



Joint Statement on Dual Credit

Texas Association of Community Colleges Texas Association of School Administrators

TACC and TASA co-led a Dual Credit Workgroup, which includes the following individuals:

TACC: Dennis Brown, Lee College (co-chair); Brenda Hellyer (San Jacinto College); William Serrata (EL Paso Community College); Brent Wallace (North Central Texas College); James Henry Russell (Texarkana College); Hector Gonzalez (Southwest Texas Junior College); and Johnette McKown, McLennan College (TACC Board Chair).

TASA: HD Chambers, Alief ISD (co-chair); Jamie Wilson, Denton ISD; Brian Woods, Northside ISD; Jodi Duron, Elgin ISD; Kim Alexander, Roscoe ISD; and Danny King, Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD.

Purpose

The primary goal of the workgroup is to develop policy recommendation(s) for the Texas Legislature. At its initial meeting, the workgroup agreed that while some issues can be addressed through operational changes (not requiring statutory changes), the workgroup would attempt to find consensus on one or more policy solutions.

Findings

The workgroup met five times during 2016, inclusive of a conference call focused on data with researchers at the THECB and TEA. The workgroup engaged in lengthy, robust conversations covering a wide range of issues affecting dual credit programs, from affordability and accessibility to course quality.

Funding: The discussion over dual credit funding (affordability) was especially lengthy and complex given the wide variance in how the college-ISD partnerships fund dual credit. The workgroup supports the prospect of seeking state funding specifically for dual credit. However, we recognize that the state's fiscal status for 2017 may not allow for new funding. At the end, the workgroup concluded that more

information and discussion on funding models were required before we could reach any consensus on a recommendation for policymakers.

Course Quality: The workgroup is aware of the concerns raised by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board regarding quality of dual credit courses (rigor). However, the workgroup respectfully disagrees with suggestions that dual credit courses are not rigorous. The available data, in terms of student outcomes, indicate that dual credit students are successful in their university studies.

The workgroup believes that the state of Texas can both continue to realize managed growth in dual credit and sustained course quality. These are mutually inclusive goals. Dual credit courses are in fact college courses. Institutions of Higher Education - community colleges and universities alike - have in place the necessary controls to ensure course quality and integrity. This includes a rigid examination of course and program quality by the regional accreditation agencies.

Recommendations

TACC and TASA jointly submit three recommendations on dual credit policy and practice, as follows:

Sustain Dual Credit Access. TACC and TASA believe that policymakers should avail themselves to all available data and research on dual credit before making wholesale changes to dual credit offerings, funding, and delivery models. We urge policymakers to consider the analyses forthcoming from ongoing studies and postpone any major changes to dual credit until the 86th Legislature in 2019. The forthcoming research will shed light on opportunities for strengthening dual credit programs or whether dual credit even requires any changes. We will know more when the report, expected in the summer / fall of 2018, is released.

Recommendation for the Field: Ensure consistency of instruction through professional development for dual credit instructors.

- The workgroup recommends that TACC and TASA, in collaboration with the Texas Community College Teachers Association, jointly develop and provide to practitioners a field manual on effective practices in professional development for faculty.

Recommendation for Policymakers: Defining how students can demonstrate dual credit readiness.

- The workgroup recommends a multiple-measurements approach for determining student readiness for dual credit courses. These measures could include benchmark scores on approved assessments (TSI, et. al.), high school GPA, completion of prerequisite courses, and other measures.
- The workgroup recommends that the THECB postpone any attempt to promulgate rules to define dual credit readiness until the workgroup, working in consultation with THECB and TEA, develops a field-based, multiple-measurements approach.