

A photograph of three women in a professional setting. One woman is seated at a desk with a laptop, smiling. Two other women are standing behind her, looking at the laptop screen. The image is overlaid with a green and blue geometric design.

BUILDING A CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT TEACHER PIPELINE: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES, & LESSONS

MARCH 2022



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All photos courtesy of Allison Shelley/The Verbatim Agency for American Education:
Images of Teachers and Students in Action.

INTRODUCTION

This report is intended for multiple audiences:

- State policy leaders, and representatives of national, regional and state organizations—including representatives of regional postsecondary accrediting bodies—interested in broadening equitable student access to concurrent enrollment coursework, and addressing the teacher pipeline challenges inextricably linked with expanding concurrent enrollment course access.
- Postsecondary institution leaders who want to explore ways they can increase the availability of concurrent enrollment coursework, including by growing the number of high school teachers credentialed to teach such courses.
- Secondary and postsecondary concurrent enrollment program staff who wish to advocate for state and institutional policy enhancements to strengthen equitable access to concurrent enrollment course offerings.

The goal of this report is to inform audiences on:

- Current growth and inequities in concurrent enrollment participation
- Ways in which existing teacher credentialing requirements are creating—or exacerbating—inequities in student access to and participation in concurrent enrollment opportunities
- Complexities in retrofitting well-established teacher preparation and professional development systems to address new concurrent enrollment teacher credentialing requirements
- Strategies, common themes, and lessons learned from a variety of state and local approaches to address the shortage of credentialed concurrent enrollment teachers

Terminology Used in this Report

For purposes of this report, “concurrent enrollment” refers to college courses taught by high school teachers approved by the partnering postsecondary institution. Courses may be academic or have a career technical focus. “Dual enrollment” is used in this report as an umbrella term for college courses delivered to high school students, regardless of course location, format or instructor type.

Thanks to the following individuals who generously shared their time and expertise to inform this report

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In addition to the named individuals above, this paper was informed by four meetings of a Dual Enrollment Teacher Pipeline Working Group convened April-July 2021 by the College in High School Alliance (CHSA), the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), and the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC). The working group was comprised of over 160 participants from secondary, postsecondary, state agencies, think tanks, advocacy organizations, and accreditors.



Why Do We Care About the Concurrent Enrollment Teacher Pipeline, and Why Now?

In recent years a series of clarifications and changes to concurrent enrollment teacher credentialing requirements, converging with an increased focus on concurrent enrollment by policy and practice leaders, has generated significant state and local interest in increasing the number of high school teachers credentialed to teach concurrent enrollment courses.

These interrelated circumstances include:

- **Rapidly growing enrollment in college courses taught by high school instructors.** National and state-level data point to significant growth in the number of high school students participating in college courses. For example, federal data published in 2019 found that 34% of U.S. high school students complete college courses through dual and concurrent enrollment programs.¹ Of that total, 80% of students participating in dual enrollment take these courses at their own school. This represents a significant increase from federal data from the 2010-11 school year, indicating that 10% of high school students were completing college courses at any location.²

State-level data bear out these national trends. The percentage of Colorado high school graduates completing at least one college course while in high school nearly doubled in seven years, from 21.2% in 2012 to 39.5% in 2019.³ From 2018-19 to 2019-20 alone, community colleges witnessed a 17% increase in unduplicated student count, with the majority of these courses taught by approved high school teachers.⁴ Recent changes to some states' dual and concurrent enrollment funding models have been key drivers for increases in program participation. In Idaho, where the percentage of high school graduates completing one or more dual credit courses rose from 41% to 58% from 2016 to 2020, an estimated minimum share of dual credit courses taught by high school instructors ranged from 75-85% during the same four-year period.⁵ In perhaps the nation's most striking example, Georgia witnessed a 256% jump in dual enrollment participation rates from 2012-13 to 2017-18, after 2015 legislation overhauled the state's dual enrollment funding model.⁶

- **A growing movement to address inequities in dual and concurrent enrollment participation.** National reports, including by the Community College Research Center,⁷ the General Accounting Office (GAO)⁸ and the National Center for Education Statistics⁹ are raising awareness about inequities in student access to and participation in dual and concurrent enrollment offerings by student race/ethnicity, gender, student family income, high school size, and high school location (urban, suburban, rural). These inequities are particularly concerning given the preponderance of data showing that all other factors being equal, dually enrolled students are more likely than their peers with similar academic, socioeconomic, and demographic backgrounds to matriculate in postsecondary and experience greater measures of postsecondary success, including degree completion.
- **Accountability mechanisms incenting schools to enroll more students in dual and concurrent enrollment.** Thirty-seven states' accountability systems under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act incent schools and districts to increase high school students' participation in college coursework.¹⁰ Given federal data indicating that the vast majority of college courses completed by high school students are delivered at the student's high school,¹¹ high schools and districts experiencing a shortage of high school teachers credentialed to teach college courses could see their accountability standings negatively impacted.
- **Parent & student demand.** Growing parent and student demand for better college and career preparation through advanced course options is placing greater pressures on secondary partners to offer dual and concurrent enrollment courses.



Who Sets the Bar, and How Changes to the Bar Create Challenges

As a subset of dual enrollment, concurrent enrollment is set apart by several defining characteristics. Concurrent enrollment connects secondary and postsecondary institutions to offer early access to college courses within the school building during the school day, delivered by a high school teacher approved by the postsecondary institution. One of the most valuable and least discussed benefits of concurrent enrollment is that it creates a system that connects secondary and postsecondary educators and administrators to collaborate on their approaches to teaching and learning and formally align curriculum.

Concurrent enrollment teachers are at the absolute center of this work. As an employee of the district, the teacher has already met the criteria to teach the high school class. However, when the course confers college credit through concurrent enrollment, the teacher also becomes an instructor of record for the college, and as such, must also meet the partnering institution's education and experience criteria for adjunct faculty to deliver the college course.

Who Sets the Bar?

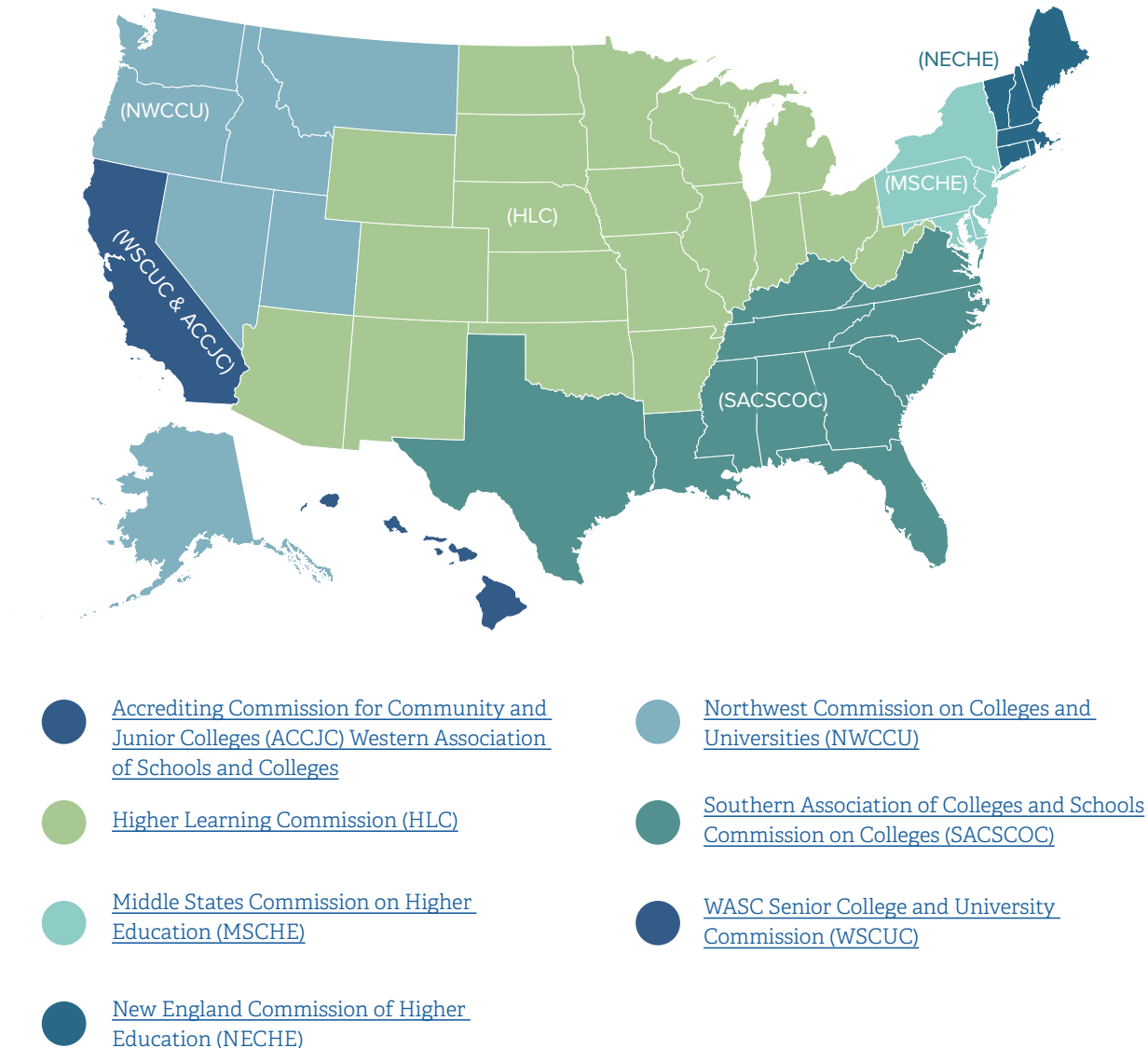
[Regional accreditors](#) accredit public and private, nonprofit degree-granting two- and four-year institutions.¹²

Accreditation is important for colleges and universities as it not only messages that the institution has demonstrated that its academic programming adheres to standards of quality, but is a prerequisite for students to be eligible for federal financial aid, for students' credits to be considered for transfer, for students to sit for industry certification and professional licensure exams, and for employers to recognize graduates' credentials. To become accredited or to maintain their accreditation, public and private postsecondary institutions must periodically undergo a successful review by their regional accreditor, during which the institution demonstrates its compliance with accreditor-set standards, policies, and practices.

