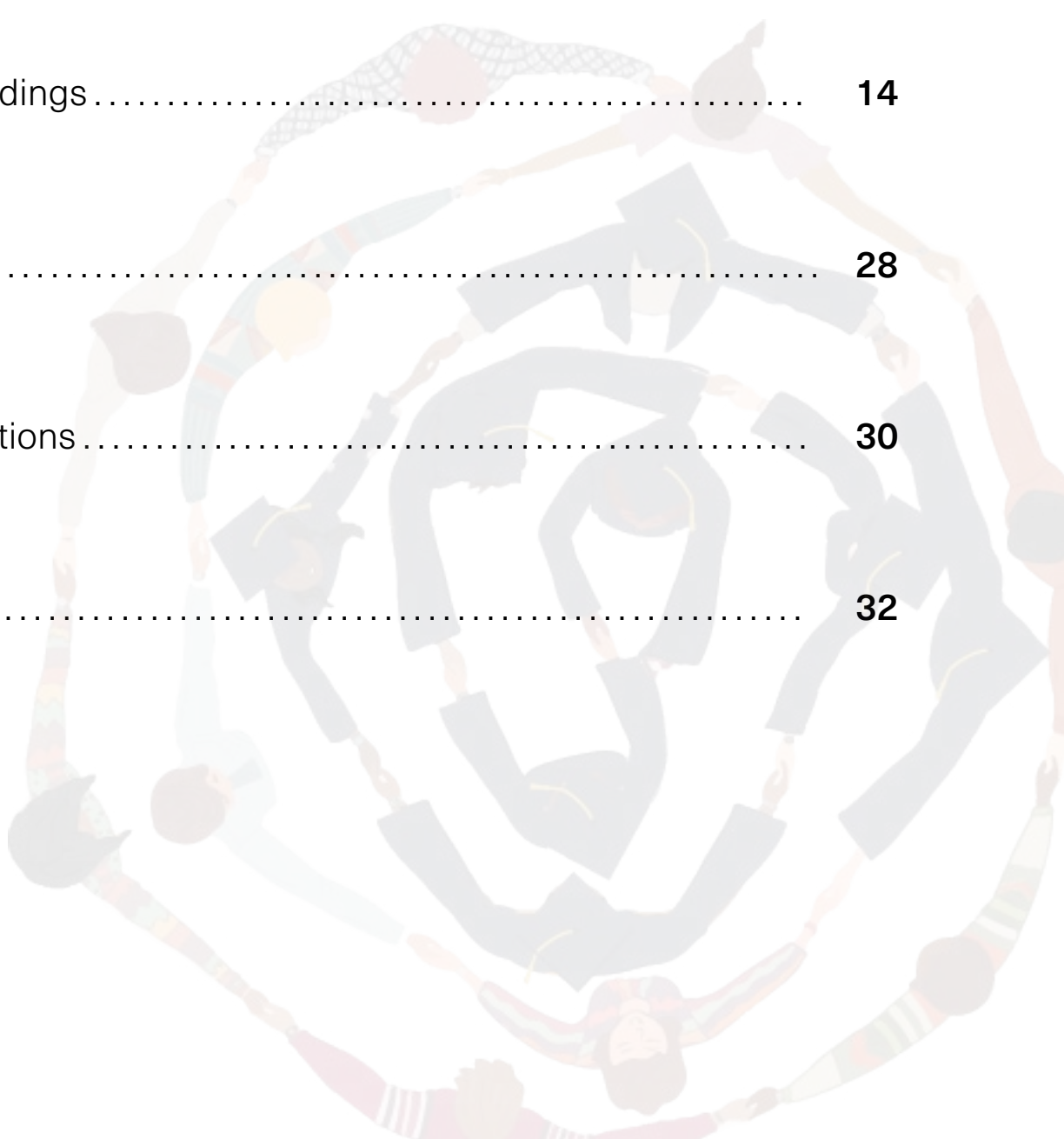
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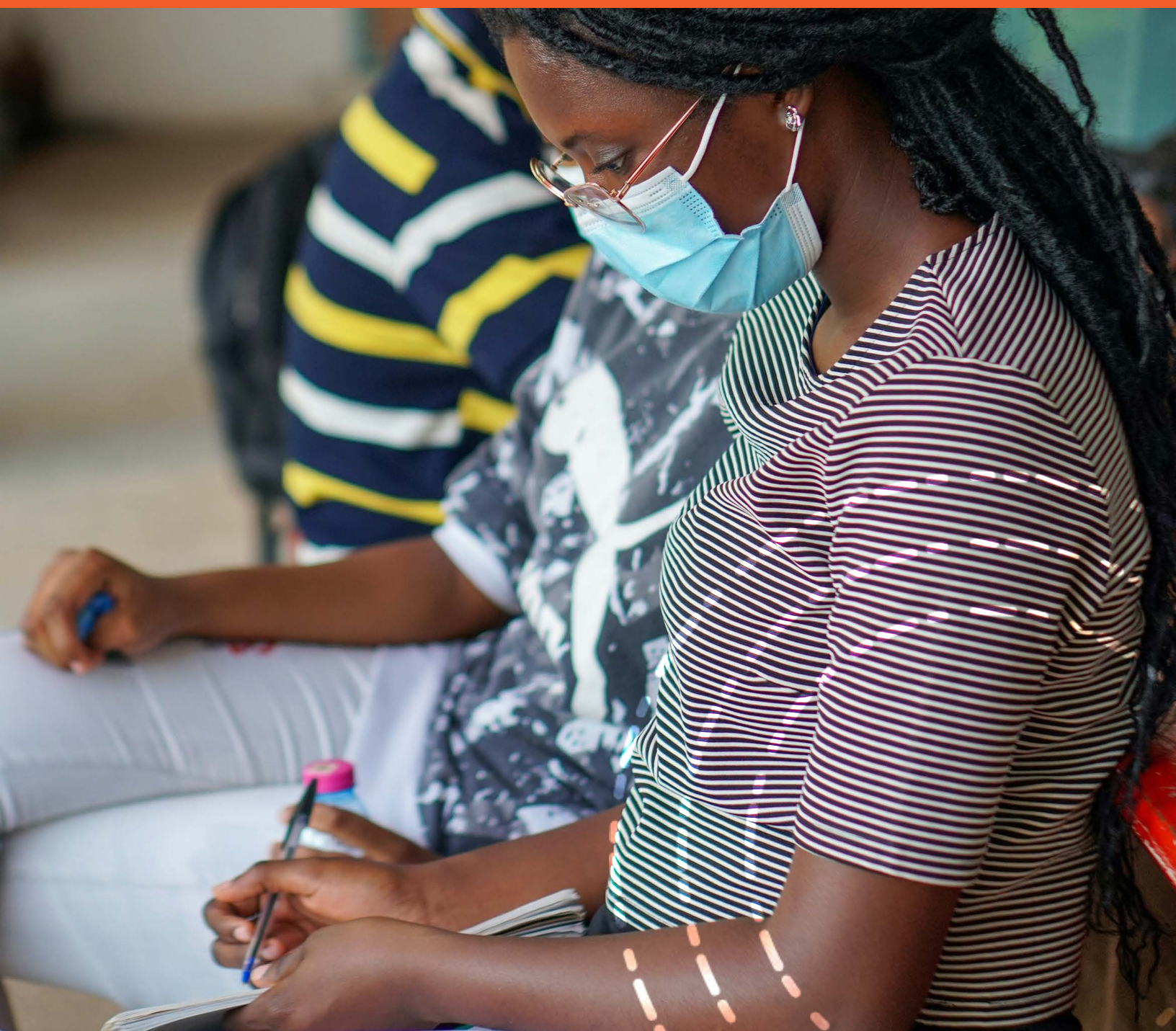
DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS ENROLL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS in college credit coursework.[1] Traditionally, these programs have engaged scholastically advanced and college-bound students. For the college-bound student, **dual enrollment presents new challenges and offers an opportunity to earn college credit beyond Advanced Placement (AP). It further allows college-bound students to complete the A–G courses[2] required for admission to the California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC) systems.** In 2015, the College and Career Access Pathway (CCAP; Assembly Bill (AB) 288) partnerships expanded the **reach of dual enrollment to include students who may need additional support to be prepared for college or career** with "the goal of developing seamless pathways from high school to California Community Colleges (CCC) for career technical education (CTE) or preparation for transfer, improving high school graduation rates, or helping high school pupils achieve college and career readiness" (California Legislative Information, 2015; AB 288 Analysis). This and subsequent legislation (e.g., AB 30) have stimulated interest in and the growth of dual enrollment as **a tool to advance equity, economic mobility, and college and career preparation and success.**

In year one of this three-year mixed methods research endeavor, RDP Consulting **presents information gleaned from seven of 10 public K12[3] and California community college (CCC) partnerships participating in *Dual Enrollment for Equitable Completion (DE4EC).*** These partnerships were selected for funding by a collaboration of three funders, see Sidebar 1.1, *Dual Enrollment for Equitable Completion,* in response to their commitment and efforts to increase African American/Black, Latina/o/x, and low-income students' access to and success in dual enrollment offerings, a proxy for equity. The purpose of this first year of research was to examine how the partnerships purposefully included historically marginalized students in dual enrollment opportunities. To take this deep dive, RDP Consulting collaborated with the Educational Results Partnership (Ed Results) and the Cal-PASS Plus program to obtain quantitative data to execute a comparative analysis of academic outcomes, and conducted interviews with students, parents, and educators across the seven of the 10 partnerships. This report is intended for current and future high school and community college dual enrollment partners and stakeholders within the broader field of college access for historically excluded populations.

