

# Dual Enrollment for Youth Apprenticeship

Stephen Hamilton, Robert Lerman, and Zach Boren

More than four out of five public high schools offered dual-enrollment practices in the 2017–18 school year, allowing students to take high school and college credit classes simultaneously. The practice is increasingly used for career and technical courses and can have significant advantages for young people enrolled in apprenticeship programs.

Dual enrollment helps employers by reducing the costs of Related Technical Instruction (RTI), making apprenticeships more affordable and thus more available. And dual enrollment also helps apprentices gain valuable college credits. Expanding the combination of youth apprenticeship with dual enrollment to more students and communities would benefit apprentices, their employers, and their schools.

## ADVANTAGES OF DUAL ENROLLMENT

There are several advantages of dual enrollment:

- It makes the transition to college smoother, especially for those whose parents did not go.
- It reduces costs and time to graduate. Some states will pay tuition.
- Location is flexible. Courses may be taken in the high school building, on the college campus, or virtually.
- Colleges often have more advanced equipment than high schools and instructors with more field experience.

## ADVANTAGES FOR REGISTERED YOUTH APPRENTICES

Dual enrollment's advantages are especially significant to registered youth apprentices. Few high schools have enough apprentices in the same occupation to justify offering technical courses for them. But many community or technical colleges teach courses to apprentices and have well-established connections with employers in the region. Some parents will be comforted to know that apprenticeship is a path that can include college.

## SUCCESSFUL DUAL-ENROLLMENT YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

- **Apprenticeship Carolina**<sup>TM1</sup> hosts South Carolina's youth apprenticeship program within its technical college system and serves all ages. The statewide initiative's flagship program at Trident Technical College in Charleston has a long history of providing RTI courses to adult apprentices and strong relationships with regional employers. Youth apprentices take courses at Trident unless their high school has high-quality career and technical education (CTE) courses. Trident acts as an intermediary organization, actively recruiting and supporting employers and secondary educators and going so far as to intervene to aid individual apprentices with tasks like finding transportation.
- **Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky**,<sup>2</sup> TRACK, jointly sponsored by the state CTE Office and Office of Apprenticeship, offers dual enrollment when employers choose it. Since 2013, an estimated one-quarter of youth apprentices have been dual enrolled. State scholarships and lottery funds that were formerly

<sup>1</sup> Apprenticeship Carolina SC Technical College System, accessed May 19, 2023, <https://www.apprenticeshipcarolina.com/>.

<sup>2</sup> "TRACK: Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky," Kentucky Department of Education, May 15, 2023, <https://education.ky.gov/CTE/cter/pages/track.aspx>.

only available to college students are now given to apprentices. The college also collaborates with high schools to sponsor Kentucky Advanced Technology College High, KTECH, a marriage of dual credit with work-based learning, culminating with a high school diploma, an associate degree, and industry certification in one of ten health care occupations.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO COMBINE DUAL ENROLLMENT WITH YOUTH APPRENTICESHIPS

**Achieving equity** is always critical. A [six step process](#) recommended for dual enrollment and youth apprenticeship:

1. Publicly state the equity goal and report progress toward it.
2. Monitor course quality and ensure credit articulation.
3. Remove financial barriers for apprentices.
4. Ensure equal access to courses and pathways.
5. Recruit and support a diverse cadre of well-qualified instructors.
6. Give all students information and support to enable them to navigate career pathways.

Other aspects of a high-quality dual-enrollment program include the following:

**Quality Programming.** Stakeholders and staff should commit to continuous improvement. Attaining the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships ([NACEP](#))<sup>3</sup> accreditation is one step, parallel to federal and state registration of apprenticeships.

**Connecting high schools and colleges.** Both types of institutions must give leadership, commitment, and resources to make it possible for instructors to communicate and collaborate on behalf of their shared students. Each should assign staff explicitly to work and collaborate with the other.

**Credit that counts toward a two-year or four-year degree.** This may require policy changes in both two-year and four-year colleges because they often award certificates for CTE courses, not college credit.

**Effective public communication.** Programs need to overcome both the lack of knowledge and misconceptions about apprenticeship among young people, parents or guardians, and employers and to increase awareness of dual enrollment.

**Students who are prepared and advised.** School counselors need more and better access to labor market information and career planning assistance. Looking for such assistance is an option; for example, with a workforce development organization, apprenticeship intermediary, or state employment agency. All students can learn from classroom visitors who talk about their jobs, field trips, job shadowing, and internships.

**State education policies that facilitate dual enrollment, youth apprenticeship, and the combination.** States that actively support youth apprenticeship make it easier for educators and employers to create opportunities. Some states count students in dual-enrollment courses for both colleges and high schools when allocating aid. In contrast, some states' community college instructors are not allowed to teach high school students because they have not taken the education courses required for certification. States and local school districts often provide free tuition at community colleges for dual-enrollment students.

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<sup>3</sup> National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), accessed May 19, 2023, <https://www.nacep.org/>.