

# Purposeful Dual Enrollment

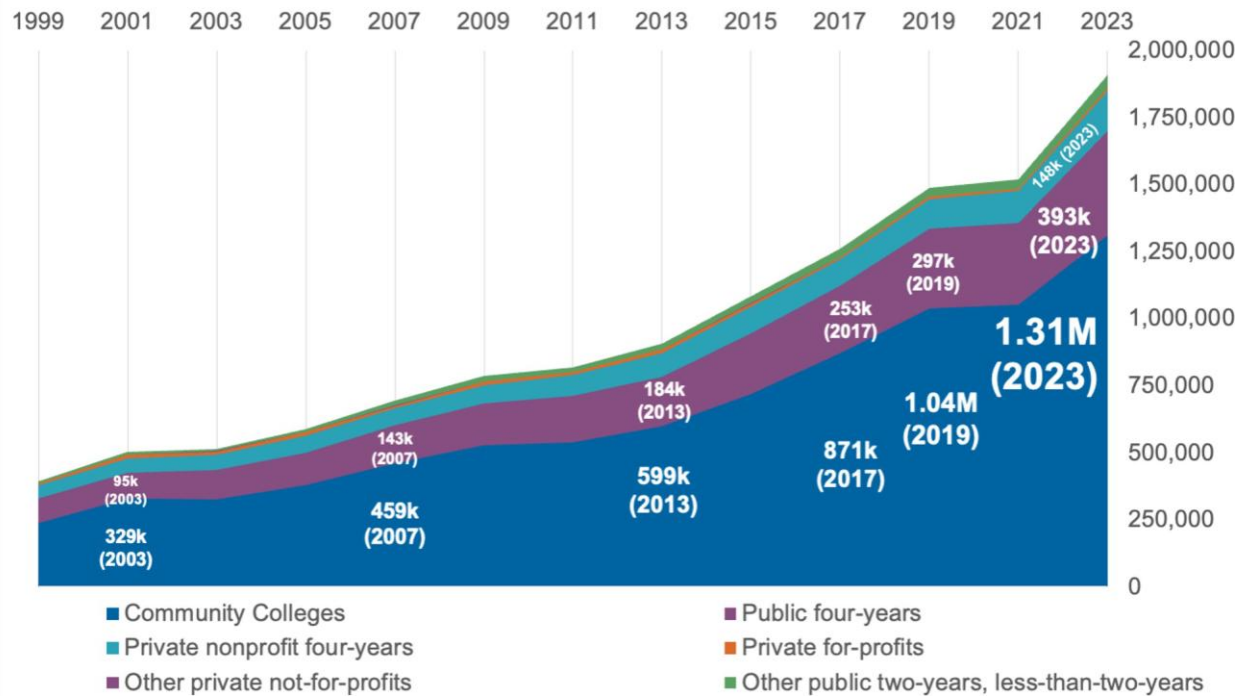
## Expanding College and Career Opportunity

John Fink, Senior Research Associate and Program Lead

October, 2026 | [North Central State College](#)

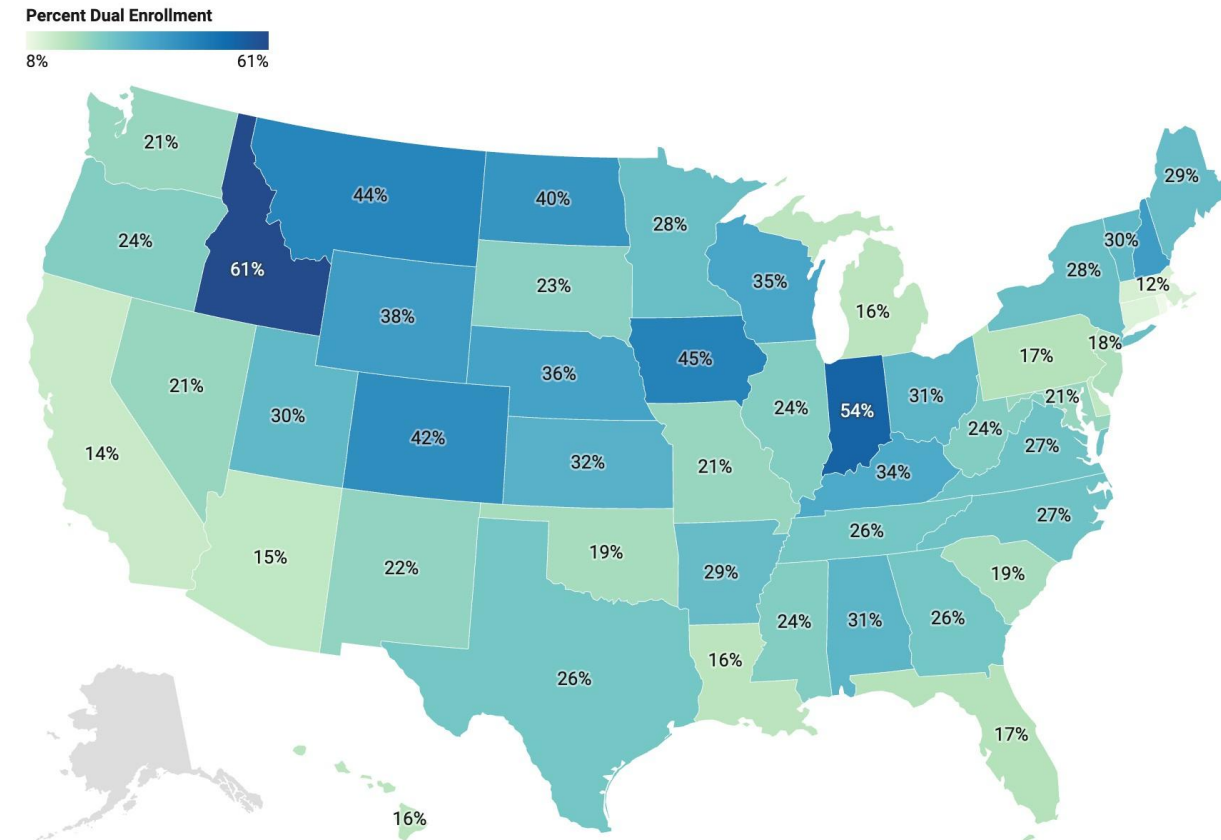
# Dual enrollment has doubled in the past decade, up to 3.1M in 2024-2025

