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New Report Outlines Recommendations to Enhance Equity in Dual Credit Availability, Access and Success in Indiana

(INDIANAPOLIS) – A new report released today provides state-level policy recommendations to enhance equitable access to and participation in high-quality dual credit programming for all Hoosier students.

[*Within Reach: A Policy Roadmap for Dual Credit in Indiana*](#) combines the insights of secondary and postsecondary dual credit stakeholders on barriers to equitable dual credit access, participation and success in Indiana, as well as recommendations to address identified challenges. The primary author of the report is Jennifer Zinth, a leading national expert on dual credit.

The report utilized findings from the [Indiana Commission for Higher Education's 2021 Early College Credit Report](#) to identify equity gaps in dual credit participation by race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status and geography. The Commission's report noted low-income students, rural students, and Black and Hispanic and Latino students are less likely than their peers to earn dual credit. Recommendations in the report are based on a framework developed by the College in High School Alliance in its 2019 report, [Unlocking Potential: A State Policy Roadmap for Equity and Quality in College in High School Programs](#).

"We know that when students earn high-value credentials or certifications, made possible by earning dual credit while in high school, they are more likely to achieve success in their next steps, whether that's enrollment, employment or enlistment," said Indiana Secretary of Education Dr. Katie Jenner. "It is imperative that we expand access and intentional completion of dual credit to ensure doors are open for all students. This will take collaboration on the state and local level, as we work together to scale programs like the successful Rural Early College Network and the newly launched Urban College Acceleration Network."

Three Key Policy Levers Emerged from this Research

Within Reach provides three cross-cutting policy levers to advance state and local dual enrollment policy in equitable ways:

- **Reconvening the Indiana Dual Credit Advisory Council:** A reconvened council could consider funding models to ensure program integrity and assess viable alternatives to the current dual credit funding model.
- **Developing a statewide equity goal for dual credit participation:** A statewide equity goal would be a critical tool in identifying and addressing equity gaps in dual credit access and participation.
- **Scaling the Indiana College Core in high school:** The Indiana College Core establishes 30 college credit hours guaranteed to transfer to public institutions statewide. Awareness of the program is growing with key audiences, but many are still not aware of the opportunities and advantages of the Indiana College Core.

“Over the last decade, Indiana has seen significant growth in the number and percentage of underrepresented students taking dual credit – through AP, dual credit and dual enrollment. However, equity gaps persist in access and completion,” said Indiana Senior Associate Commissioner and Chief Academic Officer Ken Sauer. “The recommendations from this report will allow our state to build upon its progress of intentional and high-quality dual credit for all Hoosiers.”

Additional recommendations from each *Unlocking Potential* policy category:

- Provide and utilize more detailed student participation and outcomes data
- Enhance and broadly communicate the [TransferIN](#) website
- Enhance communication to legislators on the value and benefit of dual credit courses
- Develop and disseminate tools for local secondary and postsecondary partners to identify and address root causes contributing to inequities in course availability, participation and success
- Create a menu of additional state and local up-credentialing strategies
- Explore efforts to extend counseling capacity beyond high school counselors

“Indiana is a national leader in the number of high school students completing college credits, but disparities remain when it comes to who earns dual credit,” said Jennifer Zinth, a national dual credit policy expert who authored the report. “This report is an important step for secondary and postsecondary stakeholders to better understand these equity gaps and explore policy recommendations to improve equitable dual credit access and participation.”

The report was funded by [the Joyce Foundation](#), a nonpartisan, private foundation that invests in evidence-informed public policies and strategies to advance racial equity and economic mobility for the next generation in the Great Lakes region. This includes policies to expand high-quality college in high school options for students, especially students of color and those from marginalized communities.

Read *Within Reach: A Policy Roadmap for Dual Credit* [here](#).

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About the Indiana Commission for Higher Education

Created in 1971, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education plans, coordinates and defines Indiana’s postsecondary education system to align higher learning with the needs of students and the state. The Commission also administers Indiana’s financial aid programs, including the [21st Century Scholars](#) early college promise scholarship, which celebrated 30 years in 2020. Learn more about the Commission’s [Reaching Higher in a State of Change](#) strategic plan at www.in.gov/che.