



Department of
Education

EPSO Strategic Growth Plan

Achieving Equity, Access, and Success through a
Portfolio Approach to Early Postsecondary
Opportunities

Office of Postsecondary Coordination & Alignment | September 2017



Overview

The division of college, career and technical education (CCTE) of the Tennessee Department of Education (department) established the office of postsecondary coordination and alignment in 2012 for the purpose of expanding and promoting early postsecondary opportunities¹ (EPSOs) for all high school students across the state. The office is also charged with collecting data and disseminating information related to these opportunities to students, parents, and educators. Over the past four years, the state has made great strides in creating and expanding early postsecondary opportunities for students and ensuring vertical alignment between secondary and postsecondary courses and programs. We are now at a key juncture where we must take a comprehensive look at our successes and challenges over the past four years in order to update our strategic growth plan in alignment with our goals for postsecondary attainment as outlined in the department’s strategic plan, *Tennessee Succeeds*,² and *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan*.³

Moreover, the department is striving to improve the percentage of “ready” graduates, who demonstrate the necessary skills for postsecondary and workforce readiness. A ready graduate will not only receive a high school diploma but will also have **acquired early postsecondary experiences**, earned industry certification, and/or met college-readiness benchmarks on ACT or SAT. The department will steadily improve the quality and meaningfulness of a high school diploma toward reaching our **goal of a majority of graduates going on to earn a postsecondary credential**.

—ESSA State Plan, April 3, 2017

In examining the available data on early postsecondary course enrollment and testing outcomes for the graduating class of 2015, the most recent cohort for which we have comprehensive data, we have identified several important trends. First despite nearly universal access with 92 percent of high schools offering at least one EPSO, only 41 percent of the cohort enrolled in an early postsecondary opportunity. Second, we see additional drop-offs in success in both testing and credits earned; however, some strong numbers in matriculation show that students who successfully earn EPSO credit in high school are highly likely to articulate that credit when they enter into postsecondary. Finally, our observations also reveal large gaps between student subgroups despite increased access to EPSOs across districts. **This plan will explore strategies and identify key benchmarks⁴ that will focus on expanding access for all students and creating equitable access and success across student subgroups.**

¹ Definitions for bolded terms throughout this document can be found in the Glossary, pages 17-19.

² Tennessee Department of Education’s Strategic Plan, *Tennessee Succeeds*, can be found at <https://www.tn.gov/education/about-tdoe/strategic-plan.html>

³ The ESSA State Plan is available at https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/documents/TN_ESSA_State_Plan_Approved.pdf

⁴ Benchmark data can be found in the Appendix, page 29.

