SHARING THE COST:

Dual Enrollment Funding and Equitable Access in California and Minnesota

Presented to the SHEEO Higher Education Policy Conference

August 13 | 2:00 – 3:00 PM | Charles Frost

Session Moderator and Panelists

Sharmila Mann, Moderator

Sharmila Mann is an associate partner at Bellwether in the Policy and Evaluation practice area.

Krista Kaput, Presenter

Krista Kaput is a senior analyst at Bellwether in the Policy and Evaluation practice area.

Noami Castro, Presenter

Naomi Castro is the Chief Program Officer at the Career Ladders Project in California.

Josiah Litant, Presenter

Josiah Litant is the Executive Director of the Minnesota P-20 Partnership.

Poll Question:
What are the top 1-2 barriers to equitable dual enrollment access and participation in your state?

- **Information** - Students don't know about dual enrollment opportunities
- **Cost** - It is too expensive for students to take dual enrollment courses
- **Instructors** - Districts struggle with finding enough qualified dual enrollment instructors
- **Geography** - Postsecondary institutions are too far away from high schools for partnerships
- **Other –** Briefly describe
- **Not sure**

Bellwether

Sharing the Cost: Insights from States Funding Dual Enrollment to Expand Access

Presented to SHEEO Higher Education Policy Conference

AUGUST 13, 2025

About Bellwether

Bellwether envisions a future where *all* young people have access to an **equitable** and **excellent** education, and live lives filled with **opportunity**.

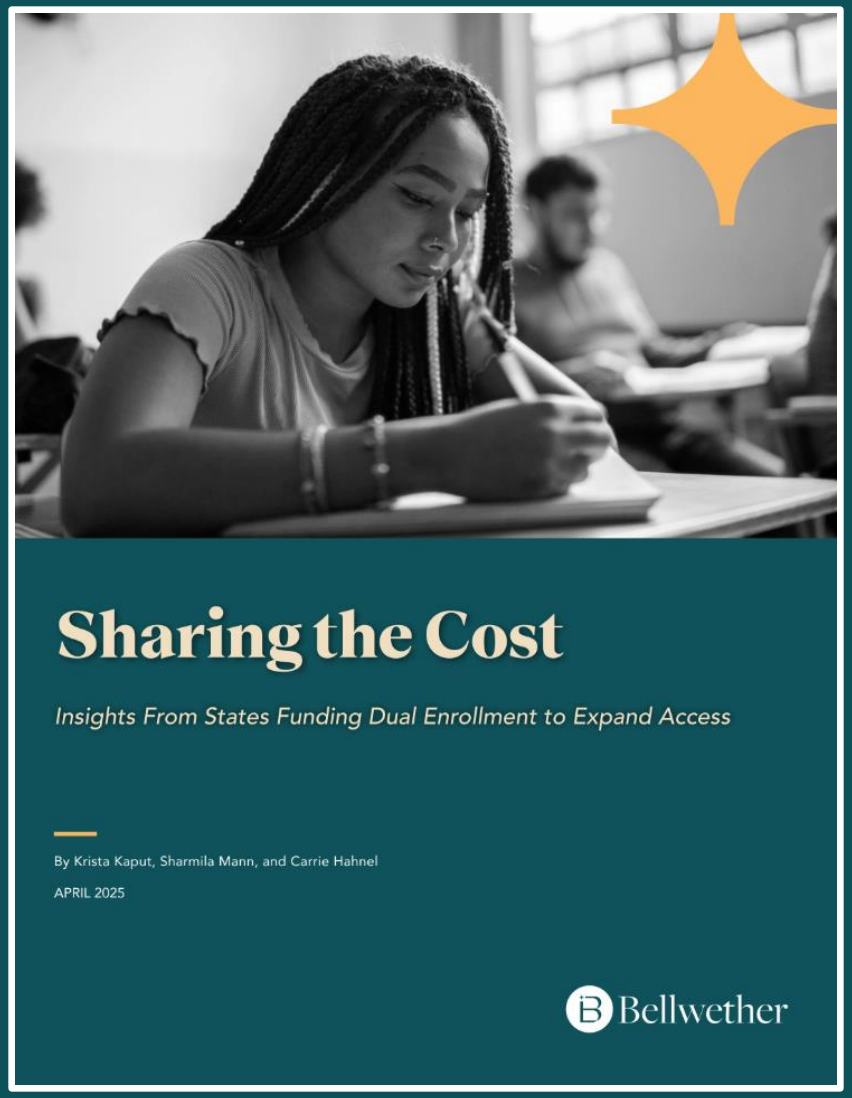
Bellwether is a **national nonprofit** that works hand in hand with education leaders and organizations to accelerate their impact, inform and influence policy and program design, and share what we learn along the way.

