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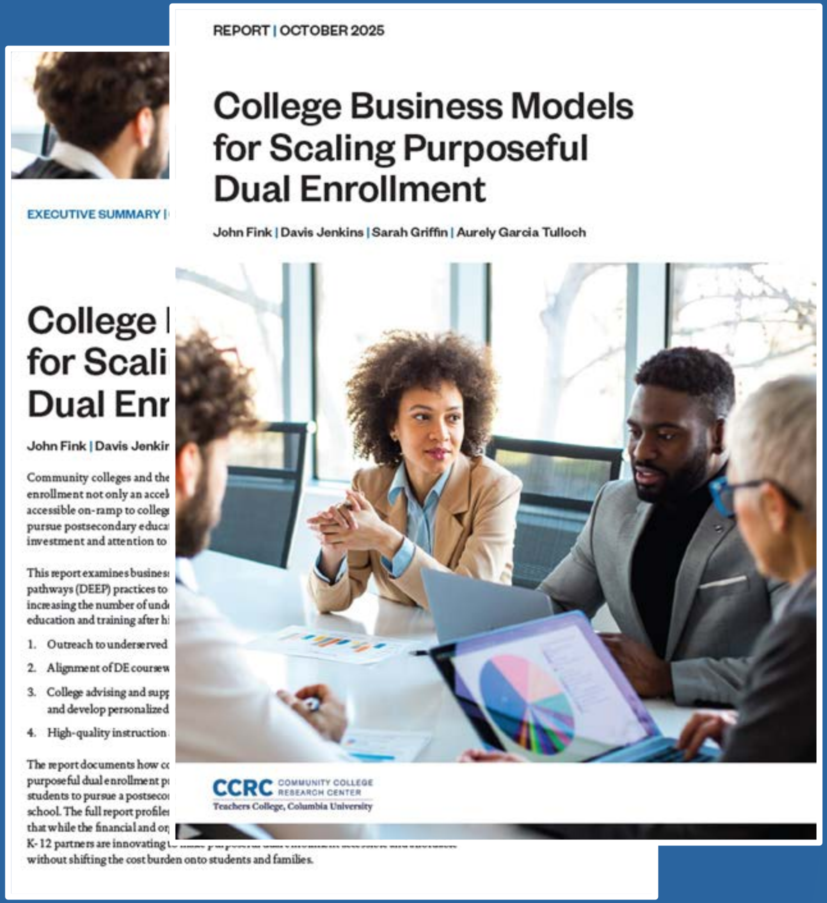
Teachers College, Columbia University

Strategically Investing College Resources to Scale Purposeful Dual Enrollment

John Fink, CCRC | Kristy Black, Kirkwood Community College | Christopher Conzen, Hudson County Community College

January 28, 2026 | CCRC Webinar

New Research From CCRC



Find the report at ccrc.tc.columbia.edu.

