

Increasing the Returns of Dual Enrollment

Research Findings Using National and State Data

SHEEO Conference – August, 2025

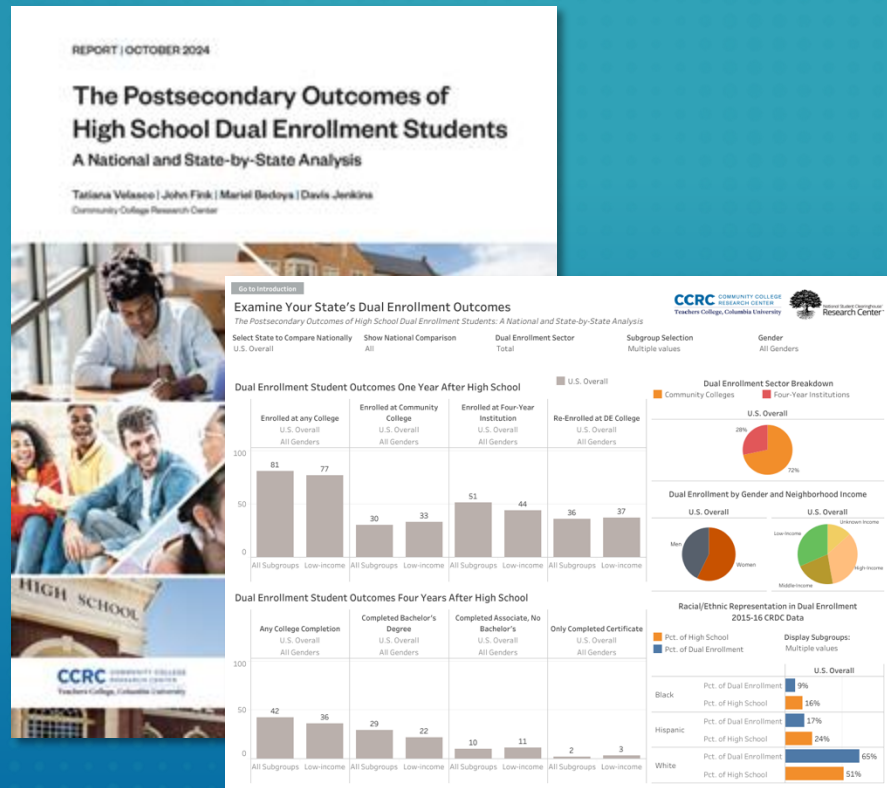
Increasing the Returns of Dual Enrollment

Research Findings Using National and State Data

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We used NSC data to examine national and state-by-state postsecondary outcomes of DE students who started in fall 2015.