Dual Enrollment for Equitable Completion Overview

Dual Enrollment for Equitable Completion (DE4EC) is a multi-year collaborative initiative among the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, College Futures Foundation, and Tipping Point Community, carried out with research support from RDP Consulting. *DE4EC* helps California community colleges and their high school partners build dual enrollment programs centered on strengthening equitable access and completion outcomes for students underrepresented in higher education, particularly African American/Black, Latina/o/x, and students experiencing economic disadvantage.

DE4EC supports 10 community colleges and their high school partners: Berkeley City College, Compton College, Contra Costa College, Cuyamaca College, East Los Angeles College, Fresno City College, Gavilan College, Hartnell College, Madera Community College, and Skyline College. Each of these collaborations represents different levels of capacity and stages of dual enrollment program implementation.

Career Ladders Project, an organization focused on promoting equitable community college redesign and an expert on dual enrollment practice and policy, supports the work of each partnership by convening a community of practice and providing capacity building as needed.

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1. In California, dual enrollment is defined in the legislation, Assembly Bill (AB) 288, College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP), as a "special part-time" or "special full-time" student, which refers to high school or other eligible special admit students who are enrolled in community college credit-bearing courses (see CLP & RP Group, 2016). A more recent bill, AB 30, protects, promotes, and expands dual enrollment offered as part of CCAP by removing several barriers to its implementation for the districts and their students such as streamlining the school district to college district agreement process, allowing the inclusion of continuation school students, and requiring only one application to be completed by students during for the duration of their dual enrollment participation.
2. Fifteen year-long courses that a high school student should complete with a C grade or better to, at the minimum, be eligible for consideration for entry at a University of California. College coursework completed during high school can help to meet these subject requirements. The "A" refers to history, "B" English, "C" mathematics, "D" science, "E" a language other than English, and "F" is for visual and performing arts, and "G" is a "college-preparatory" elective including college courses or a language other than English (reference page).
3. Although some of the partnerships include middle schools sites, the majority of the partnerships focus at the secondary level so we often use "high school" in place of K12.

Report Overview

THE FIRST SECTION PROVIDES A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE *DE4EC* initiative followed by a review of relevant literature. Next, we offer a summary of the research methodology, including sample population, research instruments, data collection, and analysis. **We examine key qualitative findings thematically organized, encapsulating successes, promising practices, and challenges.[4]** Whenever possible, we insert participant quotes that represent and contextualize the findings. Based on participants' responses, a concluding section highlights recommendations and suggestions to *clarify, elevate,* and *catalyze* equitable dual enrollment efforts state- and nationwide.

Dual Enrollment for Equitable Completion

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Gates Foundation) and College Futures Foundation (College Futures) have been partnering since 2019 to **support dual enrollment given its potential to increase equitable college access and outcomes particularly for historically marginalized students.** Tipping Point Community (Tipping Point), a like-minded Bay Area partner with a poverty-fighting agenda, joined the conversation one year later. The *DE4EC* initiative is an outgrowth of this funder alliance and was established to:

1. Inform the grantmaking approaches and strategies of the funders to enable them to align and support the dual enrollment partnerships;
2. Understand and inform the work of the practitioners who are part of the initiative;
3. Support learning and continuous improvement among partners; and
4. Share key lessons and learnings to advance equitable dual enrollment development and implementation.

As a leader in dual enrollment practice and design, Career Ladders Project (CLP) is the *DE4EC* capacity building provider and professional development convener. CLP is joined by RDP Consulting, a consulting firm committed to advancing equity through culturally responsive research, evaluation and leadership development, that will lead a learning and inquiry process to explore the goals above.

Using a **mixed methods research approach,** over the next three years, RDP Consulting explores how 10 CCC and high school partnerships engaging in the *DE4EC* initiative provide expanded and equity-focused dual enrollment. RDP Consulting's Theory of Change postulates that learner-centered activities that focus on recruiting, supporting, and guiding African American/Black, Latina/o/x, and low-income high school students will increase their access to dual enrollment. This achievement underscores a college-going culture, supports career and job readiness, and ultimately, leads to more positive academic, economic, and personal outcomes for participating students.

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4. We did not evaluate the effectiveness of the approaches, policies, and processes that are highlighted as promising.

Literature Review

"Leg up, jumpstart, and unlocking potential," are some of the ways in which education researchers describe dual enrollment (Friedmann et al., 2020, p. 1; Jobs for the Future [JFF] & CLP, 2018; Kurlaender et al. (2020), p. 1; The Education-Trust West, 2021, p. 1). Typically, a partnership between community colleges and their feeder high schools or school districts, dual enrollment presents an opportunity for high school students to take college classes, heightening their knowledge of post-secondary possibilities. Likewise, dual enrollment strengthens students' confidence in their ability to navigate and succeed in college coursework. These programs are particularly useful for first-generation students who may be unaware of the economic and social mobility advantages of a postsecondary education.

In 2020, over 112,000 California high school graduates participated in dual enrollment, an increase of over 50% in just four years (Rodriguez & Gao, 2021). Additional research shows that nearly one in five California high school seniors have taken a community college course (Kurlaender et al., 2020). With an increase in opportunities to take college courses during high school, African American/Black and Latina/o/x student participation rates in dual enrollment grew between 2015 and 2020 (Rodriguez, & Gao, 2021). Dual enrollment is associated with positive academic outcomes, such as increasing high school grade point average (GPA) and completion rates and college preparedness and enrollment (Berger et al., 2013; JFF & CLP, 2018; Hughes et al., 2012; Lui et al., 2020; Purnell & White, 2021; Struhl & Vargas, 2012; What Works Clearinghouse, 2017). However, participating students are often more likely to: (a) have parents who attended college, (b) identify as Asian, White, and/or female, and (c) identify as middle and upper income (An, 2013b; Friedman et al., 2020; Kurlaender et al., 2021; Rivera et al., 2019). Thus, despite the increase in participation as cited by Rodriguez and Gao, the number of African American/Black, Latina/o/x, and Native American students remains low given their enrollment percentages across California school districts or when compared to other racial and ethnic groups (The Education Trust-West, 2021; Kurlaender et al., 2020).

Increasing access to dual enrollment could have a powerful impact on historically underrepresented students, including those pursuing career and vocation-focused pathways, who are African American/Black, Latina/o/x, low- or middle-achieving students, and males (Community College Research Center [CCRC], 2012; Liu et al., 2020; Karp et al., 2007; Policy Leadership Trust, 2022; Minaya, 2021; Rodriguez et al., 2012). In a comparative study where non-dual enrollment and dual enrollment students were matched by race and ethnicity, African American/Black and Latina/o/x dual enrollment students were found to have positive postsecondary outcomes (e.g., university enrollment), compared to their non-dual enrollment peers (Liu, Minaya, Zhang, & Xu, 2020). Even students with lower high school GPAs can benefit from dual enrollment, doing as well or better in college than their higher achieving high school peers (Edwards et al., 2011; Karp et. al, 2007). Drilling down, recent research by Minaya (2021) suggests that dual enrollment algebra coursework may promote entry and persistence in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) postsecondary pathways for African American/Black and Hispanic students. Although it should be noted that Heavin (2020) found that college algebra enrollment was not associated with increased likelihood of graduating in STEM.

Given California's demographic diversity, it is primed to ensure equitable dual enrollment access to its African American/Black, Latina/o/x, and low-income students. In fact, across many California Community Colleges, "achieving equitable representation in dual enrollment" may simply require enrolling up to two dozen students from historically excluded populations (The Education Trust-West, 2021, p. 6, para 1).Yet to successfully offer dual enrollment to a greater number of disproportionately marginalized students, barriers to access must be removed. These include complicated applications, student fees, eligibility requirements[5], course enrollment restrictions, lack of transportation, textbook costs, and limited student preparation (CLP, 2022; Mehl, Wyner Barnett, Fink, & Jenkins, 2020; Pompelia, 2020; Williams & Perry, 2020).