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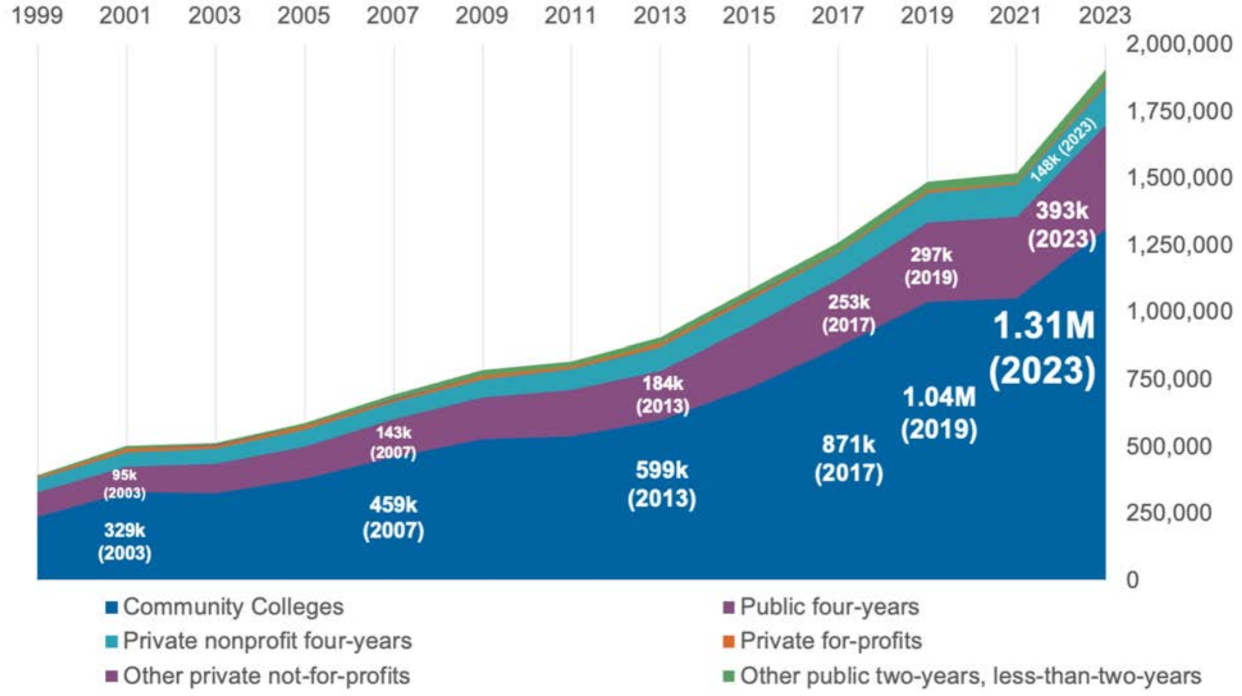
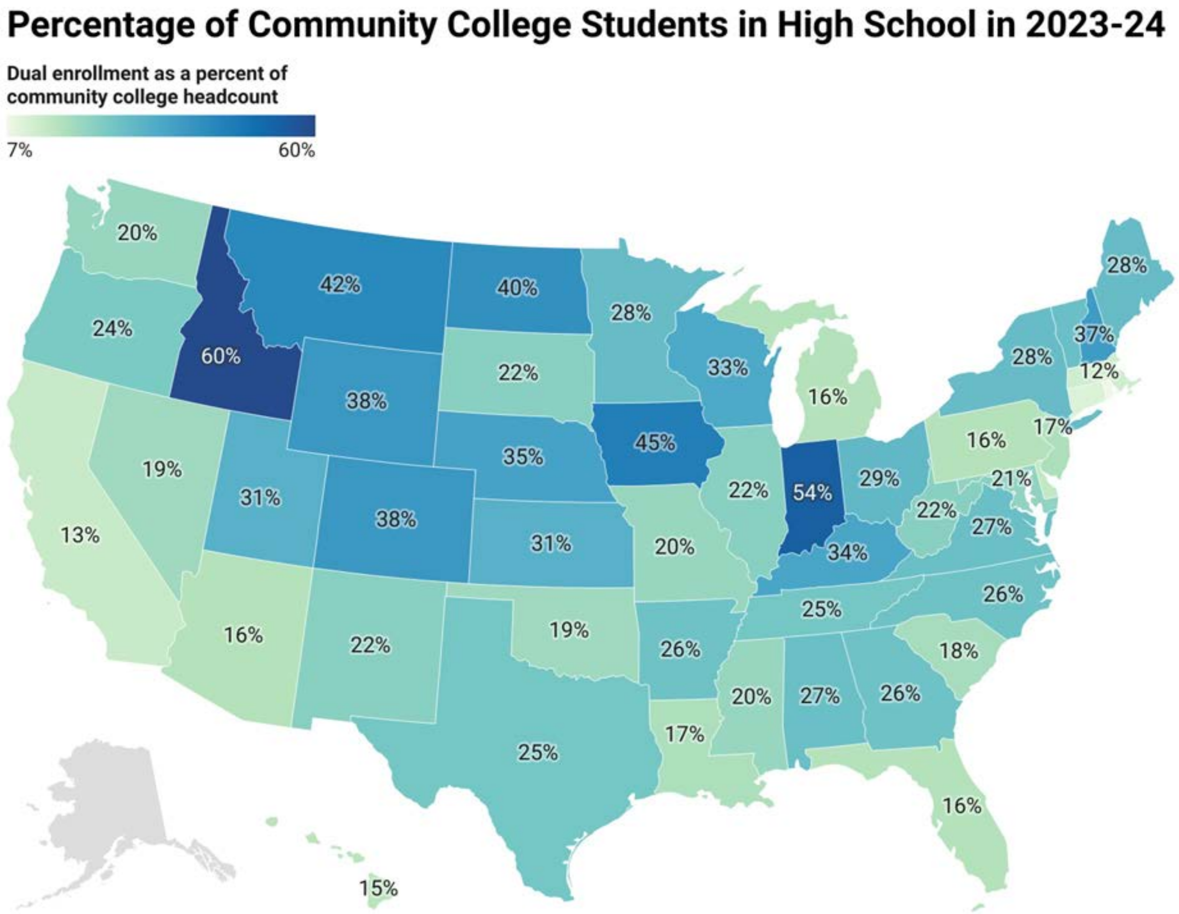
Redesigning Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment has doubled in the past decade, up to 2.8M in 2023-2024

Growth of Dual Enrollment, Fall Enrollments 1999-2023



1 in 5 community college students are in high school



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CCRC analysis of IPEDS Data
https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/easyblog/high-school-dual-enrollment-grows.html