Each regional accreditor's standards, policies, and practices address faculty qualifications. While some concurrent enrollment stakeholders may perceive that state or local policies determine the qualifications that high school teachers must meet in order to teach college courses, in practice, in the vast majority of states, regional accreditors establish these requirements as part of the faculty accreditation standards. Thus the bar is set for all faculty, including concurrent enrollment instructors, by regional accreditors.



The map below identifies each regional accreditor and the jurisdictions historically under its purview.



Regional accreditors' faculty standards vary (see the Appendix A for the full text of regional accreditors' faculty qualifications). Most regional accreditors' standards do not call out explicit education and experience requirements for faculty or high school teachers teaching college courses through concurrent enrollment. However, two do—the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The combined jurisdictions of HLC and SACSCOC cover postsecondary institutions in three-fifths of states nationally, and their policies impact many thousands of concurrent enrollment students and programs. Both SACSCOC and HLC have adopted policies specifying the criteria institutions must apply to qualify high school teachers as concurrent enrollment instructors. These requirements represent an evolution from criteria institutionally-derived, to more prescriptive language.

Prior language used by both accreditors was more deferential to institutionally-derived faculty qualifications. Appendix B shows the timing and progression of language over the past several years that has moved from statements like “justify and document instructors' credentials”, “shall generally”, “relevant degree...one level above...”, and “typically hold a master's degree” to stronger language requiring that concurrent enrollment instructors hold qualifications equivalent to all faculty and, in HLC's case, concurrent enrollment instructors have completed either 18 graduate credits in the discipline or a master's in the discipline. The shift from language that deferred to institutions' instructor standards to language with higher levels of specificity impacted many states' community colleges as well as their concurrent enrollment programs.

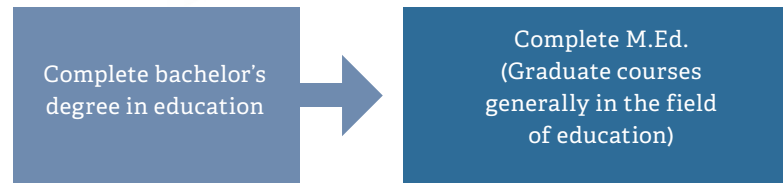
In short, the shift from institutionally-determined to accreditor-determined faculty qualifications has caused significant issues in a number of HLC states that had been utilizing instructors that had previously met long-standing, institution-based requirements.

How Changes to the Bar Create Challenges

Changes by regional accreditors to instructor qualification standards can have unintended, disproportionate effects upon concurrent enrollment programs and instructors. This is largely because the preparation and professional development paths typically followed by high school teachers and adjunct instructors are dissimilar. One group spends its time in the school of education, while the other studies in the schools and departments of its chosen content area. This results in very few individuals possessing the training and credentials necessary to qualify them to teach in both settings. These differing paths mean that changes that seem straightforward when applied to adjunct faculty are highly disruptive to the potential concurrent enrollment teaching pool.

By and large, states require teachers to complete additional continuing education credits—or a master's degree—within a certain number of years of initial certification to maintain their license or move to the next level in the profession. Some states offer salary incentives for teachers to earn a master's degree. Teachers often choose advanced degrees in education because such programs offer the flexibility needed for working professionals. Changes to faculty qualifications by regional accreditors are disruptive because they add new and different requirements that are outside of the typical career path of a high school educator, and these requirements are being overlaid upon an established and well-understood professional development system.

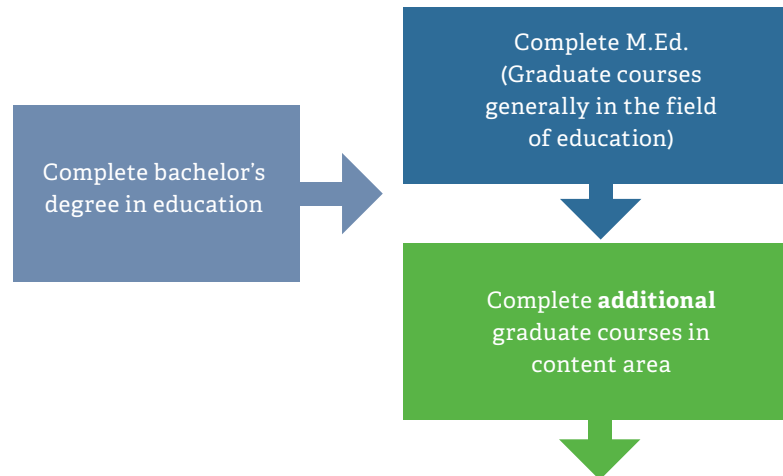
Traditional High School Teacher Pathway



Most high school teachers:

- Earn bachelor's degree in education, not in a content area;
- Seek and earn a master's degree in an education field, not in a discipline;
- Complete their M.Ed. in flexible, part-time programs designed for working professionals

Typical Experience of an Aspiring Concurrent Enrollment Teacher

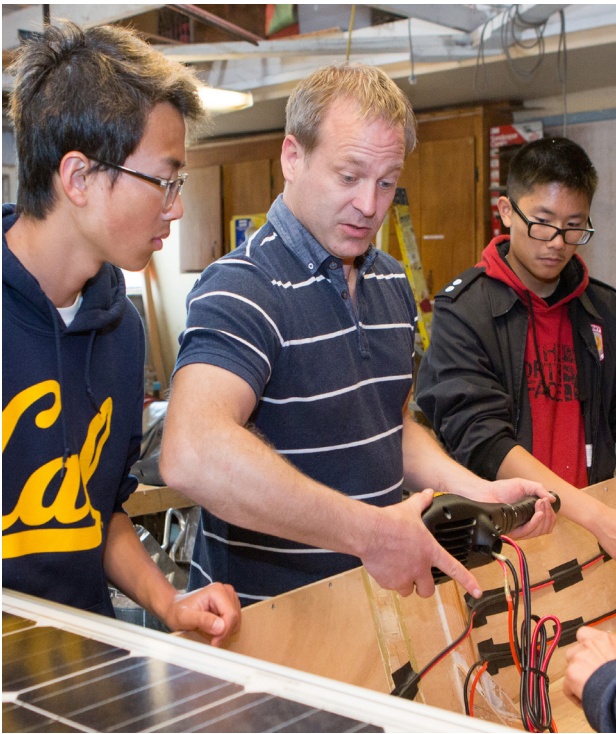


Most aspiring concurrent enrollment teachers:

- Learn about the need for content-specific courses **after** they have already completed their M.Ed. and have to earn additional graduate credits
- Have to search on their own for options and determine if the partner college will accept the courses as meeting the qualifications
- Have a hard time finding programs offered in a flexible, part-time programs designed for working professionals

The completion of additional graduate credits relies on several conditions:

- courses are available in the area or online
- courses are open to part-time, non-degree seeking students and flexible enough for working professionals
- courses are affordable
- course content has educational value to the teacher and their students
- completing the courses has a clear economic and professional value to the teacher
- courses are accepted by the partner college to meet their criteria



What about Career Technical Education (CTE) Teachers?



A traditional CTE teacher preparation path is similar to that of non-CTE teachers, yet differs in several important ways that ultimately impact a college's ability to approve the teacher to deliver a college course in a high school classroom. While many states offer alternative licensure pathways for mid-career professionals to become CTE educators, the traditional CTE teacher preparation path often starts in an undergraduate secondary teacher preparation program. These programs provide the general secondary education content needed for licensure and incorporate additional courses to help the candidate gain specific skills or state-required industry certifications for the CTE field they intend to teach.

Regional accreditors' guidance for determining qualified faculty for college-level certificate and occupational degree programs acknowledges the

unique blend of skills, education, and experience needed to instruct in college technical programs (see appendix A). Because of this flexibility, challenges in credentialing CTE teachers may not originate from regional accreditors, but may lie with state or institution-level requirements. Education, professional experience, and recency of skills are all attributes evaluated by technical colleges in hiring CTE instructional staff.

When they enter teaching, a CTE teacher may not have had extensive coursework in a career area or had the opportunity to build skills directly through professional experience or industry certifications. Additionally, if the teacher has been teaching in the high school classroom for a number of years they may not have had recent industry-level experience.

Common Elements Used for Evaluating CTE Teachers for Concurrent Enrollment

Education

Depth of undergraduate or graduate coursework in the field

Experience

Number of years of professional work experience in the industry and the recency of the experience

Skills

Mastery of specific, industry-relevant skills that are in demand

Certifications

Possession of a credentials or certifications valued in the industry



Flexibility for CTE Concurrent Enrollment Teachers Offers Options and Challenges

The path to becoming a CTE concurrent enrollment instructor includes a variety of possible ways to meet accreditor, state, or institutional requirements. Despite the options and flexibility, credentialing challenges persist for CTE teachers looking to teach college courses in their classrooms.

Option	Challenge	Opportunities
Education: A college may look at the depth of undergraduate or graduate coursework in the field.	Courses vary by undergraduate program and graduate courses may not be available in CTE fields because advanced coursework is not typical for the industry.	Colleges may offer courses, boot camps, and other educational experiences for teachers to increase their content knowledge in in-demand fields.
Experience: A college may look at the number of years of professional work experience in the industry. Further, some prioritize the recency of the work experience.	Colleges are often looking for actual hours of employment experience and may not consider years of teaching in a CTE area as professional work experience.	Colleges, school districts, and business and industry partners can work to build summer teacher externships, industry job shadow opportunities, and other work experiences to increase teachers work experience and the recency of their experience.
Skills: A college may look for candidates to demonstrate mastery of specific, industry-relevant, in-demand skills.	Specific skills valued by business and industry stakeholders can vary regionally and over time.	Colleges, school districts, and business and industry stakeholders can partner to create summer or evening workshops targeted at building skills and connections between the high school, the college, and business and industry.
Certifications: A college may look at credentials or certifications held by a teacher that are valued in the industry.	Teachers may lack access to certification opportunities, may find the costs prohibitive, or may not know which have value to a partner college as well as local business and industry.	Colleges, school districts, and business and industry partners can collaborate to offer teachers the opportunity to earn certifications valued by the private sector.

