

A Leg Up On College: Dual Enrollment Growth Across California's Community Colleges

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with
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A Leg Up on College

The Scale and Distribution of Community College Participation Among California High School Students

By Elizabeth Friedmann, Michal Kurlaender, Alice Li, and Russell Rumberger

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT DUAL ENROLLMENT—a practice in which high school students take college courses while they are still in high school—has multiple benefits for student success in both systems. To capitalize on those benefits, California and other states have moved in recent years to increase high school students' access to college courses.

In California, the historical lack of an integrated state data system that connects information from K-12 to higher education has hampered efforts to understand the extent of dual enrollment here. The prevailing narrative has been that California lags other states and the nation in dual enrollment, which is offered in 89% of U.S. high schools, with 11% of all high school students participating nationally.¹

This report breaks new ground by matching high school and community college datasets to provide a clearer picture of college course-taking among California public high school students statewide. Our analysis of course-taking for the population of students who were seniors in the 2016-17 school year (n=408,650)—the most recent cohort for which data from both segments was available—shows that 12.6% (n=51,472) of California high school students take college courses, a rate higher than the national average and well above what previous reports suggest for California.²

A closer look at the matched dataset, however, reveals significant differences in college course-taking by race and socioeconomic status. Access to an important onramp to the early college experience, and its many demonstrated benefits, is not available to all California high school students.

12.6%
of California
high schoolers
take community
college courses

TOPLINES

- > **College course-taking by public high school students is more prevalent in California than previously understood:** Nearly 13% of 2016-17 seniors enrolled in a community college course at some point during high school.
- > **Disparities in college course-taking by high school students are substantial:** Latinx and African-American students were underrepresented in community college course-taking compared to their share of overall high school students. Socioeconomically disadvantaged (SED) students were also less likely to dual enroll than their non-SED peers.

Research shows that dual enrollment—a practice in which high school students take college courses while they are still in high school—has multiple benefits for students, high schools and colleges.

College Course-taking in High School Improves Educational Attainment

- Studies show that taking college level courses while in high school leads to:
 - Increased likelihood of graduating from high school (Karp et al, 2007)
 - Increased likelihood of enrolling and persisting in college (Song & Zeiser, 2019; Karp et al, 2007; An, 2013; Berger, Adelman & Cole, 2010; Struhl & Vargas, 2013)
 - Shortened time to earn a bachelor's degree (Marshall & Andrews, 2002)

Mechanisms by which College Course-taking Improves Educational Attainment

- Provides students with advanced and rigorous coursework (Bettinger, Boatman, & Long, 2013; Karp et al., 2007; Kurlaender & Howell, 2010)
- May promote student engagement and motivation (Karp & Jeong, 2008; Marshall & Andrews, 2002)
- Often allows students to develop a sense of belonging with the college environment and identify as a college student (AIR/SRI, 2009)
- Yet, access to dual enrollment opportunities can be unequal across school type and geography (Burns & Leu, 2019; Xu, Fink & Solanki, 2019)

Types of College Courses in High School

- **Advanced Placement Courses (AP)**

- Students earn college credit generally by scoring 3 or higher on AP Exams
- In 2016-17 -- 411,620 CA students
 - 779,608 exams
 - 57 percent scoring 3 or higher

- **International Baccalaureate Courses (IB)**

- Students earn college credit by scoring 4 or higher on IB Exams
- 105 programs in CA

- **College credit courses in local colleges/universities**

Expansion of Dual Enrollment in California

- **Assembly Bill 288 (2015) & Assembly Bill 30 (2019)**
 - DE courses can be taught on high school campuses for high school students only (not open to the public)
 - **College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) partnership**
 - Allows CCC districts and high schools to enter a joint partnership and offer DE courses that count for both a high school diploma and AA degree
- **Career Pathways Trust**
 - Funding for career and technical education pathways for grades 9-14
 - Established avenue for formal partnership for K-12 and CCC
- **California School Dashboard – College/Career Indicator (2017)**
 - College credit courses as 1 of 8 pathways for college/career preparedness

