

EXPANDING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO DUAL CREDIT

The Illinois Dual Credit Survey asked educators and administrators representing secondary and postsecondary, policymakers, parents, and students for their perspectives on Dual Credit¹ in Illinois. In total 1,004 responses were collected throughout early 2021. Respondents were asked about access, rigor, and perceived benefits of Dual Credit courses. In a short answer section respondents were invited to provide deeper context on the challenges and advantages of Dual Credit programs.

97% of secondary respondents believe that high schools benefit from offering Dual Credit courses

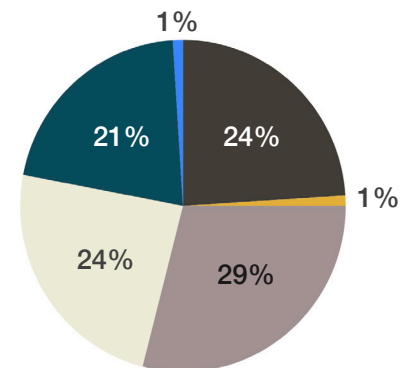
73% of postsecondary respondents believe that colleges benefit from offering Dual Credit courses

97% of student respondents believe that they benefited from participating in Dual Credit

83% of all respondents say Dual Credit courses are high quality and rigorous

83% of all respondents agree that Dual Credit courses are college courses

WHAT ROLE BEST DESCRIBES YOU



● Parent ● Secondary
● Policymaker ● Student
● Postsecondary ● Other

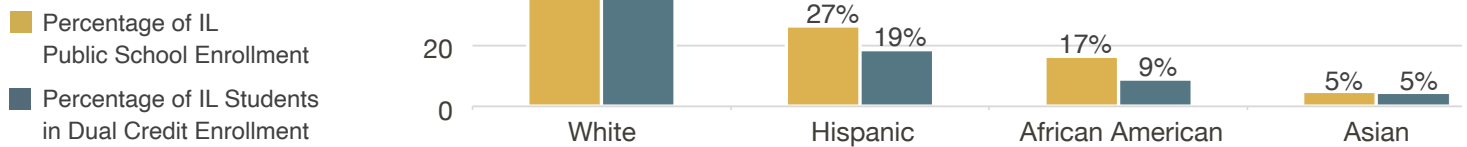
While a strong majority of secondary respondents believe Dual Credit programs seek out and enroll students from all socioeconomic and demographic groups, over a third of parents and nearly half of postsecondary respondents disagree with that claim. Nearly all respondents, 93%, believe that low-income students and students of color can benefit from participating in Dual Credit programs.

While Illinois has steadily grown the number of students taking Dual Credit courses, many students still lack access to these pivotal courses.

Respondents recommend a wide array of strategies to expand access to Dual Credit courses, including increased marketing, awareness, and recruitment efforts; a concerted effort to lower costs for students and families; and intentional course offerings.

¹ The survey defined Dual Credit as a college course taken by a high school student that results in the student receiving credit at both the college and high school level. These courses may be taken at a high school, a college, or some other hybrid environment (inclusive of early college high schools and P-TECH). It does not include exam-based credit programs like Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate.

PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ENROLLED IN DUAL CREDIT BY RACE



Source: ICCB Dual Credit in the Illinois Community College System Report 2020

To see your school's disaggregated Dual Credit enrollment data visit: standadvocacytoolkit.org