This report on the *DE4EC* partnerships will inform future research on dual enrollment (Taylor et al., 2022) and provide additional information and data on what constitutes equitable dual enrollment. We will pursue the following inquiries:

- How do academic outcomes compare for a historically underrepresented group of dual enrollment participants and a matched group of their non-dual enrollment peers?

- How do high school and CCC partnerships grow and sustain equitable dual enrollment efforts?

- How can other high school and CCC partnerships design and launch similar efforts?

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5. The California Community College system is open access and does not limit access to students with certain GPAs or by using entrance exams. All are welcome. Similarly dual enrollment access cannot be restricted either with the exception of a very few requirements: parent permission and principal recommendation, and the college can limit enrollment by age or grade level. Beyond that any criteria or entrance requirements that we don't require of adult students we can not require of high school students.

Methodology

As previously mentioned, RDP Consulting **employed a mixed methods research approach,** to explore how 10 CCC and high school partnerships engaging in the *DE4EC* initiative (see Sidebar 2.1, Key Research Questions) provided expanded and equity-focused dual enrollment. It should be noted that ultimately, seven of the 10 partnerships agreed to participate in this first phase of this study and will be encouraged to continue to participate in the next phase. The primary research question in this first year of research was:

> ***How did the partnerships ensure that historically underrepresented and excluded students were engaged, participated, and successful in dual enrollment…and beyond?***

Additional information on the study methods and limitations can be found in the appendices which can be accessed on the [RDP Consulting's project webpage](#).

Research Design

The study **employed a mixed methods design, both quantitative and qualitative in nature.** A quantitative team for RDP Consulting is partnering with a statewide data clearinghouse, Ed Results and Cal-PASS Plus, to obtain statistical data allowing RDP Consulting to execute a comparative analysis of academic outcomes of dual enrollment, non-dual enrollment, and first-time college students. A separate brief summarizing the quantitative findings will be released in early 2023. This report highlights the qualitative findings from the 27 interviews with partners, six student focus group interviews, and two parent focus group interviews that RDP Consulting conducted during Year One of the initiative. A detailed roster of participants is included in the next section. It should be noted that interview participants are also referenced as students, parents, teachers, faculty, staff, administrators, and/or partners. RDP Consulting executed these interviews following the systematic design and review of interview protocols, research and recruitment procedures, and completion of Institutional Review Board applications or human subjects submission forms.

Sidebar 2.1 Key Research Questions[5]

Student-Family Level
Why do students and their parents decide to participate in dual enrollment and what messages, information, experiences, and program elements are particularly engaging and relevant in drawing students to, keeping them involved in, and helping them be prepared for post-secondary / career success?

Student Level
To assess equitability in students' outcomes, how do dually enrolled students' secondary and postsecondary achievement compare to those of similar groups of high school and CCC students disaggregated by age, gender, income, race/ethnicity, etc.?

Program Level
How do and what specific dual enrollment program elements/partners/regulations/structures help or hinder efforts to advance equity in students' understanding of, preparation for, and success in postsecondary education/careers within the Guided Pathways framework?

College Level
In what ways does / can dual enrollment inform and advance the participating CCCs' overall reputation, enrollment, culture, climate, and equity agenda as well as Guided Pathways and other relevant efforts and to what degree?

Partnership Level
What constitutes an effective CCC and high school partnership necessary to successfully support dual enrollment, adapt it, and expand it as an integral vehicle of campus-wide equity?

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6. A separate internal report, *Funder Interview Summary,* summarizes an initial set of interviews with the initiative's foundation leads that explored what these funders and the larger philanthropic community knows about dual enrollment and how their current and future support of dual enrollment efforts could/should be structured to support high school and CCC partnerships.

Participants

To ascertain diverse perspectives on dual enrollment, RDP Consulting conducted a broad range of interviews across seven of the 10 *DE4EC* partnerships. They included:

- 27 partner interviews with both high school and CCC representatives
  - 7 CCC administrators
  - 10 high school administrators
  - 7 high school counselors
  - 6 high school teachers and/or CCC instructors
- 6 student focus group interviews with 52 students
- 2 parent focus group interviews with 10 parents

Partners ranged in **tenure from less than one year to over 30 years.** Nearly all had previous experience leading formidable equity-centered initiatives. Digging into their professional histories, many had held a variety of executive postsecondary and secondary positions, including:

- Vice President, Student Services
- Director, College & Career Readiness
- Director, Pupil Personnel Services
- Director, Dual Enrollment
- Director, Educational Partnerships
- Dean, Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment

Overview of Dual Enrollment Partnerships & Groupings[7]

Partnerships	Length of Partnership as of 2021	Type of Partnership MOU or agreement	# of K12 Partners[8]	Grades Where Dual Enrollment Offered	Location & Type of Instructor	Estimated # of Undup Students in 2021–22	Special Student Populations Served	Estimated % BIPOC students in DE	Region
"New/Emerging" Partnerships									
Contra Costa College	5 years (2016)	CCAP	6	9th–12th	HS (High School)/face-to-face (F2F) only HS teachers	1,000	Cohorts grouped by interest academies (e.g., law, health, IT)	50–74%	Bay Area
Gavilan College	0 years (2021)	MOU	9	9th–12th	HS / F2F only CCC instructors	154	Open to all	25–49%	South Bay
Madera Community College	4 years (2017)	CCAP HS Enrichment	8	10th–12th	HS / F2F only HS teachers College / F2F only CCC instructors	1,015	• 1st gen • Males • GE (General Education) transfer	75% or more	Central
"Stable/Maintaining" Partnerships									
Berkeley City College	3 years (2018)	MOU CCAP	10	9th–12th	HS / F2F or Hybrid HS teachers College / F2F, Hybrid & Online CCC instructors	1,104	• BIPOC students • Students who want to be teachers • Students who want to work in public health	50–74%	Bay Area
Compton College	9 years (2012)	MOU CCAP	9	9th–12th	HS / F2F only College / F2F only CCC instructors	1,400		75% or more	Southern
Cuyamaca College	1 year (2020)	CCAP	3	9th–12th	HS / F2F only HS teachers College F2F & Hybrid CCC instructors	811	Disproportionately impacted populations (specifically Black/African American, Latinx, and Native/Indigenous students)	Unsure	Southern
"Growing/Scaling" Partnerships									
Fresno City College	5 years (2016)	MOU CCAP	9	9th–12th	HS / F2F only HS teachers	2,089	• CTE • Low-income • ELL (English Language Learners) • Rural • Hispanic	75% of more	Central
East Los Angeles College	12 years (2010)	MOU CCAP GSFSF! (Get Focused… Stay Focused!)	95	9th–12th	HS / Hybrid or F2F & Online CCC instructors	7,000	• Open to all • CTE • GE Transfer	75% or more	Southern
Hartnell College	4 years (2017)	CCAP	11	10th–12th	HS / F2F only HS teachers CCC instructors	600	Historically undeserved	75% or more	Central Coast
Skyline College	5 years (2016)	MOU CCAP	20	9th–12th	HS / F2F only HS teachers College / F2F only CCC instructors	2,500	• CTE pathways • College Confidence • Career Exploration • CLL • GE	50–74%	Bay Area

Source: *Dual Enrollment for Equitable Completion:* Initial Learning and [e]Valuation Getting to Know You Survey

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7. The figures highlighted in this table are self-reported by the partnerships and any missing information indicates that a completed survey was not submitted.
8. The K12 partners may include schools, colleges, and/or universities, but not school districts.

Qualitative Findings

The qualitative findings from this study emerged from judiciously **coding over 30 hours of interview transcripts with four dual enrollment subgroups:** (1) students, (2) parents, (3) high school teachers and college faculty, and (4) high school and college staff and administrators. RDP Consulting researchers utilized pre-determined codes to label the text data, ultimately contextualizing participants' responses. This deductive analysis generated three high-level findings:

1. Equity-driven outreach, recruitment, and enrollment efforts are central to creating successful dual enrollment communities.
2. Successful dual enrollment partnerships are supported by strong coordination, communication, and collaboration.
3. With support from counselors and instructors, dual enrollment coursework facilitates student confidence and a college-going culture.

What follows is an overview of these three findings and their related sub-themes. After making sense of the data, **we present new insights on how dual enrollment can be purposefully designed to advance equitable student outcomes.** Each thematic summary contains a content overview, marked by challenges and opportunities. Note the corresponding sidebar "Equity Spotlights," highlights promising practices by finding or central theme. Interspersed throughout the findings, we offer the magnitude of the idea, essentially the number of times a concept was conveyed. Providing the number of codes specific to each finding allows readers to understand how many participants might have shared overlapping insights and comments. We also **employ participants' quotes that underscore how this information was communicated.** The findings section ends with conclusions and recommendations, highlighting key takeaways and implications for future practice and research.

Finding 1: Equity-driven outreach, recruitment, and enrollment efforts are central to creating successful dual enrollment communities.

