

Every Student Succeeds Act Primer: Advanced Course Work



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The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 offers states and districts several opportunities to provide students with advanced course work, including Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), dual- and concurrent-enrollment programs, and early college high schools.

Definitions for Dual- and Concurrent-Enrollment Programs and Early College High School

ESSA defines both *dual and concurrent enrollment* and *early college high school*, establishing consistent terminology for these programs. Under ESSA, dual or concurrent enrollment refers to “a program offered by a partnership between at least one institution of higher education and at least one local educational agency through which a secondary school student who has not graduated from high school with a regular high school diploma is able to enroll in one or more postsecondary courses and earn postsecondary credit that is transferable to the institutions of higher education in the partnership and applies toward completion of a degree or recognized educational credential as described in the Higher Education Act.”

ESSA defines early college high school as “a partnership between at least one local educational agency and at least one institution

of higher education that allows participants to simultaneously complete requirements toward earning a regular high school diploma and earn not less than 12 credits that are transferable to the institutions of higher education in the partnership as part of an organized course of study toward a postsecondary degree or credential at no cost to the participant or the participant’s family.”

Funding for Advanced Course Work

ESSA provides several funding opportunities to allow states and districts to provide students with advanced course work. High poverty districts implementing a schoolwide Title I program (i.e., districts with a poverty rate above 40 percent) may use Title I funds to raise awareness of and prepare students for advanced course work, including AP, IB, dual and concurrent enrollment, and early college high schools. Districts can use these funds to cover any costs associated with students’ dual or concurrent enrollment, including tuition and fees at institutions of higher education and transportation, as well as professional development for teachers in conjunction with educators in career and technical education (CTE) and from institutions of higher education.

Under ESSA, states may use up to 3 percent of their Title I funds to provide grants to school districts for “direct student services.” Districts may use these grants to provide students with the following:

- advanced course work that is not otherwise available at a student’s school;



- CTE course work that leads to industry-recognized credentials;
- AP, IB, and other opportunities for students to complete postsecondary-level instruction and exams that lead to postsecondary credit.

ESSA creates the new Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants program, which provides funds states may use to support AP, IB, dual and concurrent enrollment, early college high schools, and other advanced course work.¹

Under ESSA, states and districts can use federal funding for teacher professional development to support teachers in implementing early college high schools and dual- or concurrent-enrollment programs, including helping teachers acquire needed credentials and certifications. States and other grantees can use federal funding that supports the academic success of English learners to increase access for English learners to early college high schools and dual- and concurrent-enrollment programs.

State Report Cards

ESSA requires states and districts to report the number and percentage of students, in the aggregate and disaggregated by student subgroups, enrolled in accelerated course work

that leads to postsecondary education credit including dual- or concurrent-enrollment programs. States also can use this information as an indicator within their accountability and improvement systems.

District and School Plans

ESSA requires school districts to develop plans that include strategies for effectively transitioning students from high school to postsecondary education. These strategies may include coordinating with institutions of higher education to increase access to dual- or concurrent-enrollment opportunities and integrating academic course work and CTE.

For additional fact sheets and videos about ESSA, visit www.all4ed.org/essa/.

Endnotes

¹ The Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants program has three purposes: (1) provide all students with access to a well-rounded education; (2) improve school conditions for student learning; and (3) improve the use of technology to raise academic achievement and digital literacy for all students. If a district receives less than \$30,000 through this program, the district may choose to support only one of these purposes.

The **Alliance for Excellent Education** is a Washington, DC-based national policy and advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring that all students, particularly those traditionally underserved, graduate from high school ready for success in college, work, and citizenship. www.all4ed.org

The **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)** is the nation's oldest, largest, and most widely recognized grassroots-based civil rights organization. Its more than half-million members and supporters throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities, campaigning for equal opportunity and conducting voter mobilization. The mission of the NAACP is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination. www.naacp.org