Bellwether's work in **state education finance equity** aims to change the status quo, state by state, through public analyses, trainings, and capacity building supports for state advocates and decisionmakers.

Scan the QR code to access the publication

You can also use this link:

bellwether.org/publications/sharing-the-cost/



Goals and Research Questions

Why focus on dual enrollment funding?

Sharing the Cost defines dual enrollment as programs that offer high school students the opportunity to engage in college-level coursework.

- **Dual enrollment is early college access.** State funding can increase access.

- **In 2022-23, 2.5 million students participated in dual enrollment**, representing:
  - 16% of all public high school students nationwide
  - an increase of over 2 million students since 2015.

- **Dual enrollment participation improves student outcomes**, including:
  - increased high school graduation rates
  - increased college enrollment and credit accumulation
  - increased postsecondary attainment

- **However, dual enrollment participation has historically been inequitable**, with white and high-income students participating at much higher rates than Black, Latino, Indigenous, and economically disadvantaged students.

- **Dual enrollment funding policies and approaches vary significantly** among states and programs, complicating efforts to identify the most promising approaches.

Goals and Research Questions

Sharing the Cost uses a case study approach to investigate how different state policies and funding mechanisms might contribute to improved dual enrollment participation and attainment for underrepresented student groups.

Goals:

- Help state leaders, policymakers, and advocates better understand **how states use funding models to increase dual enrollment equity.**
- Provide state leaders, policymakers, and advocates with **clear, actionable policy design options and considerations** that help them evaluate their current approaches to dual enrollment funding, prioritize equity, and determine policy changes.

Research Questions

- **What are the characteristics of dual enrollment funding models** that aim to support more equitable dual enrollment program participation and student outcomes?
- **How do these models share dual enrollment tuition and non-tuition costs** across the state, community colleges, K-12 districts, and students?
- **What are the program growth and attainment outcomes** in state programs that have employed these models of dual enrollment funding?

Dual Enrollment Cost Sharing

There are four main players that (can) cover dual enrollment tuition and non-tuition costs

State Governments

Some states fully cover, or partially offset, the student tuition cost of dual enrollment with a dedicated allocation or grant program.

Students

In some states, dually enrolled students are responsible for covering tuition or non-tuition costs.

Tuition
Dually enrolled students are charged a discounted rate in most states

Non-Tuition Costs
Fees, textbooks, supplies, meals, transportation

Community Colleges

If states do not fully cover the tuition and non-tuition costs, community colleges and K-12 districts must agree on how to share these costs (often through MOUs).

K-12 Districts

If states do not fully cover the tuition and non-tuition costs, community colleges and K-12 districts must agree on how to share these costs (often through MOUs).

States must consider how K-12 and community college funding systems will work together to cover DE expenses

K-12 Districts

- Every state has its own K-12 funding formula that allocates funding to districts **based on either enrollment or attendance (ADM/ADA).**
- States generally allocate some or all of the K-12 general education per-pupil allocation for dual enrollment students to districts.

Community Colleges

- States generally allocate some or most community college formula funding **based on the full-time equivalent (FTE) number of enrolled students.**
- Many states have incorporated dual enrollment students into community college FTE counts.

Some states allocate supplemental dual enrollment funding outside the state's K-12 and community college funding formulas.

Does your state provide full per-pupil allocations to K-12 districts (ADA/ADM) and community colleges (FTE) for dual enrollment students?

