Access, Quality, and Success: The Road to Equity in Advanced Coursework

R. Davis Dixon, PhD
Today’s Roadmap

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Today’s Roadmap
The Education Trust Mission

The Education Trust is a nonprofit organization that promotes closing opportunity gaps by expanding excellence and equity in education for students of color and those from low-income families from pre-kindergarten through college. Through research and advocacy, the organization builds and engages diverse communities that care about education equity, increases political and public will to act on equity issues, and increases college access and completion for historically underserved students.
So What Do We Do?

- Research and policy analysis on patterns and practices that both cause and can eliminate inequities.

- Advocacy to share that knowledge and push for policies and practices that help to close gaps.

- Technical assistance to districts, states, and community-based organizations.
How does our work take shape?
The work at Ed Trust is rarely linear
What does our work look like?

Reports

Convenings

Social Media Engagement

Technical Support

Coalition Building
Today’s Roadmap

WHO WE ARE

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QUESTIONS ADVOCATES CAN ASK

CURRENT AND NEXT STEPS
Educational research tells us:

- Not enough students of color and students from low-income backgrounds are leaving high school ready for college or career.
- Key education stakeholders are paying closer attention to advanced coursework to ensure students are college/career ready.
- Issues of access, success, program & course quality, and subsequent college outcomes have become areas of concern.
What are the barriers to access and success?

Finding America’s Missing AP and IB Students

Bridging the Divide: Within integrated The Race Gap in High School Honors Classes

Why have smart, low-income NC students been excluded from advanced classes?

Finally, the US admits it: AP classes are way too white

The Underrepresentation of Black Students in Advanced Placement Courses: Student Perceptions of Peers, Teachers and School
Ed Trust’s Previous Work in Advanced Coursework
SYSTEMS FOR SUCCESS: THINKING BEYOND ACCESS TO AP
In order to foster not just access but success, school leaders have to move beyond simply offering opportunities to creating the supports that will help students thrive both in AP courses and in the courses that lead up to them.
ACCESS and QUALITY mean nothing without SUCCESS
Eliminate barriers for students, but back it up with support

- Increase opportunities for students to enroll in AP.
  - Allow for multiple roads toward participation
    - GPA’s
    - Class Ranks
    - Course History
    - Standardized Tests
    - Teacher/Counselor Recommendations

- Create support systems that fit into students’ and teachers’ schedules.
Systematically support teachers

• Build a staff of AP teachers who are confident and effective in the classroom.
  • AP specific professional development
  • Expose novice teachers to AP instruction gradually with real-time support from more experienced AP teachers.
  • Create opportunities for teachers to collaborate.
Optimize the master schedule

• Create a comprehensive master schedule to manage the availability of courses, tutoring, and other activities.
  • Accommodate student requests, especially for AP courses.
  • Track student representation in courses.
  • Schedule teacher professional development, tutorials and other activities so students have an opportunity to get everything they need.
Build a curriculum that ushers students toward AP

• Create a curriculum structure and pace that is intended to prepare students for AP coursework.

• Account for students who may come in behind academically.
  • Build interventions that bring students up to speed and prepares them to be successful in AP.
Create the expectation that all students are suited for AP

• Identify students who need support early to ensure they are ready for the challenge of AP later.

• Establish an AP culture.
  • AP is “what they do”
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CURRENT & NEXT STEPS
What is Dual Enrollment?
Overall, dual enrollment (including early college) students are more likely to earn a degree, pay less money for college, earn more college credits, have higher graduation rates, higher college enrollment rates, and take less time to complete a degree than similar, non participating students.
On average students of color have less access to advanced coursework programs than White students.
What are the barriers to access?

- Lack of Preparation or Course Quality
- Finances
- Systemic Barriers
Who has access to WHAT KIND of programs?
Four Indicators of Quality

- Rigor
- Instructor Quality
- Data Transparency
- Regular Evaluation
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How can we make dual enrollment programs equitable?
What questions should advocates be asking?

- How will states publicly report data?
- How will states and districts monitor participation and outcomes?
- How will states remove financial barriers for low- and middle-income students?
- How will partnerships address gaps in readiness and ensure that affected students receive support?
- How will states ensure high-quality design principles?
Quick Reflection

In teams of two or three, take a second to reflect on what we’ve gone over so far, and talk about what sticks out in the two videos.

Is there anything that you wish more people knew?

What else should advocates be doing to push policymakers?
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Our Advocacy in Practice

State-based policy recommendations

• Analysis of current policies
• Recommendations for policy changes
• Examples of promising practices
One Example: Credit Transferability

Current Policy
• Students not being guaranteed credit at both high school and higher education levels.

Recommendation
• Students should be able to earn credit in high school and college simultaneously, and credit should count towards high school graduation requirements.

Promising Practice
• Colorado: credits earned in dual enrollment coursework must count at both levels and must count toward requirements for high school graduation.
How do we plan to work to bring an equity lens to the dual enrollment conversation?

- Identify inequities
- Build knowledge about quality
- Examine course taking
Where to from here?
How can Ed Trust’s work be more helpful?
For more information, visit www.edtrust.org

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