Need to Rethink Dual Enrollment

Conventional Approach

"Programs of privilege"

"Random acts"

DEEP Approach

All – and especially underserved students

Designed to expand college and career opportunities

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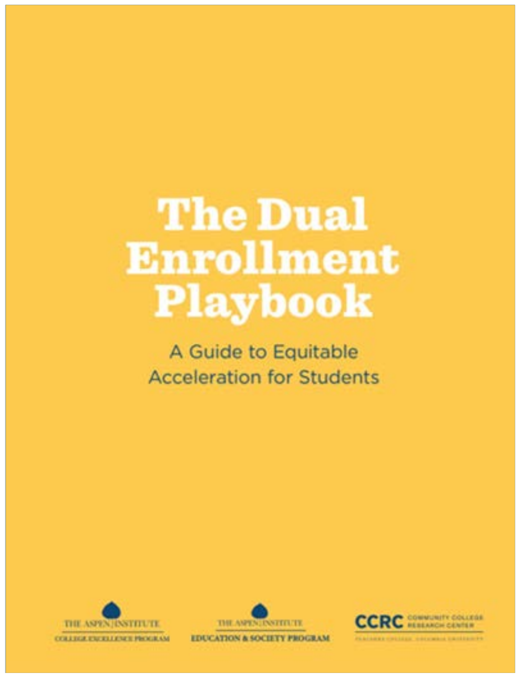
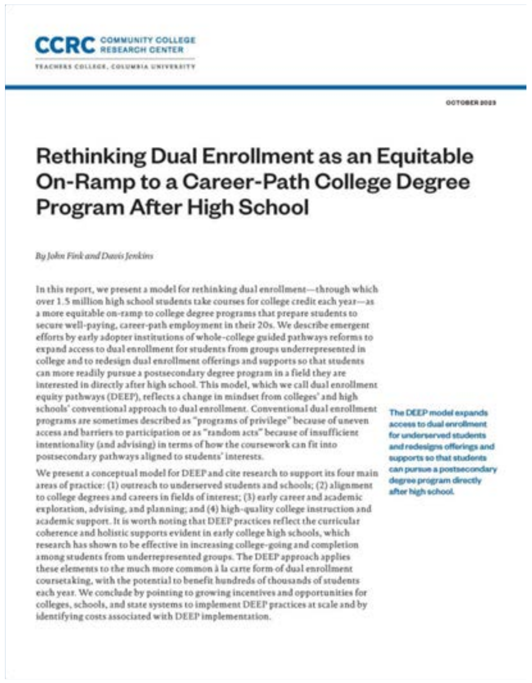
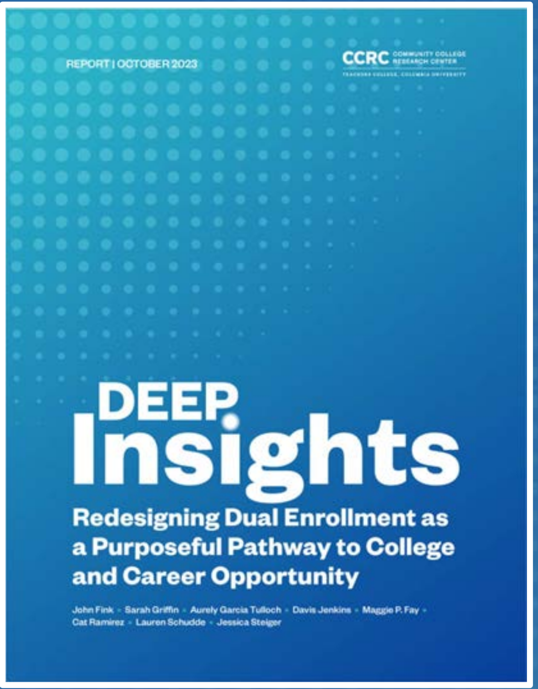
Our Research Focus: Expanding College Access and Success Through Dual Enrollment



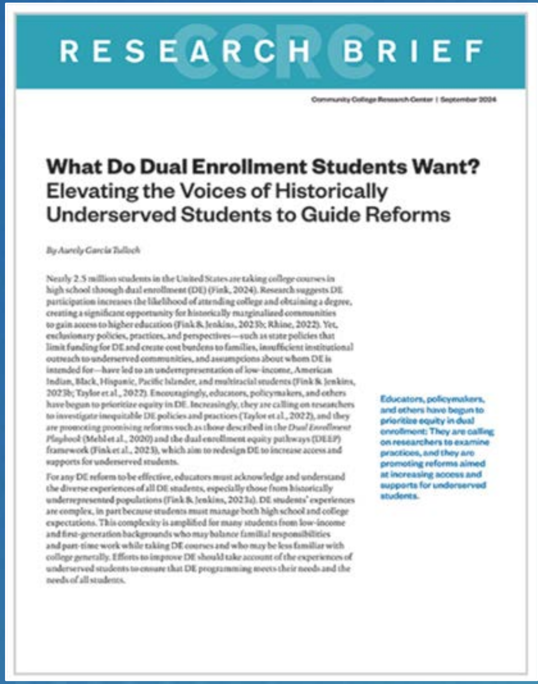
The Dual Enrollment Playbook: A Guide to Equitable Acceleration for Students (October 2020)