- **Both** - Yes, both K-12 and CCs receive their full per-pupil state allocations for DE students
- **K-12 only** - Yes to K-12, but not to CCs
- **CC only** - Yes to CCs, but not to K-12
- **Neither** – No, neither K12 nor CCs receive their full per-pupil state allocations for DE students
- **I'm not sure**

State Case Studies

We selected case study states using four key criteria identified from the literature base and expert interviews

Criteria	Description
1. **The state has invested in DE**	The state **provides additional funding** to help districts and community colleges cover dual enrollment expenses
2. **The state has prioritized DE participation**	The state has **committed to expanding dual enrollment**, particularly for systemically marginalized student groups, through legislation, regulations, or strategic initiatives.
3. **Students are not responsible for tuition costs**	The state **requires tuition-free dual enrollment** for all or certain student groups.
4. **Students are not responsible for nontuition costs**	The state **requires that all or certain student groups are not responsible for other costs** associated with dual enrollment, such as textbooks, fees, or course materials.

We analyzed six dual enrollment programs across four states – California, Idaho, Minnesota, and Texas

State	Dual Enrollment Program
California	**College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP)** allows high school students to take college courses and earn both high school and college credits simultaneously at the high school at no cost.
Idaho	**Advanced Opportunities** provides $4,625 to public school students in Grades 7-12 to accelerate their education and earn college credits, including through dual enrollment programs.
Minnesota	**Concurrent Enrollment** is offered at the high school and taught by qualified high school teachers or college faculty at no cost to students.
	Traditional Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) is offered at institutions of higher education (IHEs), including community colleges, and taught by college faculty. The tuition is covered through a statutory formula.
	PSEO by Contract is offered at IHEs, including community colleges, and is taught by college faculty. The tuition is covered through individual memorandums of understanding (MOUs) between the IHE and the school district
Texas	**Financial Aid for Swift Transfer (FAST)** allows public IHEs, including community colleges, to offer dual credit courses to educationally disadvantaged high school students at no cost.

Every DE program we chose met at least 3 of the program criteria

1. The state has invested in dual enrollment
2. The state has prioritized dual enrollment participation
3. Students are not responsible for tuition
4. Students are not responsible for nontuition costs

State	Dual Enrollment Program	Program Selection Criteria			
		1	2	3	4
California	College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP)	X	X	X	X
Idaho	Advanced Opportunities	X	X	X	
Minnesota	Concurrent Enrollment	X	X	X	X
	Traditional Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO)		X	X	X
	PSEO by Contract		X	X	X
Texas	Financial Aid for Swift Transfer (FAST)	X	X	X	X

Case Study Themes and Recommendations

Part 1: Supportive Funding Policies

Policy	Description	State Examples
Students pay no tuition	The state requires that dual enrollment is tuition-free for all or certain student groups.	• State selection criteria
State allocation to K-12 districts	The state allows school districts to receive full per-pupil state allocations for DE students.	• **CA**: DE students who attend 240 min/day • **MN**: DE students in concurrent enrollment and PSEO by contract
State allocation to community colleges	The state includes DE students in the community college full-time equivalent (FTE) calculation for state allocations.	• **CA**: DE students count as "special admit" FTEs
State reimbursement of community college tuition	The state (partially) reimburses community colleges for DE tuition costs	• **MN:** Traditional PSEO DE students, at a flat rate of $241/credit hour. Funded by a significant reduction in state allocations to the K-12 district partner

Part 2: Supportive Policies Beyond Funding

Policy	Description	State Examples
State goals	The state sets goals specific to dual enrollment	• **CA**: Included in state strategic plan for community colleges
Data reporting requirements	The state requires school districts and community colleges to report dual enrollment program data to the state.	• **CA**: community colleges submit annual reports to the governor • **MN CE, PSEO by Contract**: DOE collects data and conducts yearly evaluations • **MN PSEO:** DOE tracks student enrollment and participation
Partnership agreements	The state requires school district and community college partners to establish formal agreements.	• **CA:** Program legislation includes clear, minimum criteria for MOU • **MN CE, PSEO by Contract:** Requires formal K-12/IHE partnership for cost-sharing
Aligned coursework	The state requires coursework to be aligned with a credential of value or workforce needs.	• **CA:** CTE DE courses must be aligned with regional and statewide labor markets

Part 3: Challenges to Increasing Equity

CHALLENGE 1: State data reporting requirements are limited.
All four states require data reporting but also face data limitations. These include the lack of linked data between K-12 and postsecondary systems, uneven reporting requirements across programs, limited data disaggregation, and limited public data access.

