



POLICY PROFILE: THE IMPACT OF HOUSE BILL 444 ON CAREER, TECHNICAL AND AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION DUAL ENROLLMENT AT TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM OF GEORGIA INSTITUTIONS

The modern labor market requires most learners to have some postsecondary education/credential to thrive.¹ For several decades, education systems have developed numerous approaches to readying learners for postsecondary instruction, including offering postsecondary courses while learners are still in high school and/or offering postsecondary credit for instruction earned in high school. One of the most common options is dual enrollment, which offers high school learners the opportunity to participate in courses that count toward both a high school and a postsecondary credential. In fact, approximately 88 percent of high schools offer dual enrollment, and 34 percent of U.S. learners take postsecondary college courses in high school.² In 2022 alone, 22 states enacted legislation to expand access to dual enrollment programs to a broader learner population.³

Georgia offers 17 Career Clusters[®] to prepare learners for post-graduation success by teaching employability and technical skills that are in demand now and will continue to be in the future.⁴ Every school district in the state offers career, technical and agricultural education (CTAE) pathways, and learners begin engaging with coursework as early as middle school. To learn more, visit [Georgia's state profile on Advance CTE's CTE in Your State page](#);⁵ the [Georgia Career, Technical and Agricultural Education homepage](#).^{6,7}



This policy profile examines recent legislative efforts in Georgia to redirect spending to support dual enrollment programs aligned to in-demand career fields.

Dual enrollment is one of Georgia's most popular education initiatives. At Georgia Piedmont Technical College (GPTC) alone, the population of dual enrollment learners has tripled in the past five years, accounting for more than 20 percent of the overall college enrollment.⁸ This exponential growth has been attributed to the availability of state funding for these programs through learner tuition grants.

DUAL ENROLLMENT IN GEORGIA

In 2009, the Georgia General Assembly passed the Move On When Ready (MOWR) Act, House Bill (H.B.) 149, establishing dual enrollment as a statewide mandate. Initially, only 11th- and 12th-grade learners were able to enroll in and receive funding for expenses accompanying both academic and CTAE dual enrollment courses. Learners were able to enroll in 12 semester hours to earn high school and college credits simultaneously.⁹

When the MOWR Act was reaffirmed in 2015, the law aimed to increase enrollment by streamlining several similarly focused programs (Accel Program, HOPE and Zell Miller Grant for dual enrollment and Move On When Ready) into one program with a singular funding source under the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC).¹⁰ The streamlining of these programs was a response to the confusion that school counselors and families expressed when trying to navigate the different rules and funding streams for the separate scholarship programs. Under the 2015 law, 9th- to 12th-grade learners could take core academic or CTAE courses for postsecondary credit. Articulation agreements between the Georgia Department of Education, the Georgia Technical College System (TCSG), and the University System of Georgia (USG) guarantee the transfer of certain academic and CTAE course credits.¹¹ Local colleges within TCSG have the option to broker specific articulation agreements for CTAE courses with USG to ensure the transfer of credits.



POLICY IN ACTION

In 2020, H.B. 444 was introduced to curtail spending increases that accompanied the exponential growth in dual enrollment across the state in the wake of the 2015 MOWR Act. At this time, Georgia's budget for dual enrollment programs was \$101 million¹² and served nearly 52,000 public, private and home-schooled learners.¹³ H.B. 444 limited the pool of learners eligible to participate in dual enrollment to 10th to 12th grade and capped the number of credits that learners can earn at 30.

H.B. 444 authorizes the HOPE Career Grant, which is available to HOPE Grant-qualified postsecondary learners who enroll in select majors specifically aligned with industries in which Georgia's labor market demand exceeds supply.¹⁴ Industries such as computer programming and practical nursing have been identified as strategically important to the state's economic growth and therefore qualify as high demand. Offering additional funding for these programs is part of a statewide strategy to increase enrollment in high-demand fields, and it aligns with a nationwide trend to promote postsecondary attainment and workforce readiness through dual enrollment programs. Under H.B. 444, learners must apply, meet and maintain the academic requirements of at least a 3.7 grade point average in their core curriculum courses to be eligible for scholarships.¹⁵ Despite the resources available through the HOPE Career Grant, only about 30 percent of learners enrolled in dual enrollment participate in CTAE programs.¹⁶