Rethinking Dual Enrollment as an Equitable On-Ramp to a Career-Path College Degree Program After High School (October 2023)



DEEP Insights: Redesigning Dual Enrollment as a Purposeful Pathway to College and Career Opportunity (October 2023)



What Do Dual Enrollment Students Want? Elevating the Voices of Historically Underserved Students to Guide Reforms (Sept. 2024)

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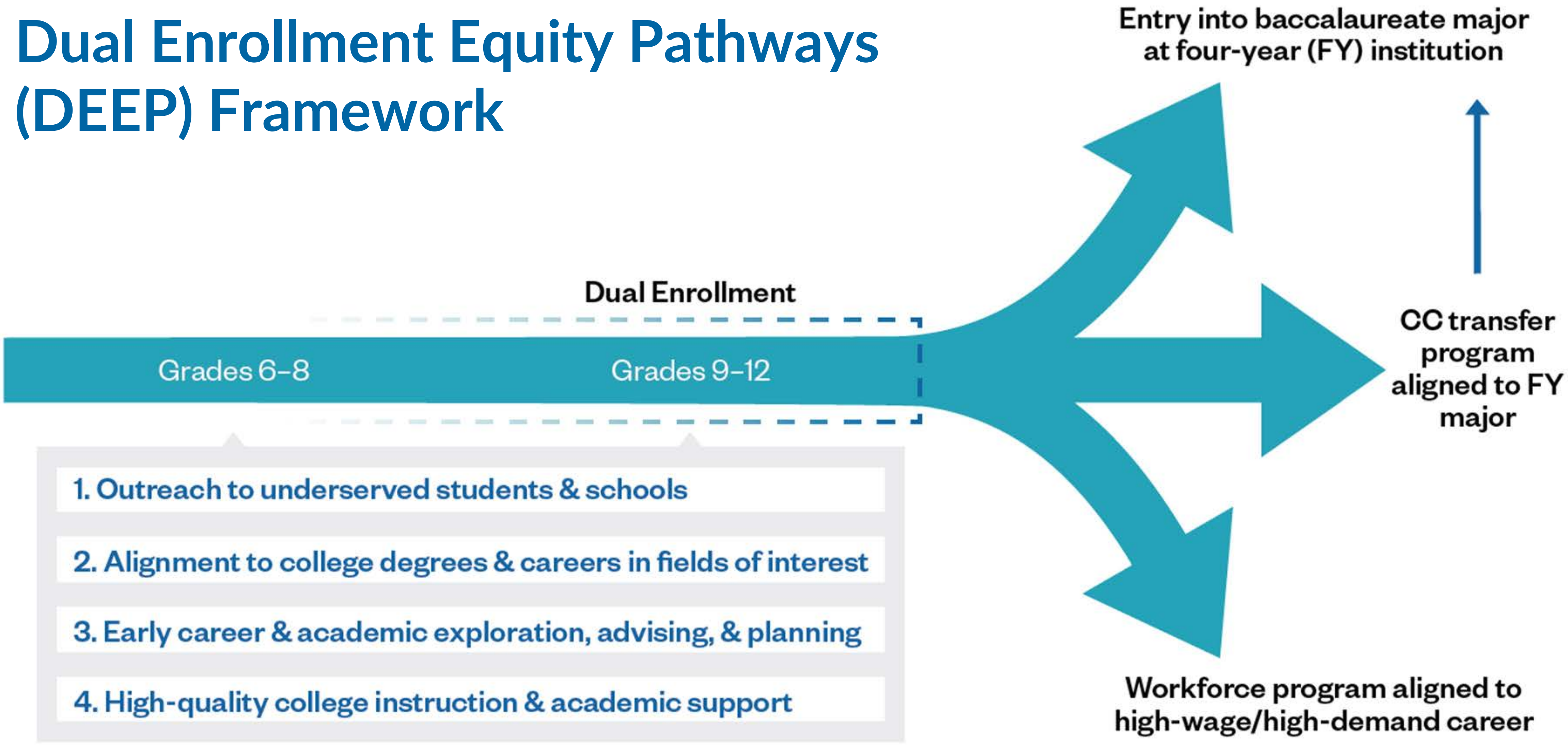
Dual Enrollment Equity Pathways (DEEP) Framework



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Conventional Versus DEEP Approaches