## Growth of Dual Enrollment, Fall Enrollments 1999-2023



# 23% of community college students are in high school

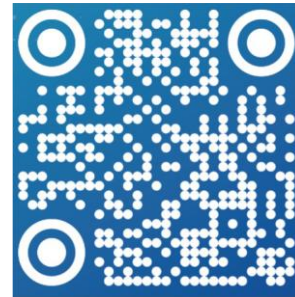
## Percentage of Community College Students in High School in 2024-25



## The Dual Enrollment Playbook

A Guide to Equitable Acceleration for Students

## View our latest dual enrollment research



### RESEARCH BRIEF

#### What Do Dual Enrollment Students Value? Elevating the Voices of Historically Underserved Students to Guide Reform

By Andy Glick and David Jenkins

Nearly 1.5 million students in the United States are enrolled in college courses while still in high school. Though dual enrollment (DE) programs have been around since the 1960s, they have grown significantly in the past decade, with many states now offering DE programs to all students. However, the voices of historically underserved students have not been heard enough. This research brief explores the experiences of these students and offers recommendations for reform.

## DEEP Insights

Redesigning Dual Enrollment as we know it

### Business Models for Purposeful Enrollment

By David Glick and David Jenkins



### Promising Combinations of Dual Enrollment, AP/IB, and CTE

How College and Career Trajectories of Texas High School Students Who Take Accelerated Coursework



### The Postsecondary Outcomes of High School Dual Enrollment Students: A National and State-by-State Analysis

Talena Wilkins, John D. Winters, David Jenkins



### How States and Systems Can Support Practitioner Efforts to Strengthen Dual Enrollment

By David Glick and David Jenkins



Dual enrollment can benefit all students when designed and implemented purposefully to help students build momentum for college and careers

### Understanding Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment (DE) is a program that allows high school students to take college courses while still in high school. This research brief explores the experiences of these students and offers recommendations for reform.

### What the Research Tells Us

- Dual enrollment is a program that allows high school students to take college courses while still in high school.
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### Scaling Dual Enrollment Pathways to College and Career Opportunity: Five State Policy Strategies

By David Glick and David Jenkins



### Research in Brief: Why States Need to Redesign Dual Enrollment

- Dual enrollment is a program that allows high school students to take college courses while still in high school.
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### Dual Enrollment as an Integrated Pathway: Defining and Redesigning Integrated Pathways for Historically Underserved Students

By David Glick and David Jenkins



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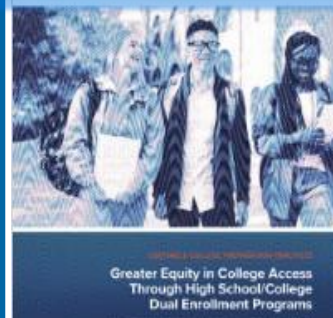
### Dual Enrollment Momentum Metrics: Leading Indicators for Program Improvement

By David Glick and David Jenkins



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### Greater Equity in College Access Through High School/College Dual Enrollment Programs

By David Glick and David Jenkins

### Search Brief

By David Glick and David Jenkins



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### Scaling College-Credit-in-High-School as an On-Ramp to Postsecondary Career Paths for Underrepresented Students

By David Glick and David Jenkins



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# Dual Enrollment as an Onramp to College & Career

## Conventional Approach



*“Programs of privilege”*



*“Random acts”*



## DEEP Approach



*All – and especially underserved students*



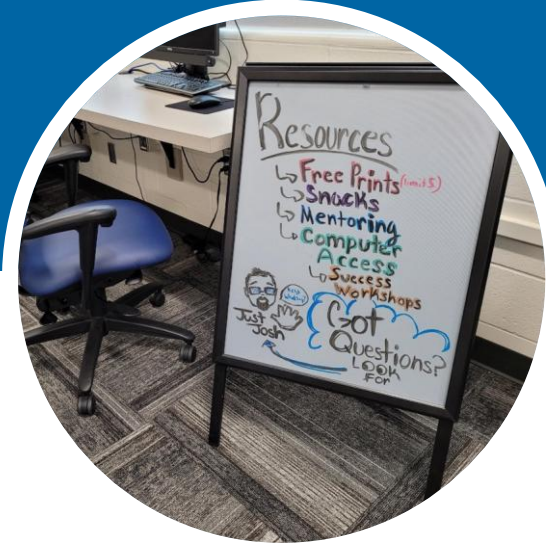
*Designed to expand college and career opportunities*

# DEEP Framework Extends Guided Pathways to High School through Dual Enrollment



## Outreach

*Outreach to Underserved Students & Schools*



## Support

*Support Students by Delivering High-Quality Instruction*



## Alignment

*Align DE to College Degrees & Careers*



## Advise

*Advise Students to Explore Interests and Develop Plans*

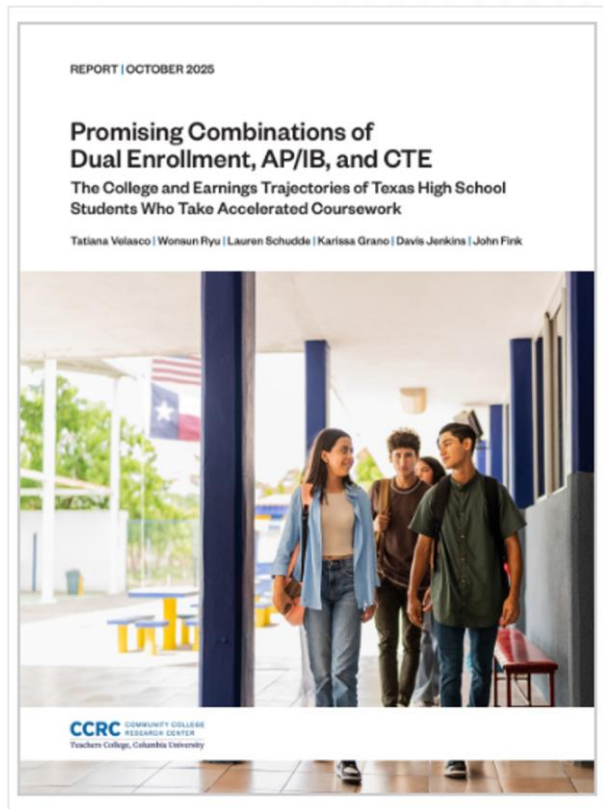
# Students increasingly need education after high school to get good jobs