Outreach, recruitment, and enrollment efforts are central to creating successful dual enrollment communities. Strategic and comprehensive approaches are required to increase dual enrollment access for African American/Black, Latina/o/x, and low-income students. This thematic analysis includes **information relevant to equitable outreach strategies, inclusive recruitment messages, counselors as anchors in recruiting students, and equitable enrollment practices.** Taken together these efforts make dual enrollment an opportunity for disproportionately represented public high school students across California.

Make Dual Enrollment Information Easily Accessible to Students

Hallmark components of equitable outreach strategies in public education include communicating and listening, building rapport with students and their families, being responsive, and focusing on disproportionately represented groups to increase opportunity and engagement (The Education-Trust West, 2021; JFF & CLP, 2018; Mehl et al., 2020; Purnell, 2014). Community college and high school interviewees in this study, discussed the myriad ways in which they enact these leading principles. In fact, RDP Consulting researchers coded over 70 responses in the area of equitable outreach strategies.

At the college level, they may distribute flyers, and send a dual enrollment team to make presentations at the high school. These efforts are **generally done in collaboration with the high schools** in that high school staff alert the school community of these information sessions. One particular college campus hosts a mini-orientation with students and their parents before the student completes an application for admission. The mini-orientation includes the vice president of academic affairs, director of admission, dean overseeing dual enrollment, and the dual enrollment team. A primary aim is for college staff to explain that dual enrollment courses are rigorous, free of charge, can launch a student's college pathway, and require dedication through to course completion.

High schools employ unique and engaging ways of recruiting students into dual enrollment. These efforts include hosting a table at a local movie theater, airing a commercial prior to the movie screening, airing television commercials and radio ads, billboard advertising, posting on Facebook and other social media outlets, hosting a table at a local fair or college fair, and displaying yard signs. Across the high schools, **counselors regularly present on dual enrollment to students and parents.** Counselors help students complete the college application. They also review submitted applications to gauge a student's potential to pass a class, and meet with students individually if there are concerns. One high school administrator explained the outreach and enrollment timeline, emphasizing the purposeful steps taken before registering a high school student for a college course:

In the fall, the Dual Enrollment Coordinator identifies students who might be successful, and builds an initial roster of students to recruit. This is a comprehensive process, based on counselor recommendations. The roster is vetted by the high school teachers, whereby

they are offering input on student attendance and academic performance. Once the list is in solid form, the counselors book meetings with the parents of select students to offer insight on the rigor and expectations of dual enrollment. Following this meeting, the teacher or counselor assists students with CCC Apply, the application for dual enrollment.

Use Inclusive Recruitment Messages

Messaging is a core component of dual enrollment. Interviewees were asked to comment on the recruitment information that resonates best with students, parents, and the general public. RDP Consulting researchers received over 115 comments regarding effective messaging. According to interview participants, the **most powerful messaging answers the questions listed below.**

Who is eligible?

- College is for everyone.
- Dual enrollment is for everyone.

What does it cost?

- Everything is free.

What are the benefits?

- Dual enrollment helps students complete their 15 A–G course requirements for college admission, graduate from high school, and get a free head start on college.
- Dual enrollment saves time and money by earning college credits for free in high school.
- Dual enrollment students earn college credit in an achievable classroom environment with support services. There is no comprehensive exam.

How does it shift mindset?

- Students can build self-efficacy and see themselves as college students.
- Dual enrollment students are college students. Classes are rigorous and attendance is mandatory.
- Dual enrollment advances students' larger, longer-term goals of achieving college credit and succeeding academically.

How can it advance economic and community outcomes?

- Dual enrollment means hope for achieving the "American dream".

Engage High School Counselors to Lead Student Recuitment

High school counselors are reportedly indispensable across outreach, recruitment, and enrollment, largely because, according to students and their families, high school counselors build excellent trust and rapport.

Primarily, **counselors alert students of dual enrollment oppor-**

tunities in one-on-one academic advisement. Additionally, they distribute informational flyers across campus, host campus-wide and classroom presentations, and send mass emails that spotlight the range of courses available for college credit via dual enrollment. On a psychosocial level, **counselors build meaningful and trusting relationships with students and their families,** so that when it is time to register for dual enrollment, they are able to effectively guide students onto the right path. While on a practical level, counselors distribute dual enrollment registration forms, and support students in accurately completing them for admission to the community college. They then review the forms to gauge student potential. Should a counselor have any concerns about a student's capacity to pass a dual enrollment class, she/he/they will speak directly with the student. Encapsulated in this work is a commitment to equity and inclusion. Counselors in this study **believe dual enrollment is for everyone** and that participating in dual enrollment facilitates personal, professional, and academic growth. As one high school counselor shared:

I think that our outreach is what makes it equitable because we're not saying that [dual enrollment] is specifically just for students who need elective credits. [Dual enrollment] is for anyone and they take the experience with you. [Dual enrollment] helps you be successful in your personal life, in your postsecondary education and your career. So, I think that our outreach is equity. And then, as we tailor [registration] to each student's independent learning plan, then we're also making it equitable because this is what works for you. And it might not work for someone else.

Equitable Enrollment Practices

Partners discussed a range of strategies relevant to equitable admission processes and procedures, which included 15 coded excerpts related to diverse enrollment strategies, attitudinal shifts, high-touch student support services, and inclusive marketing materials.

Multiple interviewees shared that it is futile to rely on student GPA for qualification into dual enrollment. Academic research supports this notion (see Edwards et al., 2011; Karp et al., 2007), in that utilizing students' GPA as a criterion for admission potentially dismisses countless eager and promising students. One high school administrator described this dilemma:

You can't just focus on GPA. We have kids that might have a good GPA, but they're not doing well in English or whatever. There are kids that are in regular English classes that are never going to go take Advanced Placement, but they're stellar students and they're up for the challenge.

However, offering dual enrollment opportunities to non-AP students requires a shift in attitude. It **demands that administrators and teachers believe that lower- or middle-performing students can succeed with support** in college courses. One high school administrator illustrated this point:

> *[Dual enrollment] is something that anybody could do. There is no requirement. There's no checklist of things that the student has to do. And this even shifted because we started with the best of the best. That's honestly how we started, but we opened it up and kids still did well. I guess that was the proof that we needed to say, "Okay, anybody can do this."*

Equally **important to a shift in mindset are high-touch student support services,** which purposefully recruit underrepresented minority groups to enroll in dual enrollment. High-touch student support services include **personalized counseling and guidance regarding a student's academic preparation and background in advance of course enrollment** in an effort to impress upon the student that dual enrollment is a serious undertaking.

Finally, **recruitment, outreach, and admission efforts to enroll a diverse audience** include marketing materials that are visual and translated into Spanish. Bilingual communication is not only a key equity strategy but it's also ethically imperative. As one high school administrator commented:

> *We do have information in English and Spanish and some of our recruitment or parent orientation...we tag-team and we'll do English and Spanish for parent workshops. I think that's an extreme move to become more equitable and not as exclusionary.*

Barriers to Equitable Dual Enrollment Participation

RDP Consulting researchers also identified and analyzed obstacles that participants reported and described. For this topic—equity-driven outreach, recruitment, and enrollment—partners described **these three barriers or challenges to effective *outreach, recruitment, and enrollment*.**

1. High school administrators, counselors, and teachers who believe access to college coursework should be reserved for academically advanced students. For example, dual enrollment is meant for students enrolled in AP and or honors courses.
2. The lack of an online and centralized college application and enrollment process. For example, pen and paper applications that rotate through a number of hand-delivered steps and require multiple hand-written signatures before being entered into the community college's database for processing.
3. The gap in parent or family awareness of dual enrollment. For example, an inadequate number of bilingual information sessions that explain what is meant by a permanent college transcript.

Finding 2: Successful dual enrollment partnerships are supported by strong coordination, communication, and collaboration.

Equitable Partnerships in (by) Design

Staff and administrators expressed their passion for and dedication to African American, Latina/o/x, and low-income students who may not be on a college track , and their efforts to mobilize these students via dual enrollment. In over 30 coded excerpts, staff and administrators communicated that **dual enrollment was part of a larger equity agenda to support their high school population.** By earning college credits and enrolling in college coursework, staff and administrators suggested that Latina/o/x and low-income communities can build economic, personal, and social capital. Administrators denoted three funding streams that support their students: College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP), College Promise,[9] and Title V.[10] All are critical in expanding dual enrollment opportunities for African American/Black, Latina/o/x, and low-income students. Community college administrators also described how institutionalizing dual enrollment fortified their high school dual enrollment partnerships. Examples include securing permanent coordinator/director positions, moving from dual enrollment courses to a dual enrollment program, sustaining a dedicated funding source, and implementing district policies that promote dual enrollment as a comprehensive student success strategy.

