



Advancing Dual Enrollment Equity Through State Policy

Sharmilla Mann

Dual enrollment is an encompassing term referring to programs that offer high school students the opportunity to access college-level coursework. It is an intricate and complex field; most states provide students multiple program options, and those programs vary in terms of the number of courses offered, the modality and location of course delivery, the requirements for instructor qualifications and the ease of college credit transfer. Education Commission of the States' [comparison](#) of dual enrollment programs and policies demonstrates the extent of this complexity across the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Positive Effects and Program Growth

Despite variations across programs, [existing research](#) has consistently demonstrated the [positive effects](#) of dual enrollment. These positive effects cover a wide variety of pre- and post-high school graduation student outcomes, including building early college aspirations, experiences and course credit, as well as contributing to postsecondary affordability, persistence and attainment.

In response to [growing evidence](#) of program effectiveness, states leaders have sought to create incentives for dual enrollment participation through a variety of [policy initiatives](#). States have made financial investments to grow programs



Dual enrollment participation supports postsecondary attainment but is not equitable across student groups.

Student populations historically excluded from dual enrollment continue to face barriers with respect to program access, affordability and quality.

State policy can advance equity in dual enrollment systems through program requirements, financial support mechanisms and implementation guidance.

How to Use This Policy Guide

This Policy Guide explores how state policymakers can remove barriers to equitable dual enrollment program access, affordability and quality. In each area, the guide examines the associated context, available state policy options and examples of state action. The guide concludes with a set of questions designed to help policymakers critically examine existing policy structures for barriers to advancing program equity.

In addition to taking direct action to make program policies more equitable, state leaders also have a role in providing implementation guidance to support systemic change toward more equitable participation and outcomes. This guide highlights two such strategies: setting, tracking and reporting [program equity goals](#) at the state level; and state oversight to assure the integrity of [local partnerships](#) in equitable delivery of programs.

and defray student costs; provided guidance or requirements for program structure and delivery; and set reporting requirements to track program participation and success rates. These policy actions have reaped some significant results. In the last two decades, the nation has seen significant growth in [student participation](#) in dual enrollment programs, [institutional engagement](#) of high schools and colleges as program providers, and [state collection](#) of program participation data.

Inequitable Access to Programs

While [research](#) demonstrates positive program effects [across student populations](#), it also shows that program participation is [not representative](#) across student groups. Students who are white, come from affluent households or have a multigenerational history of college attendance are overrepresented among program participants, while students who are racially minoritized, come from low-income households or are the first generation of their family to attend college are significantly underrepresented. As the nation's student population [becomes more diverse](#), dual enrollment participation faces a growing [equity gap](#).

To close this equity gap, policymakers and practitioners at every level — state, local, postsecondary and secondary — will need to focus their efforts on [removing core barriers](#) to equitable engagement in dual enrollment programs.

From the student perspective, these barriers show up in three main areas: access, affordability and quality. State policymakers have a powerful set of [cross-cutting tools](#) at their disposal that can be leveraged to support the removal of these barriers. These include setting state-level priorities, allocating and directing funds to programs, establishing program requirements, providing guidance for local implementation and requiring program data collection and reporting.

Access

Students have access to dual enrollment when they have the opportunity to participate in dual enrollment programs with reasonable expectations of effort on their part.

Access goes beyond the existence of locally available dual enrollment opportunities. To have access, students must be aware of local opportunities, see themselves as potential participants in those programs, understand the benefits and consequences of program participation, and be prepared to meet associated eligibility criteria.

Access is a core consideration for all dual enrollment programs. It becomes an equity issue when programs are unevenly distributed across schools or regions, when advising is inequitably provided and/or delivered and when eligibility criteria inequitably limit participation.

Course Availability

To be equitably accessible, dual enrollment courses must be offered locally (in person or online) to all students. While dual enrollment programs are widespread generally, access becomes inequitable when program availability is unevenly distributed across the state. Rural and [under-resourced](#) schools, which often serve greater proportions of students from low-income households and racially minoritized backgrounds, are [most likely](#) to be affected by this type of limitation.

Barriers for rural schools include long distances to postsecondary campuses, reduced ability to hire and retain qualified instructors at the high school level and limitations to broadband access. The financial constraints on under-resourced schools create barriers related to educator capacity, available equipment (including computer labs) and dedicated space to provide dual enrollment offerings.

