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Stand for Children Illinois Releases Advocacy Toolkit to Help Improve Dual Credit Outcomes for Students

Chicago -- Stand for Children Illinois today released its first Advocacy Toolkit, looking to offer parents, educators, administrators, and community members with an easy-to-use tool to help improve access and outcomes for all high school students when it comes to dual credit courses. The toolkit offers users a step-by-step guide to advocating for dual credit opportunities in their own communities with a “choose your own adventure” personalized experience.

“Stand’s Dual Credit Advocacy Toolkit is the result of everyday students and educators joining forces to really understand the landscape of dual credit access and opportunity in Illinois,” said Mimi Rodman/Aimee Galvin, Executive Director/Policy & Government Affairs Manager of Stand for Children Illinois. “One area we found was a real lack of tools or guides related to expanding dual credit courses on the local level, or even lowering the cost of those courses for families. What this toolkit does is bring all of these resources and knowledge to bear in an accessible way to help guide folks on their own advocacy path.”

The Dual Credit Advocacy Toolkit centers its advocacy pathways on access and opportunity. By making it easy to follow, the toolkit puts community members in the driver’s seat of their own advocacy goals.

“The dual credit classes I took in high school really prepared me for what is in store in college,” said Malina Rengel, a recent graduate of Rockford’s Roosevelt High School. “I’ve pushed through situations that were hard, so getting a little taste of the college class – and succeeding – lets me know that I can handle college. Those classes gave me the confidence to tackle what’s next in my education.”

Not only do parents and community members now have a straightforward guide to advocating for dual credit opportunities in their school communities, but the Dual Credit Advocacy Toolkit offers educators the tools they need to navigate the tricky world of dual credit credentialing – a space where many educators either lose hope of getting their desired credential or run into obstacles while obtaining it.

“The educator pathways in the Dual Credit Advocacy Toolkit will be immensely helpful to educators across the state,” said Josh Stafford, superintendent of Vienna High School District 13-3. “So many educators run into credentialing issues. For example, they may have a degree in

U.S. History but not World history, or not have a Master's degree, or their credentials are sometimes rejected altogether. This toolkit highlights the ways for them to overcome these obstacles and get credentialed to teach dual credit. Illinois' teacher shortage is pronounced, especially in advanced courses like these. The easier we can make this for educators, the better."

The Stand Dual Credit Advocacy Toolkit builds on the work of our 2020 report, Expanding Equity in Dual Credit. The Toolkit may be accessed at: standadvocacytoolkit.org.

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Stand for Children Illinois is a non-partisan education advocacy organization that fights for educational equity. Stand partners with parents to support their education journey and become strong advocates, and it advocates for proven policies and funding so that all students receive a high-quality, relevant education.