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9. College Promise programs are large-scale efforts supported by a partnership between a city government, local school district, nonprofits, and/or philanthropy that provide a number of supports to encourage and support residents' college-going after high school including waived community college tuition for first two years, financial aid, priority enrollment, and comprehensive and dedicated academic and student support services.
10. Title V, an 1998 amendment to the 1965 Higher Education Act, is also known as the "Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) Program" and provides five-year grants to assist HSIs to expand and enhance academic and supportive services to ensure and improve the success of Hispanic/Latina/o/x students. All 10 *DE4EC* community college partners are Hispanic Serving Institutions.

As the RDP Consulting researchers reviewed each transcript, they identified patterns regarding approaches, practices, policies, and processes that were described as helpful and/or supportive to the partners and/or students. What we provide below includes: (a) the title of the practice, (b) the location of the practice, and in some cases, the stated partnership, and (c) the attributing participant. For the first finding related to *equity-driven outreach, recruitment, and enrollment* efforts, **the two promising practices are:**

- Parent engagement through non-credit course offerings
- Family and community engagement

Non-credit Courses for Parents
East Los Angeles College

We've offered non-credit courses for parents as well...So we want to create a family of learners and we've...offered ESL, citizenship, and Intro to College for our parents... So you're empowering...them, now they are seeing themselves as college students. At the middle school level, we did a robotics class for parents - non-credit... [What] we're trying to do is ensure that they understand the impact of collegiate education. So now looking back, we've made great strides in increasing the awareness level of dual enrollment. I would say we had more folks understand what dual enrollment is now than we did seven years ago. So the impact of the community has been felt...
– CCC administrator

Family and Community Engagement Services (FACES)
East Los Angeles College

Another layer was increasing awareness in our community with parents and community members, developing programs that...we call our Family and Community Engagement Services...where we...provide training [and] workshops for parents on various topics about college, about the collegiate experience, going from how to apply to college to financial aid, AB 540.[11] Dual enrollment was a hot topic for our parents.
– CCC administrator

Partners illustrated the ways in which dual enrollment advanced their commitment to serve underrepresented students:

- Considering dual enrollment as a driver of equity;
- Disaggregating data to pinpoint disproportionately impacted students;
- Outreaching to underrepresented students in admission and enrollment;
- Scheduling courses with an equity mindset; and
- Pursuing and implementing equity funding streams to support dual enrollment.

What follows are excerpts that represent these key ideas.

Considering dual enrollment a driver of equity

It is our commitment to dual enrollment for equity. That is the driver, but that the champions are champions of advancing equity on the campus... once we change the conversation away from letting people complain or say, "Why not?" to saying, "Okay, like what would it take? Who can... do something here?" That has really changed things and pulled in the right people.
We were a little bit exclusive [with our dual enrollment admission] at first, but when our kids were becoming successful, we had an administrator who was like, "There are no barriers to this. There is nothing written down that should say that these kids can't [do dual enrollment]...So we need to get rid of that." And that was his philosophy. I will say that the only reason you have kids in the seats is because of that philosophy.

Disaggregating data to pinpoint disproportionately impacted students

We had our internal data team run some data around what's the overall population of this high school, male, female, socioeconomic status, [race/ethnicity]. And then, we compared that to students accessing dual enrollment and the data wasn't very pretty. And so at that point, we reviewed that with our [leadership group of high school and college representatives] and so we looked at the data and said, "Okay, how do we fix this?" At that time, a few of our pieces of data that were most concerning were male versus female, and then Hispanic students. And so we looked at that and talked about how we recruit.

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11. Assembly Bill 540, also known as the California Dream Act of 2011, provides college tuition exemption for nonresident students even those who are undocumented and who meet certain requirements related to time in K12, adult school, or community college, and coursework, degree, or units completed.

Outreaching to underrepresented students in admission and enrollment

> *...the community colleges received the CCAP funding to expand dual enrollment opportunities and it's really such a great benefit to students. And when it's offered as courses in the registration process, so many students sign up that why wouldn't we offer it would be a disservice not to offer this to students. And so, the outreach for that was so compelling that it was just an automatic yes from the district to be able to offer and expand this. Prior to...CCAP funding, students could take courses at the community college for concurrent enrollment credits. That seemed to be for students who are already self-motivated and advanced learners. And now, this could make the opportunity more accessible and equitable so that more students can participate and benefit.*

Scheduling courses with an equity mindset

> *So we have a class during the day that allows a lot more students to be able to enroll in a dual enrollment class... We also offer asynchronous classes for students who might not be able to, for some reason, take that class during the day or take a class after school. ...We really promote [college courses] to all students... parents as well. We just try to give them different options, during the day online and afterschool so that students are able to take advantage.*

Pursuing and implementing equity funding streams

> *We worked with our community college partners to just own the equity piece. And we used some of their equity funds for tutoring, for extra support. We wrote grants to make sure that we were taking our students on college trips. We are currently developing...dual enrollment program with an HBCU [Historically Black Colleges and Universities] for our students in [city], that we are very excited about...*

Nearly all high school and community college partnerships revealed the ways in which **relationships play an indispensable role in advancing dual enrollment.** As defined below, coordination, communication, and collaboration emerged as three sub-themes central to partner relationships in a review of over 100 excerpts. The concepts are contextualized below in order of emphasis across the interviews.

- **Coordination:** Activities managed, monitored, and directed by a designated people who are responsible for helping both community college and K12 partners to realize a common goal

- **Communication:** Regular exchange of information in-person or by email between community college and high school partners to support and maintain the partnership.
- **Collaboration:** Collective action between community college and K12 partners to create policies, procedures, and processes supportive of equitable dual enrollment and related approaches and activities.

Coordination

Dual enrollment involves **a number of processes that must occur in a timely and ordered fashion to ensure that underrepresented high school students can access, enroll, and succeed in their college courses.** The partnership representatives described critical activities that were often launched and arranged by a dual enrollment director, college or high school counselor and in some cases, supported by student workers:

- Outreach and recruitment
- Registration and enrollment
- Selection and scheduling of courses
- Monitoring to organize proactive supportive services

The following quotes underscore the **importance of a staffing infrastructure where at least a dedicated person or a team of people on both the high school and CCC sides,** are responsible for and knowledgeable of dual enrollment-specific deadlines, policy requirements, and systems. Outreach and recruitment, and student support services are covered in other sections of this document, so here we will focus on registration and enrollment, and the selection and scheduling of courses, which includes pathway development.

Registration and Enrollment

Partners mentioned the **importance of working with specific departments to complete necessary activities and paperwork to enroll students.** As one high school administrator shared:

> *My area works with the [college's] admissions and records (A & R) office. We have a database for submission of the dual enrollment forms. So it gets uploaded from the [high school] to the [shared database]...and A & R confirms that [the school's] documentation has been submitted and admissions and records does the registration, the student doesn't have to go in and register for the class. It is completed by admissions and records.*

Selection and Scheduling of Courses

All administrators spoke about how they worked with their partner to do what was necessary to offer college courses. One partner explained this process:

> *When a school site approaches me or a teacher approaches me and tells me they want to be a dual enrollment instructor, then that's when I try to figure out*

what course is going to be the best fit, [which] college course is going to be the best fit for that high school class. And I'll schedule a meeting with the instructor. And I go down that course outline of record in detail, every single aspect of it, because if we don't meet those requirements, then we're out of compliance. And technically, you have to follow that college course outline, even though... it's a college class being taught at a high school.

Pathway Development

Partners commented specifically that they collaborated with leaders to develop viable student pathways. For example, one community college administrator described working with high school staff:

When I have a school site that is interested in developing a pathway, we ask to bring their leads and we bring the department chair and hopefully a faculty member to come together and do some planning...we hear the needs of the high school and the needs of the college, the challenges that high school has, and the challenges of college...

Communication

Partners characterized their strong communication skills. For example, holding routine check-ins between high school and CCC partners and providing timely instructions on critical processes and procedures are just two methods for increased communication. Partners also utilized their school or college websites, shared electronic files, resource guides, and curated spaces for high school and college personnel to gain clarity on deadlines or policies. Communication was **especially important when reminding students about deadlines to withdraw to ensure that struggling or failing students could drop a course.** Equally important was **clarity regarding students' application and enrollment deadlines.**

The ways that partners communicated with each other confirmed their pledge to a shared equity agenda. It further underscored the need to maintain a strong, functional public education partnership. The following content highlights communication at the district, school site, and partnership levels.

District-level communication

One college administrator shared the importance of communication not just with school-site partners to facilitate dual enrollment, but engaging district-level administrators as well:

What has worked well is ensuring that the [school] district has a good understanding of dual enrollment... this top-down from the superintendent's office all the

way down to the school site...the impact, the protocols, all the nooks and crannies of [why] it is important. What we've done is had frequent...consistent meetings with leadership and then local leadership, and then also practitioners at a summit on a semester basis. And I think that's worked well because there's clarity in the process. There's support provided.