**Connecting dual enrollment with high school CTE has enormous potential to expand college and career opportunity, putting more students on track to complete college in their 20s and secure good jobs by age 30**

# Promising Combination: Dual Enrollment and High School CTE

(Velasco et al., 2025)

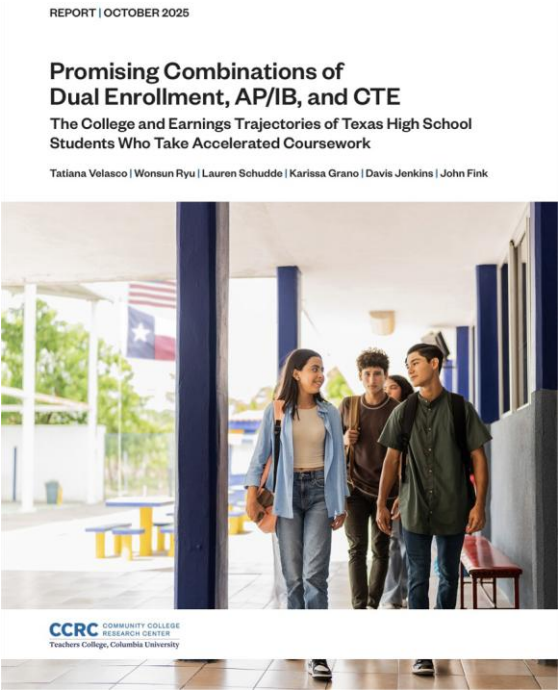
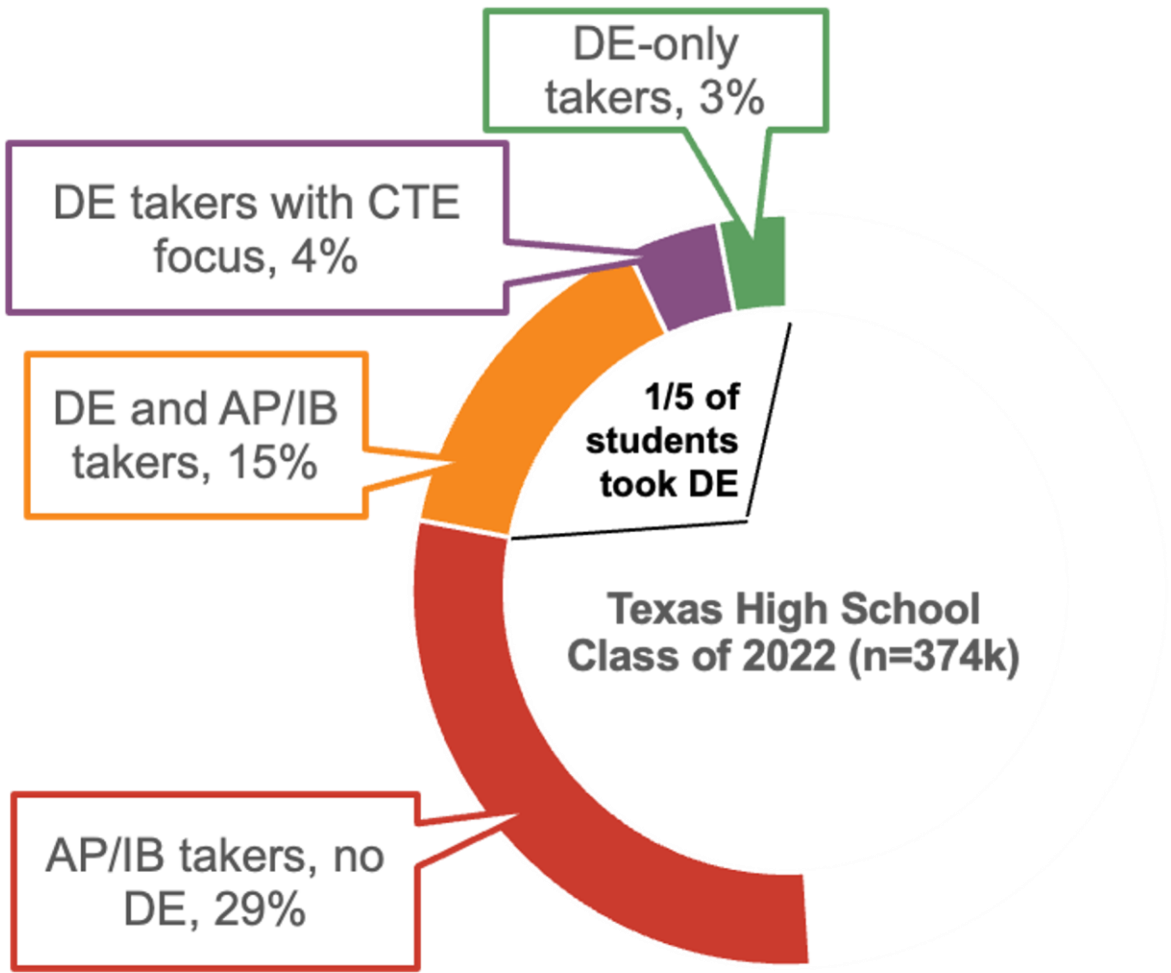


In this study, students who had a CTE focus and who took dual enrollment courses were more likely after high school:

- to enroll in college and complete a degree and
- have higher earnings (16% higher) by age 24