State and Local Responses

The field is experiencing challenges presented by the simultaneous demand for more concurrent enrollment course offerings, and the disconnect between standard teacher licensure requirements and concurrent enrollment teacher credentialing requirements. State and institution-level concurrent enrollment stakeholders have taken a variety of approaches to address these challenges. Approaches generally fall into three categories: **Incentives, Systems Change, and Initiative Alignment**. These strategies, often overlapping and not mutually exclusive, must be centered in equity. Focusing concurrent enrollment teacher pipeline strategies on equity increases the likelihood that programs increase concurrent enrollment access, participation, and success among students who are currently underrepresented.

CENTERED IN EQUITY

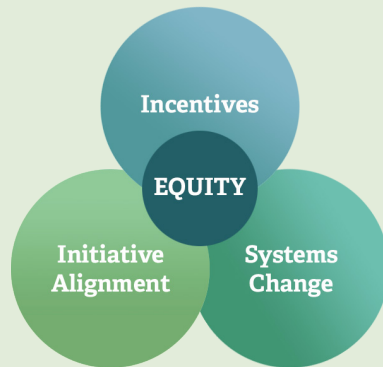
Numerous studies have shown that all students, but particularly students of color, benefit from teachers with diverse backgrounds. In 2017-2018, 79% of public school teachers [were white](#),¹³ while 53.1% of the fall 2018 public school enrollment was composed of [students of color](#),¹⁴ according to the U.S. Department of Education's most recent data. The lack of racial diversity among America's teachers creates conditions that disproportionately impact students of color. Urban, rural, under-resourced, and high-poverty school districts also have significant, well-documented challenges in attracting and retaining teachers, creating additional obstacles to building equitable access to a quality education.¹⁵

[Research has consistently shown](#) that participation in dual and concurrent enrollment has a powerful positive impact on students' college transition and persistence. This is particularly true for students typically underrepresented in higher education: first generation students,

students of color, and students from low-income families. In order to truly leverage the power and potential of dual and concurrent enrollment to improve postsecondary outcomes for students underrepresented in higher education, we need strategies to improve the concurrent enrollment teacher pipeline, and those strategies must be centered in equity. State and local decisions on concurrent enrollment teacher credentialing strategy and implementation should consistently be informed by the question, "What positive or negative impact will this approach have on concurrent enrollment equity?"

For these purposes, "equity" should be considered in terms of differences in concurrent enrollment access, participation, and success by geographic

region of the state, school location (urban, rural, suburban), and school student population (e.g., high schools serving a high percentage of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch, students of color, students with disabilities, or first-generation students).



Core strategies to address concurrent enrollment teacher shortages include:

Incentives

- Provide financial support and incentives for high school teachers and postsecondary institutions
- Redesign teacher contracts and incentives

Systems Change

- Streamline secondary certification and concurrent enrollment credentialing
- Redesign education master's degree programs

Initiative Alignment

- Align with other teacher pipeline activities
- Align career and workforce preparation initiatives to better serve CTE teachers

State context plays a large role in the approach utilized. Despite the wide variation in program strategy, several thoroughgoing themes emerged from the working groups, researchers, and content experts engaged to inform this paper. The best approach to increasing the number and diversity of concurrent enrollment teachers includes essential components that keep teachers' needs at the center.

Essential components of approaches to credential concurrent enrollment teachers:

- **Low or no cost:** Reduce or eliminate the cost for teachers to retrofit their education to suit this unique segment of the education field. Cost minimization or elimination will remain important until the systems that prepare teachers (teacher preparation programs) and those that advance teachers (master's programs) are better aligned with the evolving needs of the field. It is important to recognize the time these courses take to complete and how unique the requirement is within the typical trajectory of a teacher's professional development.
- **Offer high-value content:** Courses and technical training opportunities need to be applicable and add value to their work. They should help teachers advance their knowledge and skills in the content area in a way that translates to better outcomes for their students.
- **Work with their schedule:** Teachers have a day job. Flexible options that ensure courses accommodate day-to-day classroom obligations need to be a priority.
- **Be easy to find and easy to choose:** Teachers need continuing education options that are easy to locate, preferably in a one-stop shop. They also need course selection to be straightforward so that the course(s) and technical trainings actually meet the credentialing criteria.
- **Advance their career:** Teachers need approaches that help ensure their work is reflected and rewarded in their career path. This may include incentives and streamlining of certifications, endorsements, and licensure requirements.

INCENTIVES

Provide financial support and incentives for high school teachers and institutions

Providing financial supports and incentives for secondary teachers to complete graduate credits is the most widely-adopted state strategy to increase the number of high school teachers credentialed to teach college courses. Examples of such financial supports and incentives include offering:

- Reduced-tuition or tuition-free courses
- Scholarships or loan forgiveness upon completion of graduate courses
- Free or reduced-cost textbooks and other course materials
- Teacher stipends upon completion of a graduate course, or a sequence of graduate courses qualifying a teacher to teach concurrent enrollment courses
- Funding to four-year institutions to develop and offer a greater number of discipline-specific graduate courses

Minnesota and Indiana are among the states with the most ambitious state-level efforts nationally to expand the ranks of high school teachers credentialed to teach college courses.

Minnesota's Pathway to 18

[Pathway to 18](#) provides information on graduate courses offered by seven universities statewide in nearly 20 disciplines, as well as financial support available to defray tuition costs.¹⁶ Pathway to 18 participants cover some tuition as well as all other course participation costs (e.g., textbooks, other course materials, fees).

Teachers can filter Pathway to 18 courses by modality (online or other), discipline, and university. Pathway to 18 also helps teachers understand the processes and the number of graduate courses they need to be

credentialed in a specific discipline. Building or district leadership approval is required prior to enrollment in specific graduate courses, as well as verification that courses teachers seek enrollment in will fulfill minimum faculty qualifications for the teacher's discipline at the partnering postsecondary institution within Minnesota's 33 concurrent enrollment programs.

Indiana's STEM Teach & Teach Dual Credit Indiana

Indiana has taken multiple approaches to increase the number of high school teachers credentialed to teach college courses. [STEM Teach](#) and [Teach Dual Credit Indiana](#) are just two of several Indiana programs to credential high school instructors to teach concurrent enrollment courses.

STEM Teach

Established through 2013 legislation to meet STEM teacher pipeline needs generally, the [STEM Teacher Recruitment Fund](#) provides competitive grants from a biennial appropriation to recruit and prepare K-12 STEM teachers for underserved communities.¹⁷

Administered by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, the scope of the program's grantmaking was expanded in 2015 to provide awards to efforts aimed at increasing the number of high school teachers credentialed to teach dual credit courses in STEM disciplines. [STEM Teach](#) — a collaboration of the Independent Colleges of Indiana (ICI) and the University of Indianapolis' Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL) — offers graduate-level online or hybrid courses in STEM disciplines to licensed Indiana educators currently teaching statewide.¹⁸

Public school teachers enrolled in these courses are not charged for tuition, books, or fees. STEM Teach reimburses participating independent and public institutions for the cost of tuition and books/materials associated with offering graduate level courses to teachers for the purpose of becoming credentialed.

Teach Dual Credit Indiana

[Teach Dual Credit Indiana](#), also administered by CELL, is the liberal arts counterpart to STEM Teach, offering high school teachers access to tuition-free graduate-level courses in communications/speech, economics, English, history, political science/government, and world languages. As of August 2021, Teach Dual Credit Indiana is funded through a \$3 million grant to the Indiana Commission for Higher Education from [INvestEd](#), a statewide nonprofit.

In fall 2020, CELL invited public and independent institutions to submit proposals to deliver graduate courses via Teach Dual Credit Indiana starting in winter 2021. Eligible courses may be delivered fully online, hybrid or in-person. As with STEM Teach, participating teachers do not pay for textbooks or course materials.

Key Program Components

- **Take a state-level approach, distributing graduate course offerings across multiple institutions:** A statewide need calls for a statewide plan from the outset, rather than a localized approach spearheaded by a single four-year institution. What is more, graduate departments are typically not well-resourced. Even with an allocation of external funding, it's unlikely that any single institution will have the capacity to develop and deliver the volume of master's-level courses across numerous subject areas that teachers statewide will need to earn 18 graduate hours within a discipline.
- **Survey administrators and instructors on teacher needs and barriers:** Having a sense of the number of graduate credits in-service teachers need to be credentialed to teach concurrent enrollment courses will help make the case to four-year institutions that a commitment to developing and delivering 18-21 graduate credits will meet an existing demand, and will be worth their time and effort. Indiana and Minnesota both annually collect data on the graduate-level credit hours concurrent enrollment teachers currently have, and the subject areas they teach. Asking administrators and teachers about what stands in the way of teachers

completing the graduate credits they need to be concurrent enrollment-credentialed can also yield valuable insights that may inform graduate program design, scheduling of course offerings, and state policy.