State Role

State policies that set a legislative mandate to offer dual enrollment courses in all high schools, or those that require that some dual enrollment courses be offered both in person and online, can help improve access for all students statewide. However, since the barriers to course availability at rural and under-resourced schools are often logistical and financial, such policies alone may not be sufficient.

State leaders can more effectively reduce equity barriers by coupling requirements to offer dual enrollment with dedicated and predictable funding for initiatives designed to build capacity and infrastructure. Such initiatives can include supported pathways for educator credential attainment, statewide plans to expand broadband capacity, and financing equipment purchases and student transportation options at under-resourced schools.

Equity Action



Indiana is one of 22 states that [require](#) all high schools to participate in the state's dual enrollment programs. Indiana's [Next Level Connections Broadband Program](#), which is designed to fund broadband infrastructure to increase access, defines schools as community anchor institutions prioritized to receive funding. The broadband program supports the dual enrollment policy mandate by developing the capacity of every high school in the state to deliver online dual enrollment courses.



While **Texas** does not have a statutory requirement for all high schools to offer dual enrollment, the state enacted [legislation](#) in 2019 to change its district transportation funding rules to make it easier for districts to transport students outside of their attendance zone. The state now allows funds to pay for transportation of students to and from postsecondary campuses for dual enrollment programs and encourages districts to provide such opportunities to students.

Navigational Supports

To take advantage of locally available dual enrollment opportunities, students need to be aware of programs and how to access them. Early awareness — years before students would engage in programs — is required for students to be academically prepared. Students need to understand the benefits of programs and believe that they are capable and qualified to engage. Further, students need to understand the financial and credit implications of program participation, as well as how to access existing sources of support.

Achieving these goals equitably requires the implementation of [navigational supports](#) directed at students and families who have [historically been excluded](#) from dual enrollment programs. Such supports need to be tailored to the language, culture and context of these student groups to truly encourage their participation. Tailored supports can include providing early and accessible outreach to families, course information in multiple languages, and access to representative counselors who are trained in equity mindsets.

State Role

While the implementation of directed navigational supports is largely a local role for institutions, districts and schools, state policymakers can support this work through program requirements, funding and guidance. Most state dual enrollment programs are established in statute and addressed in regulations; these are effective levers to set equitable implementation requirements. Such requirements could include early communication to all families about available opportunities, as well as tailored outreach and directed advising that specifically addresses the needs of historically excluded student groups.

To build capacity for equity-oriented advising, states can provide funding for high school counselor professional development programs and amend licensure requirements to include training in equitable advising practices. States can also help build advisory capacity in under-resourced schools specifically through dedicated allocations. As state agencies provide guidance to schools and institutions regarding expectations of program partners, they can explicitly encourage equitable advising practices.

Equity Action



Arkansas' [College and Career Coach Program](#) brings counselors into the state's middle and high schools to support students in developing postsecondary aspirations and plans. [Initiated](#) as a pilot program in 2010 to support the state's 21 most economically disadvantaged counties, the program was [codified](#) in 2013 and [expanded](#) in 2015 to be available statewide. State policy outlines responsibilities of counselors and specifies program [evaluation metrics](#) including rates of core curriculum completion, high school graduation, financial aid application, college attendance and remediation.



Colorado established its [School Counselor Corps Grant Program](#) in 2008 to increase the availability of effective school-based counseling in secondary schools. Grant funding is awarded to eligible school districts, regional education agencies or charter schools to support increasing counseling services to students to improve the rates of high school graduation and postsecondary attendance. The Colorado Department of Education [reported](#) in 2018 that the program helped place more than 300 licensed school counselors in 427 schools in 101 districts, which supported over 225,000 students across the state.

Eligibility Criteria

States, districts and institutions set eligibility criteria for dual enrollment programs in an attempt to ensure that students who qualify to participate have a strong likelihood of success. While eligibility criteria can be helpful for signaling readiness to students, [multiple studies](#) show that existing criteria — especially when limited to a narrow range of GPA or standardized assessment scores — can be overly restrictive in terms of identifying students who can benefit from dual enrollment programs.

Limiting program eligibility to traditional measures such as the SAT or ACT has been [criticized](#) for leading to inequitable outcomes. Students from low-income households and racially minoritized backgrounds are more likely to have lower scores on these exams, which can mask their true potential to access

and succeed in college-level material. Expanding eligibility requirements to include multiple measures, such as teacher recommendations, curricular writing assessments or GPA performance over time, can improve equity in access to dual enrollment programs.