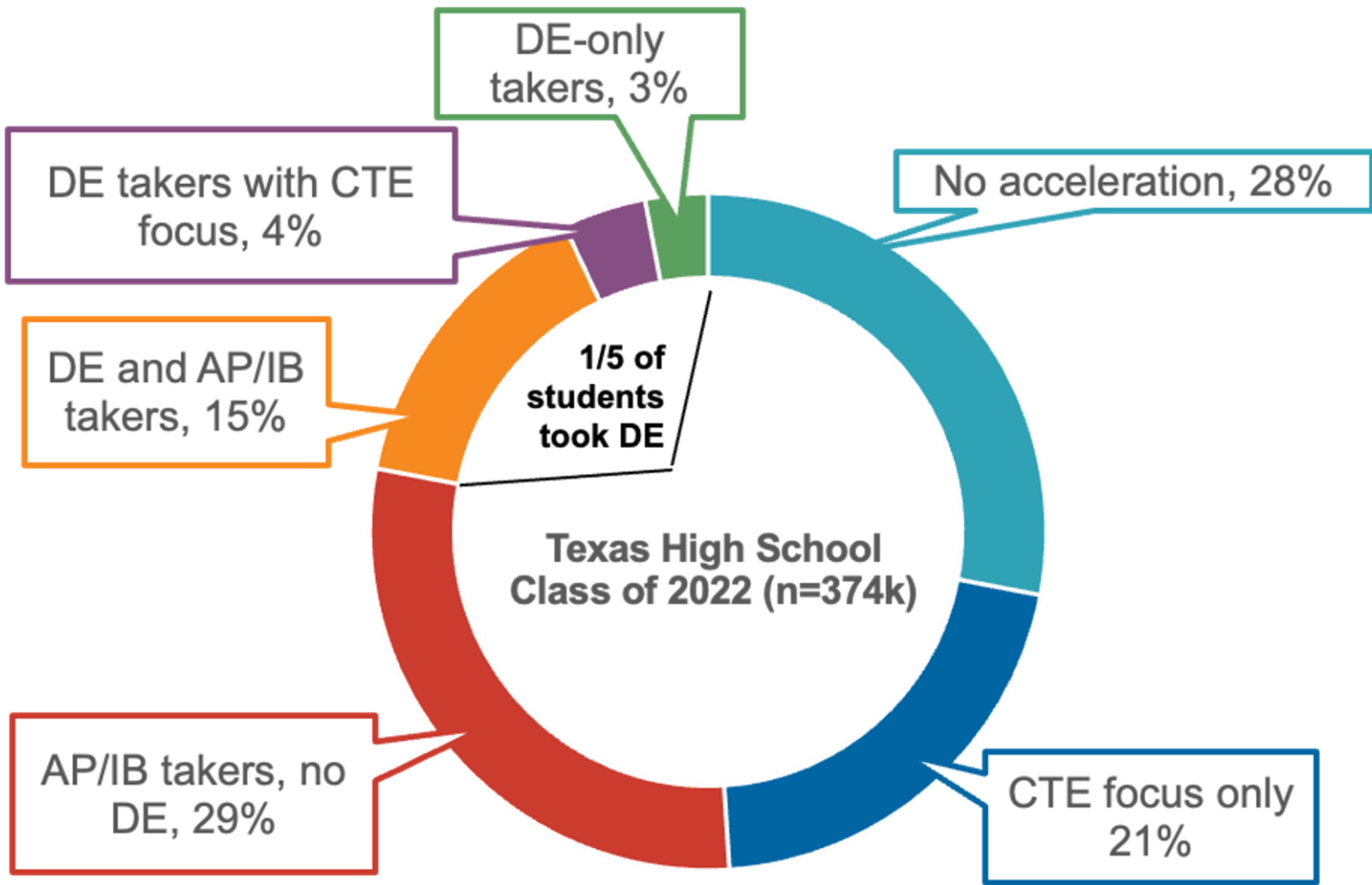
compared to HS CTE students with no dual enrollment.