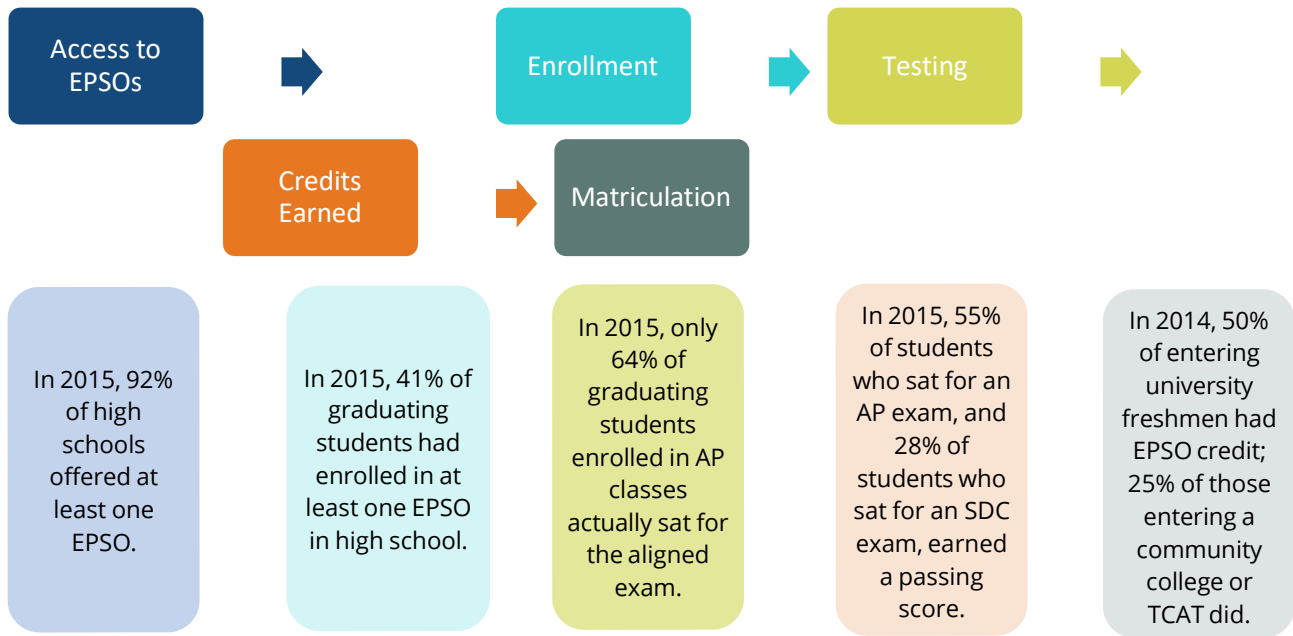


Figure 1. Current data at each step of the EPSO process for graduating class of 2015 (2011 Cohort Study)

Connecting to the Big Picture

In order to meet Governor Haslam’s goal of Tennessee becoming the number one state in the southeast for economic growth and jobs creation, 55 percent or more of our citizens need some sort of postsecondary credential, certificate, or degree. A key pillar of the governor’s Drive to 55⁵ initiative is that the state’s K–12 education system is producing graduates who are ready for postsecondary learning and career attainment.

Therefore, the department is responsible for increasing the number of graduates who enroll, persist, and ultimately graduate from a postsecondary institution. Secondary students who enroll in and complete early postsecondary courses are more likely to enroll in, persist through, and complete postsecondary learning.⁶ The department’s foundational beliefs are:

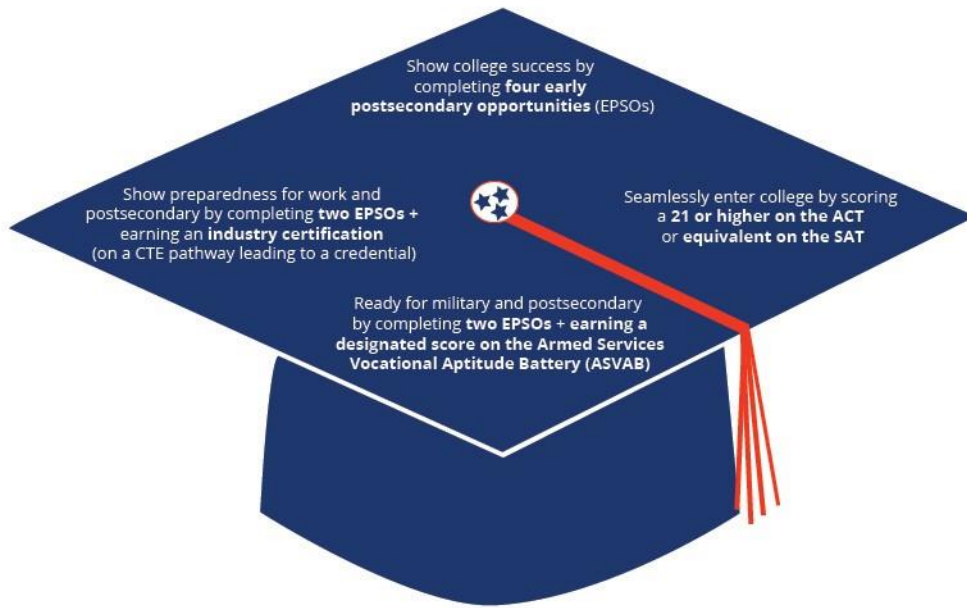
- All high school students in Tennessee should have the opportunity to earn postsecondary credits that are aligned with, and transferable to, postsecondary programs of study.
- All high schools in Tennessee should provide a portfolio of early postsecondary opportunities for students, addressing a diversity of student interests, prior academic performance, needs, and postsecondary aspirations.

⁵ Learn more about Governor Haslam's Drive to 55 Initiative at <http://driveto55.org/>.