STATE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2022, [Dr. Kristin Corkhill](#), alumni of the inaugural cohort of [The Postsecondary State Career Technical Education Leaders Fellowship at Advance CTE – Sponsored by ECMC Foundation](#), conducted an analysis of [H.B. 444](#) and its impact on learner dual enrollment participation at GPTC. The restrictions implemented by this legislation forced postsecondary institutions to reconsider how to balance the needs, opportunities and access for secondary learners to participate in dual enrollment. She sought to identify the impact that H.B. 444 had on learner enrollment, disaggregated by subgroups of learners and CTAE fields of study. Dr. Corkhill found that learners were enrolling in fewer credits and that enrollment dropped across all fields of study. She also noted that, prior to the implementation of H.B. 444, the dual enrollment programs operating through GPTC had been popular among learners from lower socioeconomic populations and thus that the newly imposed restrictions had a disproportionate impact on this group. Dr. Corkhill's research on the impact of H.B. 444 supports the following policy recommendations for states to consider if they aspire to increase dual enrollment participation and completion equitably.

1. Strengthen partnerships between postsecondary institutions and local secondary school systems to create seamless transition among learner levels.

By improving communication and learner advising, learners and their families feel more confident in their path forward to complete a postsecondary credential and to do so as efficiently and seamlessly as possible.

Statewide articulation agreements, including transcribed credits, are a good way to ensure the complete and full transferability of credits. Further, a statewide list of courses offered at reduced or no tuition that apply toward either a career pathway or general education requirements helps school counselors advise learners about the courses that are most likely to be applicable to the credential or degree they aspire to earn.¹⁷

2. Expand dual enrollment access by analyzing the tuition allocated by learning location.

States can identify/authorize dual enrollment or concurrent enrollment courses to be taught at a high school campus to decrease the cost of enrollment or transportation to a postsecondary institution for the learner. Reallocating funds to reflect changes to the location or mode of delivery (i.e., online courses) expands access by offsetting the cost to learners, which would encourage more learners to participate in dual enrollment courses and extend the life of the program.

- Indiana authorized the Commission for Higher Education to lower the tuition cost of a set of concurrent enrollment courses because the courses were being taught by approved high school instructors at the high school, rather than on a postsecondary campus.
- Florida has waived all tuition and fees for concurrent enrollment courses, which occurs when learners take a course at their high school to receive college credit.

3. Incentivize secondary learners' participation in high-demand Career Technical Education (CTE) programs through scholarships.

In Georgia, HOPE Grant and HOPE Career Grant programs are state scholarships available for eligible learners who are enrolled in a diploma or technical certificate of credit. These scholarships provide 90 percent to 100 percent of tuition funding for programs in career areas deemed high-demand fields due to their alignment to state labor market trends.¹⁸ By analyzing labor market information, states can identify which postsecondary CTE programs are aligned to high-demand, high-wage careers and offer specialized grants to incentivize dual enrollment and completion to fill these vacancies.

4. Leverage statewide dual enrollment policies and investments, with a specific focus on marginalized learners, to expedite time to degree/credential completion.

Moving forward, CTE leaders should consider the power that dual enrollment courses have in improving learner outcomes, particularly those for whom the financial and time commitment may prohibit participation. Early opportunities to gain industry-aligned skills allow learners to develop confidence and awareness of how to be successful in postsecondary programs and beyond.



Some states have offset program costs by adjusting the tuition rates for classes taken at a college campus or remotely to reflect the location and time that the learner is taking the course.



