DENVER — States increasingly are turning to dual enrollment as a strategy for improving college readiness and access, according to a 50-state database launched today by the Education Commission of the States.

The online database, available here, shows 47 states and the District of Columbia now have state laws governing dual enrollment, the practice of allowing high school students to enroll in college courses.

“More states are talking about the benefits they see with dual enrollment, in that it presents a tremendous opportunity to expose students to college expectations, allows them to earn college credit and potentially increases the number of traditionally underrepresented students who go to college,” said ECS Senior Policy Analyst Jennifer Dounay Zinth.

Perhaps because of that goal, the number of states making students and their families primarily responsible for the costs of dual enrollment is dropping, from 22 in 2008 to 11 in 2013, according to Zinth’s analysis.

Other findings from the analysis:

- **Quality.** States are striving to ensure the rigor of the classes. In 2008, 29 states included mandates for instructor or course quality in their laws, such as requiring high school teachers be appointed adjunct faculty at a partner college. In 2013, that figure was up to 37.
- **Reporting.** States are tracking who’s enrolling in dual enrollment classes. In 2008, 18 states required a participating college or high school partner to report on the demographics and/or success of students in the programs. In 2013, that number was up to 30.
- **Notification.** States are building student and parent notification into their laws. In 2013, 18 states required all students in specific grades and their parents to be notified of dual enrollment laws. In another two states with multiple programs, family notification was required in at least one program.

Zinth said state policies vary widely on whether high school students identified as needing additional college preparation can take such “remedial” courses as part of dual enrollment programs. Eight states allow it but 16 states explicitly forbid students from enrolling in remedial classes, which typically don’t count for college credit.

The database includes a state-by-state breakdown on 20 data points about dual enrollment as well as comprehensive state profiles. A grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation supported this effort. ECS receives most of its funding from the 50 states, the District of Columbia and the three U.S. territories it serves.

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**About ECS.** ECS is the only nationwide, nonpartisan organization that works directly with governors, legislators, chief state school officers, higher education officials, and other leaders across all areas of education, from pre-K to college and the workforce.