

**Credit-Based Transition Programs: Strategies to Improve Postsecondary Access and Success**



Office of Vocational and Adult Education  
October 2004





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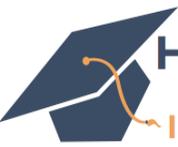
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**THE High School Initiative**  
PREPARING AMERICA'S FUTURE  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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**Economic Drivers for High School Transformation & Challenges in Today's High Schools**

- Changing skills needed in the U.S. workforce
- Fastest growing jobs require some education beyond high school
- Many high schools have not changed at the core
- Extensive college remediation
- Disconnect between student aspirations and high school preparation – CTE, academic, career, and postsecondary planning




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## Losing Our Edge?

### Students Enrolled in Postsecondary (in thousands)

	1990	2000	% Change
U.S.	13.7	15.7	+15%
China	3.8	13.6	+258%
India	4.9	9.4	+92%

UNESCO, 2003

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## Remediation at Colleges/Universities

- Any remedial reading 10.2%
- No remedial reading, but more than 2 other remedial courses 18.7%
- No remedial reading, but 1 or 2 other remedial courses 20.4%
- Total, some remedial 49.3%

Answers in the Tool Box by Clifford Adelman, June 1999

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## U.S. Population Projections

- The **white, non-Hispanic** population, is projected to decrease, comprising just **50.1 percent** of the total population in 2050, compared with 69.4 percent in 2000.
- Individuals of **Hispanic** origin are projected to grow from 35.6 million to 102.6 million. Their share of the nation's population would nearly double from 12.5 percent to **24.4 percent**.
- The **African-American** population is projected to grow from 35.8 million to 61.4 million, increasing their share of the country's population from 12.7 percent to **14.6 percent**.

U.S. Census Bureau News, U.S. Department of Commerce, March 18, 2004

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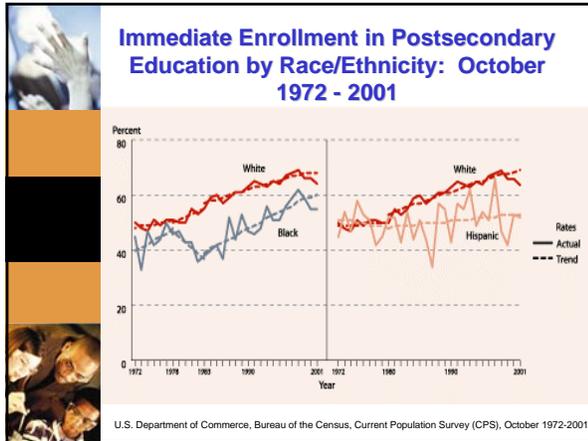
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**The Shared Vision for High School Transformation**

“Every American youth will complete high school with the academic knowledge and skills needed to make a successful transition to postsecondary education or training without needing remediation.”

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**Preparing America’s Future High School Initiative (PAF:HSI)**

The three goals are to:

1. Equip state and local education leaders with current knowledge
2. Develop the expertise and structures within the Department of Education to provide effective technical assistance
3. Facilitate a national dialogue

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## Preparing America's Future Key Principles

- High expectations for all
- Innovative learning structures that fully engage students
- High-quality teaching and leadership, and
- Accelerated transitions to work or additional education.

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PREPARING AMERICA'S FUTURE  
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[www.ed.gov/highschool](http://www.ed.gov/highschool)

Send questions and and comments  
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[HighSchools@ed.gov](mailto:HighSchools@ed.gov)




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## Accelerating Student Success Initiative




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**Questions . . . . .**

- How many students participate?
- What constitutes a high quality transition program?
- How do these programs function/operate?
- What are the long-term postsecondary outcomes?
- How can programs serve at-risk populations?  
Which types of programs are better suited for mid- to low-achieving students?

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**Accelerating Student Success Initiative**

- Literature review
- Two national surveys conducted by NCES
  - ✓ High school level
  - ✓ Postsecondary level
- Accelerating Student Success Project
  - ✓ Focus groups and interviews
  - ✓ Case studies
  - ✓ Policy analysis

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**Dual Enrollment Programs and College Courses for High School Students (Postsecondary Survey)**

- Prevalence of dual enrollment programs
- Enrollment in dual enrollment programs
- Characteristics of dual enrollment programs
  - Location of program
  - Type of instructor
  - Type of curriculum
  - Academic eligibility requirements
- Dual enrollment programs for at-risk students
  - Prevalence
  - Program focus
  - Enrollment patterns
  - Support services

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### Dual Credit and Exam-Based Courses (High School Survey)

- Exam-based course offering and courses for dual credit
  - Prevalence
  - Enrollment
- Location & educational focus of courses for dual credit
  - Location
  - Educational focus
- Characteristics of courses for dual credit
  - Course structure
  - Core instructors
  - Student composition
  - Awarding of postsecondary credit
- State policy and legislation
- School requirements

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### Accelerating Student Success Project



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## Credit-Based Transition Programs: Strategies to Improve Postsecondary Access and Success for Middle- and Low-Achieving Students

Thomas Bailey, Katherine Hughes & Melinda Mechur Karp  
Community College Research Center  
Teachers College, Columbia University

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## Community College Research Center

- Established in 1996 by the Sloan Foundation
- Conducts research on many topics
- [www.tc.edu/ccrc](http://www.tc.edu/ccrc)

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## Overview

- What are credit-based transition programs?
- Why is there increased interest in these programs?
- What is the *Accelerating Student Success* Project?
  - What did we learn during our focus groups with practitioners?
  - How do state policies address dual enrollment?
  - What issues are emerging from our case study research?