CHALLENGE 2: States allow colleges to impose additional eligibility criteria.
All four states allow community colleges to impose additional eligibility criteria (courses, GPAs, test scores) beyond the state's minimum DE eligibility requirements. Additional criteria can exclude students who could otherwise succeed in dual credit courses.

CHALLENGE 3: High school dual enrollment instructor capacity is limited.
All four case study states have encountered challenges in finding enough high school teachers who meet the IHE minimum qualifications to teach the state's dual enrollment courses. This tends to be particularly problematic in rural areas.

CHALLENGE 4: Students lack college advising.
All four states identified challenges with providing appropriate advising/navigational support to students. ASCA recommends a student-to-counselor ratio of 250-to-1; national average is a ratio of 385-to-1; all four case study states had higher ratios.

Policy Recommendations

- **Support student participation**
  - Use state funds to cover **student tuition** and nontuition costs
  - Invest in growing the **instructor workforce** to meet program demand
  - Establish effective and accessible **advising systems**
- **Support district and IHE participation**
  - Create funding structures that **fairly support both** district and IHE partners
  - Establish statewide **MOU requirements** for dual enrollment partnerships
- **Ensure sustainable state funding**
  - Direct state funds toward student tuition and nontuition costs, especially for **underrepresented student subgroups**
  - Establish **reasonable guardrails** when investing in program growth
- **Monitor impact and inform continuous improvement**
  - Require K-12 districts and IHEs to track and report **disaggregated data**
  - Connect data **across K-12 and HE** systems while addressing privacy concerns

Thank You!

Scan the QR code to access the publication

Krista Kaput

Krista Kaput is a senior analyst at Bellwether. She can be reached at krista.kaput@bellwether.org.

Sharmila Mann

Sharmila Mann is an associate partner at Bellwether. She can be reached at sharmila.mann@bellwether.org.

Carrie Hahnel

Carrie Hahnel is a senior associate partner at Bellwether. She can be reached at carrie.hahnel@bellwether.org.

Dual Enrollment in California

About CLP

Career Ladders Project promotes equity-minded community college redesign.

We collaborate with colleges and their partners to discover, develop, and disseminate effective practices. Our policy work, research, and direct efforts with colleges lead to system change—and enable more students to attain certificates, degrees, transfers, and career advancement.

California

- No GPA or cut scores
- For most DuE no cost to students
- 700m in one-time grants to K12 districts
- Now a state priority - Vision 2030, CCC Roadmap, Master Plan for Career Education
- No ongoing dedicated funding for DuE

CLP Career Ladders Project

Types of Dual Enrollment California

Highly Structured			Less Structured	
At the College	**At the High School**			**At the College**
Middle College High School[1]	**Early College High School**[1]	**CCAP at HS**[2] Governed by Agreement	**Non-CCAP at HS** Governed by Agreement	**Individual**[3]
-Integrated structure -Goal: AA/AS -Focus: Mitigate dropout rate for at-promise students -An autonomous school with a CDE designation -On a college campus	-Integrated structure -Goal: AA/AS -Focus: Mitigate dropout rate for at-promise students -An autonomous school with a CDE designation	-Pathways: Sequence toward HSD, certifications, or degrees -Can offer closed classes -Supports are embedded -Focus: Students who are not college-bound or who are underrepresented in higher education	-*Purpose specified in law*: Provide advanced scholastics or CTE -*In reality*: Offer all courses to students except remedial English or math -Classes are open to the community	-High school students across the state enroll and attend college on their own, without a designed dual enrollment partnership -*Purpose specified in law*: Provide advanced scholastics or CTE -*In reality:* all courses/students except remedial English/math -Students who can navigate the college system likely have "college knowledge"

1 This should not be confused with early or middle college programs, which are programs in comprehensive high schools that offer early access to college credit.
2 Courses in the CCAP agreement may also be offered at a college campus, but must remain open to the general public.
3 Individual dual enrollment is also referred to as "concurrent" or "enrichment."