- **Ensure adequate and reliable levels of external funding:** Funds are needed to help institutions cover the cost of developing new fully-online or hybrid graduate-level courses, and to defray or finance teachers' tuition and other course expenses. Such external funding could come from a state appropriation, as with Indiana's STEM Teach and Minnesota's Statewide Partnership for Concurrent Enrollment, or private funding, as is the case with Teach Dual Credit Indiana. External funding also needs to be ongoing and adequate to support the development of as many as 18 graduate credits in multiple disciplines, and teachers' enrollment in those courses over multiple academic terms.
- **Create a one-stop shop for teachers to find program information:** Having a centralized source for teachers to research program options and available course offerings is all the more important when multiple institutions are delivering courses in a single discipline. Indiana consolidates information on STEM and non-STEM course offerings at www.stemteachindiana.org and www.teachdualcredit.org, respectively; Minnesota's [Pathway to 18](#) website provides participation details across all disciplines and participating institutions.
- **Offer a variety of graduate courses in a discipline:** Offering multiple online (synchronous or asynchronous) graduate courses in a discipline through multiple institutions can allow teachers to select courses based both on interest as well as prior experience in a subject area.



Regional Approach to a One-Stop Shop:

The Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) has developed [Graduate Credit Quest \(GCQ\)](#) a **regional** one-stop shop for educators to locate information on graduate course options across the 12 MHEC states—Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.⁵⁷ GCQ invites and allows institutions to provide information on courses they have developed for high school teachers and provides a way for teachers to search for courses by content area, dates, modality, and more. The site also allows teachers to communicate directly with the concurrent enrollment coordinator at the postsecondary institution for which they teach. In addition to connecting institutions, teachers, and concurrent enrollment coordinators, the site provides information about dual and concurrent enrollment in each of the 12 MHEC states, news and research updates, and a blog in which institutions, teachers, and others in the concurrent enrollment community can share ideas about teacher credentialing and other relevant topics.

Also consider:

- Collaborating with secondary stakeholders on the front-end to develop a plan for delivering graduate coursework, potentially through a state-level steering committee or advisory board.
- Working with institutions to ensure the content of new (or existing) graduate courses are not too heavy on pedagogy to qualify as discipline-specific coursework.
- Ensuring the course number and prefixes utilized as well as course titles and descriptions signal discipline-specific courses.
- Creating a marketing strategy to get the word out to teachers, principals, and schools about program opportunities and costs.
- Establishing financial and non-financial incentives for teachers to complete graduate coursework. Financial incentives might include teacher stipends upon completion of each graduate-level course or upon completion of a concurrent enrollment teaching credential, or a salary increase upon becoming credentialed to teach concurrent enrollment. Non-financial incentives may include offering release time during the weekly schedule while taking graduate-level courses.





Begin with the Basics

Be aware that because most concurrent enrollment courses are offered through two-year colleges, master's degree-granting institutions will likely need background information to understand the value to students of concurrent enrollment coursework, and the need for high school teachers to complete graduate courses to be eligible to teach such courses; they may also need to be persuaded to develop discipline-specific graduate-level pathways, especially if existing graduate programs or courses have low enrollment rates. Efforts to enlist institutions to create discipline-specific graduate-level pathways will require buy-in and engagement from multiple institutional stakeholders who typically have little to no involvement with concurrent enrollment programs. These stakeholders include institutional leadership (presidents, provosts, college of education deans, discipline-specific deans) as well as admissions and registrar's office staff. To persuade institutions to create new discipline-specific graduate-level course offerings, concurrent enrollment stakeholders should be prepared to make the case for the benefit of concurrent enrollment to high school students, provide state-level data on teacher need and demand for graduate-level courses by discipline, and the value to the institution on creating new discipline-specific graduate-level courses.



Using Federal Funds: States, school districts, and institutions of higher education may also choose to use federal funding to augment these financial support and teacher incentive programs. The following federal funding sources may be considered: the [Every Student Succeeds Act](#), [Perkins V](#), and [COVID-19 relief funds](#).

Update teacher incentives and contracts

Teacher contracts and compensation approaches clearly message the credentials that will benefit educators in local hiring and salary decisions. States and districts may need to adjust their employment and salary incentives to signal to teachers the value of becoming credentialed to teach concurrent enrollment courses.

Examples of approaches to rethink teacher contracts and incentives include:

Incentivizing concurrent enrollment credentialing in teacher salary schedules. In many states, teachers advance up the salary ladder by earning graduate degrees in education and leadership, not by earning master's degrees in their discipline or becoming credentialed to teach CTE concurrent enrollment courses. Revising state and local compensation policies to reward teachers credentialed to teach college-level general education and CTE courses in the same manner as teachers completing master's degrees in education will pay dividends.

Some states have already done this. For example, Indiana statute authorizes districts to “provide a supplemental payment to a teacher in excess of the salary specified in the school corporation’s compensation plan” if the teacher “has earned a master’s degree from an accredited postsecondary educational institution in a content area directly related to the subject matter of” a dual credit course the instructor is teaching.¹⁹ A Maryland statute established by 2021 legislation (Chapter 36) directs local boards to “encourage teachers to obtain master’s degrees in fields that require special expertise, have shortage areas, and enhance the teacher’s professional skills and qualifications so that teachers are able to teach dual-enrollment courses as adjunct faculty at institutions of higher education including by providing additional compensation as appropriate and through collective bargaining.”²⁰

Encouraging local collective bargaining agreements to direct teachers toward becoming credentialed to teach concurrent enrollment coursework. Local collective bargaining agreements and teacher contracts can signal to teachers the value of becoming credentialed to teach concurrent enrollment courses; yet, by and large, local collective bargaining agreements steer teachers toward completing a master's in curriculum and instruction or an education specialty rather than a master's in a teacher's discipline. State chapters of national teachers' unions might invite local members to prioritize a graduate degree in the teacher's discipline in local collective bargaining agreements. In addition, local collective bargaining agreements might consider modifying K-12 teacher contracts to establish pay increases and step and lane schedules that reward teachers pursuing credentials to teach concurrent enrollment.

Spurring district HR departments to give extra weight in hiring considerations to candidates credentialed to lead concurrent enrollment courses. Generally speaking, district HR departments give equal weight in teacher hiring decisions to candidates with subject-area master's degrees and candidates holding graduate degrees in curriculum, instructional design, and other education areas. State education agencies' communications to district human resource staff might recommend that districts give greater consideration in local hiring decisions to candidates who possess a discipline-specific graduate degree — or the credentials to teach a CTE concurrent enrollment course. States might also encourage professional development on concurrent enrollment credentialing requirements for district HR directors and other employees who play a role in developing collective bargaining agreements.

SYSTEMS CHANGE

Redesign master's degree programs

Redesigned education master's degree programs can bridge the gap created by the traditional teacher certification and progression model, in which teachers often earn a master's in curriculum and instruction or an educational specialty rather than in a specific discipline. Such a redesign may also facilitate quicker progression by prospective teachers through the graduate hours needed to be credentialed to teach concurrent enrollment courses as part of their core studies.

Examples of innovations in education master's degree programs include:

Credit for prior learning: Although the HLC Assumed Practices allow a CTE teacher to be credentialed to teach concurrent enrollment through “a combination of education, training, and tested experience,” awarding credit for demonstration of knowledge and experiences acquired is less common for credentialing instructors for general education courses.

Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) is one institution that has developed a [Graduate Credit for Prior Learning](#) (CPL) process whereby applicant high school instructors can earn master's-level credit upon successfully demonstrating acquisition of graduate-level learning through out-of-classroom experiences.²¹ High school teachers apply to SMSU to complete a “special topics” graduate class in one of seven disciplines in which they wish to be credentialed to teach college coursework — biology, chemistry, communications, economics, English, math, or physics. They work with an assigned faculty mentor within their discipline to develop a portfolio documenting evidence of the teacher's acquisition of graduate-level knowledge, competencies and skills gained

through “work experiences, civic activities, community volunteerism, and other informal learning opportunities.” The faculty mentor reviews the portfolio against the course rubric to determine whether the portfolio reflects graduate-level learning.

Key Program Components

- **Create course outlines, grading rubrics and student learning outcomes that can apply to a variety of student experiences:** Each department that agreed to develop a special topics course was responsible for creating a course outline, grading rubric, and student learning outcomes. These materials had to strike a balance between being broad enough to cover an array of experiences that could reflect graduate-level learning, without knowing what teachers' specific experiences might be. Overly specific course outcomes might make it difficult for students to earn course credit.
- **Develop the program with a focus on the graduate student perspective:** As Jessica Mensink of SMSU advises, “Make sure the process is clear from the [graduate] student's perspective and from the institution's perspective. There should be two separate guides...one from the student's view and one from the staff's view as to what the process looks like from start to finish.”²² She further encourages institutions to avoid making student processes unnecessarily burdensome: “If a student feels like the documentation or expectation is too much, they will not” attempt to earn credit for prior learning.

Master's degrees that incorporate appropriate graduate hours in discipline-specific content along with education coursework: Southwest Minnesota State University offers a Master's of Science in Education with the option of an emphasis area in either [English](#)²³ or [math](#)²⁴ designed for multiple candidates, including high school teachers seeking credentialing to teach concurrent enrollment courses. Candidates complete 18 discipline-specific credits

from a menu of graduate-level English or math courses, as well as graduate-level courses in pedagogy and research.

Montana State University offers a [Master of Science in Science Education \(MSSE\) degree](#) and graduate certificate program.²⁴ The program was [developed as an interdisciplinary degree program](#) by university faculty active in STEM fields and science education.²⁵ The program offers a wide array of STEM field coursework in formats configured for teachers, including online and immersive summer field and lab courses. The guiding vision for the program is to create educational opportunities that enhance the teaching and learning of science by giving teachers depth of content as well as applied science concepts and experiences like field and laboratory work. Although not designed explicitly to increase the number of qualified concurrent enrollment teachers, the program typically offers several graduate courses in STEM content areas, with courses configured to increase participating teachers' content knowledge, add field or laboratory skills, and other experiences that provide graduate content knowledge and experience. Several courses are intentionally [designed to serve “7-14” instructors](#) (high school and early postsecondary instructors).²⁶ The program also offers six, 12-credit [graduate certificates](#) in STEM areas.²⁷

Key Program Components

- **Marketing and communication:** Marketing and communications are essential to informing school instructors on the availability of these options, and the relative benefits compared to completing a master's degree in a specific discipline.
- **Valuable educational experiences:** Courses and technical training opportunities need to be applicable and add value to a teacher's ability to be effective and impactful in the classroom. They should help teachers advance their knowledge and skills in the content area in a way that translates to better outcomes for their students.

