



## Dual Credit Legislation is Needed in Illinois

### Challenges Facing College Students Today and the Impact on the Economy

#### 1) Failure to Graduate College

- Approximately 75% of today's college students are juggling some combination of families, jobs, and school, leading to part-time attendance. However, only 25% of part-time students graduate, even when allowed more time to finish.
- Low-income and students of color have the lowest graduation rates.

#### 2) High Costs of College and Student Debt

- There is currently \$1.3 trillion in student loan debt in this country, an all-time high despite downward trends in all other types of debt.
- The average Class of 2016 graduate has over \$37,000 in student loan debt.

#### 3) Lack of Career Pathways upon Leaving College

- Attending college without any direction results in unneeded courses and expenses.
- Students entering college need to be able to navigate courses in a way that will lead to a sustainable income.
- Among recent college graduates, 45% are underemployed. When coupled with high debt this is stopping young people from leaving home, buying homes, starting families and contributing to the economy.
- Today's young people, those in 1980 and after, represent the first generation of Americans that are *less* likely to earn more than their parents.

### Benefits of Dual Credit Programs

Dual enrollment programs are one way to address these problems. The benefits are numerous:

- *Decreases college costs* by decreasing the amount of time to complete a college degree.
- *Increases the quantity and quality of the State's workforce* by increasing the number of students with career certificates and college degrees.
- Provides for a *smoother and successful transition* between high school and college.

### Dual Credit Legislation is Urgent and Necessary in Illinois

In Illinois, dual credit programs are *currently voluntary*, not mandatory, agreements between high schools and postsecondary schools. Legislation is needed that will promote:

1. DUAL CREDIT PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT - by requiring the participation of community colleges and their high school districts in developing dual credit programs which will remove barriers to establishing dual credit courses.  
**Minimum: (4 Core +1 elective = 15 hours)**
2. STUDENT ACCESS TO DUAL CREDIT COURSES- by ensuring that arbitrarily high thresholds to access dual credit courses are not imposed, thereby creating barriers for students to take these college credit-bearing courses during their high school careers.
3. TEACHERS CAN TEACH DUAL CREDIT COURSES- by developing alternative teaching eligibility pathways for high school teachers so that high schools can utilize their teachers to teach dual credit courses.

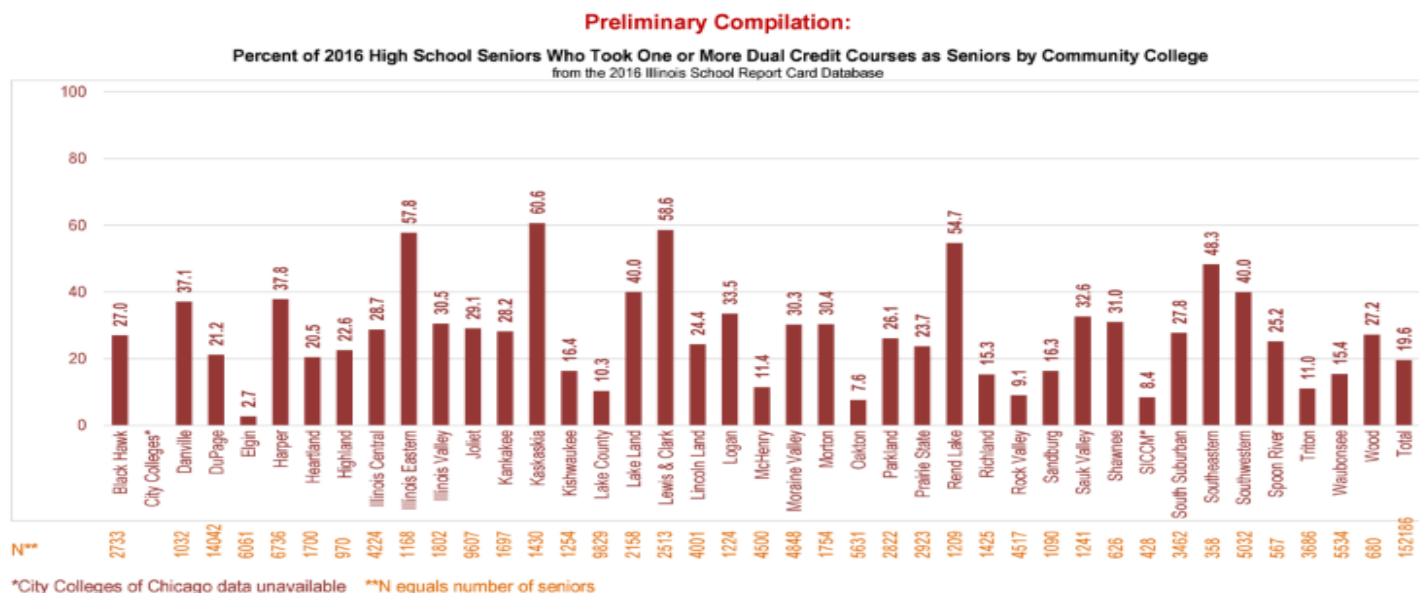
4. DUAL CREDIT COURSES ARE MEANINGFUL FOR STUDENTS - by ensuring dual credit courses are both academically and financially beneficial and that any grade of "C" or above is recognized by Illinois institutions of higher education for like college graduation credit-bearing courses.
5. DATA SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT – by developing a Statewide student identification system for Pre-K through College to track students through their education and ensure that students are receiving what is needed for postsecondary success.