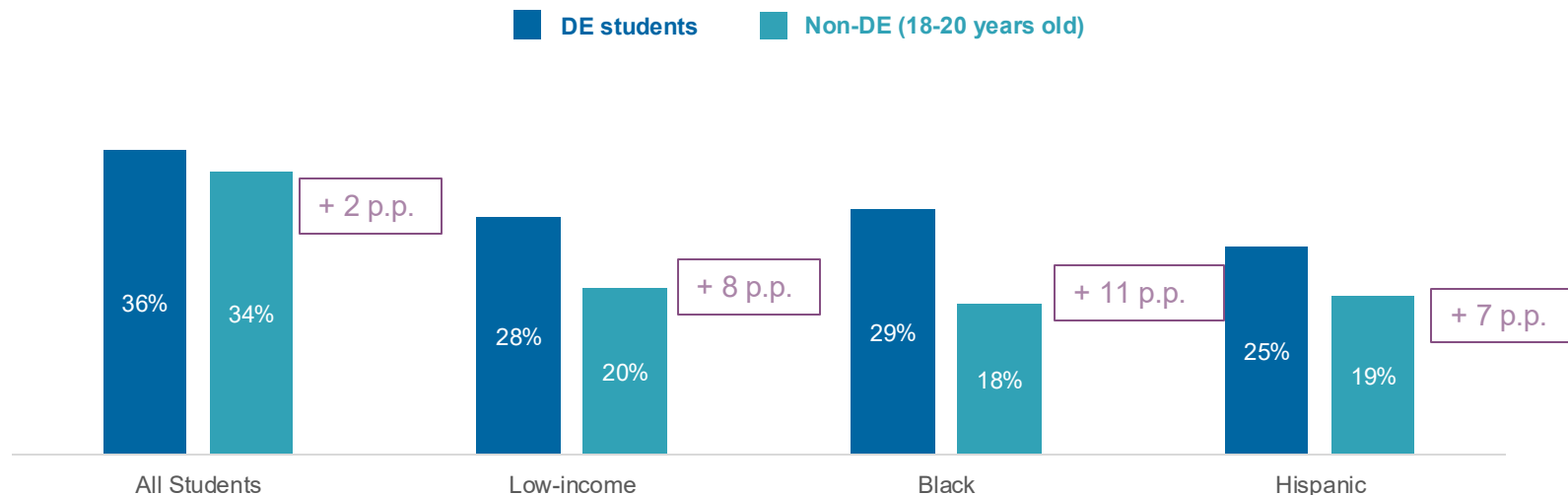


- ✓ *29% completed a bachelor's*
- ✓ *10% completed an associate*
- ✓ *2% completed a certificate*



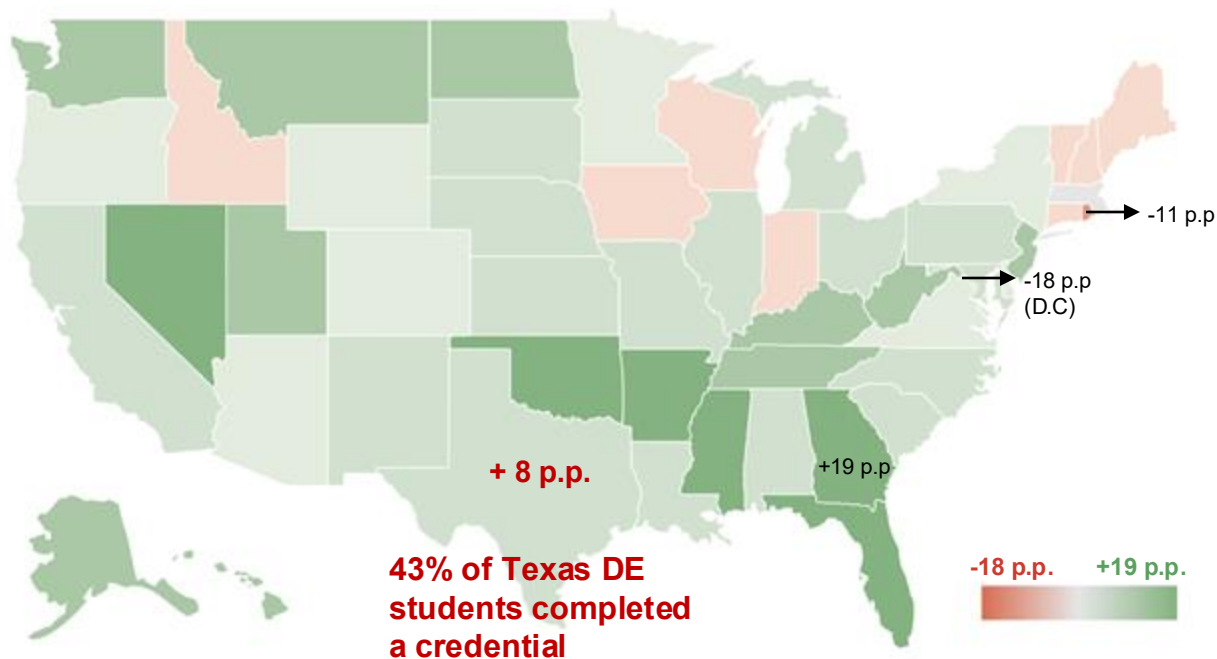
81% of dual enrollment students enrolled in college in the first year after high school, and 42% completed a credential within four years.

Bachelor's completion rate (within four years) by DE students who enrolled in a college within first year after high school and by non-DE (18–20) students



Dual enrollment students complete college at high rates, but there are gaps in outcomes.

In 41 states, DE was associated with higher college completion rates, and in 16 states, DE students showed double-digit higher completion rates.



What Happens to Students Who Took Dual Enrollment, AP/IB, and CTE Accelerated Coursework in High School?