⁶ Struhl, Ben and Joel Vargas. *Taking College Courses in High School: A Strategy for College Readiness. Jobs for the Future.* October 2012. <http://www.jff.org/publications/taking-college-courses-high-school-strategy-college-readiness>

Defining the Ready Graduate

Our goal is for every student to graduate high school ready to successfully embark on what's next—and there are multiple pathways to get there. In Tennessee's ESSA plan, we included a new Ready Graduate indicator to ensure that students have opportunities in high school to prepare for life after graduation. A Ready Graduate meets expectations for one of four designated pathways:



Strategic Plan Goals

In order to achieve the possibilities outlined in our anchoring beliefs and meet the goals outlined by both *Tennessee Succeeds* and the Governor's Drive to 55 initiative, we must hit specific goals by the graduating class of 2020. Through ensuring that all students have access to EPSOs, regardless of their background or ACT score, we increase the likelihood of reaching key benchmark goals that are differentiated by equitable access and diverse opportunities⁴. The core priorities, strategic plan recommendations, and key benchmark goals outlined in this plan will aim to achieve the goals listed below for each of the five steps in the EPSO student pipeline⁷.

By 2020:

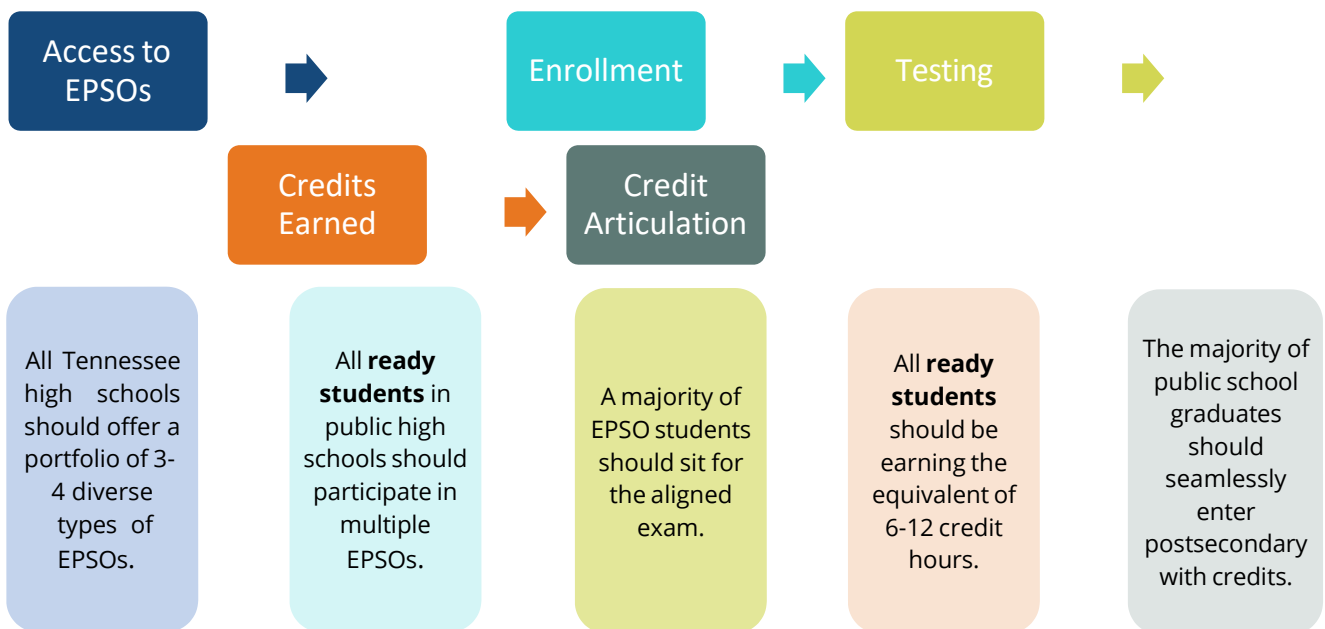


Figure 2. Strategic Plan Goals

⁷ For a full list of all of the steps in the EPSO process, see figure 4 on page 5.

EPSO Strategic Growth Plan

Introduction

Research has found that taking early postsecondary courses in high school increases postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and success after graduation.⁸ Yet, only about 40 percent of Tennessee public education students are enrolling in early postsecondary courses⁹. **Early postsecondary opportunities are defined as opportunities that allow high school students to earn postsecondary credits that are accepted by Tennessee’s higher education institutions.** In the state of Tennessee, we recognize eight early postsecondary opportunities, including Advanced Placement (AP), Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), College Level Exam Program (CLEP), Dual Enrollment (DE), International Baccalaureate (IB), Local Dual Credit (LDC), Statewide Dual Credit (SDC) and promoted capstone industry certifications (IC).¹⁰

Core Priorities

We have identified five core priorities, which build from the work of the EPSO strategic growth plan (2012-15)¹¹ and align with the department’s strategic plan, *Tennessee Succeeds*, driving our activities through 2020. These core priorities (Figure 3 on the following page) will guide the overarching work of the strategic plan—recognizing, however, that not all of our eight EPSOs have the same context, challenges, or successes.