### **Summary**

Despite higher debt, poorer job outcomes, and a growing awareness for the need to better match educational paths with viable careers that could be enhanced by the implementation of dual credit courses, high schools in Illinois are left to work individually with Community Colleges. While some partnerships have been created, many Community Colleges show little to no interest in working with their high school districts to develop dual credit courses or in reviewing empirically unsound placement decisions that have greatly over-identified students for remedial coursework; worse, because there is a lack of accountability for colleges (particularly when compared to what has been required of Illinois high schools districts for the past 20 years), there has been little incentive for Community Colleges to increase dual credit course development with high schools, improve upon inflated remedial placement rates, or improve poor retention and graduation rates. The need for legislative solutions to this problem is urgent.

Today's generation of young people is living at home in record numbers, is often underemployed even when graduating from college, and for recent college grads is carrying a mean debt load of \$37,000, higher for Hispanic and African American students. Other states have more successfully linked student success to increased participation of high school students to dual credit courses that lead to job certification, increased college completion rates and better jobs outcomes for students in shorter time with less debt. We must act to improve the outcome of our students, families, communities and state.

**Illinois Community College System High School Senior Enrollment Chart:** This chart illustrates “enrollment” of high school seniors in dual credit courses across the Illinois Community College system. It demonstrates the extreme variance in the system, which is due in large part to the relative ease or difficulty that exists in developing dual credit courses across the system on a college by college basis. Our information concludes that while some colleges have made it efficient for their high schools to develop dual credit courses, some community colleges have made minimal effort to develop dual credit courses and in many cases have simply been uncooperative and unresponsive to developing dual credit courses. When this



occurs, it is a disservice to the students that we serve.

### Further Reading

- [https://www.newyorkfed.org/medialibrary/media/research/staff\\_reports/sr749.pdf?la=en](https://www.newyorkfed.org/medialibrary/media/research/staff_reports/sr749.pdf?la=en)
- <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2016/05/24/for-first-time-in-modern-era-living-with-parents-edges-out-other-living-arrangements-for-18-to-34-year-olds/>
- <http://www.cnbc.com/2014/09/24/student-debt-at-all-time-high-of-12-trillion.html>
- [http://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/assets/2015/07/reach-of-debt-report\\_artfinal.pdf](http://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/assets/2015/07/reach-of-debt-report_artfinal.pdf)
- [https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/13/opinion/haunted-by-student-debt-past-age-50.html?em\\_pos=small&emc=edit\\_ty\\_20170213&nl=opinion-today&nl\\_art=6&nid=77794472&ref=headline&te=1&r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/13/opinion/haunted-by-student-debt-past-age-50.html?em_pos=small&emc=edit_ty_20170213&nl=opinion-today&nl_art=6&nid=77794472&ref=headline&te=1&r=0)
- [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/08/opinion/the-american-dream-quantified-at-last.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/08/opinion/the-american-dream-quantified-at-last.html?_r=1)
- <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/01/young-adults-poorer-less-employed-and-more-diverse-than-their-parents/385029/>
- <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-04-07/more-college-grads-finding-work-but-not-in-the-best-jobs>
- [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/economist\\_perspective\\_student\\_loans\\_dynarski.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/economist_perspective_student_loans_dynarski.pdf)
- [https://www.stlouisfed.org/~media/Publications/Quarterly%20Debt%20Monitor/Issue\\_1/QDM\\_2016Q1.pdf](https://www.stlouisfed.org/~media/Publications/Quarterly%20Debt%20Monitor/Issue_1/QDM_2016Q1.pdf)
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- <http://www.epi.org/publication/class-of-2016/>
- <https://ourfuture.org/20160525/underemployed-college-graduates-still-a-national-crisis>
- <http://www.marketwatch.com/story/there-really-arent-many-baristas-with-college-degrees-research-finds-2016-01-11>
- [http://libertystreeteconomics.newyorkfed.org/2016/01/working-as-a-barista-after-college-is-not-as-common-as-you-might-think.html#.VpPCi\\_k4Fph](http://libertystreeteconomics.newyorkfed.org/2016/01/working-as-a-barista-after-college-is-not-as-common-as-you-might-think.html#.VpPCi_k4Fph)
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<http://www.economist.com/news/special-report/21714169-technological-change-demands-stronger-and-more-continuous-connections-between-education>