Streamline secondary certification and concurrent enrollment credentialing

More closely aligning secondary licensure expectations with concurrent enrollment credentialing requirements can move newly-certified teachers directly into a graduate program or CTE credentialing experience after completing a preservice program, potentially reducing the reluctance in-service teachers feel to go back to school after they've settled into workplace and possibly family responsibilities. Depending on the structure of the program, streamlining efforts may offer a bachelor's degree and graduate credits at a lower cost, and may reduce the time commitment in comparison to following a traditional career path of entering the teaching workforce after undergraduate education.

Strategies to streamline secondary certification and concurrent enrollment credentialing include:

Bundling undergraduate and graduate teacher preparation programs: In fall 2021, Indiana's Ivy Tech Community College System and Marian University, a private four-year institution in Indianapolis, launched a [unique partnership](#) to support a diverse teacher workforce credentialed to teach college courses.²⁸ Under the program, high school students will take general education and entry-level education pathway courses through one of six Ivy Tech campuses. Upon completing their associate's degree at Ivy Tech, students will transfer to Marian University's Klipsch Educators College to complete their bachelor's degree and teacher certification requirements, then enroll in a discipline-specific master's degree at Marian University and a one-year paid clinical residency. Program completers will have earned an associate's degree, a bachelor's degree, and a master's degree for \$45,000 without factoring in financial aid, which could substantially lower the cost.

The goal is to enroll 100 students in the program in fall 2021, including 50 students of color, with the aspiration of growing the program to 500 students by 2025.

Key Program Components

- **Build the necessary infrastructure:** To facilitate such an undertaking connecting three different degree programs across two institutions, Ivy Tech convened an advisory committee. Marian University also hired a program director “to oversee the partnership, engage with high school administrators/students throughout the state, manage dual admissions, and ensure seamless transitions for students.”²⁹ Necessary infrastructure also included marketing materials, program scholarships, and site agreements.
- **Develop program milestones in the form of short-term certificates:** Ivy Tech Community College has launched a 30-credit-hour Technical Certificate in Education. Earning this certificate creates an important and motivating milestone on students' trajectory to an associate's degree.
- **Use statewide transfer and dual admissions agreements to create a seamless student experience:** Students will complete general education requirements at Ivy Tech that will fully transfer to Marian University and apply towards their bachelor's degree requirements. The dual admissions agreement between Ivy Tech and Marian University will, upon approval of students' dual application, secure their admission to both schools and offer them immediate access to both institutions' support services (such as career coaching, library services, advisors, student life). As noted by Rebecca Rahschulte, Ivy Tech's Vice President of K-14 Initiatives & Statewide Partnerships, “Dual admissions agreements create the long-term vision for students (allowing them to see [the] pathway through to Master's Degree completion), creates a comfort level and sense of belonging with both institutions and creates excitement for each step on their journey.”³⁰



Exploring Endorsements:

As directed by [110 ILCS 27/20](#), the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), have developed a Dual Credit Endorsement, to clearly message to districts and institutions statewide that teachers bearing the endorsement meet HLC credentialing requirements to teach college coursework. The endorsement is affixed to the Professional Educator License at the request of grades 11-12 teachers who have completed the requisite graduate credits to be credentialed to teach college coursework in specified general education disciplines.

To earn the endorsement, teachers earn a master's degree or 18 graduate hours in any of the nine approved disciplines — biology, calculus, English composition, English literature, general math, history, psychology, speech, and statistics. After applying for the endorsement and having their transcripts and application approved by the hiring institution offering the dual credit coursework, the teacher's Regional Office of Education uploads the documentation in the teacher's Educator Licensure Information System account, and the endorsement is issued.

More information on Illinois' Dual Credit Endorsement can be found on the [ISBE](#) and [IBHE](#) websites.

INITIATIVE ALIGNMENT

Align with other teacher pipeline activities

In response to significant K-12 teacher shortages, many states are undertaking activities to recruit prospective teachers. In some states, these activities include explicit efforts to recruit racially and culturally diverse candidates into the teacher workforce; in 2017-2018 79% of public school teachers [were white](#),³¹ while 53.1 percent of the fall 2018 public school enrollment was composed of [students of color](#).³²

The benefits of aligning concurrent enrollment teacher up-credentialing efforts with existing teacher recruitment and retention efforts include streamlined marketing and communications to prospective teachers. Teacher candidates, including diverse candidates, don't need to make a choice about which teacher preparation program might make the best fit.

Bundling a new initiative such as preparing teacher candidates to teach college courses with existing teacher pipeline efforts may diminish or eliminate the perception among some staff that efforts to credential teacher candidates to teach concurrent enrollment courses are a fad or “flavor of the day,” and may increase stakeholder buy-in.

Numerous articles and studies point to the positive academic and affective outcomes students of color experience in the classroom of a teacher of color. Developing a more racially and ethnically diverse concurrent enrollment teacher corps may encourage a more racially and ethnically diverse pool of students to enroll and succeed in concurrent enrollment courses.

Strategies to integrate concurrent enrollment credentialing efforts with broader teacher pipeline approaches include:

Coordinating with state or local “Grow Your Own” programs for adult teacher candidates. Grow Your Own programs are local efforts, sometimes supported by state funding and policy structures, to locally recruit individuals from their communities into teacher preparation programs at nearby postsecondary institutions, with the goal of retaining these candidates to teach in their communities upon earning their teacher certification. Grow Your Own programs are widely recognized as an effective strategy to increase the racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity of the teaching workforce. While some states' Grow Your Own policies leverage dual and concurrent enrollment programs to onramp high school students into an education pathway (more about such strategies in “Streamline secondary certification and concurrent enrollment credentialing”), few if any state or local Grow Your Own efforts appear to explicitly market to adult teacher candidates the opportunity to co-complete an undergraduate teacher preparation program and the credentials to teach a liberal arts or CTE concurrent enrollment course.

Coordinating with community-based organizations, teachers' unions, and others engaged in local teacher recruitment, retention. In just one example, the [Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota](#) is a state level network “[uniting] more than 1,500 people from more than several dozen organizations and institutions across political parties, racial and ethnic groups, geographic regions, ages, and roles within education and the community.”³³ Aligning efforts by community-based organizations, teacher's unions, state agencies and other groups supporting efforts to increase or diversify the teacher workforce can be an effective means to communicate a state's concurrent enrollment credentialing pathways. The Minnesota State

System's Graduate Education Collaborative (Pathway to 18), whose duties include coordinating concurrent enrollment credentialing pathways as well as communicating and conducting outreach about these pathways through Pathway to 18, has begun partnering with organizations like these to align shared goals on teacher workforce expansion and diversification, and to amplify communication channels about concurrent enrollment credentialing opportunities statewide.

Offering entry-level education courses in CTE pathways and as dual and concurrent enrollment courses. A growing number of states have adopted state-level policies and programs that provide explicit dual and concurrent enrollment pathways for students interested in completing credits towards an education degree while in high school. Such programs reduce student time and cost in completing preservice requirements. While these dual and concurrent enrollment pathways aren't explicitly designed to direct program completers to graduate coursework or other credentials and experiences needed to be eligible to teach concurrent enrollment courses, they do accelerate completers' progress towards concurrent enrollment credentialing opportunities.

Some state policies explicitly call out that such dual and concurrent enrollment programs are intended to increase the diversity of the teaching workforce. For example, Colorado 2021 [S.B. 21-185](#) establishes the Teacher Recruitment Education and Preparation (TREP) program; the program allows students enrolled in teaching career pathway courses in grade 12 to continue to dually enroll in teaching career pathway courses for two years, with tuition costs paid by their school district. As stated in the legislation, the objectives of the program include to “increase the percentage of students who participate in postsecondary educator preparation programs, especially among low-income and traditionally underserved populations;” and “create a more diverse teacher workforce to reflect the ethnic diversity of the state[.]”

Other states have explored leveraging their CTE pathways to increase student engagement with the profession of teaching. [Mississippi](#)³⁴ has designed a two-year, four-credit CTE program of study called [Teacher Academy](#),³⁵ that allows high school students to explore teaching as a career field through classroom content and hands-on experience. [Tennessee](#)³⁶ has developed a CTE program of study specifically to provide students insight into the career field of teaching. [Montana Career Pathways](#) includes a variety of recommended dual enrollment courses to support an education pathway, including an introductory course called Teaching and Learning, which was first launched in the state as a concurrent enrollment course to engage students in the field of teaching.

Establishing explicit partnerships with minority-serving institutions (MSIs): According to a 2021 [report](#) citing 2017 [research](#): “Although MSIs represent just 13 percent of educator-preparation providers in the United States, they produce more than 50 percent of the nation’s teachers of color, including more than half of the bachelor’s degrees in education earned by Latinos, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders and nearly 40 percent of the bachelor’s degrees in education earned by African Americans.” To increase the number *and* diversity of high school teachers credentialed to teach college courses, state and local initiatives might consider explicit partnerships with MSIs. These partnerships might offer intentional, ongoing messaging to students in MSIs’ teacher preparation programs about the research base documenting the benefits to students of color of completing college coursework in high school, as well as graduate-level requirements for secondary teachers to be approved to teach college courses. In addition, MSIs offering master’s degree programs can develop and deliver discipline-specific graduate-level content; MSIs without master’s degree programs or inadequate staffing to offer additional discipline-specific graduate-level courses could forge partnerships with other institutions’ graduate schools to offer seamless transitions from undergraduate education programs to discipline-specific graduate-level content.