DEEP Practice Area	Example Practice	Associated Costs
Outreach efforts to promote dual enrollment	Proactive marketing and recruitment to underserved K-12 schools and communities	Adequate staff to provide single point of contact and support for numerous partner high schools
Alignment of dual enrollment coursework	DE offerings mapped to postsecondary CTE degrees and bachelor's major pathways	Adequate staff time to plan course offerings and instructor availability by high school to avoid "random acts"
Advising provided by the college	College provides advising to all students in collaboration with high school counselors;	Adequate staffing to provide individualized advising and planning assistance
High-quality ***instruction and support***	DE students exposed to instruction by college faculty on college campuses and where possible in classes with post-high-school students Proactive academic and nonacademic support for DE students	Extensive quality control, professional development, and support for instructors who are high school teachers Faculty or staff time to proactively identify and support struggling students Learning management, early alert, and online tutoring systems for DE students
Close working ***partnerships*** with K-12	Day-to-day communication with K-12 partners to support planning, operations, and troubleshooting	Adequate staff time to coordinate planning and operations and to troubleshoot with numerous, often widely dispersed schools

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A New Business Model

Conventional DE and DEEP Business Models

Which business model most resembles the one at your college?

Conventional Business Model

Lower costs: Minimal investments made to cover DE program operations

Lighter supports, designed for students who are already college-bound

Less re-enrollment after high school means lower downstream revenues

DEEP Business Model

Higher costs: More investments to scale DEEP practices to implement DE as an on-ramp to college and career pathways

More supports, designed for all high school students

Greater downstream revenues from more students re-enrolling after high school instead of not pursuing any postsecondary education and training

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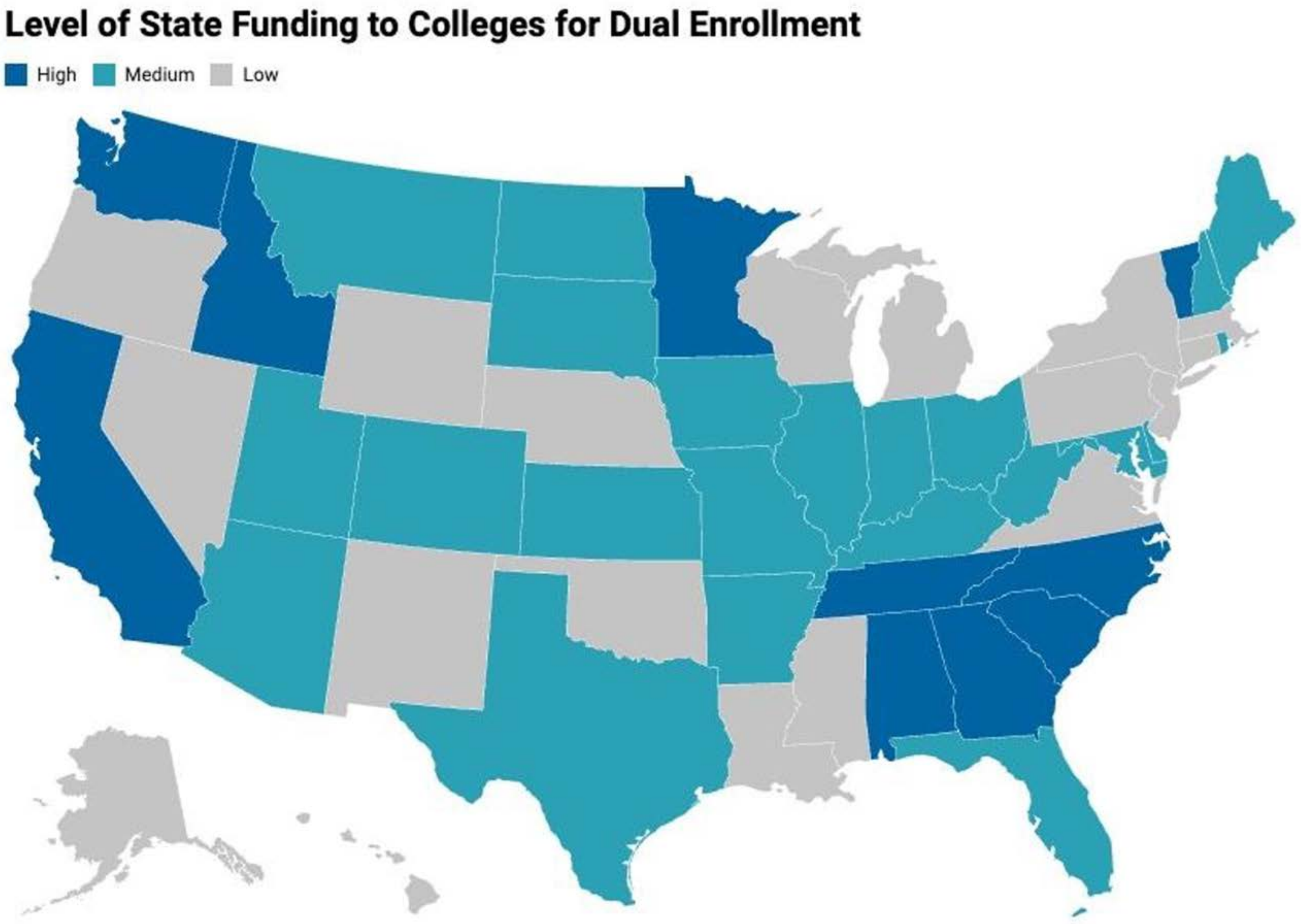
How are colleges funding DEEP practices without passing on costs to students and families?