# Promising Combinations, Untapped Potential



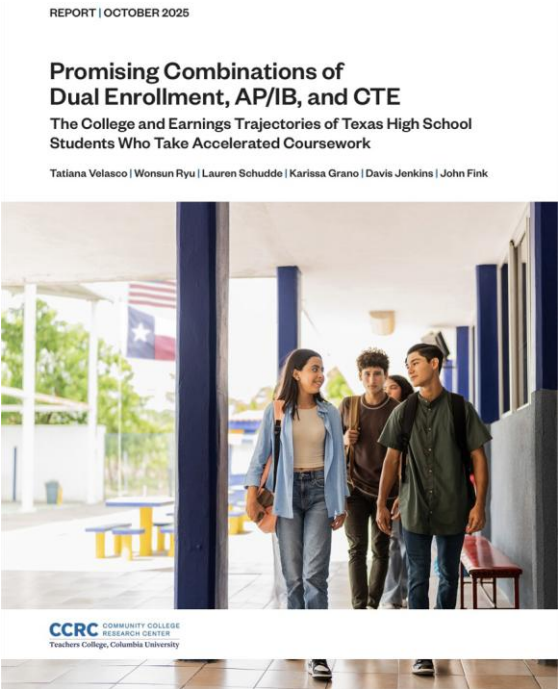
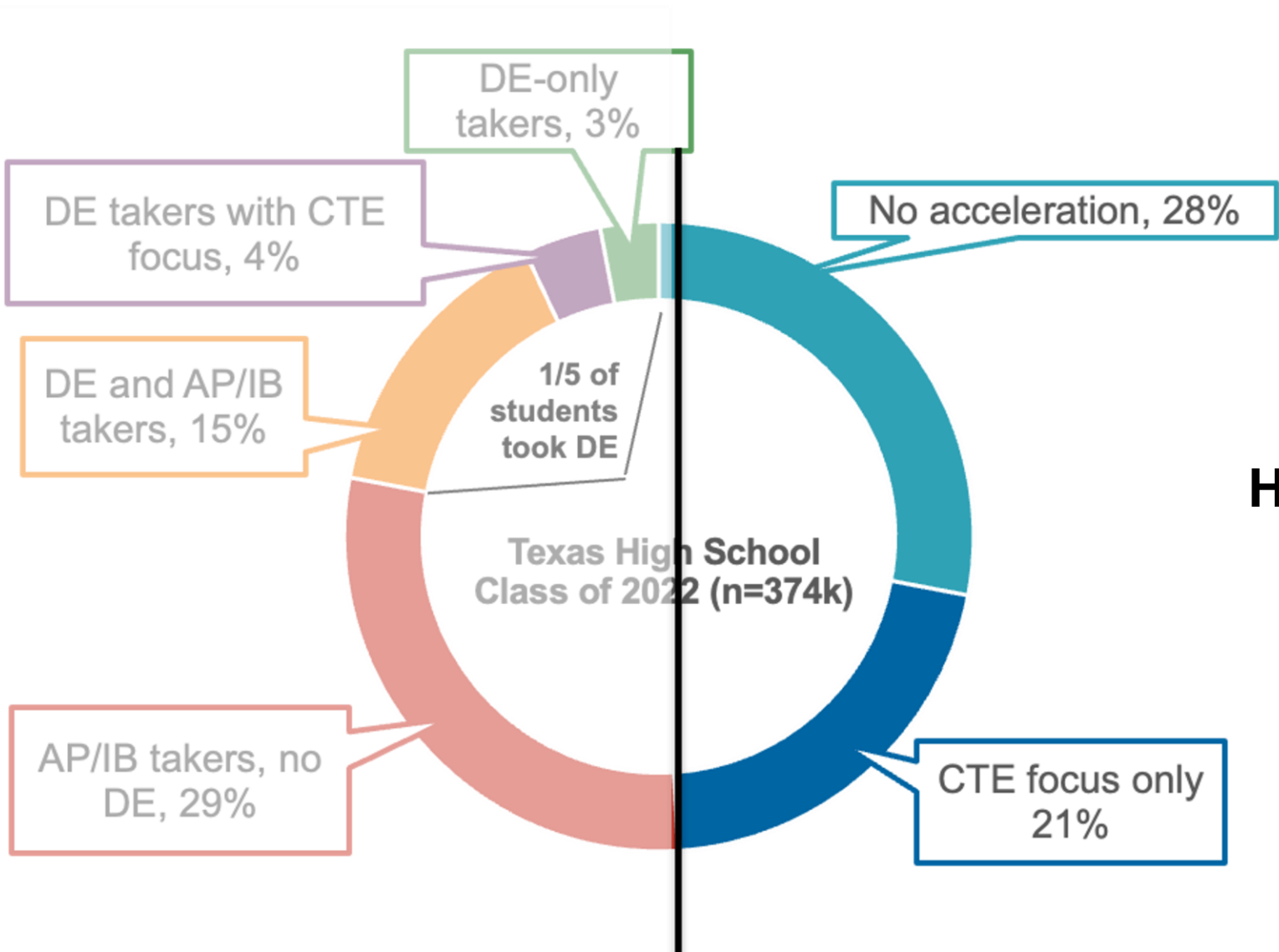
[Velasco et al., 2025](#)

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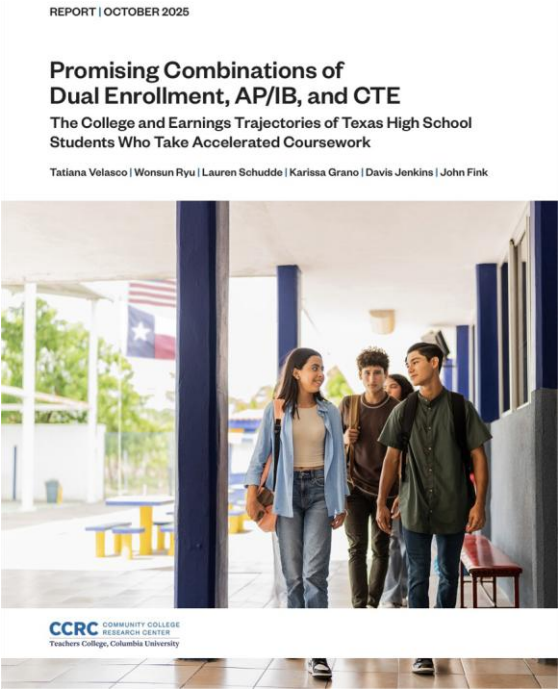
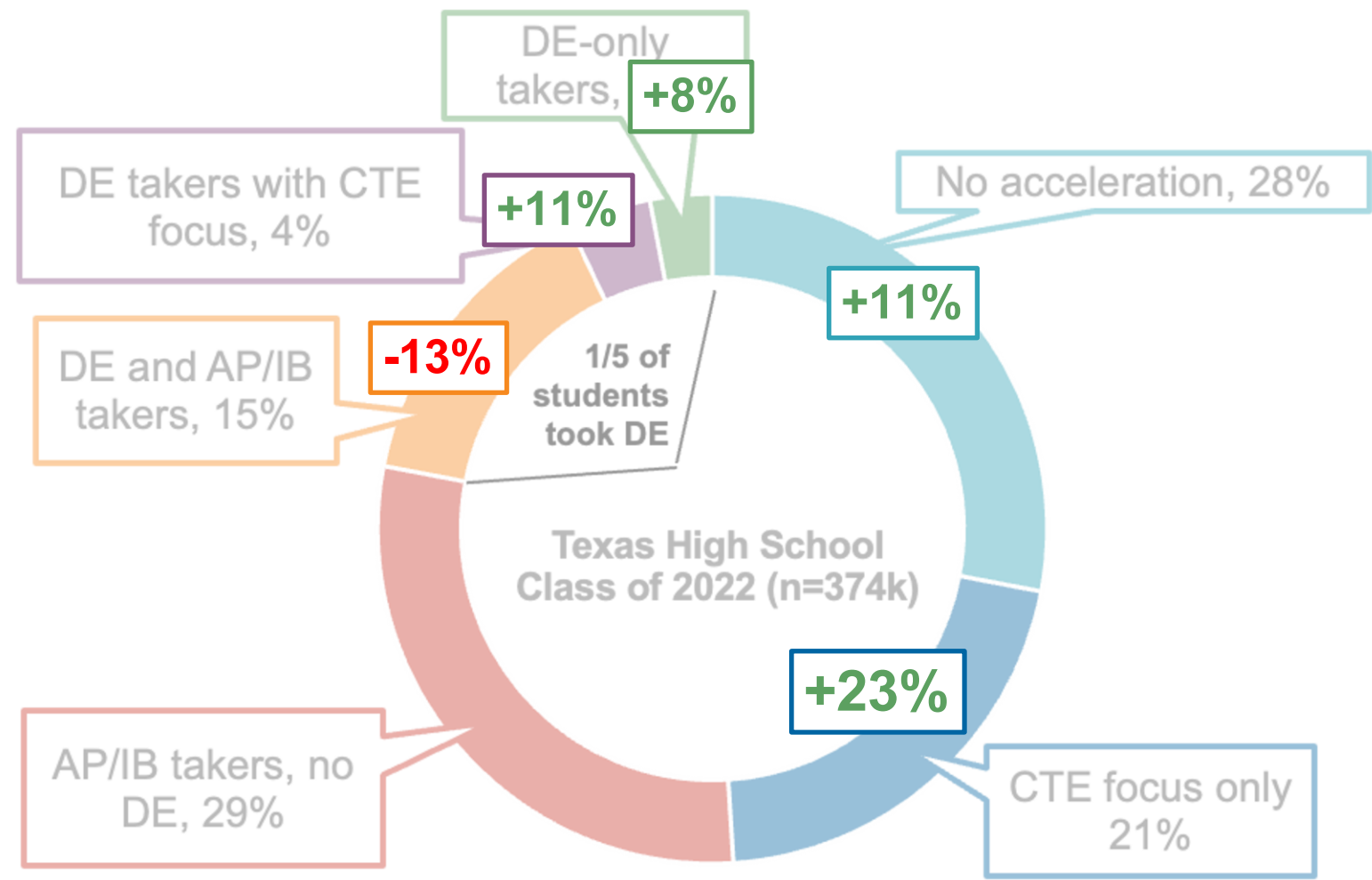