Key Program Components

- Establish measures to ensure the participant population matches the program goals:** If the goal is to ensure dual and concurrent enrollment teacher pathway programs increase the diversity of the teacher workforce, program parameters or funding criteria must clearly define what diversity in the pool of participating students looks like. For example, 2021 Minnesota [H.F. 2](#) establishes a Grow Your Own grant program that includes K-12 grant opportunities for secondary students, and particularly students of color and Indigenous students, to be exposed to teaching opportunities, including college-level courses applicable towards teaching degree requirements. To be eligible for grant funding, the legislation requires a district or charter school to ensure that the aggregate percentage of program participants who are students of color and American Indian must be equal to or exceed the aggregate percentage of students of color and American Indian students in the school district or charter school.
- Eliminate financial and other barriers to program participation and success:** If the goal of dual and concurrent enrollment teacher pathway programs is to increase the diversity of the teacher workforce, programs that pass tuition costs onto students or do not offer academic or nonacademic supports may cause programs to fall short of their intended outcomes. The aforementioned Grow Your Own grant opportunity established by 2021 Minnesota [H.F. 2](#) specifies that grant funds may be used for “direct support, including wrap-around services, for students who are of color or American Indian to enroll and be successful in postsecondary enrollment options courses ... that would meet degree requirements for teacher licensure.” Colorado 2021 [S.B. 21-185](#) establishing the Teacher Recruitment Education and Preparation (TREP) program covers students’ tuition costs during their two years of program participation.



Align career and workforce preparation initiatives to better serve CTE teachers

Commonly referred to as Perkins V, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act is important federal education legislation that provides funds to both secondary and postsecondary education entities. The law ensures quality and alignment between the needs of local and regional employers and secondary and postsecondary career and technical education. Perkins funds can be leveraged in a variety of ways to improve alignment and incentivize collaboration. States' Perkins V implementation plans must describe how the state will "support effective and meaningful collaboration between secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers to provide students with expertise in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry" It also recognizes the importance of postsecondary training and education to the modern skilled workforce. Dual and concurrent enrollment receives specific attention in the law with several opportunities to expand financial and structural support for CTE dual and concurrent enrollment.

Education, professional experience, and recency of skills are all attributes commonly assessed by colleges in hiring career and technical program instructional staff. A high school CTE teacher may not have had extensive coursework in a career area, had the opportunity to build skills directly through professional experience or industry certifications, or had recent industry-level experiences. Collaboration with business and industry and combining with other work underway through Perkins and other workforce development activities can help close skill and experience gaps that hinder CTE concurrent enrollment credentialing. In particular, Perkins V enhances focus on collaboration between secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers, which creates an excellent

opportunity for states to build and support programming to ensure CTE teachers gain the education and experience needed to meet credentialing requirements to teach concurrent enrollment.

Strategies to integrate concurrent enrollment credentialing efforts with broader workforce initiatives:

Leverage collaborative conversations to develop shared goals: The Perkins V Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment lays a strong foundation for states and local partners to better align CTE programs with the state, local, and regional workforce needs. Local and regional conversations between high school, college, and workforce stakeholders can help to build common understanding and may help stakeholders identify CTE programs to prioritize for concurrent enrollment program growth and development.

Understand the barriers: To advance concurrent enrollment CTE programs stakeholders need to understand systems each is working within including requirements, resources, timelines, and motivations.

Engage local and regional business and industry: Engaging business and industry in conversations about CTE education and the workforce can open opportunities for teachers looking to gain recent industry-specific work experience. Employers may be interested in creating or hosting teacher internships and externships to ensure that their future workforce has the knowledge and skills aligned with the current needs of the sector.

Explore alternative endorsement efforts: Several states have looked to address teacher pipeline issues through alternative endorsements. Processes developed could be leveraged to help draw a more diverse pool of candidates into CTE education. States like [Kentucky](#)³⁷ have created options to ease barriers for professionals to enter teaching.³⁸ One policy established by the Kentucky

Education Professionals Standards Board allows industry experts to teach CTE courses on a part-time basis, opening up a wider pool of local candidates with recent industry experience. [Hawaii's Community College System](#)³⁸ has created greater flexibility for new faculty for meeting minimum qualifications for adjunct faculty.³⁹ Their approach evaluates education and professional experience. In Mississippi, the Mississippi State University Research and Curriculum Unit's (RCU's) [New Teacher Induction \(NTI\)](#)⁴⁰ program provides professional development to industry professionals transitioning to teaching.⁴¹

Leverage Perkins funds to support teacher professional development: Perkins V opens a lot of opportunities for secondary and postsecondary professional development activities. Teacher workshops, skills or equipment-based training, industry certifications, closing student performance gaps, and improving CTE program management, are all allowable uses of funds for secondary and postsecondary recipients.

Challenges to Be Aware of Moving Forward

The Role of Quality in Equity

Nationally, concurrent enrollment is the most prevalent format for offering college courses to high school students, with [national data indicating that 80-86%](#) of all dually enrolled students are participating in a course offered in a high school setting.⁴² Concurrent enrollment is also the most complex type of program to build and maintain because it constructs a college course, including much of the support structure for college, into the high school classroom. This includes the development of support infrastructure to help students onboard to college through registration and orientation, advising and student supports. All this is in addition to assessing instructor qualifications, offering teacher onboarding and ongoing annual professional development, and the alignment of curriculum and assessments with the college's course..

True equity in college in high school programs requires that all programs offer students a course equivalent to what is offered on the college campus and that participating students can expect access to appropriate supports, like their on-campus counterparts. Failure to ensure quality in the programs puts students at risk for failure when they matriculate to college and can lead to students assuming they are not college-capable. It is critical that programs offer students an equivalent course so that their concurrent enrollment experience serves as an effective and impactful bridge to higher education, and beyond.

The [National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships](#) was established more than twenty years ago with the goal of uniting the field around a set of tested, proven program quality standards to help ensure high school students nationwide had access to quality college courses to advance their postsecondary objectives. These national quality standards became the basis for NACEP's program accreditation. NACEP's accreditation standards can be found in statute, policy, and regulation as the means for quality assurance in 26 states. As of August 2021, 11 states require or encourage concurrent enrollment programs to secure NACEP accreditation or adhere to similar standards.⁴³ An additional four states have adopted standards for concurrent enrollment programs modeled on the NACEP standards;⁴⁴ concurrent enrollment policies, standards and guidelines in 11 other states align with some NACEP standards, including some of the faculty standards.⁴⁵

At the heart of [NACEP's standards](#) is a belief that regular college faculty bear primary responsibility for ensuring that concurrent enrollment course content, assessments, and expectations are of comparable quality, and that institutions must provide adequate resources to support faculty in fulfilling this responsibility. Sixteen standards in six categories (Partnership, Faculty, Assessment, Curriculum, Student Supports, and Program Evaluation) serve to ensure the postsecondary institution offers the same college course in the high school as is offered on

campus and provides sufficient academic and program oversight to ensure course integrity. Programs aligned with NACEP program quality standards have built several structural supports and formal opportunities for high school teachers to connect with their college counterparts.

Programs not leveraging NACEP standards can still build a system and culture that connects high school faculty to an on-campus counterpart to help foster an authentic college experience for participating students through faculty-to-faculty collaboration and communication. Postsecondary faculty can work alongside secondary educators to help them gain the knowledge, dispositions, and skills they need to mirror the on-campus course at their high schools. This connection point between the college and the high school is critical to ensure course rigor and parity between sections of a course offered on the high school and college campuses.

NACEP Faculty Standards

Faculty 1 (F1)	All concurrent enrollment instructors are approved by the appropriate college/university academic leadership and must meet the minimum qualifications for instructors teaching the course on campus.
Faculty 2 (F2)	Faculty liaisons at the college/university provide all new concurrent enrollment instructors with course-specific training in course philosophy, curriculum, pedagogy and assessment prior to the instructor teaching the course.
Faculty 3 (F3)	Concurrent enrollment instructors participate in college/university provided annual discipline-specific professional development and ongoing collegial interaction to further enhance instructors' pedagogy and breadth of knowledge in the discipline.
Faculty 4 (F4)	The concurrent enrollment program ensures instructors are informed of and adhere to program policies and procedures.

Strategies to support collaboration:

- Ensuring that appropriate staff support the appropriate parts of the program:** Maintaining ongoing communication between the secondary institution offering a concurrent enrollment course and the partnering postsecondary institution is critical to ensuring course quality and rigor. Equally important is pairing each high school concurrent enrollment instructor with a faculty liaison in their academic area. Program coordination and management is very different from the academic and instructional elements vital to a quality program. Designating a college employee to serve as the program coordinator assigned to work with each partnering district helps faculty to focus on collaborating with the high school teacher, while the program coordinator manages the program and its logistics. This is an approach aligned with national best practices for concurrent enrollment programs.
- Ensuring concurrent enrollment instructors have access to the same professional development as on-campus faculty:** Generally speaking, regional postsecondary accreditors require faculty to participate in ongoing professional development, to stay up-to-date on the latest advancements in their discipline. Secondary teachers approved to teach college courses should likewise be exposed to and included in these professional learning opportunities. Policies in at least 16 states call for secondary instructors teaching college courses to be provided professional development; some of these states specifically require concurrent enrollment teachers to participate in the same professional learning as regular faculty.⁴⁶
- Encouraging or requiring NACEP accreditation, or adopting similar standards:** One of the six sets of standards in NACEP's program accreditation standards are faculty standards. Faculty standards include but exceed the liaison and professional development measures described above. NACEP Faculty standards are listed in the box at left.

The Role and Influence of K-12 and Postsecondary Unions

Secondary instructors teaching or preparing to teach concurrent enrollment courses may insist upon compensation for their time completing graduate-level coursework or other training, in the case of CTE instructors, to meet credentialing requirements. Secondary instructors who do not teach concurrent enrollment courses may feel concurrent enrollment teachers are receiving specialized treatment; these instructors may persuade other union members that concurrent enrollment expansion is not worthwhile.