School site-level communication

Another college administrator highlighted how the college's dedicated dual enrollment lead helped to keep all the partners informed and updated:

[The dual enrollment coordinator] has been super supportive, letting us know every step of the way updates and next steps coming out to help at the school sites. That frequent communication has been really helpful and then meetings along the way too. So we meet as needed...she sends email updates as needed.

Partnership-level communication

While another college administrator portrayed the importance of shifting the narrative through clear communication and an equity mindset:

...people will say all the reasons why...high school students typically fail...then reverse that. What would it take for them not to? What needs to happen here? I hear you if that's your experience, but then, what would it take so that it was the reverse of that [and] nobody failed. And you communicate that because if you do, maybe I can prove that my job as the administrator is to provide resources...but if you don't have those conversations, and in any space where you're talking about advancing equity, the questions are, "Okay, what would it take? Okay, here are the barriers...what would it take to remove those barriers? What can each of us do from where we sit?"

Collaboration

DE4EC partners frequently used the word "alignment" when illustrating their concerted effort to link high school and CCC approaches, processes, and requirements. According to the partners, equitable outcomes demand the following four elements:

- Scheduling regular meetings to support high school and CCC alignment
- Identifying and supporting structured pathways
- Supporting and orienting dual enrollment teachers and instructors
- Reviewing student data continuously to design robust and supportive efforts

These elements are presented below with relevant examples of collaboration at the district, school site, and college levels.

District-level Collaboration

College and high school partners work together to create their dual enrollment efforts. One school district administrator described these purposeful actions:

> *We have a collective lift and it took many years to build. Some of the pieces that still need to happen on a larger, broader scale is a strategic plan. To support dual enrollment district-wide, we have this little bubble of a school that does amazing things. We really listened to our [high school] deans when they say "Here's the instructional moves that need to happen on the high school side to prepare [students] for this class, to prepare [students] for this level"...We really take accountability to make sure that we are working with our college partner on academic planning. We started with our community college courses and we mapped everything backwards. And when we did that, we saw a huge shift in academic success.*

School Site-level Collaboration

Stressing how sharing a common agenda helped to support partners' collaboration, a school counselor noted the following:

> *What's really necessary is that all stakeholders at our school are on the same page that we listened to each and every one of us, the counselors, the administration, the CTE teachers or other teachers. We need to all come together and really support each other from the recruitment phase all the way to ensuring that the students are also successful.*

College-level Collaboration

One college administrator also described how the college regularly engaged in data disaggregation to inform the partners how they could and should collaborate to strengthen their collective dual enrollment efforts:

> *With my team, we look at data. We analyze to identify if there's a demonstration of successful completion... then we continue [the course]. We see that there's a decrease in enrollment or successful completion, then we started looking at this, "Oh, is there a trend here that's happening?" That's demonstrating that this might not be the right course for the students at this particular time. And we have those conversations with our partners and identify what's happening. "Is it...our faculty? Is it our students? Is the course itself not aligning with the program at the school?" So we look at data, we look*

> *at metrics and outcomes that we have to ensure that we're being mindful.*

Challenges to Shared Dual Enrollment Program Implementation

Once again, RDP Consulting researchers pinpointed obstacles that participants reported and described. For this topic–partnership coordination, communication, and collaboration–partners described **these barriers or challenges to *effective coordination, communication, and collaboration*:**

1. Misaligned academic calendars and holiday breaks, which require one partner to provide coverage when technically on vacation. For example, high school partners are required to work during the college holiday breaks that are different from the school district holiday calendar.
2. Use of different learning management systems (LMS) that require students and faculty/teachers to switch platforms (e.g., Google Classroom to Canvas) once their academic year or semester begins. For example, teachers start the semester using their school's LMS and are required to transfer the information to the college's LMS when the institution's semester starts.
3. Expansion of college course offerings may be limited by the number of faculty/teachers available who meet minimum qualifications to teach at the CCC. For example, without the recruitment and engagement of a large pool of teachers or faculty, only a small number of dual enrollment courses may be offered due to caseload limitations or scheduling conflicts.

Finding 3: A holistic dual enrollment experience can improve students' academic self-efficacy and college confidence.

High school students reported they **register for dual enrollment courses primarily because they can work toward completing college admissions requirements** for the California State Universities (CSU) and the University of California (UC) systems while earning college credit for free. As one student described:

> *My counselor offered [dual enrollment] to me and told me that the class would replace my senior year of English, and it would give me college credits. So, it was like a win-win. Why wouldn't I take it?*

This initial research indicates that impactful dual enrollment

involves more than just enrolling high school students in college credit coursework. These findings indicate that a variety of approaches contribute to a positive dual enrollment student experience. Participants called out strong relationships with counselors and instructors; connections to the college campus and access to support services; and coursework that introduces students to professional pathways. Combined, they can increase students' confidence in their ability to succeed in college and beyond.

Below we offer **initial insights from students and high school and community college personnel about their dual enrollment participation.** We begin with an overview of the advantages and limitations of dual enrollment called out in interviews. Then, we describe approaches that strengthen students' dual enrollment experiences, highlight the positive impacts of taking part in these opportunities, and share challenges that might impede students' success in these programs.

Advantages and Limitations of Dual Enrollment

Nearly 50 excerpts were coded to differentiate the advantages and limitations of dual enrollment. The top advantages recognized by students included the following.

Advantages

Students identified the following advantages of dual enrollment:

1. Saving money since college tuition and fees are waived
2. Earning college credit while in high school
   a. Completing college admission requirements
   b. Saving time required to achieve college goals by completing some general education requirements
3. Accessing well-organized and self-paced college coursework during the high school day, thereby reducing scheduling conflicts (primarily with work and after-school activities)
4. Gain critical time management skills
5. Developing awareness of college and career options
6. Enrolling in an academically demanding curriculum with support
7. Learning to seek help and support as a college student

One high school student described how dual enrollment increased their time management, independence, and overall maturation:

> ...Dual enrollment has given me new insight on what it means to be college ready and the differences between college and high school. I used to procrastinate a lot on my assignments and [even] being in dual enrollment... there came points where I reached certain deadlines, where I knew I couldn't write things and essays way before it was due. So, this basically forced me into becoming an organized person and organizing my time. I began to write sticky notes, keeping a planner, and changing entirely the way that I operated and studied.

Limitations

Students echoed six major drawbacks across the focus groups. Below, we highlight these disadvantages to dual enrollment participation along with a relevant student or administrator quote.

1. **Students' high school schedule is not as flexible after integrating dual enrollment courses.**

   > [There is] a lot of pressure and stress, especially when you get a lot of work from the class, and then you have to balance everything out. And then, the school year ends earlier for a dual enrollment class. So, it scrunches the time more.

2. **Dual enrollment course content is more rigorous and extensive, which means the workload can feel overwhelming.**

   > I feel like for my [college] class..., it's definitely a challenge. If you can keep up with the modules, if you skip one or you don't watch the lecture that the professor assigned, then it's definitely going to be hard to keep up with the other modules, which is going to impact your grade. You're [responsible for the] learning progress. And I find it really hard... The pace of the work is okay. But the material you're learning is more in depth and sometimes you won't get what...the material is saying.

3. **Enrolling in an independent, self-paced college curriculum requires an adjustment from high school; assignments can be challenging to track and accomplish, given the self-paced structure of dual enrollment coursework.**

   > It can be like an information dump with really long lectures and discussions. The work isn't difficult, but you want to take it seriously. So, it takes a while to accomplish the course...[on] the college timeline, unlike an AP class, which would follow a high school timeline...In a high school class, you're going to have a due date for every assignment. But [in dual enrollment courses], you're working a little more independently. So, there's more critical thinking of your independent work that's happening.

4. **Students must have strong, functional Wi-Fi to complete assignments and do research at home.**

   > For the cons for taking dual enrollment. I would definitely say...there's a bit more extra work you have

> *to do. And there's also required [online] meetings. You have to join, and if you can't meet at the time, that's kind of troublesome. You need to have good internet and equipment.*

5. **Low performance in a dual enrollment course can have a lasting impact; grades below a C remain on a student's college transcript.**

> *If somebody brings it up to me, I would be like, "Oh, maybe I shouldn't take [a dual enrollment course]." It's that if you do not pass the dual enrollment class with a C or above, for example if you get a D or F. This will also not appear just in your high school record or transcript, but also in your college record. So, for example, if you fail one semester of a dual enrollment class, although the school won't allow you to take a dual enrollment class again, it'll still show up on your college record, and that can affect you in college.*

6. **Fluctuating between various learning management systems (LMS), such as Google Classroom and Canvas, can be challenging for students to manage.**

> *...One of my dreams is that we have an aligned learning management system, K–16. When the pandemic hit and you're teaching 14-year-olds online how to navigate our own learning management system, Google Classroom, Canvas, [and] online textbooks. It was too much.*

Approaches that Strengthen Students' Dual Enrollment Experiences

This research highlighted different approaches that contributed to positive dual enrollment experiences, called out by students and educators alike. Taken together, they offer a window into how a holistic dual enrollment experience can foster students' college confidence and academic self-efficacy.