1. **Expand access** to early postsecondary opportunities by increasing (1) the number of high schools offering EPSOs and (2) the number and diversity of offerings at each school.
2. **Enhance quality and relevance** of early postsecondary opportunities by (1) ensuring vertical alignment between student learning pathways in secondary and postsecondary and (2) improving instructional practices to improve student success and credit attainment.
3. **Increase number of students earning and articulating credit** from secondary to postsecondary by (1) closing achievement gaps in student subgroups and (2) overcoming barriers to testing and credit articulation for matriculating students to allow more students to increase their probability of successfully obtaining a postsecondary credential.
4. **Increase stakeholder awareness** regarding early postsecondary opportunities by providing high quality marketing and communication materials and goal-driven strategies to reach a diversity of stakeholders.
5. **Develop strong data practices** that take place on an ongoing basis, at regular intervals to obtain high-quality, timely student outcome data to make policy, funding, and implementation decisions to continuously evaluate and improve programs.

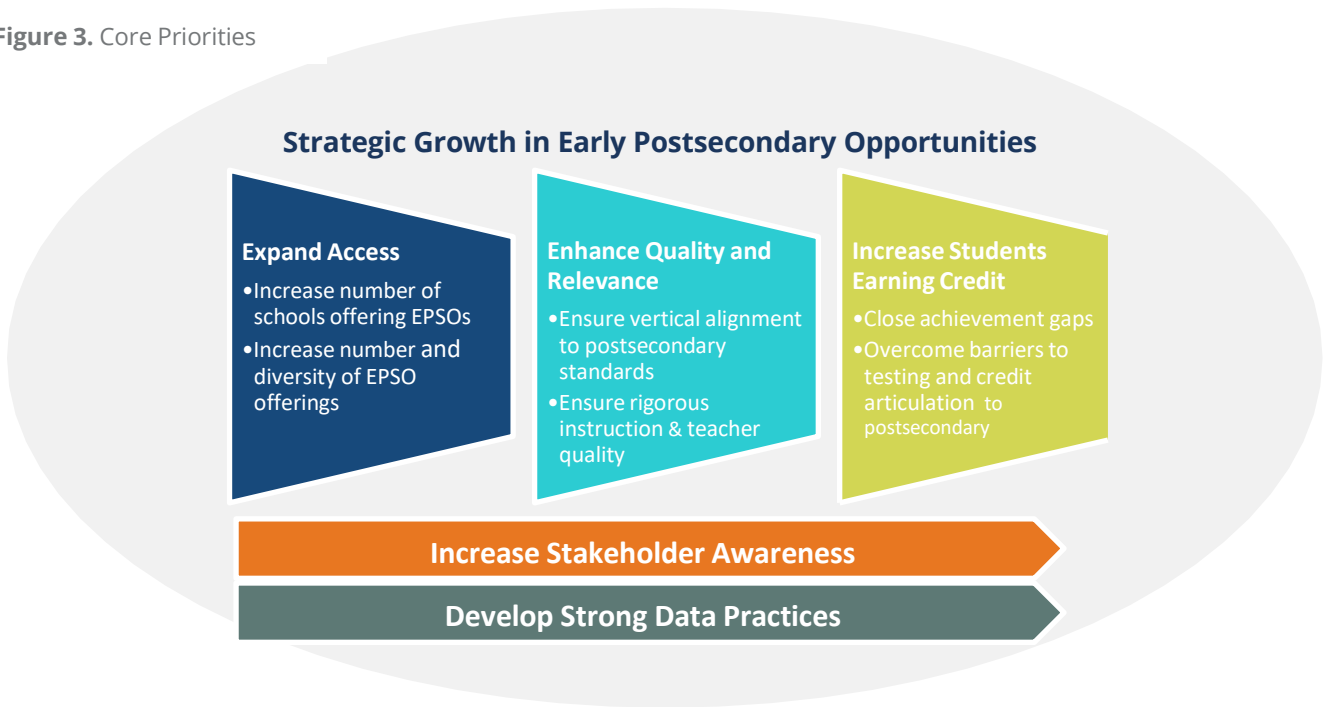
⁸Struhl, Ben and Joel Vargas. *Taking College Courses in High School: A Strategy for College Readiness. Jobs for the Future.* October 2012. <http://www.jff.org/publications/taking-college-courses-high-school-strategy-college-readiness>

⁹ Attridge, Jonathon. *Tennessee EPSO Landscape – 2011 Cohort Study.* July 2016.