Research

Defining College Credit Course-taking

- **Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit:** High school students take courses that count for both high school and college credit
- **Concurrent enrollment:** Students take college courses while enrolled in high school
- **College credit course-taking on the College/Career Indicator portion of the California School Dashboard:** earning credit in a college course with grade of C- or better (does not have to also earn high school credit)

Data

- California Department of Education - College/Career Indicator
 - 4 cohorts of 12th graders enrolled in CA public high schools
 - 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19 cohort
 - Race/ethnicity, SED indicator
- California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
 - Special Admits enrolled 2012-13 through 2018-19
 - College course enrollment and performance

Dual Enrollment Participation Increasing Overtime

11.3%

2015-16

13.4%

2016-17¹

15.2%

2017-18

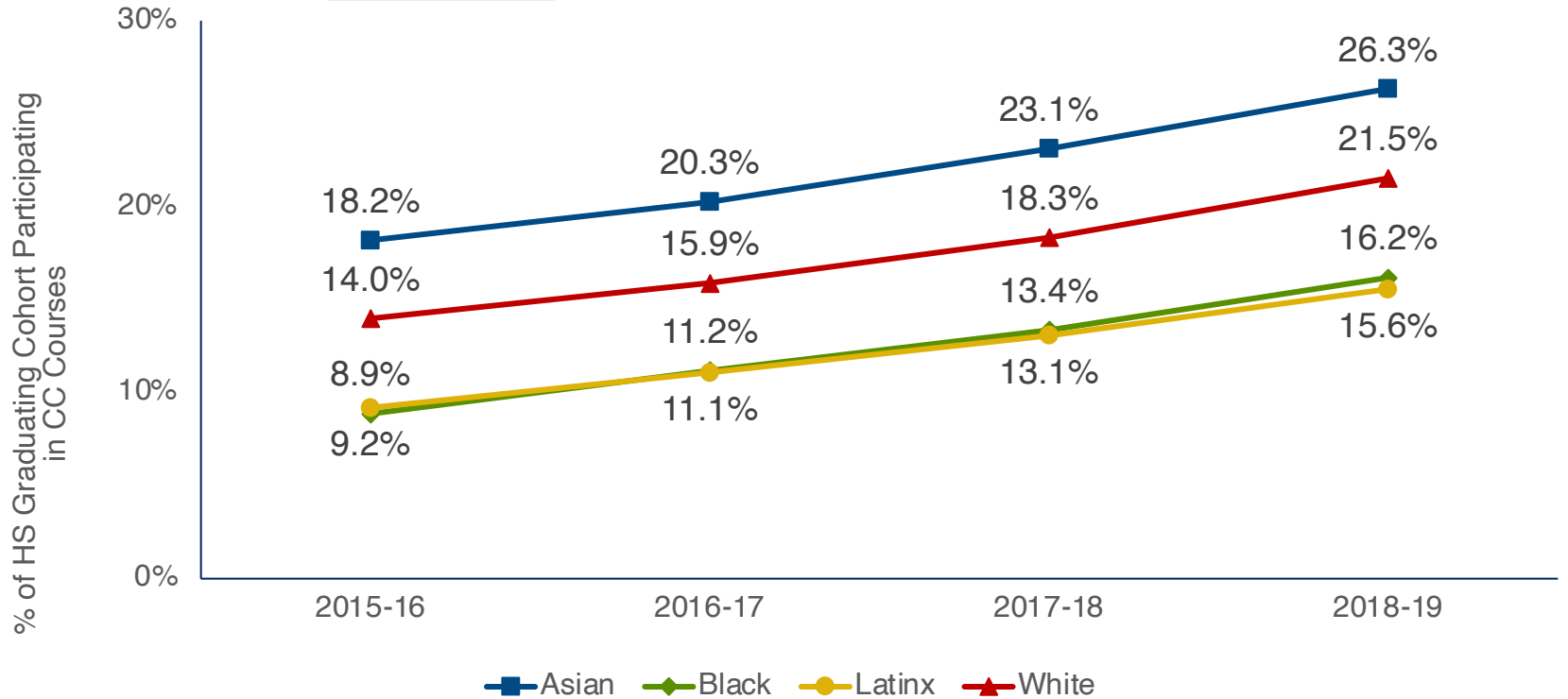
18.2%

2018-19

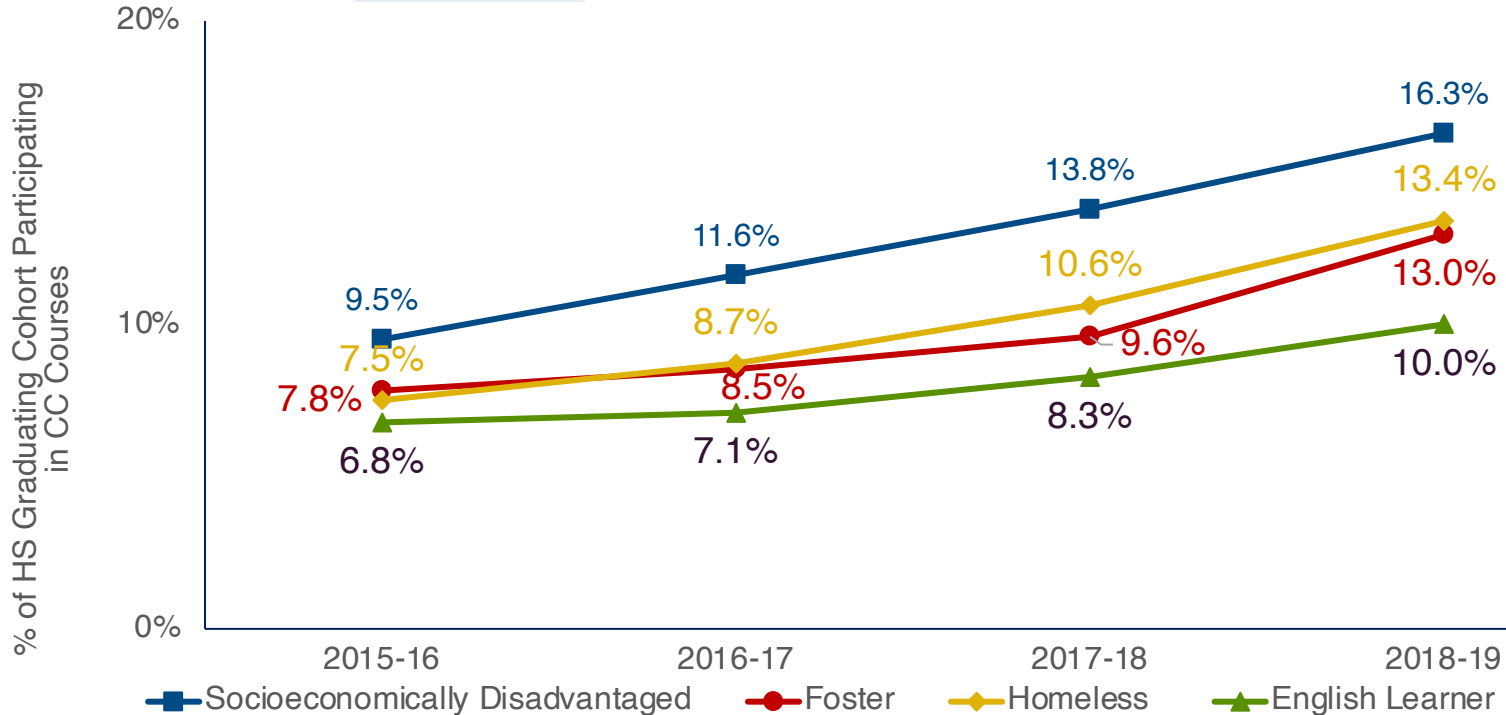
Percent of California high school graduates in each year who take community college courses at some point during the four years of high school.

¹In *A Leg Up on College* (January 2020), we reported that 12.6% of 2016-17 high school seniors participated in community college courses during their high school years. Since the publication of this report, we improved our methods for matching high school students to the community college data, which resulted in this updated figure.