Supportive Instructor and Counselor Relationships

Relationship building is paramount to the student experience in dual enrollment. For the purpose of this research, relationships **include the networks and connections between students and their counselors; high school counselors and faculty and their community college counterparts; and students and the community college.** These educators understand they are working with high school-aged students who are at a different stage of emotional and academic development and foster that understanding with other personnel involved in dual enrollment program delivery. One high school district administrator explained how she collaborated with the college to demonstrate flexibility with young people, knowing from a developmental perspective, a 14-year-old student has socio-emotional needs

that are distinct from the traditional 18-year-old college student:

> *We learned early on that you can't put a 14-year-old in a college class and just walk out the door. They need to learn some executive functioning skills. We also quickly realized the social-emotional lift that it is. It's a lot of pressure on a young person. We had to work with our college counseling team. Once we had one adjunct counselor assigned to us, we really went through like, "Hey, it's not a 25-year-old that you're building that schedule for; [the schedule] needed to be balanced. Put a hard [course] in with two that aren't so hard. Let's leave some time in the day so they can go to the tutorial center."*

Roughly 75 excerpts from the transcript data provided evidence of the vital role these relationships play. Below we explore the specific relationships students form with counselors and instructors.

Counselors

High school and community college **counselors are a driving force** behind students' dual enrollment experience. Not only do they work relentlessly on their own campuses, but they also collaborate with each other to support high schoolers involved in dual enrollment programming. Counselors meet with students and families to explain the rigor and demands of dual enrollment; register students for classes; host information events to promote dual enrollment programs; teach college, career, and life management courses; and work with faculty to facilitate their success teaching dual enrollment students. Since dual enrollment is inclusive, underrepresented students include those students who are at risk of not graduating from high school and typically come from vulnerable backgrounds (e.g., households with addiction, unemployment, physical and emotional abuse). It should be made abundantly clear that **without high school counselors, students' access to and enrollment in dual enrollment would be limited.**

In some cases, community college counselors make a concerted effort to help dual enrollment students to become California community college students after they graduate high school.

> *...We've tried to work with the high school students that participated in CCAP dual enrollment, [to] give them designated counseling time to help in their transition. I think that this has proven a bit successful, along with the connection to the pathway promise programs.*

Instructors

Instructors also serve as a pivotal bridge connecting high school and college for students. Students primarily had complimentary remarks about their dual enrollment instructors. This research showed that students' dual enrollment instructors frequently hold both the role of high school teacher or counselor

AND college instructor. Participants indicated that the immediate connection with high school teachers and counselors puts students at ease because they are more familiar. Students explained that part of this deeper connection could be also attributed to the fact that the majority of their dual enrollment courses were offered on their high school campus.

These instructors are flexible and accommodating of high school students' needs while maintaining rigor and high expectations. For example, course readings, assignment deadlines, and assessments are in alignment with college-level requirements. At the same time, some students described their dual enrollment teacher as someone who understood all that they were balancing as high school students with extracurricular activities, work, and family responsibilities.

Students **characterized their dual enrollment instructors (again, these individuals also serve as high school teachers) as available, consistent, organized, and supportive.** Students overwhelmingly **presented their dual enrollment instructors, consistently focusing on the socio-emotional needs of learners.** One dual enrollment student shared how a particular professor extended her connection with students:

> *My high school teacher, who is now my college professor, was my previous English teacher last year. And our relationship grew since last year. Over COVID we still had a relationship, even though it was online, because I sent a lot of messages in chat for no reason. She just found it funny. And then to have her again as a professor was pretty cool, and it just grew even more, and we played cards together. It was just hanging out, basically in our class during lunch, just to chill.*

Campus Connections

This research indicates that dual enrollment provides students with a supported introduction to the college and begins to build comfort with and awareness of the campus. Students described how college communications and listservs inform them of college supports, resources, activities, and updates about schedules, deadlines, and requirements. They also indicated that family and friends who attend the college served as an important bridge to the campus community, offering insider information about how to navigate the campus and contextualize their dual enrollment experience. One student shared:

> *I would say [I feel connected] because in our [college campus] email, we always get notified about the events going on at [college campus]. I'm always up to date on what's happening, what programs they offer, especially for high school students. And since I also have a cousin*

> *who went to [college campus], I feel like she would give me more advice on what to do, what not to do for college and what they do at [college], what they offer. It's just like a big resource for me.*

Support Services Designed with Dual Enrollment Students in Mind

Dual enrollment programming offers high school student access to college supports and resources to promote their educational success, including but not limited to academic, career, and financial aid counseling; tutoring; writing center support; mental health and wellness services; disabled student services; and translation services. Based on magnitude and pattern coding, RDP Consulting researchers discerned two emerging sub-themes related to support services: the role of the academic counselor and the availability of tutoring. Since we explored the counselors' roles above, we cover tutoring in this section.

Tutoring

In this research, **tutoring emerged as the next most frequently cited and pivotal support service (after counselor support).** Across partner interviews, it was clear that **there is no single agreed-upon version of academic tutoring** in dual enrollment. It was offered in many different forms, with embedded and supplemental versions provided both remotely and in-person across campuses.

Dual enrollment students pointed out that tutoring services need to respond to their specific needs while factoring in the global pandemic. They indicated a desire for flexible approaches (i.e., offering in-person and online support, expanding hours of operation, etc.), and an awareness of the numerous demands on the time of a dual enrollment learner. Students work, participate in extracurricular activities, and have family responsibilities that may limit their ability to utilize tutoring services. These are critical considerations as partners design tutoring support.

For example, one community college partner described offering an English course with embedded support services for English learners:

> *[The] college also offers English [redacted] to those students who may feel a little insecure about their abilities in English. And it has built-in academic support for students. So, it's a little bit more bite-size and supportive. We offer that as a four-unit course.*

Another partner seeking to support English learners describes embedding remote tutoring in an in-person community college class:

...Interestingly, at [the high school], we had a class that took place in the multimedia studies room, and the tutor was embedded in a face-to-face classroom virtually. Everybody—the high school, the faculty, and the students—says it was fabulous. I guess the tutor was on a machine in a part of the classroom, and they said it was particularly effective for English language learners so that...if they felt lost when the class broke out into groups, they could go over and the tutor would sort of explain to them in real-time.

Coursework that Builds Students' Understanding of Professional Pathways

This research showed that some dual enrollment offerings can serve to both inspire and inform students about potential careers and provide insight into the educational requirements for different professional pathways. Students described the positive impact of taking dual enrollment offerings that oriented them to program options related to specific career paths. They also shared ways these courses helped them make connections with and gain insight from those working directly in the field/sector, receiving a first-hand account of what is possible and what it takes to travel that path.

Students described ways these courses helped them think aspirationally, allowing them to explore "what can my future look like?"; one student shared:

One of the opportunities that our class offers is ...they bring a lot of guest speakers and all of them have a different career path that they pursued. And they were all extremely successful, which gave us a really big insight that everybody has a different path, and we shouldn't be pressured to take another path that somebody else wants because you're able to do it in any way, as long as you put your mind to it.

Students also shared ways these courses provided them practical guidance about career paths, helping them to understand "what do I need to do to get there?''; one student explained:

Last semester, I took [a course on] helping careers. I wanted to get into the health field. I took it and it made me understand more about the health laws and different equipment, different stuff, different occupations. And for our final, we had to do a project of searching [and] researching for a career. Like about the annual salary. What they do in a daily life. What do you need to do in order to become that career? What colleges you might have to go to? Or what degrees you might have to have in order to have to get that career?

Dual Enrollment Student Impact

This research also underscores how these positive dual enrollment experiences can ultimately impact students, helping them believe that college is a place where they can indeed succeed.

One of the most compelling assets a student can acquire from dual enrollment coursework is an increased belief that they can succeed at the college level. This attitudinal shift is also known as college and academic self-efficacy, "...operationalized as one's confidence in one's ability to successfully perform pro-academic self-regulatory behaviors" (Gore, 2006, p. 94). Participants in this research—both students and parents involved in dual enrollment and educators tasked with leading and carrying out these programs—noted the numerous ways students' dual enrollment experience was helping them develop academic self-efficacy. Examples included:

- Asking questions in class
- Being resourceful (e.g., understanding the physical campus location, institution's website, learning management systems (LMS), books)
- Developing long-term academic plans along with backup plans
- Holding oneself accountable for one's own actions and choices
- Learning to self-advocate

Relevant student quotes for each of these self-regulatory behaviors are included below.

Asking Questions

From my biology class, I learned to always ask questions. That's really important. Especially if you don't understand something or would like more information on that, it's better to ask you a question instead of just being confused and stressed.