Evolution of Dual Enrollment Approach

Old Dual Enrollment	CCAP
• Advanced academics / vocational work • Designed to benefit a limited number of students • Random acts = common practice • GPA requirements = common practice • Latine, Black students underrepresented • Mostly students coming to the college on their own • MOUS	• For students who are underrepresented in HE • Designed along pathways • During the school day classes can be closed • Student supports • Data sharing • Free for students No tuition/fees or cost for supplies

Results

- CCAP has eliminated the equity gaps in access for Latine students
- Majority of CCAP students continue on to community college
- CCAP students complete transfer level math and English in the 1st year at higher rates
- Still have work to do …CCAP students have lower gpa than other kinds of DuE
- Black and Latino CCAP students completed transfer-level courses at lower rates than Asian or white students

Improving College Access and Success Through Dual Enrollment PPIC 2023

MN P-20 Education Partnership and Dual Enrollment

Josiah S. Litant, Executive Director

MINNESOTA
P-20 EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

Image by rawpixel.com on Freepik

About our partnership

- **Josiah Litant**, Executive Director since 2023
- A **multi-sector, independent coalition of leaders** representing 27 organizations across early childhood, K-12, higher education, nonprofits, workforce development, and government
- The coalition also includes **bipartisan, bicameral legislator representation**
- Created in statute in 2009 with the charge of making **P-20 education policy recommendations** to the governor and state legislature
- Much of our work also focuses on collaboration to **influence change** and to **incubate, accelerate, and amplify** promising practices statewide
- We are well-positioned to tackle issues that **cross sectors**, like dual enrollment

Our mission and vision

Mission: Why does MNP20 exist?

We collaborate across sectors to increase equitable education access and supports, enhance lifelong learning opportunities, and improve outcomes for every Minnesotan.

Vision: What must MNP20 become in order to achieve its mission?

We will influence change, foster innovation, and advocate for policies and practices that address priority issues in education and workforce development.

Minnesota dual enrollment landscape

- Minnesota has the **oldest dual enrollment statute** in the country
- **Two types of DE**: concurrent enrollment & PSEO
  - **PSEO** offered by public and private higher ed
  - **Concurrent enrollment** offered in public high schools
- Broad opportunities for students at **no cost;** tuition, fees, and textbook costs completely covered
- **Financial model** comes with **big challenges**
- Some base requirements, otherwise **admissions standards are by institutions**

MNP20's work in dual enrollment

- **Dual Credit subcommittee** since 2020 with cross-organizational representation
- We are exploring the dual enrollment landscape with a **comprehensive approach**
- MNP20 looks at the work through **two lenses**:
  - What are the **policy and funding** barriers/opportunities?
  - What role can an intermediary play to help **accelerate action**?
- 2023 report with the CHSA, *Improving Minnesota's Dual Enrollment Funding System*, which included a priority to **increase access and equity** as our core focus
- Conducted some initial **dual enrollment ROI** analysis in 2024

“Next Phase of DE Policy” cohort

- A lack of **cohesive, shared vision**—the WHY—was hampering forward movement
- College in High School Alliance announced their **“Next Phase of DE Policy” cohort** opportunity; selected states are MN, NM, OH, OR, TN, VA, and WA
- Focusing on:
  - Developing a **statewide vision** for dual enrollment
  - Increasing **intentionality** of dual enrollment experiences
  - Increasing **participation** and **success** for **rural and BIPOC students**
- Work will lead to a series of **recommendations** to MNP20 and, we hope, back us into a conversation about the funding model

MINNESOTA
P-20 EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

For more information:

Josiah Litant, Executive Director, Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership
josiah.litant@state.mn.us | 651.468.1483

Moderated Panel Discussion

Q & A

Thank you!

Sharmila Mann, Moderator

Sharmila Mann is an associate partner at Bellwether in the Policy and Evaluation practice area. She can be reached at sharmila.mann@bellwether.org

Krista Kaput, Presenter

Krista Kaput is a senior analyst at Bellwether in the Policy and Evaluation practice area. She can be reached at kritsta.kaput@bellwether.org

Noami Castro, Presenter

Naomi Castro is the Chief Program Officer at the Career Ladders Project in California. She can be reached at ncastro@careerladdersproject.org

Josiah Litant, Presenter

Josiah Litant is the Executive Director of the Minnesota P-20 Partnership. He can be reached at josiah.litant@state.mn.us