State Role

State leaders can directly address the need for multiple measures for program eligibility. States can include eligibility criteria in program requirements, which would create statewide expectations for expanded measures. States can also provide program eligibility guidance for local implementation and require that eligibility criteria be reported to the state through established partnership agreements. States can require disaggregated data reporting on dual enrollment program participation to monitor whether existing eligibility criteria are contributing to inequitable access.

Equity Action



[State regulations](#) in **Delaware** require that dual enrollment participation eligibility be based on multiple indicators of readiness, including a combination of test scores, course grades and teacher recommendations or portfolios. Postsecondary institutions such as Delaware Technical Community College have made this requirement visible and transparent for students by listing the full set of institution-specific eligibility measures on the program [website](#).



Connecticut uses [statute](#) to specify that dual enrollment eligibility cannot be exclusively based on academic performance and that local policy should provide for multiple eligibility methods, including recommendations from teachers, administrators, school counselors or other school personnel. The most recent version of the state's [College Career Pathways Guidelines](#) encourages schools to consider pass-level grades in prerequisite courses and/or student essays as criteria.

Equity Goals and Reporting

Students engaging in dual enrollment may never be aware of attainment goals and data reporting requirements set by state policymakers. However, these goals and requirements can serve as critical tools for state leaders as they seek to clarify priorities around early attainment pathways and guide state action to build equity into dual enrollment systems.

State leaders can signal the importance of equitable access by explicitly naming dual enrollment as a pathway to achieve statewide goals in postsecondary access, completion and workforce development. States can require that district and postsecondary partners report disaggregated data and use it to track dual enrollment program participation and success. This can illuminate gaps in program access and highlight the need for interventions to improve program equity.



Texas supports quality and equity through a [legislative](#) requirement for the state's K-12 and postsecondary boards to collaboratively set statewide dual credit goals in the areas of student outreach, academic advising, course rigor and accelerated attainment.



Tennessee builds its [ready graduate indicator](#) from a variety of data elements including dual enrollment participation and uses it to reward schools and districts in which high school graduates demonstrate readiness for meaningful postsecondary education or workforce entry.

Affordability

Program affordability requires predictable financial supports to defray students' cost of attendance and support provider costs for program delivery.

While discussions of dual enrollment affordability tend to focus on student costs, program affordability involves both access affordability for students and delivery affordability for providers. Students who have the logistical and financial means to engage in available opportunities have access affordability. Districts and postsecondary institutions that have access to funding that allows for sustainable provision of dual enrollment programs, even in times of program participation growth, have delivery affordability.

Affordability is an equity issue when the funding to support these two types of costs is absent, inadequate, unpredictable or inequitably accessible across a state. In these cases, dual enrollment programs are fully accessible only to students, districts and postsecondary institutions that are well-resourced enough to cover program costs. Programs become less accessible to students in districts and institutions serving historically excluded communities.

Student Financial Support

Engaging in dual enrollment opportunities can carry significant costs for students and families. Without state or local support, students and families are expected to pay postsecondary tuition and fees associated with college courses. Students and families may also be responsible for covering the costs of books and materials, which can be nearly as significant as tuition.

There are also logistical costs associated with access to dual enrollment programs. If courses are offered on the postsecondary campus, students are responsible for transportation between their high school and the college provider. Students who qualify for free and reduced price lunch programs in high school do not have the same coverage at postsecondary institutions and must cover the cost of onsite meals. If courses are offered online, students are responsible for the cost of a computer and internet service, or the logistics of finding an alternate place to access curriculum.

The student costs of dual enrollment are often the most visible equity issue associated with programs. Students from low-income or racially minoritized backgrounds, who are already the least likely to have access, are also often least able to afford the cost burdens associated with programs. Assuring affordability in terms of student costs is thus critical to equitable engagement across student populations.

State Role

State policymakers seeking to defray student expenses associated with dual enrollment programs often subsidize the cost of tuition and fees. [Thirteen states](#) have established policies where, for at least one state dual enrollment program, tuition costs for all students are fully covered by state allocations. In many other states, policy requires tuition and fee costs to be limited or shared between states, students and local providers.

While tuition support for dual enrollment is critical to equitable access, state leaders can also look beyond these costs. States can dedicate funds to scholarship programs that cover the cost of books and materials for students with demonstrated financial need. They can provide guidance to encourage local partners, both districts and postsecondary institutions, to defray the costs of books and supplies or explore the use of open educational resources. State leaders can also require local education agencies and postsecondary institutions offering dual enrollment programs to cover transportation and meal costs for participating students.