Secondary instructors and postsecondary faculty alike may argue that they're not being compensated (or adequately compensated) for the additional time involved with delivering a concurrent enrollment course. To mitigate concerns about additional teacher or faculty workload, or inequitable benefits, local stakeholders may consider borrowing contract language from districts and postsecondary institutions successfully addressing these concerns.

Postsecondary union members may put up resistance to broadening concurrent enrollment availability because such expansion could reduce the number of general education courses offered at the college; such members fear that fewer general education offerings will prompt faculty layoffs. To date, no research has documented this postulated impact on faculty. Most arguments of this nature are founded on the assumption that all concurrent enrollment students were college-bound prior to their participation. This is not the case; further it ignores important data showing that dual and concurrent enrollment can increase postsecondary aspirations and likelihood of college matriculation and retention.

Data on higher matriculation rates among former dual and concurrent enrollment students may allay fears about

decreased faculty workload. Research further indicates participation in dual and concurrent enrollment can have a strong impact on students' postsecondary institution choice, particularly for males, nonwhite students, and students who are "low or middle achieving" in terms of high school GPA.⁴⁷ Notably, these are groups often cited as underrepresented in postsecondary education. The expansion of concurrent enrollment has the potential to engage a much more diverse group of students in postsecondary education—students who may not have considered college prior to participating in dual or concurrent enrollment. Contrary to concerns that concurrent enrollment will diminish faculty workload, student participation in concurrent enrollment may in fact help institutions, particularly community colleges, improve enrollment.

Building relationships with faculty, including faculty union leadership, can also support conversations that concurrent enrollment will lead not only to more but to better-prepared students in their classrooms in the future.

Broader Concerns About Dual and Concurrent Enrollment

Some K-12 or postsecondary stakeholders' concerns about the role and value of dual and concurrent enrollment may thwart state or local adoption of efforts to enlarge the pool of credentialed concurrent enrollment teachers. These stakeholders may express worries that:

- High school students taking college courses are "missing out" on the full, "typical" college experience by reducing the number of credits they'll need to complete after matriculating
- High school instructors — even those who meet the same qualifications as on-campus faculty — are not qualified to teach college-level content
- High school teachers are "watering down" college-level coursework or "taking it easy" when grading

assignments and tests

- Even when the course content is identical to the course's on-campus equivalent, a course offered at a high school does not deliver an authentic college experience
- High school students are making poor course enrollment choices, signing up for courses that will not transfer to other institutions, or that may end up applying as electives or that do not apply to their post-high-school aspirations — if they even know what educational or career path they'd like to pursue after high school.
- A low grade in a college course taken in high school will stay on a student's transcript forever, and may negatively impact a student's financial aid eligibility and/or result in a student's placement on academic probation.

A growing body of data⁴⁸ indicates that in spite of the fact that approved high school instructors are increasingly the instructor of record for college courses delivered to high school students, dual and concurrent enrollment students are more likely than their peers — including when controlling for students' academic and demographic background — to graduate high school, matriculate in postsecondary, enroll in gateway English and math courses without remedial placement, persist to their second year, post higher college GPAs and more rapid credit accumulation, and complete a credential, including with fewer excess credits accumulated.⁴⁹ If high school students were enrolled in "watered-down" college courses or not held to college-level expectations, their postsecondary outcomes would differ less (or not differ at all) from the postsecondary outcomes of students who did not dually enroll in high school.

State policies creating financial incentives for students to enroll in broadly applicable and transferable courses, or courses with high workforce need, can guide students

towards wiser choices; Indiana does this by offering certain liberal arts and CTE courses at reduced to no tuition and providing a partial reimbursement to offering institutions based on reported headcount in these courses.⁵⁰ State-level parameters around the dual and concurrent enrollment courses students may enroll in — either during their first course enrollments or at all — can likewise steer students towards courses more likely to apply to their future degree. Determining and broadly communicating courses recognized for transfer across all public (and some independent) postsecondary institutions in a state further increases the likelihood that courses will apply towards degree requirements, wherever within a state a student ultimately enrolls. Institution-level academic appeals can allow students to remove a failing grade from their transcript, and protect their future financial aid eligibility and academic standing if due to extenuating circumstances a student is unable to pass a dual or concurrent enrollment course.

What Really Are the Courses and Experiences that Truly Reflect an Instructor's Ability to Deliver College-Level Content and Skills?

As stated earlier, the HLC, which accredits postsecondary institutions in 19 states, requires instructors of general education college courses to possess a minimum of a master's degree in the discipline of the course, or a master's degree in another subject and at least 18 graduate hours in the discipline of the course. However, there is no consensus among researchers about whether this threshold of graduate-level education is necessary in all cases to ensure concurrent enrollment teachers are equipped to deliver equivalent quality and rigor as on-campus course offerings. For example, a 2017 brief by the Midwestern Higher Education Compact concluded that the relationship between teacher educational attainment and student outcomes is complex and varies by such

factors as level of schooling, academic subject, and major-course congruence.⁵¹

What is more, states under the jurisdiction of the various postsecondary regional accreditors — who establish widely divergent qualifications for instructors to teach college courses — show similar positive course-level and postsecondary outcomes for dual and concurrent enrollment students. If a minimum master's degree or 18 graduate hours in the discipline of the course were necessary for a secondary teacher to convey college content, one would expect to see a weaker correlation between concurrent enrollment participation and postsecondary success in states whose regional accreditors hold high school instructors to more flexible and locally-determined qualifications.

In addition, [many states and institutions](#)⁵² award college credit for minimum scores on Advanced Placement (AP) exams.⁵³ Yet a high school instructor is not required to possess a master's degree or 18 graduate hours in the subject to teach an AP course — rather, a certified secondary teacher must receive AP course authorization by passing a College Board [AP Course Audit](#)⁵⁴, which typically means approval of a proposed course syllabus (which may be the AP sample syllabus for the course subject) or adoption of AP Unit Guides in the course and exam description for the course subject.⁵⁵ In other words, in most states a licensed high school social studies teacher successfully completing an AP Course Audit for a particular course would be qualified to teach any of the nine AP history and social science courses.⁵⁶

States and institutions, in HLC states and elsewhere, are investing considerable resources to meet regional accreditors' requirements for faculty. Yet those requirements are not linked to research that demonstrates better instruction by faculty or better educational outcomes for students in 100 and 200 level courses. Further research is needed to quantify the criteria necessary for secondary teachers to impart college content and skills.



CONCLUSION

A recent convergence of modifications and clarifications to concurrent enrollment teacher credentialing requirements, and heightened interest in ensuring equitable student access to quality concurrent enrollment offerings, has created in many states an elevated sense of urgency to the need to increase the number of high school teachers credentialed to teach college courses. Each of the regional accrediting bodies has set standards high school teachers must meet to be approved to teach college courses; these standards differ significantly in the criteria secondary instructors must meet, posing potential shortages of credentialed concurrent enrollment teachers in regions where the credentialing bar has been set higher.

To address these challenges, states and institutions have adopted an array of strategies, from which some similar themes and strategies have emerged.

These approaches generally fall into three, often overlapping, categories: incentives, systems change, and initiative alignment. These state and institutional strategies must be centered in equity to better help these programs meet their potential to help advance students traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education. However, stakeholders undertaking efforts to enhance the number of secondary teachers credentialed to teach college courses should be cognizant of obstacles they will most probably confront, that go beyond the challenges of adopting and implementing concurrent enrollment teacher up-credentialing efforts. Further, the bigger question remains for researchers, the field, and regional accreditors—are the requirements stipulated by accreditors justified by leading to better outcomes for students or do they simply pose a barrier to increasing equitable access to a postsecondary education?



Appendices

Appendix A: Regional Accreditors' Faculty Standards

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges

"Faculty qualifications include knowledge of the subject matter and requisite skills for the service to be performed. Factors of qualification include appropriate degrees, professional experience, discipline expertise, level of assignment, teaching skills, scholarly activities, and potential to contribute to the mission of the institution. Faculty job descriptions include development and review of curriculum as well as assessment of learning. ... An institution with part time and adjunct faculty has employment policies and practices which provide for their orientation, oversight, evaluation, and professional development. The institution provides opportunities for integration of part time and adjunct faculty into the life of the institution." ([Accreditation Standards](#) adopted June 2014, Standard III: Resources, A. Human Resources, 2, 8)

Higher Learning Commission

"Qualified faculty members are identified primarily by credentials, but other factors, including but not limited to equivalent experience, may be considered by the institution in determining whether a faculty member is qualified. Instructors (excluding for this requirement teaching assistants enrolled in a graduate program and supervised by faculty) possess an academic degree relevant to what they are teaching and at least one level above the level at which they teach, except in programs for terminal degrees or when equivalent experience is established. In terminal degree programs, faculty members possess the same level of degree. When faculty members are employed based on equivalent experience, the institution defines a minimum threshold of experience and an evaluation process that is used in the appointment process. Faculty teaching general education courses, or other non-occupational courses, hold a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield. If a faculty member holds a master's degree or higher in a discipline or subfield other than that in which he or she is teaching, that faculty member should have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or

subfield in which they teach." ([Assumed Practices](#) B.2.a.)

"The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings. ... The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development." ([Criteria for Accreditation](#), 3.C.2, 3.C.3, 3.C.5)

"Faculty teaching in higher education institutions should have completed a program of study in the discipline or subfield (as applicable) in which they teach, and/or for which they develop curricula, with coursework at least one level above that of the courses being taught or developed. Completion of a degree in a specific field enhances an instructor's depth of subject matter knowledge and is easily identifiable.

"With the exception noted in the bullet immediately following, faculty teaching in undergraduate programs should hold a degree at least one level above that of the program in which they are teaching. If a faculty member holds a master's degree or higher in a discipline other than that in which he or she is teaching, that faculty member should have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline in which he or she is teaching.

"If an individual faculty member has not achieved 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline in which he or she teaches, the institution should be able to explain and justify its decision to assign the individual to the courses taught. These decisions should be supported by policy and procedure that are acceptable to the professional judgment of HLC peer reviewers. See the following subsection for more information about how experience may be considered in determining faculty qualifications.