How do states fund colleges for dual enrollment?



The CCRC Blog

Jenkins, Steiger, & Fink, 2025

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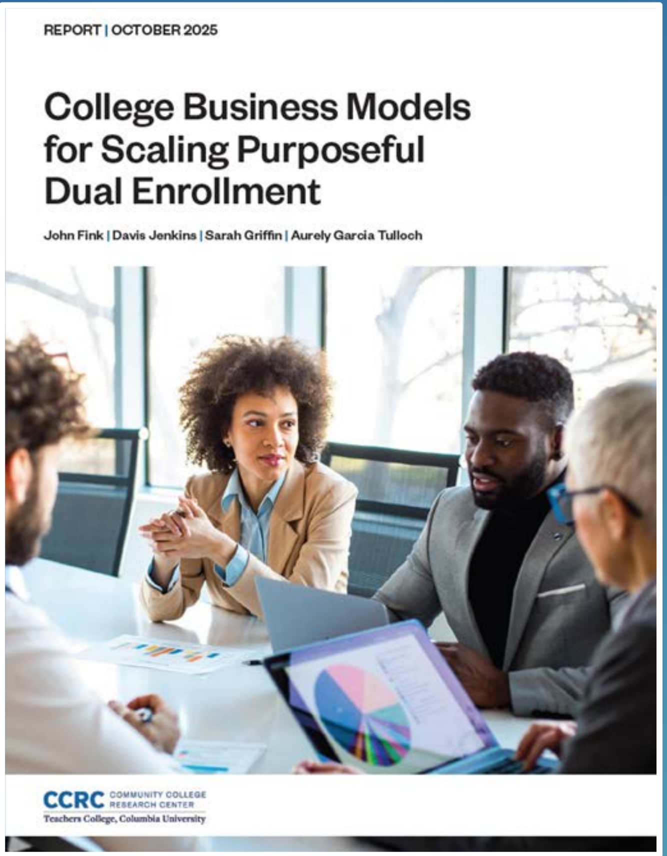
We interviewed staff from colleges at various stages of DEEP implementation and with varying levels of state funding for DE.

State Funding for Dual Enrollment at Colleges Interviewed

State	College	State DE funding level
Alabama	Coastal Alabama College	High
California	Compton College Lemoore College	High
Iowa	Kirkwood Community College	Medium
Nebraska	Northeast Community College	Low
New Jersey	Hudson County Community College	Low
Ohio	Marion Technical College	Medium
South Carolina	Tri-County Technical College	High
Texas	Alvin Community College Amarillo College South Texas College	Medium
Washington	South Puget Sound Community College	High (Running Start); medium (College in the High School)
Wisconsin	Madison Area Technical College	Low

Note. Funding level characterization is based on a 50-state analysis of state funding of DE (Jenkins et al., 2025).



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Strategies for Investing College and K-12 Resources to Scale DEEP

1. Establish a “DEEP” mindset by committing to dual enrollment as an accessible pathway to college and careers for every student

2. Leverage the college’s core staff, facilities, and technology resources to support a DEEP experience for students

3. Partner with K-12 schools to maximize available resources for DEEP

4. Strategically invest financial resources to scale DEEP practices

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1. Establish a "DEEP" mindset

- Increasing DE access has huge potential benefits for students, families, and communities
- Access isn't enough: DE should provide an on-ramp to college and career pathways
- DE students are "our" students

2. Leverage the college's *core* resources

Colleges are using "core" resources–including staff, facilities, and technology–to sustain DEEP-aligned practices.