Evidence on College and Earnings
Trajectories of Texas Students



Forthcoming report

High school students have access to diverse college-and-career accelerated coursework options, and these can lead to different outcomes post-high school

Coursework taking profiles	Accelerated Coursework Combinations		
	DE (1+ course attempted)	AP/IB (1+ course attempted)	CTE focus (10+ courses attempted)
DE takers only	X		
DE takers with CTE focus	X		X
DE and AP/IB takers	X	X	Some
AP/IB takers, no DE		X	Some
CTE focus only			X
No acceleration			

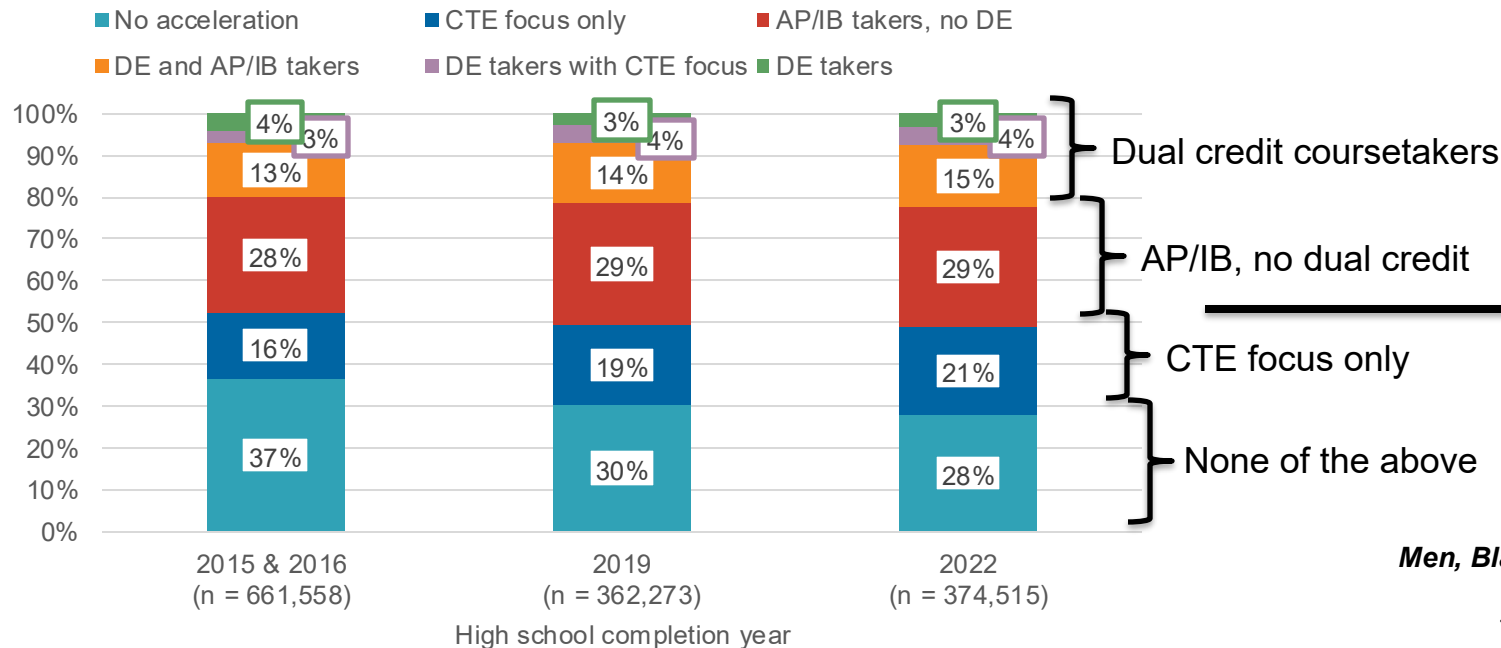
Texas Public High School Students

- We examined cohorts expected to graduate in 2015–16 and 2016–17
- Tracked their college attainment and earnings up to six years post high school completion

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DE takers with CTE focus	X		X
DE and AP/IB takers	X	X	Some
AP/IB takers, no DE		X	Some
CTE focus only			X
No acceleration			

College-and-career accelerated coursework participation has increased over time, but large untapped segments remain.