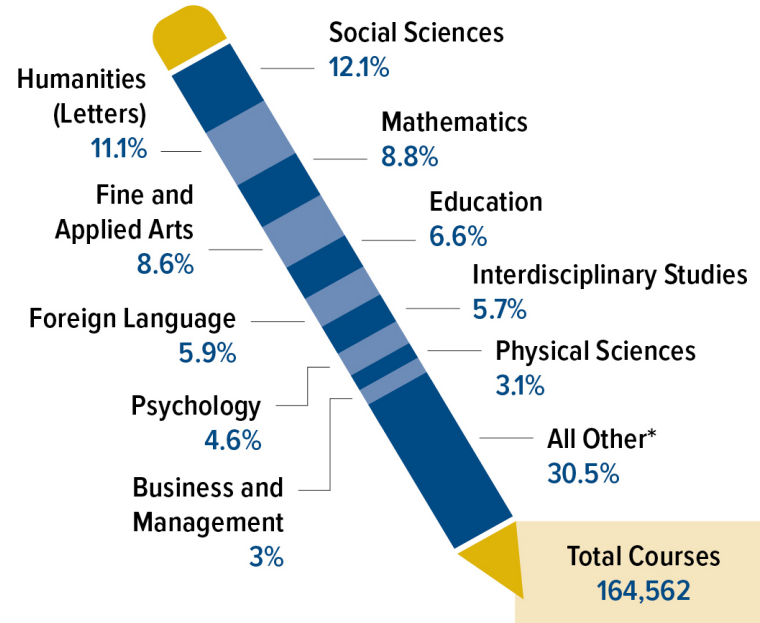
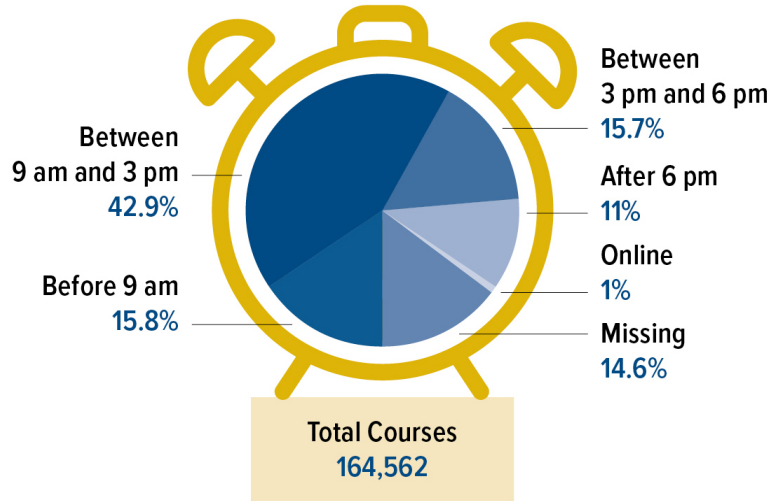
Persisting Inequities in Dual Enrollment Participation



Students who face educational barriers are less likely to participate in dual enrollment

