COLLEGE IN HIGH SCHOOL
ALLIANCE

COLLEGE IN HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS SOLVE EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES:
Recommendations for State Executive Branch Teams

THE CASE FOR COLLEGE IN HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The percentage of jobs requiring postsecondary education and training is expected to reach a new high of 65 percent in 2020. Yet our nation remains ill-prepared. Businesses are projected to face shortages of three million workers with associate's degrees or higher and five million workers with technical certificates and credentials by 2020.[1]

In addition, a large number of students who attempted college but never graduated – only 54.8 percent of students who started any kind of college in 2010 graduated within six years – are hobbled by student debt without a credential to show for it. [2] The college completion crisis is only magnified when broken down by race, with Asian and White students completing degrees at much higher rates when compared with Hispanic and Black students.[3]

College in high school programs, including dual enrollment, concurrent enrollment, and early college high schools, can help solve our college access, completion, and affordability challenges. Students that participate in these programs are more

likely to go on to get a college degree. And when states invest in these programs families and students can save money by getting a head start on college before even leaving high school.

Why we know college in high school programs work:

- Research shows that college in high school programs increase high school graduation rates, improve college readiness, and provide gains in college access, persistence, and completion for a diverse group of students.[4]

- Studies included in the Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) concluded that high school students who experience college-level courses are more prepared for college and more likely to attain a college degree.[5]

- Investments in early college and dual enrollment increase the cost-effectiveness of public investment in education, as more students receive postsecondary credentials and degrees more quickly and at higher rates, and the need for and costs of remedial coursework decrease. [6]

College In High School Programs Can Help Solve Big Challenges

Developing and implementing a policy framework to support high quality college in high school programs can:

- Increase the number of students attending and completing college
- Bring down the cost of college
- Grow a workforce with the right credentials
- Address the crisis of the national teacher workforce
- Stop students from wasting time on courses that don't count.

What is the College in High School Alliance?

The College in High School Alliance (CHSA) is a coalition of national and state organizations collaborating to positively impact policies and build broad support for programs that enable high school students – particularly those who are low income or underrepresented in higher education – to enroll in authentic, affordable college pathways toward postsecondary degrees and credentials offered with appropriate support.

The policy recommendations contained within this guide are endorsed by the Steering Committee of the College in High School Alliance. To learn more, see our complete membership list, and to contact us for further information, please visit www.collegeinhighschool.org

What Are College in High School Programs?

College in high school encompasses dual and concurrent enrollment programs, which are partnerships between school districts and institutions of higher education that allow high school students to enroll in college courses and earn transferrable college credit. In many states, dual and concurrent enrollment were historically used as acceleration strategies for high-achieving learners, and often served middle- or higher-income students, though these opportunities have been found to be highly beneficial for all students. College in high school programs also include early college high schools, which target students from underserved groups and are designed to provide an opportunity to earn an associate's degree or significant college credit at no cost, while also embedding comprehensive supports.

The Role of the State Executive Branch in Supporting College in High School Programs

Incoming governors and state executive teams have a strong role to play in supporting college in high school programs. Every state still has work to do to advance opportunities for high school students to earn college credits, particularly with regard to access, equity, and quality assurance.

Recent data from the US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights show equity gaps for access to college in high school programs in nearly every state, [7] even in those states that have already invested significantly in these programs. As a result, there is a need for executive leadership to focus on not just expanding access to college in high school programs, but leading a charge to ensure those programs are reaching traditionally underrepresented students in higher education.

New state executive teams and state agency leaders have a critical role to play in convening the many partners engaged in providing students with access to college in high school, including K-12, higher education, and employers, to jumpstart a new conversation in the state about the vision for these programs and how they can be effective in solving a number of serious challenges within our current educational system. In addition, decisive leadership and a strong vision is necessary to ensure that the policies that impact college in high school programs are aligned with the state's needs, particularly around its workforce.

[1] Anthony P. Carnevale, Nicole Smith, and Jeff Strohl, Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements Through 2020 (Washington, DC: Georgetown Public Policy Institute's Center on Education and the Workforce, Georgetown University, 2013).

[2] Shapiro, D., Dundar, A., Huie, F., Wakhungu, P., Yuan, X., Nathan, A & Hwang, Y., A. (2017, April). A National View of Student Attainment Rates by Race and Ethnicity – Fall 2010 Cohort (Signature Report No. 12b). Herndon, VA: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.

[3] Ibid

[4] More information on the studies in this area can be accessed on the College in High School Alliance website, under the "Evidence of Success" tab: http://www.collegeinhighschool.org

[5] Ibid

[6] Joel Vargas, The Economic Payoff for Closing College-Readiness and Completion Gaps. (Boston: Jobs for the Future, 2013).

[7] John Fink, How Does Access to Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement Vary by Race and Gender Across States?, November 2018, https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/easyblog/access-dual-enrollment-advanced-placement-race-gender.html

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Using College in High School Programs to Solve Educational Challenges

Too Many Students are Not Attending or Completing College

The Opportunity…

- Make the opportunity to earn college credit in high school available to more students across the state, particularly those from underserved communities, through creation of a sustainable, formula-based funding source that allows school districts and colleges to sustain college in high school programs that charge low or no tuition costs to students.

- Enhance the state's focus on closing access gaps for traditionally underrepresented students in higher education by focusing resources on serving those populations that data demonstrates suffer from significant and persistent access challenges.

- Reward high schools that offer students access to college in high school programs by refining indicators related to college credit in K-12 accountability systems to ensure quality by focusing on completion of college courses, not just access, and increasing points for greater credit accumulation and degree or credential completion.

College Costs Are Too High

The Opportunity…

- If the state has a 'College Promise' program to offer a tuition free community college education to low income students or plans to create one, incorporate college in high school as one route for students to benefit from free college.

- Re-envision state tuition assistance programs or other state aid, with appropriate student protections, to include high school-age students enrolled in college programs of study, and ensure that eligible programs remove cost barriers beyond tuition (such as textbooks or fees).

States Need to Grow Their Workforce with the Right Credentials

The Opportunity…

- Convene a statewide task force to examine, align, and promote college in high school programs as potential solutions to meet the workforce needs of in-demand industry sectors and employers in the state.

- Create a start-up fund to launch new career-focused college in high school programs with school districts, higher education, and industry partners.

- Take advantage of new federal opportunities under Perkins V, as well as existing opportunities under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), to enhance college in high school CTE courses.

National Teacher Shortages Have Led to a Workforce in Crisis

The Opportunity…

- Provide funding (including leveraging federal ESSA funds) to support teachers to pursue advanced credentials that will enable them to teach college in high school courses, strengthening the teacher workforce and promoting career ladders and increased teacher retention.

- Promote policies that allow college professors to teach college courses to high school age students, including removing burdensome regulatory requirements and providing funding incentives when needed.

- Incentivize graduate schools of education to produce more candidates prepared to teach dual enrollment courses.

Students Waste Time and Money on Courses that Don't Count

The Opportunity…

- Create statewide articulation agreements that ensure college credits earned in high school will transfer to colleges across the state.

- Ensure all state-funded dual enrollment courses are credit-bearing (non-remedial), part of a program of study, and transferable.