Equity Action



Georgia offers dual enrollment through a [single statewide program](#). Students in grades 10 through 12 who qualify to participate may enroll part-time or full-time, take courses at their high school or on a postsecondary campus, and can receive high school and college credit simultaneously. The [funding](#) associated with the program covers the cost of tuition, mandatory fees and required books for up to 30 semester hours. The state provides a publicly available [course directory](#) indicating which courses at state public postsecondary institutions qualify for dual enrollment funding.



Washington specifies in [statute](#) that the state will cover the cost of tuition for all students accessing dual enrollment through the [Running Start](#) program. To increase equitable participation in dual enrollment, the state [passed a law](#) in 2009 to additionally waive institutional fees for students from low-income households. More recently, the state created a five-year [Dual Enrollment Scholarship Pilot Program](#) to cover courses fees, laboratory fees and the cost of textbooks for eligible students from low-income households.

District and Postsecondary Allocations

While student costs — particularly tuition and fees — may be the most visible financial aspect of dual enrollment programs, the costs taken on by local partnerships between districts and postsecondary institutions are equally important to equitable access. Depending on the funding model employed by the state and specific program, postsecondary institutions may be required to waive fees or agree to a reduced or limited tuition cost to participate. Districts may seek to cover the costs of books, materials and transportation for their students.

Equitable access requires consistent financial support to districts and postsecondary institutions responsible for creating and delivering programs to students. Steep tuition discounts without supportive state subsidies can serve as disincentives for postsecondary institutions to participate in programs. For community colleges with limited resources, the lack of [state subsidies](#) can serve as a barrier to providing program access. Similarly, when districts are required to carry costs for students without state support, those serving low-income neighborhoods will be the most stretched and may only be able to provide students with limited options.

State Role

As state leaders seek to increase access and participation in dual enrollment programs, it is important to keep an eye on whether new policy initiatives are setting up unfunded mandates or unrealistic expectations given current funding levels. It is especially important for policymakers to monitor and correct for unintended disincentives in states where program participation is voluntary at the local level.

States that require reduced tuition for dual enrollment offerings can consider supporting postsecondary partners by setting expectations around delivery that share the burden of instructional costs with districts. States that expect all high schools to offer dual enrollment can look to ensure that per-student funding amounts are not reduced for dual enrollment participants.

States can track local contributions by requiring districts and institutions to file partnership agreements with the state that specify the distribution of the cost burden for the program. This can provide state leaders with a better sense of how to direct available funds to support districts and institutions serving students with the greatest needs. State leaders can also engage directly with district and postsecondary leaders to understand any policy or financial barriers preventing the expansion of equitable access to programs.

When setting up funding streams for dual enrollment programs, states can seek to ensure that funds are stable and predictable while still flexible enough to support programs through economic cycles of growth and recession. State leaders can also use funding streams to incentivize institutional behavior. For instance, states may choose to engage performance funding measures to reward postsecondary partners that are effectively helping dual enrollment students from historically excluded populations succeed in college courses.

Equity Action



North Carolina [waives tuition](#) for participating students and uses a collaborative funding model to support all three dual enrollment opportunities offered through its [Career and College Promise](#) program. The state covers the cost of the tuition waiver and compensates participating postsecondary institutions by providing a full-time equivalency allocation for each program participant. The state supports [district costs](#) by counting dually enrolled students as full-time with respect to high school attendance in the state's per-student K-12 funding formula.



Utah has a [statutory requirement](#) that student tuition and fee charges for dual enrollment are limited to \$30 per credit hour. The state [compensates](#) district and postsecondary providers for the lost revenue through an appropriation made to the state board of education. The funds are [allocated](#) in a 60%-40% split; the entity that provides instruction for the course receives the larger portion. The board allocates funds to districts directly and to postsecondary institutions through the board of higher education.

Partnership Oversight

Students accessing dual enrollment need the support of both district and postsecondary partners engaged in providing programs. While students may not be aware of the formal agreements that set expectations between partners, they can struggle when those agreements are not well developed.

State-level guidance documents can be used to clarify expectations of local partnerships. States can support equitable access to dual enrollment programs by requiring local providers to file partnership agreements with the state. State leaders can specify what must be included in partnership agreements, such as partner-specific responsibilities for programmatic services, costs and data reporting. States can tie the approval of partnership agreements to the receipt of state subsidies, as well as use reporting requirements to track (and help adjust) cost-sharing and instructional load across partners.