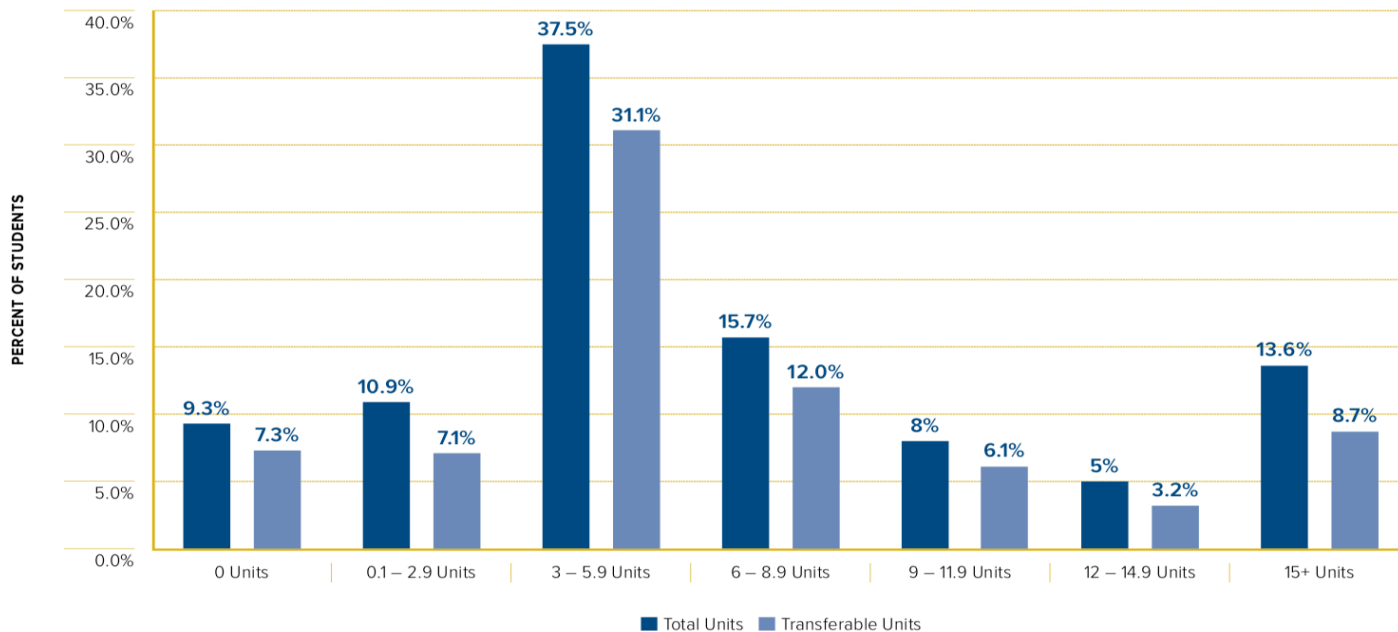


Course Characteristics



2016-17 12th Grade Cohort

Cumulative Credits Earned



2016-17 12th Grade Cohort

Opportunities and Next Steps

- College preparation and access remains uneven by student subgroups and by high school
- Decrease gaps in college readiness, increase access to college
- Serve the community through closer CCC-HS partnerships
- Increase revenue streams both now and in the future
- Explore sending high school and receiving community colleges

Thank you!

- California Department of Education
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 - Gary Adams
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Alina Varona

Dean of Workforce Development & Career Education
College of Marin

Dual Enrollment: A Reflection

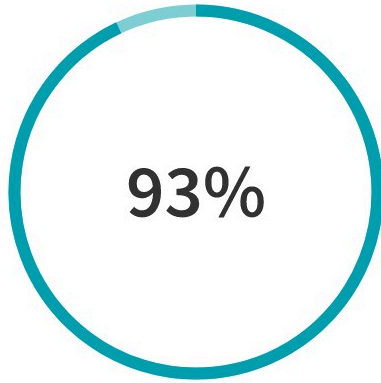
SUCCESSSES

- More DE Courses
- Greater Interest in Partnering
- Increased Access
- System Cross Training
- Comprehensive Pathways
- DE Equity Agenda

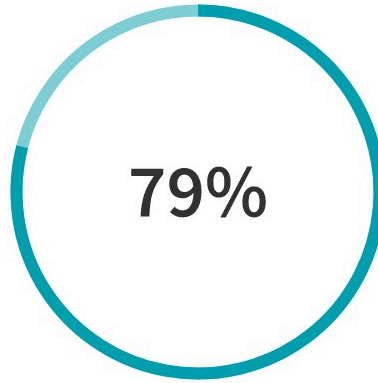
CHALLENGES

- Bell Schedule
- Enrollment/Course Selection
- Comprehensive Pathways
- Student Sorting
- Resource Constraints
- Professional Development