Students by coursetaking profile and high school cohort

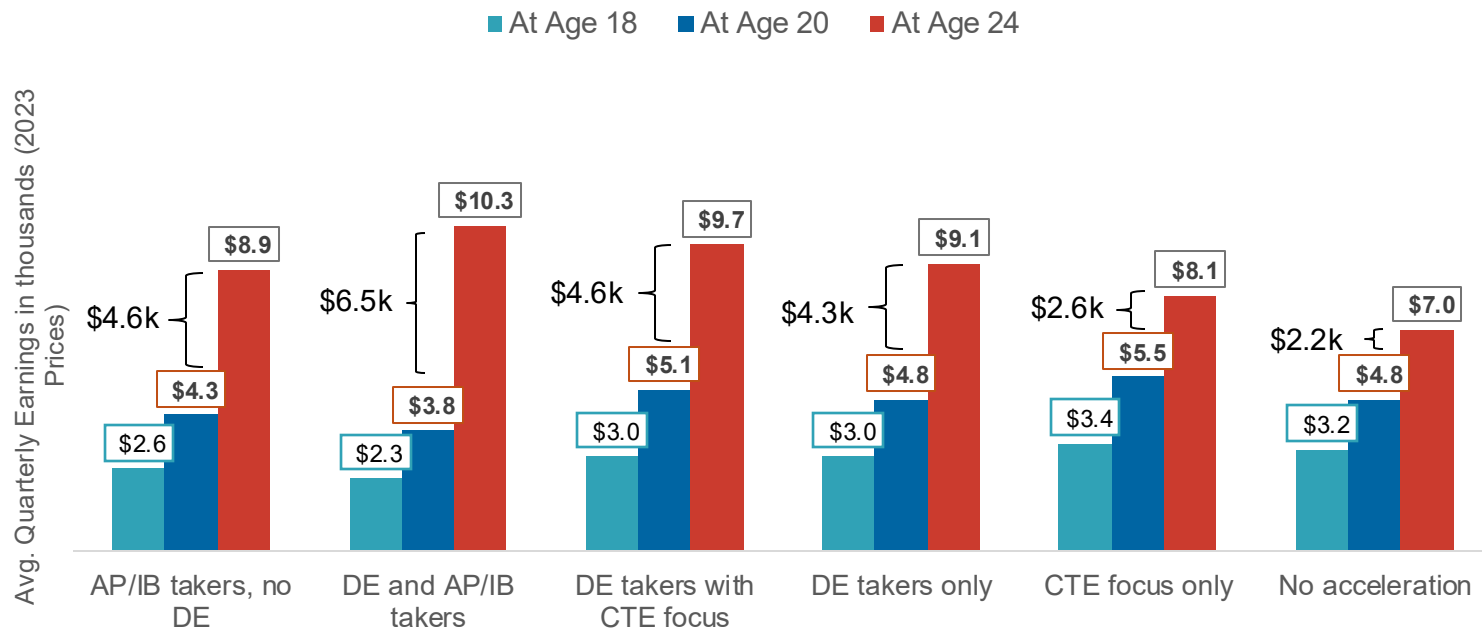


**Half of Texas
HS Students**

Overrepresented:
Men, Black, & low-income students
56-57% men (51% baseline)
14-18% Black (13% baseline)
62-65% low-income (54% baseline)

