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CREATING **STRATEGIES** FOR **EDUCATIONAL** AND **ECONOMIC** OPPORTUNITY

Early College Designs:
Pathways for Achieving College and Career Readiness for All Students

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JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

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Today's Objectives

- Explain early college designs.
- Share latest research on early college high schools and dual enrollment.
- Identify enabling policies that states can adopt to sustain and expand investments in early college designs.

Too many students graduate unprepared for college-level work

- **50 percent** of students seeking an Associate's degree require remediation. Meanwhile, nearly **21 percent** seeking a Bachelor's degree require remediation.

- The graduation rate at community colleges for non-remedial students is **14 percent,** compared to **9.5 percent** for students needing remediation .

- The graduation rate for all students pursuing a B.A. is **56 percent**, but only **35 percent** for students requiring remediation.

What are Early College Designs?

Why Early College Designs?

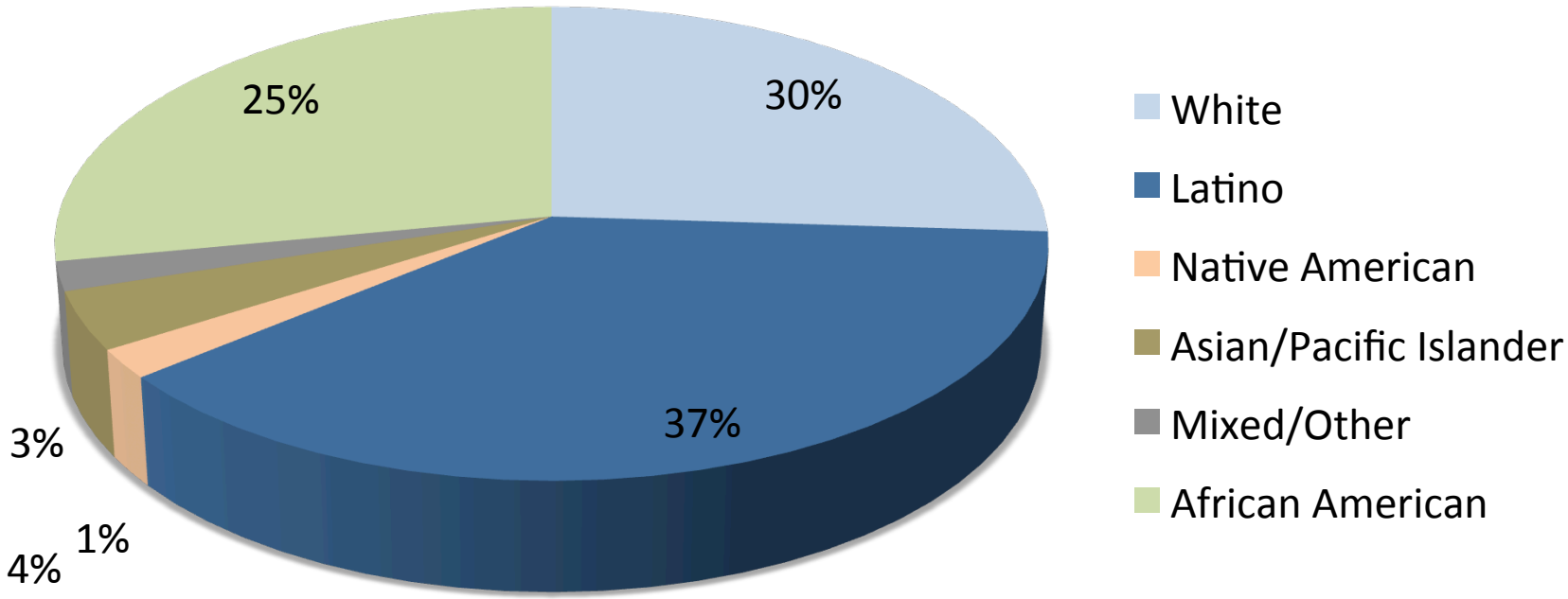
- **For Students**: Free college courses with support motivates students to accelerate: completed college coursework is a strong signal of college readiness; already college students by high school graduation.

- **For Schools, Districts, and Postsecondary Institutions:** Alignment of high school college- and career-ready standards with college courses; students enter college without need for remediation.

- **For States:** Return on the investment in lower cost to degree completion, more college graduates.

Our Aim: Move from small early college schools to district early college designs. All students supported to achieve at least 12 college credits by the end of high school (including college math and composition).

Targeted Student Population



Early College Results

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National Findings from the Student Information System:

- On average, early college graduates earn more than **20 college credits.**
- **39 percent** of graduates at early college schools open for four or more years earned more than one year of transferable college credits while in early college.
- **25 percent** of graduates at early college schools open for four or more years earned two years of college credit or an Associate's degree.
- **86 percent** of early college graduates in 2009 went on to some form of postsecondary education in the fall of that year.

Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Research Findings (NC & TX)

- Early college students are enrolling and progressing in key college preparatory classes at a **higher rate** compared to control group students.
- The ECHS design is **closing the achievement gap** for students of color.
- Early college students **outperformed their peers** in comparison schools.

Areas for Policy Leverage:

1. Ensure that state funding for dual enrollment is sustainable and targeted to low-income students.

2. Eliminate barriers to college course-taking opportunities in high school.

3. Create a mechanism to ensure course quality and credit transferability.

4. Develop cachet for early college designs so that public stakeholders understand how the model builds on dual enrollment to create pathways to college readiness and success for low-income, minority and first generation college goers.

Sustainable Funding

JFF Principles for Financing Early College Designs

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Shared Responsibility:

- Secondary and postsecondary institutions are held harmless for jointly creating grades 9-14 pathways.

Eliminating Financial Barriers:

- Funding mechanisms are based on the principle of no cost to students.

Flexible Funding:

- Permit flexible use of per-pupil enrollment funding and special purpose program allocations.

Startup Funding:

- Utilize funding from complementary college readiness, access and success programs to support start-up and ongoing dual enrollment costs or to subsidize tuition.

Eliminate Barriers to College Course-Taking Opportunities in High School

JFF Principles for Ensuring Equitable Access

- Establish eligibility policies that permit students to take college-level courses in individual subject areas for which they are fully prepared.
- Utilize multiple indicators to assess college readiness.
- Consider non-cognitive dimensions of college readiness.

Ensure Course Quality and Credit Transferability

JFF Principles for Ensuring Quality and Credit Transferability

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Quality Controls:

- Ensure dual enrollment course content, student assessments, and instructor qualifications meet college standards.

Transfer Rules:

- Clear, formal, statewide articulation agreements must ensure that students can transfer their college courses easily to a four-year postsecondary institution and shorten their time to a Bachelor's degree.

Design Integrity:

- Ensure early college designs are implemented with fidelity to critical design features that are required to ensure *all* students are ready for college-level coursework by the 11th grade.

Building Public Will & Buy-In

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- **Framing & Messaging** Early College Designs
- **Aligning** with High Profile Strategies
- **Identifying** Potential Champions
- **Engaging** Key Partners

RESOURCES

- A Policymaker's Guide to Early College Designs: Expanding a Strategy for Achieving College Readiness for All http://www.jff.org/publications/education/college-success-all-how-hidalgo-independ/1144

FOR MORE INFORMATION on early college designs, contact:

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