"Faculty teaching in career and technical education college-level certificate and occupational associate's degree programs should hold a bachelor's degree in the field and/or a combination of education, training and tested experience. (Note: See the Tested Experience section

below.) Such qualifications are allowable even in instances where technical/occupational courses transfer, which HLC recognizes is an increasing practice. ..."

"Tested experience may substitute for an earned credential or portions thereof. Assumed Practice B.2. allows an institution to determine that a faculty member is qualified based on experience that the institution determines is equivalent to the degree it would otherwise require for a faculty position. This experience should be tested experience in that it includes a breadth and depth of experience outside of the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline in which the faculty member would be teaching. (Note: Tested experience, as is explained in the following section on dual credit, is typically not based exclusively on years of teaching experience, although other experiential factors as noted below may be considered on a case-by-case basis.)

"The value of using tested experience to determine minimal faculty qualifications depends upon the relevance of the individual faculty member's experience both to the degree level and to the specific content of the courses the faculty member is teaching. An institution that intends to use tested experience as a basis for hiring faculty must have well-defined policies, procedures and documentation that demonstrate when such experience is sufficient to determine that the faculty member has the expertise necessary to teach students in that discipline. In their policies on tested experience as a basis for hiring faculty members, institutions are encouraged to develop faculty hiring qualifications that outline a minimum threshold of experience and a system of evaluation. Tested experience qualifications should be established for specific disciplines and programs and could include skill sets, types of certifications or additional credentials, and experiences. Documented qualifications would ensure consistency and transparency in hiring and human resources policies. The faculty hiring qualifications related to tested experience should be reviewed and approved through the faculty governance process at the institution—a step that should be highlighted for peer review teams, as appropriate." ([Determining Qualified Faculty Through HLC's Criteria for Accreditation and Assumed Practices: Guidelines for Institutions and Peer Reviewers](#), September 2020)

Middle States Commission on Higher Education

“The institution has a core of faculty (full-time or part-time) and/or other appropriate professionals with sufficient responsibility to the institution to assure the continuity and coherence of the institution’s educational programs.” ([Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation](#), Requirements of Affiliation, 15)

“An accredited institution possesses and demonstrates the following attributes or activities: ... student learning experiences that are designed, delivered, and assessed by faculty (full-time or part-time) and/or other appropriate professionals who are: a. rigorous and effective in teaching, assessment of student learning, scholarly inquiry, and service, as appropriate to the institution’s mission, goals, and policies; b. qualified for the positions they hold and the work they do; c. sufficient in number; d. provided with and utilize sufficient opportunities, resources, and support for professional growth and innovation; e. reviewed regularly and equitably based on written, disseminated, clear, and fair criteria, expectations, policies, and procedures[.]” (Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation, Standard III, Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience, 2)

New England Commission of Higher Education

“The preparation and qualifications of all faculty and academic staff are appropriate to the nature of their assignments. Qualifications are measured by advanced degrees held, evidence of scholarship, advanced study, creative activities, and teaching abilities, as well as relevant professional experience, training, and credentials.” ([Standards for Accreditation](#), 6.3)

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

“Consistent with its mission, programs, and services, the institution employs faculty, staff, and administrators sufficient in role, number, and qualifications to achieve its organizational responsibilities, educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs.” ([NWCCU 2020 Standards](#), 2.F.3)

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges

“The institution employs an adequate number of full-time faculty members to support the mission and goals of

the institution. For each of its educational programs, the institution ... Justifies and documents the qualifications of its faculty members.” ([The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement](#), December 2017)

“For each of its educational programs, the institution justifies and documents the qualifications of its faculty members. Rationale and Notes: Qualified, effective faculty members are essential to carry out the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs. The emphasis is on overall qualifications of a faculty member, rather than simply academic credentials. While academic credentials in most cases may well be the standard qualification for faculty members, other types of qualifications may prove to be appropriate. Examples could include appropriately related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications related to the teaching assignment, honors and awards, continuing professional development, relevant peer-reviewed publications, and/or continuous documented excellence in teaching. These types of qualifications are especially important in professional, technical, and technology-dependent fields.

“It is the institution’s obligation to justify and document the qualifications of its faculty. Determining the acceptability of faculty qualifications requires judicious use of professional judgment, especially when persons do not hold degrees in the teaching discipline or are qualified based on criteria other than their academic credentials. Similarly, persons holding a degree at the same or lower level than the level at which the course is taught require additional qualifications and the application of professional judgment. Additional justification is needed for these cases as compared to cases where the academic credentials are a ‘perfect match’ for the ‘teaching assignments.

“Appropriate qualifications may also differ depending on whether a course is generally transferable to other institutions; qualifications for teaching nontransferable technical courses depend heavily on professional experience and appropriate certifications or work experience.

“Judicious use of professional judgment should also be exercised by those asked to serve as external reviewers of faculty qualifications[.]” ([Resource Manual for the Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement](#), 2020 Edition, 6.2.a)

“SACSCOC defines an ‘instructor of record’ as the faculty member qualified to teach the course. This person has overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the syllabus and for issuing grades. The faculty member will provide direct instruction for the course.

“The institution ensures appropriate faculty qualifications for those who provide instruction for dual enrollment courses; these faculty members possess the same academic credentials and/or documented professional experience required by the institution of all of its faculty. Graduate teaching assistants, if they are the instructor of record and providing direct instruction, should meet the same academic and/or professional criteria. In all cases, the institution bears responsibility for documenting and justifying the qualifications of its dual enrollment instructors, and they are included on the Faculty Roster when appropriate for review by a SACSCOC committee. (Please refer to the Resource Manual, Standard 6.2.b, for a broader discussion of faculty qualifications.)

“An institution offering dual enrollment courses or programs ensures that a sufficient number of full-time faculty members teach and/or provide appropriate oversight for the courses/programs. Materials submitted for review by SACSCOC explain the nature of faculty oversight that ensures the quality and integrity of the courses offered. The institution has clear criteria for the evaluation of faculty teaching dual enrollment courses and demonstrates the use of these criteria.” ([Dual Enrollment Policy Statement](#), Revised December 2018)

WASC Senior College and University Commission

“The institution’s educational programs are appropriate in content, standards of performance, rigor, and nomenclature for the degree level awarded, regardless of mode of delivery. They are staffed by sufficient numbers of faculty qualified for the type and level of curriculum offered. ... The institution employs faculty and staff with substantial and continuing commitment to the institution. The faculty and staff are sufficient in number, professional qualification, and diversity to achieve the institution’s educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic and co-curricular programs wherever and however delivered.” ([Handbook of Accreditation 2013 Revised](#), 2.1, 3.1)

Appendix B: Timeline of Changes to HLC and SACSCOC's Concurrent Enrollment Teacher Credentialing Requirements

SACSCOC: SACSCOC's [Dual Enrollment Policy Statement](#) issued in 2018 requires that faculty teaching dual enrollment courses (who may include high school teachers approved by the college) "possess the same academic credentials and/or documented professional experience required by the institution of all of its faculty."

How SACSCOC's concurrent enrollment teacher credentialing requirements have changed over the years

2002: Original *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement* approved, to go into effect in 2004. The Principles of Accreditation require each institution to justify and document instructors' credentials, including those of dual enrollment instructors.

December 2006: Original Faculty Credentials Guidelines approved: "The guidelines represent commonly-accepted good practice for the academic qualifications of faculty; however, SACSCOC recognizes that qualifications other than academic credentials (or combined with credentials) may be appropriate for teaching particular courses."

June 2018: Dual Enrollment Policy Statement issued, including guidelines on faculty. Among these faculty guidelines: "The institution ensures appropriate faculty qualifications for those who provide instruction for dual enrollment courses; these faculty members possess the same academic credentials and/or documented professional experience required by the institution of all of its faculty."

April 2019: General Instructions for Completing the Faculty Roster Form updated to include specific reference to dual enrollment instructors: "the roster should include all faculty members for all courses taught in the appropriate terms, no matter when or where. This would include coursework offered in an online modality and in high school dual enrollment courses."

HLC: HLC specifies in [Assumed Practices B.2.a](#) that faculty teaching general education courses or other non-occupational courses hold either a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield of the course, or at least 18 graduate hours in the discipline or subfield. HLC [faculty guidelines](#) provide that high school instructors teaching CTE dual enrollment courses "should hold a bachelor's degree in the field, and/or a combination of education, training and tested experience."

Recent changes in HLC concurrent enrollment teacher credentialing requirements

February 2012: Adoption of the original HLC Assumed Practices, to go into effect January 2013. Under this version, instructors (with the exception of graduate teaching assistants under faculty oversight) "possess an academic degree relevant to what they are teaching and at least one level above the level at which they teach, except in programs for terminal degrees or when equivalent experience is established. In terminal degree programs, faculty members possess the same level of degree. When faculty members are employed based on equivalent experience, the institution defines a minimum threshold of experience and an evaluation process that is used in the appointment process."

May 2014: Adoption of original [Determining Qualified Faculty: Guidelines for Institutions and Peer Reviewers](#), which states, "Those teaching general education courses, or other courses that transfer, typically hold a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield. If a faculty member holds a master's degree or higher in a discipline or subfield other than that in which he or she is teaching, that faculty member should have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach." No explicit reference to concurrent enrollment instructors.

June 2015: Clarification to Assumed Practice B.2. announced. Under the clarification, effective September 1, 2017, teachers of general education and other non-occupational courses must hold a master's or higher and at least 18 graduate hours in the subfield of the course.

November 2015: Availability of application for five-year extension announced, to allow institutions to bring their programs into compliance with Assumed Practice B.2. by September 2022.

June 2020: Five-year extension extended by one year, to account for the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic; institutions that received an extension must now bring their programs into compliance with Assumed Practice B.2. by September 2023.

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