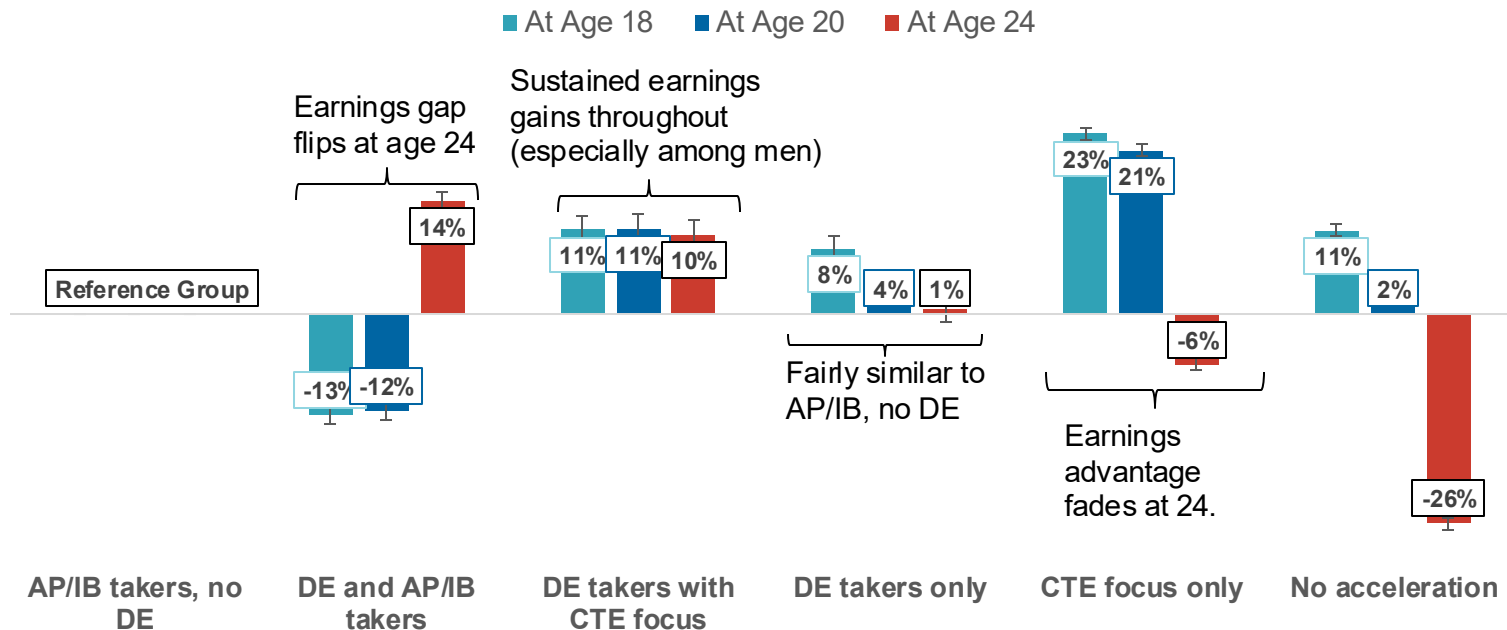
DE students had the highest earnings growth from the ages 20 to 24. No acceleration and CTE focus only students' earnings advantage is short-lived.

Average Quarterly Earnings Among Texas Public High School Students



DE alone, but especially in combination with other accelerated coursework, is associated with significant earnings gains by age 24, even after accounting for student background.

Regression-adjusted Differences in Quarterly Earnings by Coursetaking Profiles



Regression-adjusted estimates of the average quarterly earnings by each year post-high school. Controls: gender, race, income background, TAKS test scores, student ranking, and high school characteristics. Whiskers represent 95% confidence intervals.

Summary of Findings

Students with college acceleration coursework, particularly DE:

- Had stronger postsecondary and earnings outcomes compared to students with no acceleration coursework

AP/IB and DE students:

- Were less diverse and initially earned less than other groups, including AP/IB alone students.
- But their earnings rose sharply by age 24, outperforming students with AP/IB alone and other coursetaking profiles.

Students who combined High School CTE with DE:

- Had higher college attainment than CTE focus only students and no accelerated coursework students
- Sustained earning gains up to age 24

Early College High School (ECHS) students:

- Are disproportionately from underrepresented groups
- Have relatively strong early postsecondary and earnings outcomes compared to the Texas high school average
- But represented 5% of the Texas public high school population

Recommendations for Policy and Practice



Expand Dual Enrollment (DE) participation.



DE can complement AP/IB offerings.



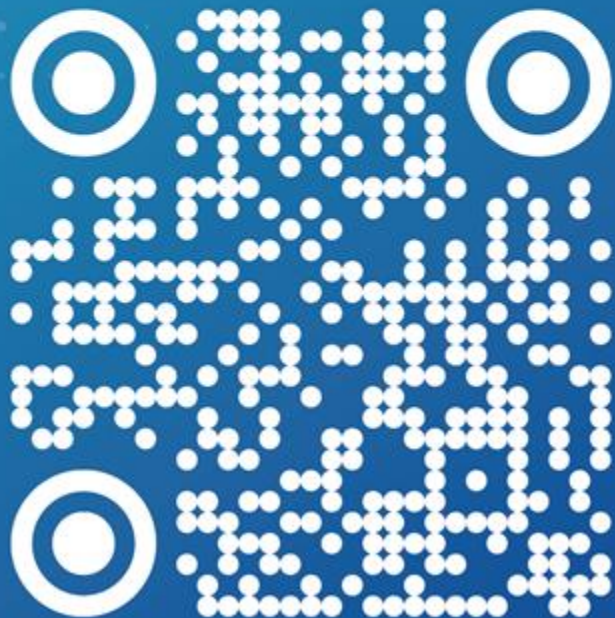
Expand access to DE for CTE students.



Expanding access to DE is not enough.

DEEP@CCRC

Resources on dual enrollment
equity pathways for K-12 and
college practitioners.



Thank you!

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