Becoming Resourceful

You kind of get experienced with the [community college] website and [learning management system] and a lot of programs or websites that you might not know how to use as well. If you're using the very same book, by the time we'll go to college or if you go to [community college], you'll know more or less what to do.

Developing Long-Term Academic Plans along with Backup Plans

There's not going to be somebody next to you holding your hand, guiding you on what to do next and everything. That takes a lot of courage on yourself. And you have to also be prepared a lot. If you're not prepared and you're going to jump right into it, then you're going to go downhill. It's better to have a game plan before you get into something. And

RDP Consulting researchers reviewed each interview and focus group transcript to discover patterns regarding approaches, practices, policies, and processes that could be categorized as helpful and/or supportive to the partners and/or students. What we provide below includes: (a) the title of the practice, (b) the location of the practice, and in some cases, the stated partnership, and (c) the attributing participant. For the third finding related to *opportunities to complete college coursework with support*, **the promising practice is**:

- Teacher mentorship

Fresno Unified Teacher Mentorship Program
Partner: Fresno City College

For the mentor piece, it's a unique situation. The Dual Enrollment Office [at Fresno City College], where they really have their game on, they have created a community of participants, both mentors, and sometimes instructors. And we meet a few times each semester just to go over processes and best practices - CCC instructor

then, you can find new ways if something doesn't work out. You have to have a Plan C or a Plan B, too, in case your Plan A doesn't work out.

Holding Oneself Accountable

[Dual enrollment] is a great experience, and it just allows you to not change as a person, but better yourself as a person. Because if you are used to not meeting deadlines or just being on track, dual enrollment definitely helps you get on everything, stay organized, make sure everything's there, because of course, you don't want to fail the course.

Learning to Self-Advocate

[Dual enrollment] helps you advocate for yourself to not be shy and to speak up for yourself and just challenge yourself in general. I think it really helped me grow.

Given that most students participating in this research identified with groups historically underrepresented in higher education, this finding is particularly promising to the goal of leveraging dual enrollment for equitable completion.

Challenges to Students' Dual Enrollment Success

While dual enrollment programs can boost students' college confidence and academic self-efficacy, this research also revealed some important obstacles to students' success in these experiences. RDP Consulting researchers deconstructed the barriers that participants reported and described when discussing the topic of *opportunities to complete college coursework with support*, noted below.

Limited Student Contact with College: Dual enrollment students participating in this research have minimal in-person contact with the community college campus when all courses are offered online or at the high school. This research indicated that the lack of on-campus experiences results in students feeling disconnected and unprepared to effectively access college student support services. As one student shared:

I don't really feel quite connected to [college campus] just mostly because the majority of classes I've taken are at the high school campus or online. I haven't really gone to the main campus, explored all the services they offer and all that. I don't really feel that big of a connection.

To develop feelings of connectedness, students recommended that high school students visit the college campus to begin building relationships with faculty and visiting classroom labs.

Academic Load: For some students, balancing the rigors of dual enrollment coursework with their other academic and personal commitments can be challenging, especially if colleges do not

consider these numerous responsibilities when developing dual enrollment program schedules and composition and course requirements. Some students acknowledged that the balancing act when enrolled in dual enrollment and Advanced Placement courses simultaneously can be arduous.

> *The only way to explain is how much of the hard math classes were already embedded in our regular high school classes. So, it's like going from like one AP class to like my [college] class to then another AP class. That was a little difficult, especially with the projects and the tests specifically.*

Student Use of Supports: Partners made several references to students not accessing tutoring, and their struggle to help students understand how tutoring can be pivotal to the dual enrollment journey. One high school partner described attempting multiple tutoring models to increase student use of academic assistance:

> *...on Fridays, the [community college] tutor came into the [high school] library at lunch and students, even though it was on their campuses, didn't really access it that much. Our better dual enrollment teachers structure their class to where three days a week or four days a week, depending on the number of units, are college time, and the other days become tutorials. And the teacher provides support—tutorial, reading time, homework time—those pieces. But [students are] not accessing [tutoring] at [the community college].*

Inadequate Professional Development: No or limited professional development is offered to support high school teachers in becoming college faculty who cultivate classrooms rooted in postsecondary preparedness and independence. Further, some college partners might view high school teachers, even those who meet the college's minimum qualifications, as not prepared to offer "authentic college courses."

Conclusions

In the first year of this three-year research endeavor, the majority of the partnerships signaled an equitable agenda by *clarifying* who dual enrollment is for, *elevating* policies that support dual enrollment as an equity strategy, and *catalyzing* dual enrollment as a contributor to improved student, family, and community outcomes.

Year One research findings suggest that participating partnerships are determined to increase equitable student access and engagement in dual enrollment. This agenda fundamentally underscores high school and CCC coordination, communication, and collaboration, and serves as a backdrop for curricular design and programming focused on increasing underrepresented student achievement. Two critical and foundational components of the participating partnerships were as follows:

Dual enrollment is for everyone

Dual enrollment is guided by the mindset and philosophy that it can prepare *all* students for college and/or career. This especially includes those who may be historically underrepresented on college campuses and lower- or middle-performing. RDP Consulting found that programs that adopt a "dual enrollment for all" strategy:

- Require parents and/or students to opt-out of dual enrollment, rather than opt-in.
- Engage counselors to identify and recruit students, particularly those who are usually not considered and those who identify as African American/Black and Latina/o/x, for dual enrollment opportunities.
- Structure outreach, recruitment, and enrollment in ways that invite alternative and continuation school students to dual enrollment, as they may have had mixed academic experiences and limited college aspirations.
- Prepare students who may need additional support before they arrive at the college.
- Offer support services that are proactive and comprehensive to ensure students, regardless of academic history, find success in dual enrollment courses.
- Analyze data to ensure that students who are taking dual enrollment courses represent the demographics of the overall student population.

Dual enrollment is an opportunity to increase economic and social mobility

Dual enrollment provides opportunities that not only benefit individual students, but can advance a broader equity agenda to promote and communicate the benefits of postsecondary education in communities with low college-going rates. Partners that see dual enrollment as a driver of economic and social mobility ensure that their dual enrollment program:
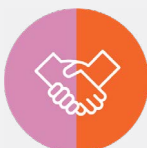
- Facilitates, supports, and organizes early engagement and support of African American/Black, Latina/o/x, low-income, and other underrepresented students from feeder schools.
- Encourages parents to envision and support their children's postsecondary aspirations and success while encouraging parents' own postsecondary knowledge and plans.
- Builds out districts', schools', and colleges' diversity, equity, and inclusion plans.
- Inspires students to be hopeful, confident, and prepared for academic, career, and life success by providing them access to pathways from the high school to and through college.

Future RDP Consulting evaluation research will **continue to explore additional partnership- and college outcomes and also concentrate more narrowly on high-need populations and pathway programs.** RDP Consulting will also evaluate dual enrollment program structures to glean how equitable pathways are developed, implemented, and maintained. This research priority is supported by Taylor, et al.'s (2022) most recent publication on the importance of dual enrollment research.

Recommendations

The following recommendations for administrators, faculty, and staff working in the fields of secondary and postsecondary education to consider are based on participants' experiences, perspectives, and suggestions. These suggestions are organized below by the level (see page 11) at which the recommendation can be executed followed by the recommendation itself.

Level	Recommendation	Example
	1. Design and offer outreach activities that engage parents in supporting their students and promote postsecondary certificate, credential, and degree completion for the entire family.	Focus communications and marketing on informing families in communities where few residents have postsecondary credentials/degrees.
	2. Remove key participation barriers (e.g., eligibility requirements; textbook and materials costs; course-related fees) and adhere to an open-door policy, in line with the California Community Colleges mission.	Encourage students who express an interest in the dual enrollment program to participate, regardless of current academic standing, and support their application process.
	3. Build academic and personal support services into students' schedules to ensure the successful completion of college coursework.	Provide proactive, inescapable opportunities to receive support in college courses such as integrated advising (e.g., course assignments to support long-term educational and career planning) and academic assistance designed to help students to earn a C or better (e.g., embedded tutoring).
	4. Braid and leverage available funding to launch, maintain, and scale dual enrollment efforts.	Pursue additional equity-focused grants and funding opportunities to cover dual enrollment costs (e.g., CCAP funding, College Promise initiatives, Local Control and Accountability Plan, Student Equity and Achievement Plan, Title V grants).
	5. Institute high-level policies, procedures, and processes that encourage and facilitate scaled dual enrollment programming.	Engage school and college district trustees in articulating a commitment to equitable dual enrollment programming (e.g., the LAUSD board's *Accelerating College Access, and Awareness, and Attainment through Dual Enrollment* resolution).
	6. Focus on aligning K12 to CCC curricular pathways to promote college and career readiness, college enrollment, major selection, and certificate/degree completion.	Develop educational pathways from middle/high school to and through the community college as part of a dual enrollment effort to increase students' postsecondary credential/degree completion.

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