MARKETING, AWARENESS, AND RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES SHOULD CAST A WIDE NET

- *“Publicize more broadly, consistently, and generally as well as emphasizing to every touch point - teachers, counselors, coaches, club leaders, parent and guardian organizations, tutoring center, library, township etc. - to **discuss with ALL students as a possibility/option and encouragement that they can do it.** With parents/guardians who may not be aware, clear and concise language that encourages them to support their student(s)’ engagement (NOT jargon memos and power points or a presentation that puts the onus on them to contact the school as the only way for more information).”*
—Parent
- *“High schools [should make] sure that students and parents are well aware of the opportunities and **have a point person** who manages the process for them. Simple one-step sign up with no cost to the family.”*
—Parent
- *“**Educate the students on what classes are required for an associates degree** and [have] as many of those classes as possible, so for lower income student or high achieving ones they can take Dual Credit instead of AP.”*
—Dual Credit Student
- *“We are hoping to provide consistent messaging for our high schools to use on their websites that are prominently displayed and link them to the College Dual Credit page. We are also working on **programming for younger students: summer camps for 5-8 grade, a sophomore career exploration day, speaking at high school freshmen orientations,** etc. that will allow our message to reach a wider audience.”*
—Postsecondary Administrator
- *“More communication channels from the collegiate and high school partners; early access to sophomores/juniors; **targeted recruitment to mirror the demographics of the school district.**”*
—Secondary Administrator
- *“**Promote these courses early and often.** Make sure students know they can work on high school and college credit at the same time. Make sure that counselors, parents, and teachers of classes that lead to [Dual Credit] courses are spreading the message to all students, especially students who do not want to take AP courses.”*
—Secondary Faculty

- *“A district wide approach from the high school that is coordinated with the (entire) college. **Attention should include non-academic student support and resources.**”*

—Postsecondary Faculty

- *“**All students and parents should be given more information on what courses are available for Dual Credit** and what requirements are involved to take those courses and then can make course registration decisions with that in mind.”*

—Parent

- *“**High schools proactively reaching out to all eligible students and helping them with the dual enrollment registration.**”*

—Parent

- *“**Provide automatic enrollment with an opt out feature.**”*

—Parent

INTENTIONAL COURSE OFFERINGS MAKE THE BIGGEST IMPACT FOR STUDENTS

- *“I’ve worked on both the high school counseling side and now at a community college. My issue with Dual Credit is that oftentimes the course(s) that is/are taken only result in elective credit for students, rather than meeting a program or general education requirement. I would love to see **more developmental math courses [or] core subject courses offered via Dual Credit**, which could be applied towards a student’s transfer credits or general education program. Additionally, having excess elective credits can put those who qualify for financial aid in a tough position where, in some rare cases, they may not be eligible based on poor performance or excess elective/non-degree credits.”*

—Postsecondary Counselor

- *“**Survey the students and see what they want and/or need.** Also look at general education courses at colleges and see what aligns with high school courses to create more opportunities.”*

—Postsecondary Administrator

- *“The first step is to engage the student with opportunities. **Presenting paths for job and career opportunities** while developing the skills to overcome obstacles while meeting students where they are in their education development.”*

—Postsecondary Faculty

- *“Designing clear pathways to degrees. Not just offering classes for the sole purpose of saying that you offer Dual Credit. The idea is to **get students excited about a career and give them clear roads to reach those goals.** Bring Dual Credit workshops to middle school students/parents/guardians to increase knowledge around the benefits of taking Dual Credit. Offering concise information which includes cost savings, etc. Students in low performing schools and students of color must have access to all of this information. There are so many students out there that are slipping through the cracks. Students that have real dreams and hopes! Schools need to provide multiple touch points with each and every student to explore all postsecondary options. Hiring more high school counselors to lessen the counselor to student ratio will benefit the student, their family and the broader community.”*

—Secondary Administrator

COORDINATED EFFORTS TO INCREASE AFFORDABILITY ARE PARAMOUNT TO EQUITABLE ACCESS

■ “You will never be able to expand and reach more low-income students as long as they have to pay full tuition rate. **Reducing tuition rates for [Dual Credit] will give more students access** and encourage them to continue after graduation to get a degree. Without reaching some of these students in high school, you will never get them to even go to college. Dual Credit gives them the confidence to know that they can go to college and be successful.”

—Secondary Counselor

■ “When considering equitable access, colleges need to **understand direct and indirect costs for families**. Tuition and textbooks are direct costs for families but transportation is an indirect cost if the program is located offsite. Furthermore, the more barriers associated with an offering, ie testing, prerequisite coursework, background checks, screenings, limits the ability of a student on their own to navigate the system. We cannot assume they have an involved adult who will make it happen.”

—Secondary Administrator



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