- ¹ Carnevale, A. P., Smith, N., & Strohl, J. (2020). *Recovery: Job growth and education requirements through 2020*. Georgetown University Center on Education and Workforce. https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.ES_Web_.pdf
- ² Rhine, L. (2022, September). *The power of dual enrollment: The equitable expansion of college access and success*. HomeRoom: The Official Blog of the U.S. Department of Education. <https://blog.ed.gov/2022/09/the-power-of-dual-enrollment-the-equitable-expansion-of-college-access-and-success/#:~:text=Approximately%2088%25%20of%20high%20schools,college%20courses%20in%20high%20school>
- ³ Advance CTE. (2022). *State policies impacting CTE: 2022 year in review*. https://careertech.org/resource/2022_year_in_review
- ⁴ Georgia Department of Education. (n.d.). *CTAE delivers: 2020–2021 annual report*. <https://ctaedelivers.org/CTAE101>
- ⁵ Advance CTE. (n.d.). Georgia. <https://careertech.org/georgia>
- ⁶ Georgia Department of Education. (n.d.). *CTAE delivers: 2020-2021 annual report*. <https://ctaedelivers.org>
- ⁷ Georgia Piedmont Technical College. (n.d.). *Welcome to dual enrollment at Georgia Piedmont Tech!* <https://www.gptc.edu/future-students/high-school-students/>
- ⁸ Corkhill, K. (2023) *The impact of state funding on dual enrollment participation in CTAE programs*. Advance CTE. [LINK]
- ⁹ Georgia Department of Education. (2011). *What is the Move On When Ready (MOWR) Act?* <https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/CTAE/Documents/MOWR-separate-card.pdf>
- ¹⁰ Blackwell, M. (2015, August). *Move On When Ready (MOWR) Act: Top 10 questions answered!* Georgia Public Broadcasting. <https://www.gpb.org/blogs/education-matters/2015/08/21/move-on-when-ready-mowr-act-top-10-questions-answered>
- ¹¹ Georgia Department of Education. (n.d.). *Articulation*. <https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/CTAE/Pages/Articulation-.aspx>
- ¹² Owens, S. (2019). *Georgia education budget primer for state fiscal year 2020*. Georgia Budget & Policy Institute. <https://gbpi.org/georgia-education-budget-primer-for-state-fiscal-year-2020/#:~:text=Georgia's%202020%20budget%20for%20Dual,high%20school%20and%20college%20credit>
- ¹³ Lee, J. (2019). *Dual enrollment requires sustainable funding to promote high school and college success*. Georgia Budget & Policy Institute. <https://gbpi.org/dual-enrollment-requires-sustainable-funding-to-promote-high-school-and-college-success/#:~:text=About%2045%2C000%20out%20of%20522%2C000,students%20took%20Dual%20Enrollment%20courses.&text=%5B7%5D%20GBPI%20analysis%20of%20Georgia's%20FY%202020%20Budget>
- ¹⁴ Georgia Student Finance Commission. (n.d.). *HOPE Career Grant*. <https://www.gafutures.org/hope-state-aid-programs/hope-zell-miller-grants/hope-career-grant/>
- ¹⁵ Georgia Student Finance Commission. (n.d.). *My high school HOPE GPA*. <https://www.gafutures.org/hope-state-aid-programs/hope-zell-miller-grants/track-your-hope-academic-eligibility/my-high-school-hope-gpa/>
- ¹⁶ Corkhill, K. (2022). <https://careertech.org/resource/state-funding-dual-enrollment-participation-corkhill>
- ¹⁷ Zinth, J. (2019, October). *Funding for equity: Designing state dual enrollment funding models to close equity gaps*. College in the High School Alliance. <https://www.collegeinhighschool.org/finance>
- ¹⁸ Georgia Student Finance Commission. (n.d.) *TCSG-Eligible Programs*. <https://www.gafutures.org/hope-state-aid-programs/hope-zell-miller-grants/hope-career-grant/tcsg-eligible-programs/>



[The Postsecondary State Career Technical Education Leaders Fellowship at Advance CTE – Sponsored by ECMC Foundation](#) (The Fellowship) strives to address the growing shortage of state postsecondary CTE leadership by closing racial representation gaps and removing equity barriers to leadership advancement. Through individualized support, intentional network building and a real-world fellowship project, Advance CTE – ECMCF Fellows will gain the skills and network to pursue leadership positions and advance high-quality, equitable state postsecondary CTE systems.

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This policy review features original research and presents policy recommendations to highlight new and relevant CTE research topics being pursued by the inaugural class of The Fellowship. By highlighting this work and positioning the findings as potential action steps for Advance CTE's members and the national CTE landscape, we aspire to elevate a new – more diverse – generation of CTE leaders.