[Velasco et al., 2025](#)

**Half of Texas HS Students did not take DE or AP/IB**

**Overrepresented:**  
**Men, Black, & low-income students**  
56-57% men (51% baseline)  
14-18% Black (13% baseline)  
62-65% low-income (54% baseline)

# Earnings advantage strongest among HS CTE students one year after HS

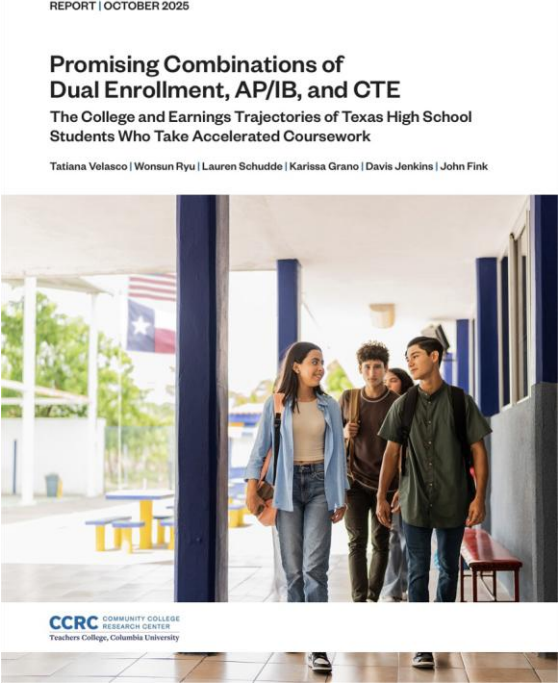
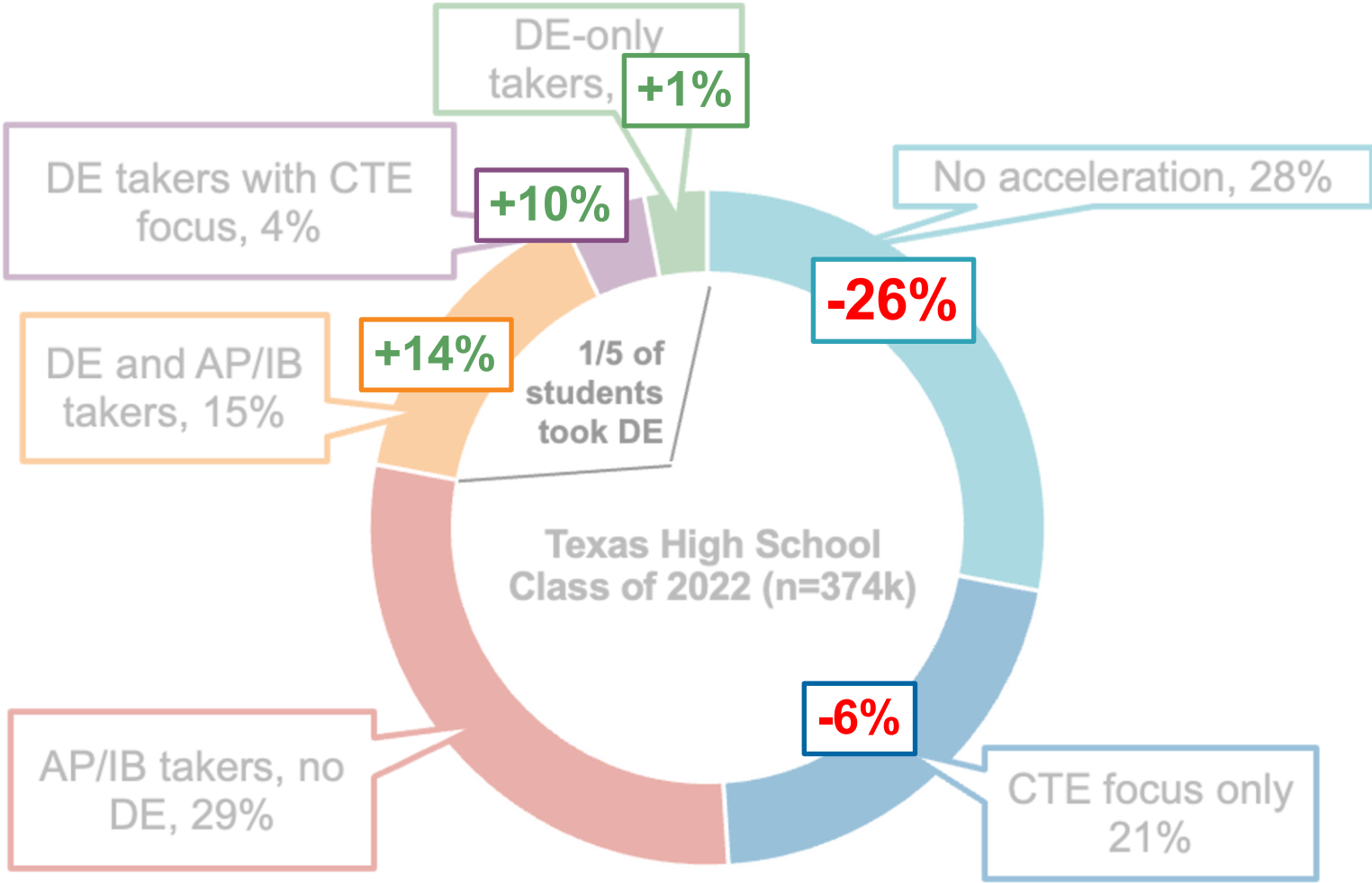