Illinois' [Dual Credit Quality Act](#) establishes a model dual enrollment [partnership agreement](#) that is meant to help structure local collaboration between districts and colleges and ensure quality and access. The model serves as the default partnership agreement if local providers cannot reach an agreement.



Ohio's [Alliance of Dual Enrollment Partnerships](#), a statewide coalition of practitioners and advocates, serves to link school and college partnerships across the state, promote and disseminate national standards, provide professional development and advocate for quality initiatives in service of the state's dual enrollment programs.

Quality

Students who can engage in rigorous college-level courses with assurance of transferable postsecondary credits upon completion have access to quality dual enrollment.

In addition to being accessible and affordable, dual enrollment programs must be of high quality if they are to support student success in a meaningful way. For students, engaging in a high-quality dual enrollment program means having a few assurances. First, students need to be confident that they are engaging with college-level course content and instruction. Second, students need to know that the credits they earn through dual enrollment programs will transfer across postsecondary institutions.

Course quality becomes an equity issue when the rigor and expectations of content and instruction vary across programs and delivery sites. Credit transfer becomes an equity issue when transfer pathways and processes are unclear or uneven across the state, and when students have variable access to accurate information about how dual enrollment credits are accepted across postsecondary institutions.

Content and Instruction

Dual enrollment programs offer students the promise of accessing college-level work while in high school. To deliver on that promise, dual enrollment courses must be equivalent in rigor, content and instruction to the associated college course. As course providers, postsecondary partners are responsible for ensuring that their dual enrollment courses meet the same quality standards as any other course offered by the institution.

Postsecondary institutions rely on [institutional and programmatic accreditation](#) to ensure the quality of course offerings on their campuses. Institutional accreditation is used to verify that the postsecondary institution has adequate resources — such as buildings, faculty, libraries and endowments — to effectively offer the education promised. The federal government views institutional accreditation as a quality benchmark and requires it to access student financial aid. Programmatic accreditation is used to verify that the content, materials and faculty associated with specific institutional programs meet explicit quality criteria.

One complication with dual enrollment is that courses may be taught on high school campuses by high school faculty. For quality assurance purposes, this means that the postsecondary partner must verify the quality of instructional materials delivered outside of their campuses, as well as the qualifications of instructors who are not their employees. Equitable access to quality programs requires that these quality assurance practices are implemented with fidelity in every instance that a program is offered.

State Role

While postsecondary institutions are ultimately responsible for course quality, states can help ensure dual enrollment program quality is consistent and equitable statewide. State leaders can begin by collaboratively setting a vision for quality dual enrollment. At a minimum, states can require that all postsecondary providers of dual enrollment programs are institutionally accredited. State leaders can also require that institutions meet the standards of the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships, the dual enrollment programmatic accreditor, or equivalent requirements set and recognized by the state.

In addition to setting standards at the state level for dual enrollment faculty qualifications, state leaders can provide financial support to build out equitable capacity. This might include scholarship programs for high school faculty to obtain necessary credentials or financial support to under-resourced districts to offer hiring incentives for qualified instructors. At the postsecondary level, states can require and support instructional certification for college faculty expected to teach dual enrollment courses.

Equity Action



Oregon enacted [legislation](#) in 2019 authorizing the Accelerated College Credit Instructor Grant Program. The initiative [directs](#) the department of education to provide grants to school districts to cover tuition costs for high school faculty seeking dual enrollment certification. The grants are also available to postsecondary institutions to develop graduate course offerings relevant to the state's dual enrollment needs. The department chronicles the implementation of the program in a [2021 report](#).



Minnesota lawmakers [amended statute](#) governing the state's alternative teacher professional pay system in 2017 to specifically direct incentives to schools and districts for hiring teachers with dual enrollment certification. The state's targeted graduate program for dual enrollment certification, [Pathway to 18](#), is offered through the Minnesota State University System and includes opportunities for high school faculty to leverage [credit for prior learning](#) toward dual enrollment certification.

Credit Transfer

One [core purpose](#) of dual enrollment is to provide students the opportunity to acquire college credit while still in high school. Earning these credits should create a bridge to postsecondary attendance and reduce time and cost to postsecondary attainment. Ensuring that students can equitably realize these benefits requires transparency in credit transfer policies.

Credit policies should be clear to students prior to engagement in programs to inform their choices about whether and how to participate. Credit transfer information should include not only the number of credits earned and which institutions will accept that credit, but also how those credits will apply to student-selected postsecondary degree pathways.