- Core college staff
- Facilities
- Technology

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3. Partner with K-12 schools to maximize available resources for DEEP

- Integrate DE into related high school academies and programs to increase support
- Increase local resources by helping K-12 schools meet performance goals

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4. Invest financial resources strategically

Such as:

- Measure and closely monitor dual enrollment costs
- Implement a sustainable pricing model that balances variable costs and returns
- Keep costs low and prioritize investments in underserved students and schools
- Capitalize on state and local workforce development funding
- Generate performance funding and reinvest in strengthening dual enrollment program supports
- Generate downstream revenue by increasing post-high-school matriculation of DE students

Potential Incentives for DEEP Investments

K-12 schools	• Can offer new and attractive programs in partnership with colleges • Can attract students and families looking for college acceleration options • Improved high school graduation, college-going and other student outcomes, particularly for underserved populations and schools • Gains in state performance reporting and funding
Employers	• "Grow-your-own" talent development strategy: Generates a reliable supply of employees with specific knowledge and skills catered to industry needs that also better reflect the specific make-up of the local community • Helps students gain early awareness and exploration of career opportunities that can promote better matching with jobs, more career advancement opportunities, and less employee turnover
Colleges	• Expands the pool of potential college-going students after high school • Downstream benefits to retention, completion, and statewide performance funding by increasing re-enrollment of former DE students after high school • Reputational benefits (generating public support to sustain or increase local funding)

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Taking Action

Take Action Using the Inquiry & Action Guide

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Inquiry and Action Guide: Toward a Sustainable College Business Model for Scaling Purposeful Dual Enrollment

John Fink, Davis Jenkins, Sarah Griffin, & Aurely Garcia Tulloch

The accompanying report, *College Business Models for Scaling Purposeful Dual Enrollment* (Fink et al., 2025) describes how community colleges and their K-12 partners are developing sustainable financial and organizational models that enable dual enrollment (DE) to better serve as an on-ramp to college and career opportunities for more students. The report examines business models at colleges implementing dual enrollment equity pathways (DEEP) practices to strengthen their DE programs. DEEP is a framework for increasing the number of underserved students who pursue degree- and career-connected education and training after high school. It includes four key practice areas: (1) outreach to underserved high schools and students, (2) alignment of DE coursework to postsecondary programs in high-opportunity fields, (3) college advising and supports to explore career and academic interests and develop personalized education plans, and (4) high-quality instruction and academic supports.

To scale DEEP practices, the report finds that colleges must shift from a business model with lower cost, lighter support, and limited marginal revenue from current DE enrollments to one that requires more investment for more supports for students but that also produces higher downstream revenue through increased college going by students who would not otherwise continue their education after high school. The report describes four strategies for colleges to create business models for scaling DEEP practices without passing on costs to students and families:

1. **Establish a DEEP mindset.** This requires college leaders to cultivate a shared commitment and vision that DE is an accessible pathway for all students to college and career opportunity. It means seeing DE students as "our" students and providing them with an experience and supports similar to that of "regular" post-high-school students.
2. **Leverage core resources.** This involves deploying core college staff, facilities, and technology resources that typically serve post-high-school students to support a DEEP experience for DE students in coordination with specialized DE staff.
3. **Partner with K-12 schools.** Colleges can leverage K-12 resources and help raise additional funds by integrating DE into high school academies and career pathways and helping schools meet performance goals.
4. **Strategically invest financial resources.** This involves carefully managing costs and investing scarce resources in practices that connect DE students not already bound for college to postsecondary programs after high school—thus generating downstream revenue and, where applicable, performance funding.

October 2025

Find the guide at ccrc.tc.columbia.edu.

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Overview of Action Steps

Action Steps Presented in This Guide

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Table 1. Dual Enrollment Cost and Revenue Analysis Template

Academic year:		Breakdo (exam	
	Total across DE course type	Taught by college faculty online or on college campus	Ta fac sch
DE credit hours	#	#	#
State revenue (per credit or FTE)	$	$	$
Performance funding	$	$	$
Program grants (state and local)	$	$	$
Tuition/fees	$	$	$
Other program revenue	$	$	$
Total revenue	**$**	**$**	**$**
Instruction	$	$	$
Instructional materials	$	$	$
DE program implementation (1)	$	$	$
Overhead/indirect (2)	$	$	$
Total expense	**$**	**$**	**$**
Total net revenue (revenue - expense)	**$**	**$**	**$**