[Velasco et al., 2025](#)

**Earnings at age 19**  
*Related to AP/IB, no DE*

Regression-adjusted estimates of the average quarterly earnings by each age group. All estimates are in reference to “AP/IB takers, no DE” earnings. Controls: gender, race, income background, TAKS test scores, student ranking, and high school characteristics.

# Earnings advantage shifts to students with dual enrollment six years after HS

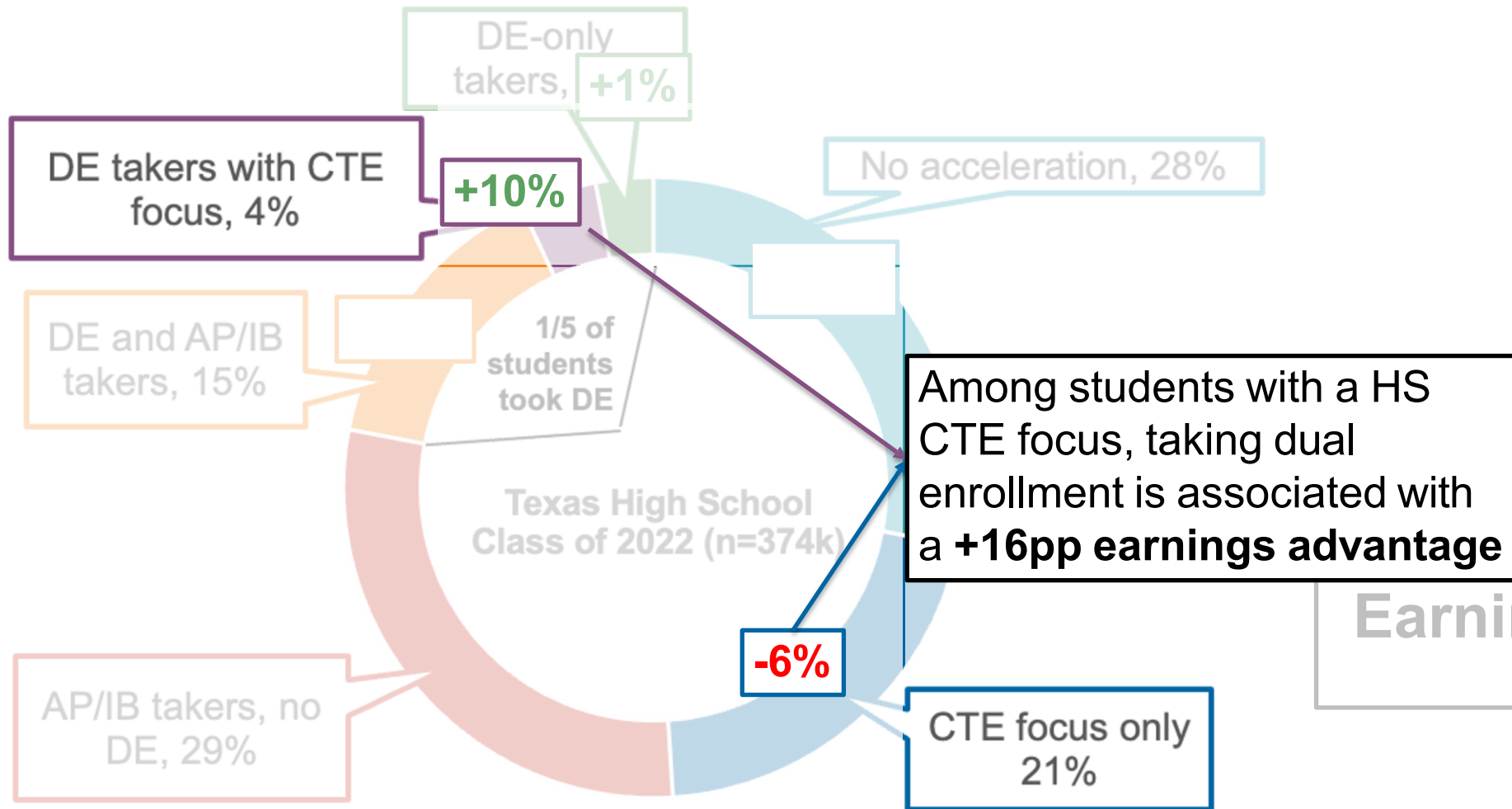


[Velasco et al., 2025](#)

**Earnings at age 24**  
*Related to AP/IB, no DE*

Regression-adjusted estimates of the average quarterly earnings by each age group. All estimates are in reference to “AP/IB takers, no DE” earnings. Controls: gender, race, income background, TAKS test scores, student ranking, and high school characteristics.