State Role

State leaders can use policy to establish statewide guidelines or requirements that support consistent and equitable credit transfer. For example, statewide articulation agreements can be used to specify the courses and credits that are guaranteed to transfer across postsecondary institutions. States can also support postsecondary leaders in working across institutions and systems to set up common course numbering systems. Such systems can greatly simplify credit transfer by creating transparency in course equivalencies across institutions.

Further, states can help ensure that credit transfer policies are communicated equitably to students. For instance, a state might choose to create a central resource such as a web portal detailing how individual courses transfer across all state institutions. Alternately, states might choose to invest in training local high school personnel, such as college counselors, to deliver clear and consistent communications about existing credit transfer systems.

Equity Action



Kentucky's [statewide transfer policy](#) requires all public colleges and universities to recognize any course that meets established statewide general education requirements for credit. The state's [dual credit policy](#) requires that any courses that are offered through dual enrollment and meet the statewide established general education requirements be subject to the transfer policy. If high schools offer only a limited number of dual enrollment courses, those courses must meet transfer requirements.



Florida's comprehensive [Statewide Course Numbering System](#) is set in [statute](#) and encompasses all public institution courses, postsecondary adult vocational courses and accredited nonpublic institution courses. The state's [articulation manual](#) includes dual enrollment as part of the system; the state also provides a separate [statement](#) on dual enrollment articulation that specifically guarantees transfer of system courses offered through dual enrollment to all public postsecondary institutions in the state.

Considerations for Policymakers

Supporting equitable access and success in dual enrollment programs for all students continues to be a significant challenge. While state policymakers have access to powerful tools and levers to assist in this process, sorting through the wide range of equity issues and available policy options can be overwhelming. The following list of questions is meant to support policymakers as they evaluate existing dual enrollment systems in their state through an equity lens.

Equity in Access

- Are all high schools required to provide dual enrollment opportunities and communicate to students and parents about available options?
- Do high schools have access to state funds to build out equitable capacity and infrastructure for program delivery?
- Are programs required to offer students multiple means to demonstrate eligibility? Are partnerships required to report eligibility requirements to the state?
- Do high schools have access to state funds and guidance to create and strengthen equitable college and career counseling services?
- Does the state require navigational supports to be tailored to reach students that have been historically excluded from programs?

Equity in Affordability

- How does the state support student costs of tuition and fees? Is this support equitably accessible to all students?
- Do students have access to financial support for nontuition costs such as books, materials, transportation and meals?
- Does the state provide adequate funds to districts and postsecondary institutions to support the full cost of equitable program delivery?
- Does the state track local allocations to support student costs of programs?

Equity in Quality

- Does the state require programs to meet national standards for dual enrollment quality such as those set by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships?
- Are state funds available to support the development of instructor capacity in schools serving students from historically excluded backgrounds from programs?
- Does the state set consistent credit transfer requirements for all public postsecondary institutions?
- Do requirements for credit transfer codified through articulation agreements or common course numbering systems specifically include dual enrollment?

Supporting Equity Through Systemic Change

- Have state leaders built their vision for equity in dual enrollment into state-level goals for postsecondary access and attainment?
- Do state leaders regularly connect with district and postsecondary partners to understanding existing financial and policy barriers?
- Does the state provide guidance on the content of program partnership's memorandums of understanding or local agreements?
- Does the state collect and track local agreements? Are agreements used to hold partners accountable for services provided through state allocations?
- Does the state require district and postsecondary partners to report disaggregated program access and success data?

Final Thoughts

Dual enrollment has demonstrated positive benefits for participating students. Reducing equity gaps in program participation could greatly amplify these benefits across all student populations. State-level policy has already been used across the nation to set access, quality and monitoring requirements for dual enrollment programs, create supportive funding mechanisms and provide local implementation guidance. As a result, these very policies can be leveraged by state leaders to advance program equity. State policymakers can examine existing frameworks to identify barriers to dual enrollment access, affordability and quality, then retool policies to support the growth of dual enrollment programs toward more equitable outcomes.

About the Author

Sharmila Mann



As principal, Sharmila provides leadership on the development and execution of Education Commission of the States' strategic policy initiatives and fosters internal and external relationships. Sharmila brings more than 15 years of education policy experience to her role, including 10 years at the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association engaging with state and federal policymakers, funders and national associations in pursuit of policy to smooth transitions between education sectors. Sharmila holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Cornell University and a master's and doctorate in human genetics from the University of Michigan. Contact Sharmila at smann@ecs.org.