Table 2. DE Program Implementation Annual Time and Effort

Example responses in italics

College staff	FTE allocation in support of DE	Description	Salary & benefits
College president	*1%*	*Executive leadership*	*$XX,XXX*
VP student services	*3%*	*Partnership and workgroup meetings, planning, agreements, general meetings*	*$XX,XXX*
VP academics	*15%*	*Partnership and workgroup meetings, planning, agreements, general meetings*	*$XX,XXX*
Dean, advising	*10%*	*Oversight of DE advising staff*	*$XX,XXX*
Institutional research analyst	*20%*	*Designing, maintaining, manipulating, querying specialized databases and information systems*	*$XX,XXX*
Division/department chairs	*50% (10% for 5 divisions)*	*Hiring, onboarding, evaluating faculty*	*$XX,XXX*
Division coordinators	*100% (20% for 5 divisions)*	*Scheduling, contracts, coordination with faculty*	*$XX,XXX*
Associate registrar	*30%*	*Planning and oversight of student registration, admissions and records maintenance operations*	*$XX,XXX*
Director, admissions	*20%*	*Planning, organizing, controlling, directing the processes and operations in admissions and records offices*	*$XX,XXX*
Records specialist	*85%*	*Managing student enrollments and records for DE courses*	*$XX,XXX*
DE program director	*100%*	*Leading DE program and collaboration with K-12 partners and college departments*	*$XX,XXX*
DE associate director	*100%*	*Assisting DE program director; responsible for establishing and maintaining relations with area school district and college personnel*	*$XX,XXX*
DE outreach specialists	*150% (50% for 3 advisors)*	*Working directly at high schools with students, assisting with DE application and registration*	*$XX,XXX*
College advisors	*330% total FTE across 5 advisors*	*Helping DE students explore postsecondary pathways and create individualized program plans*	*$XX,XXX*
... Add more rows as needed			
Total staff time & effort	**XXX.X FTE**		**$XXX,XXX**

Templates for assessing DE costs and revenues

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Resource Mapping

Table 5. Resource Mapping for DEEP Practice Implementation

Example responses in italics

DEEP practice implementation goal: *We will increase advising and development of college program plans such that more than 80% of our DE students have completely mapped out an individualized college program plan by the end of next academic year.*

Area	Current resources & unmet need	Opportunities to redeploy core college resources	New resources needed
Staffing	*Currently, 2 staff advise 2,000 students; need 2–3 more for reasonable caseloads. Most DE students take a college success course, but planning and advising is limited as a part of the course.*	*College advising office has 10 staff, with declining enrollments and caseloads. College success course could include group advising and planning time.*	*Hire 2–3 more advisors if we cannot redeploy other college advisors.* *DE staff and college advisors need time to work with college success course instructors to redesign course elements.*
Technology and systems/processes	*No system to track DE advising notes.*	*College advising portal could also be used for DE students.*	*Need to figure out how to also give access to school counselors.*
Facilities or other resources	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*

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Table 6. Projecting Future Revenues From Dual Enrollment Matriculation After High School

(a) High school graduation year	(b) Observed/ projected	(c) Number of graduates who took DE	(d) Re-enrollment rate	(e) Number of DE students who re-enrolled after high school	(f) Average credits enrolled per student in year 1 post-high-school for (e)	(g) Total tuition/fee revenue for (f)
2022	observed	# graduates	% re-enrolled	# re-enrolled	# credits per student	$ tuition/fees
2023	observed	#	%	#	#	$
2024	mixed	# (obs.)	% (proj.)	# (proj.)	# (proj.)	$ (proj.)
2025	projected	# (proj.)	% (proj.)	# (proj.)	# (proj.)	$ (proj.)
2026	projected	# (proj.)	% (proj.)	# (proj.)	# (proj.)	$ (proj.)
2027	projected	# (proj.)	% (proj.)	# (proj.)	# (proj.)	$ (proj.)
2028	projected	# (proj.)	% (proj.)	# (proj.)	# (proj.)	$ (proj.)
2029	projected	# (proj.)	% (proj.)	# (proj.)	# (proj.)	$ (proj.)
Calculations for projections		Prior year number * expected % growth of DE	Expected re-enrollment rate. This can be based on prior years ([e] / [c]) or set as a new target rate.	Projected number of graduates who took DE (c) * expected re-enrollment rate (d)	Total credits enrolled in year 1 post-high-school among (e), observed or projected based on prior years / number of students (e)	Number of students (e) * Avg. credits enrolled per student (f) * tuition/fee revenue per credit

Projecting ROI from scaling DEEP Practices

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Panel Discussion

Kristy Black

Executive Dean,K-12 Partnerships, Kirkwood Community College

Christopher Conzen

Executive Director, Secaucus Center and Early College Program, Hudson County Community College

Panel Discussion

Hudson County Community College (NJ)	**860** DE students in 2024-25 (less than 10% of overall enrollment); 20 high schools served	**7.5 FTE staff:** • 1 executive director • 1 associate director • 2 academic counselors • 1 program assistant • 1 administrative assistant • 0.5 assistant
Kirkwood Community College (IA)	**6,670** DE students in 2024-25 (36% of overall enrollment); 39 high schools served across 7 counties	**19 FTE staff:** • 1 executive dean of K-12 partnerships • 4 centralized operations team members (1 lead operations director, 2 operations coordinators, and 1 health program coordinator) • 6 student academic support coordinators • 8 regional center staff (1 director and 1 center coordinator at 4 centers)

Audience Q & A

DEEP@CCRC

Resources on dual enrollment equity pathways for K-12 and college practitioners.

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Thank you!

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Visit our website for our latest research findings

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