# Earnings advantage shifts to students with dual enrollment six years after HS



REPORT | OCTOBER 2025

Promising Combinations of  
Dual Enrollment, AP/IB, and CTE  
The College and Earnings Trajectories of Texas High School  
Students Who Take Accelerated Coursework

Tatiana Velasco | Wonsun Ryu | Lauren Schudde | Karissa Grano | Davis Jenkins | John Fink



[Velasco et al., 2025](#)

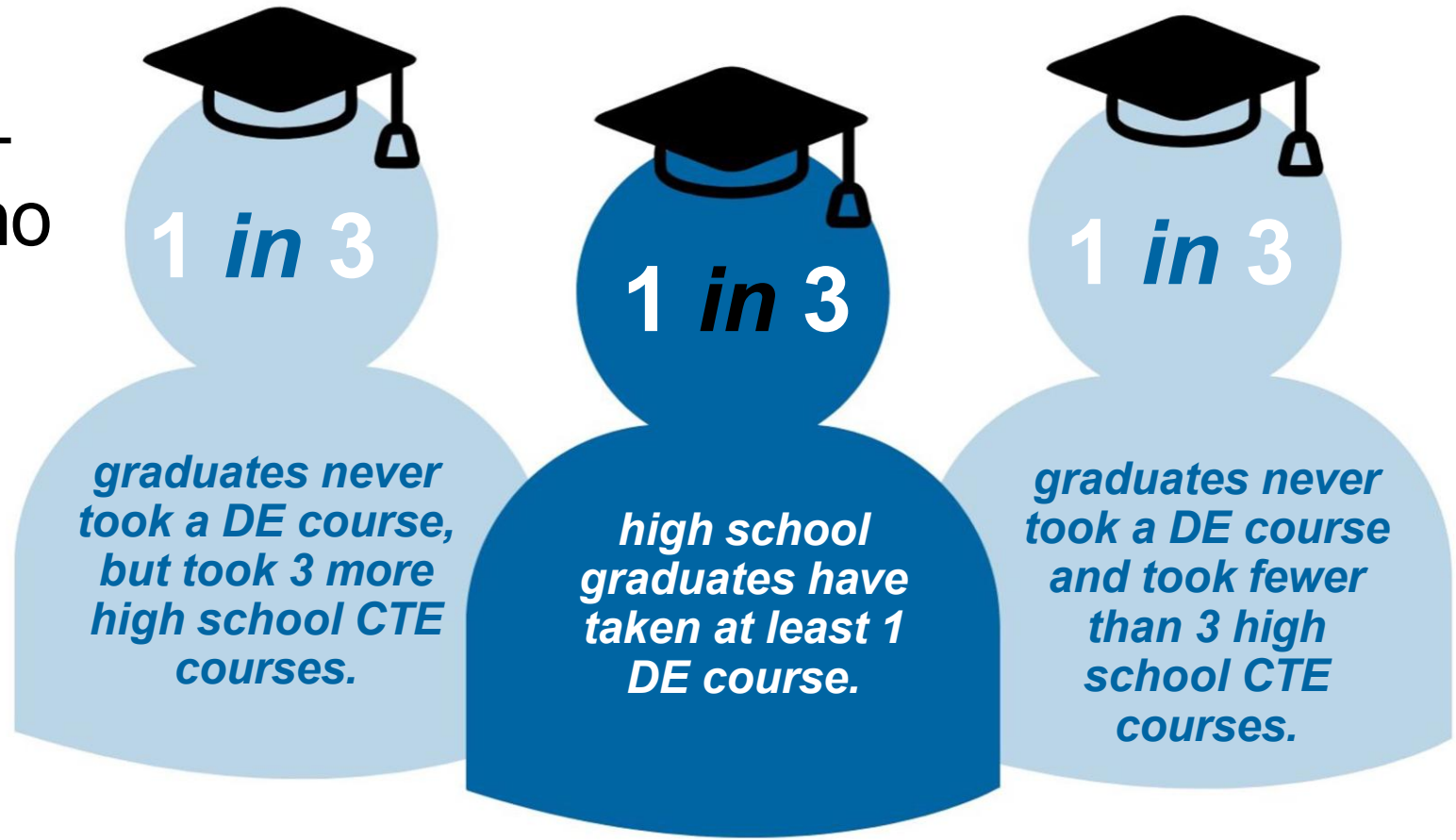
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Nationally, nearly a third of high school graduates have taken dual enrollment

Another third earned 3+ credits in HS CTE with no dual enrollment

**How can dual enrollment serve as an on-ramp to college and career opportunity for high school CTE students?**



Source: CCRC analysis of NAEP-NSTS data of 2019 high school graduates

# **Three Strategies for Scaling Career-Connected Dual Enrollment**

**Report Forthcoming October 2026**

# Our research explored how sites are scaling career-connected dual enrollment.

*Career-connected dual enrollment: the integration of dual enrollment coursework into existing high school career programs*

**We conducted interviews with 135 dual enrollment and CTE practitioners.**

## RESEARCH SITES

1. Amarillo College (TX)
2. C.E. King High School (TX)
3. Centinela Valley Union High School District (CA)
4. Eastern Iowa Community College (IA)
5. High School District 214 (IL)
6. Kilgore College (TX)
7. Kirkwood Community College (IA)
8. Oakland Unified School District (CA)
9. Odessa College (TX)
10. Patrick and Henry Community College (VA)
11. Texarkana College (TX)
12. Tri-County Technical College (SC)

# Schools and colleges are using their existing educational structures to scale career-connected dual enrollment.

1

## High School CTE Pathways

Build CTE dual enrollment courses into traditional high school CTE pathways

2

## High School Career Academies

2a

### Theme-Based Academies

Build relevant dual enrollment coursework into high school career academies aligned to broader career-related themes

2b

### Career-Field Academies

Build CTE and technical foundational dual enrollment courses into high school career academies aligned to career fields

3

## College CTE Programs for High School Students

Offer community college-led, postsecondary CTE programs to high school students

# Thank you!

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latest research findings*  
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