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## Credit-Based Transition Programs

- Allow high school students to earn college credit while still in high school
- Include:
  - Dual enrollment/Dual credit
  - Tech Prep
  - Middle College High School/Early College High School
  - Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate
- Many programs were traditionally targeted toward high-achieving college bound students
- Growing strategy for middle- and lower-performing youth

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## Categorization

- Programs can be categorized by their intensity and purpose:
  - Singleton
  - Comprehensive
  - Enhanced comprehensive
- Categorization is dependent upon individual program characteristics

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## Participation

- Numbers are not precise
- 7,400 high schools currently offer at least one Tech Prep program
- Middle college high schools are currently receiving significant funding to expand
- Dual enrollment legislation exists in 38 states
- Over 13,000 students in New York City (2002-2003)
- 14,000 students in Washington's Running Start Program (2002-3003)
- Over 20,000 in Illinois (2001-2002)—4,000 (97-98)

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## Focus on Broad Group of Students

- Policy and reform interest is not directed primarily at traditionally “college bound” students
- Federal government, many states, and certainly the foundations are interested in transition programs as reforms for low-income and lower and middle achieving students

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## What accounts for this growth in interest and activity?

- Growing importance of postsecondary education
- Problems with access to college and retention and completion in college
  - Especially for low-income students
- Fiscal pressures
- CBTP offers possible solutions

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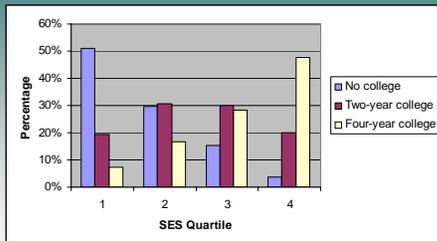
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## Educational Access and SES Experience by 2000 for HS Class of 1992



Source: NELS

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## Financial Pressures

- If CBTPs are more effective in preparing HS students, then no need to “pay twice”
- Many students complete most HS requirements by the senior year—“senioritis”
- If students simultaneously earn HS and college credit, *someone* saves money—student, parents, or taxpayers

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## Evidence of Program Impact

- Need more outcomes research on credit-based transition programs
- Evidence suggests that enhanced comprehensive programs are more likely to succeed, especially with low-income or lower-achieving students
- Difficult methodological problems
- See *Promoting College Access & Success* (Bailey & Karp, 2001)

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## Accelerating Student Success Project

- Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education
- Exploring program features that might contribute to the successful secondary-to-postsecondary transition of lower- to middle-achieving students
- Three parts
  - Case Studies (5 diverse sites)
  - Focus Groups
  - State Policy Report

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## Focus Groups

- Practitioners were asked about:
  - The characteristics of high-quality programs
  - How programs can support the transition of middle- and low-achieving students
  - Data collection for outcomes measurement

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## Characteristics of High-Quality Programs

- Outstanding faculty, and professional development for faculty
- A strong curriculum
- An emphasis on non-academic factors
- Communication between the high school and the college
- Thorough dissemination of information about the program to students and parents

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## How Programs Can Support the Transition of Middle- and Low-Achieving Students

- A sequential, developmental curriculum
- Individualized attention
- The provision of general information about college

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## Data Collection for Outcomes Measurement

- Participants understand the need for data collection but lack capacity
- Short-term program completion data are usually collected
- However, college enrollment and persistence not tracked

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## What are the implications of state policy for programs and practices?

- Dual enrollment policies for all 50 states collected and analyzed
- Analysis limited to dual enrollment policy; did not include AP, IB, Tech Prep
- Defined policy as legislative statutes, executive orders, or regulations from state government education entities

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## Credit-Based Transition Programs Vary along a Range of Features

- Target population
- Admissions requirements
- Location
- Student mix
- Instructors
- Course content
- Method of credit earning
- Program intensity
- Funding
- Mandatory or optional nature of the policy

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- 39 states have policies addressing dual enrollment
- Most common aspects addressed are funding and student admissions
- Least common aspects addressed are those of program structure, such as location, program intensity or model, or course content

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## Funding

- Multiple aspects
  - Tuition, fees, and books
  - ADA
  - FTE
- Funding arrangements vary widely, with implications for institutions and individuals

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## Admissions

- Over half of the states address admissions requirements
  - Of these, 10 explicitly leave admissions criteria up to the institutions
- Tension between broad access and limiting college courses to those who are ready

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## Credit Earning—An Emerging Issue

- Dual Credit or Not?
- Credit Earning
  - Articulated credit or credit-in-escrow
  - Students may have to enroll in a specific postsecondary institution and/or declare a specific major to access their credit
  - This is often unclear to students and parents
- Credit Transfer
  - As with any credit, credit earned through a CBTP may not be applicable to a degree program at institutions other than where it was earned

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## Outcomes Measurement—An Emerging Issue

- What is an appropriate outcome?
- Lack of data coordination between secondary and postsecondary sectors
- Lack of resources for data collection

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