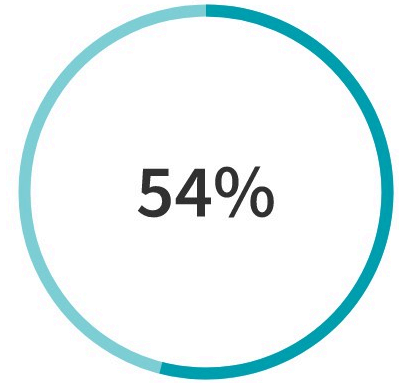
GAINS IN ACCESS AND OUTCOMES



RETENTION



SUCCESS



PERSISTENCE

CCPT SECTORS 2017-2019
N=421 Students & 702 Enrollments

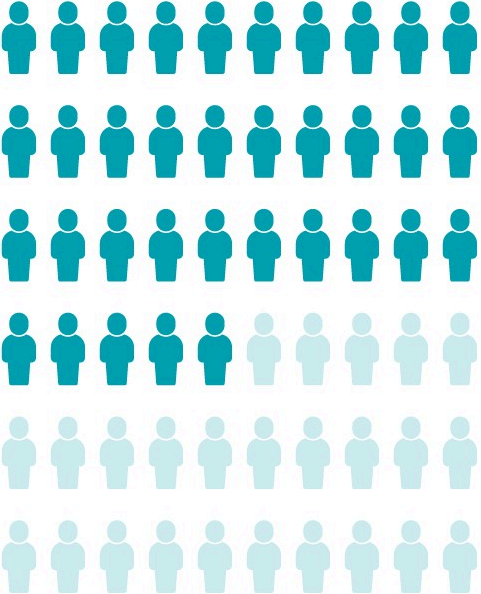
The Brutal Facts

91%



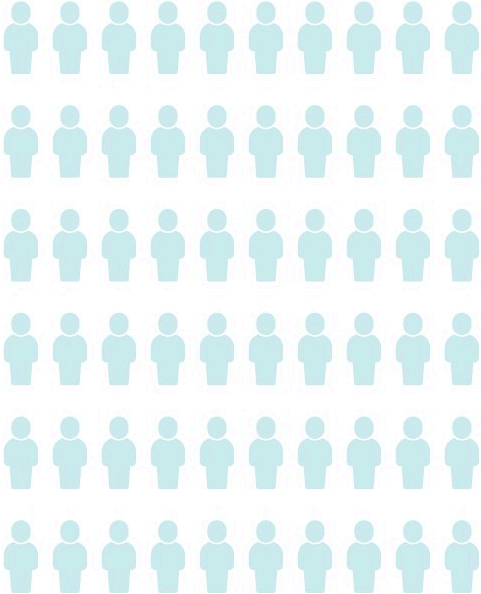
ASIAN

58%



LATINX

0%



AFRICAN-AMERICAN

ONE PAGERS Practitioner's Guide



DUAL ENROLLMENT

City College of San Francisco (CCSF) and San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) have partnered to offer SFUSD high school students access to college classes. Dual Enrollment (DE) can be a game changer for historically underrepresented communities by providing early college exposure, success, and college transition support.

BENEFITS OF DUAL ENROLLMENT:



Students are more likely to graduate



More likely to matriculate and persist through college



More likely to connect to college

Dual Enrollment Defined

SFUSD describes all dual enrollment as "Early College." College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) and AB 288 is the California legislation that enables high school and community college partnerships for the purpose of dual enrollment at the high school.

Connects students who may not already be college bound or who are underrepresented to college.

Provides college credit and high school credits.

CCAP agreements enable CCSF and SFUSD to offer college courses dedicated for high school students only.

Benefits of Dual Enrollment (Early College):

- Provides students college courses.
- Offers other courses that would be an entry to college and would help students transition to a class at the college campus.
- Gets students enrolled in CTE college courses in fields with likely job opportunities.
- Gives students an opportunity to take academic courses that are not offered at the high school.
- CCSF offers courses that are transferable to UC-CSU.


HIGH IMPACT COURSE SELECTION

CHOOSE THE BEST COURSE FOR STUDENTS:

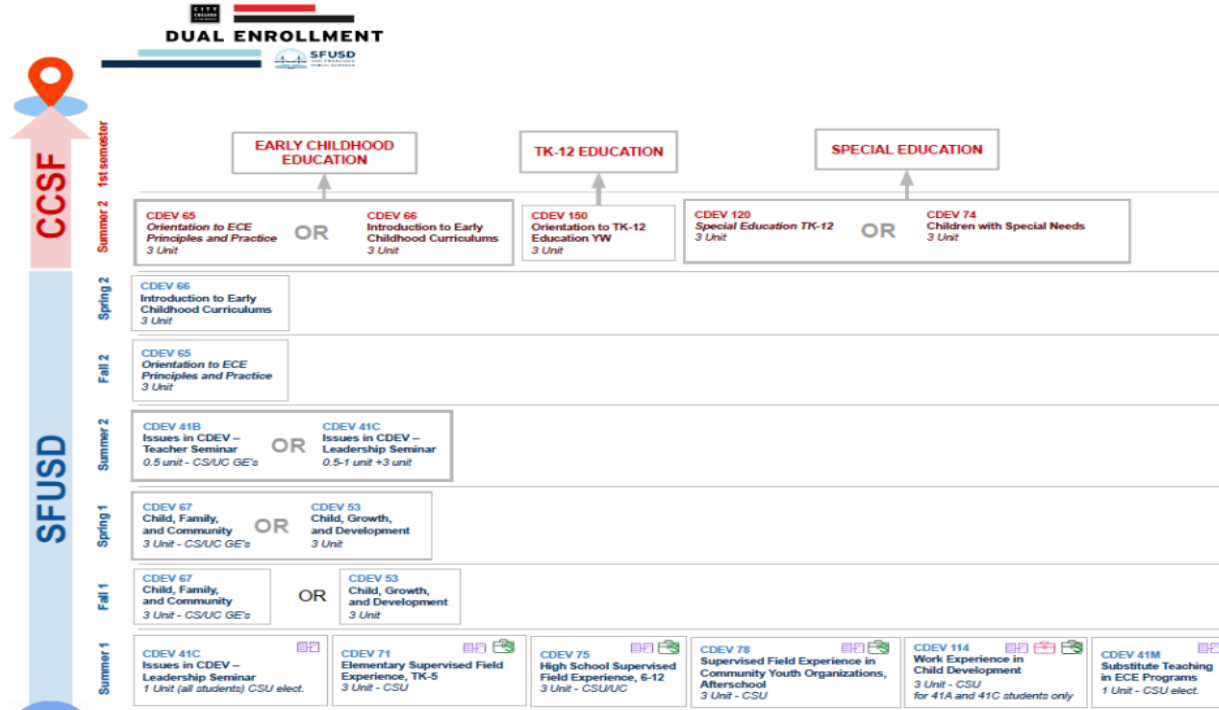
- Transferable to UC-CSU
- Leads to or is part of a Certificate and Associate Degree for Transfer
- Provides Job Training and Career Exploration
- Addresses Disproportionate Access and Outcomes
- Closes Equity and Opportunity Gaps



Dual Enrollment/Early College Models:

| Type | Schedule | Description | Logistics | Considerations |
|-------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| CCAP On-Site Courses (AB 288) |  <p>Embedded in high school</p> | California Career Access Partnership CCSF course is held at the school site, during the school day. Course is closed to non-high school students. | <p>School must schedule the CCSF course hours into the regular school day.</p> <p>School must have a minimum of 30 students to schedule the course.</p> <p>School is responsible for outreach, enrollment and registration, and textbooks.</p> <p>CCSF courses cannot supplant regular high school courses.</p> | <p>Convenient access to college courses.</p> <p>Students can be cohorted to provide academic support.</p> <p>Highest equity/access approach.</p> <p>Recommended for 10th – 12th grade students.</p> |

STUDENT-CENTERED PATHWAYS



CHILD DEVELOPMENT & FAMILY STUDIES

Luis P. Sanchez

**President
Oxnard College**