¹⁰ For additional details on each type of EPSO, see Appendix A.

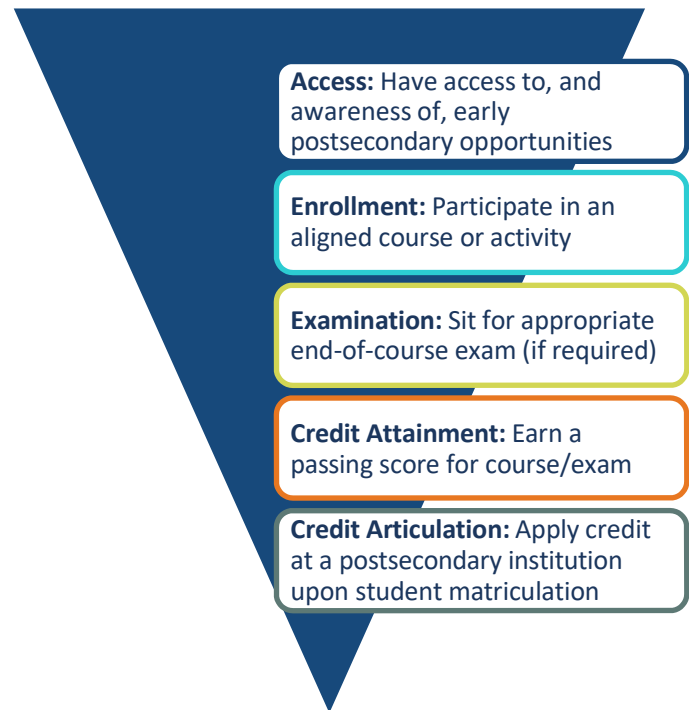
¹¹ For information on the original belief statements and core priorities of the 2012-15 strategic plan, see Appendix B.

Figure 3. Core Priorities



EPSO Process: The Student Pipeline

To increase the number of students earning postsecondary credits while in high school, we need to first understand the path they must follow to earn credit. For example, students cannot sit for a specific early postsecondary exam unless their high school offers the aligned course and they have enrolled appropriately for that course. Each of the five steps outlined in Figure 4 are a part of the EPSO process, starting with access and concluding with credit articulation to a postsecondary institution. Growth in each of the five steps of the EPSO process is needed to ensure a majority of students are on track by 2020 to earn a postsecondary credential¹²



¹² Tennessee Succeeds

Current EPSO Initiatives

Over the past four years, the department has implemented many initiatives to increase and improve early postsecondary opportunities for students. These initiatives, ranging from funding for exams to vertically aligning secondary and postsecondary programs, have shown good results. However, challenges in the initiatives, most notably lag time in accessing data results, limited staff capacity, and limited stakeholder awareness, have direct implications on a larger scale-up of efforts around increasing access to and enrollment in EPSOs for students across the state. If we can address these challenges, we can begin to narrow the achievement gap and better support growth in EPSOs at both the state and local levels.

| Initiative | Description | Results | Considerations |
|--|--|--|---|
| AP Exam Fee Pilot and Pilot Extension | Small pilot program that is designed to increase student participation in AP exams by eliminating the exam fee (\$89 per exam) associated with selected AP courses for students in qualifying schools. | Initial findings by Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury ¹³ found an increase in testing but not a corresponding increase in students earning credit, due to a lower pass rate. | Because annual state funding allocations are awarded late spring, there has been a significant challenge to communicate in advance, making it difficult to fully implement the materials and resources provided to teachers through the pilot program and gauge its impact on teacher quality and student exam results. |
| AP Rural Expansion Pilot | Provide resources to selected districts to offer AP courses to their students (including teacher trainings through AP institutes) and assistance planning. | To date, only half of the originally targeted schools actually implemented an AP program during the 2015-16 academic year. | Additional sites have been identified, but continual funding to scale up expansion efforts and cover the cost of AP institute, for teachers, each year is needed. |
| Federal AP Grant | Federal AP Test Fee Grant to cover a portion of the costs for economically disadvantaged students who take AP exams. | We have seen year-over-year increases in total AP exams taken. Overall, 2,000 additional tests were taken in 2016 than in 2015. | This program is no longer offered by the federal government. The department will fold this funding into its ESSA block grant. |
| Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCAT) – CTE Pilot | Provide assistance to high schools and TCATs to increase dual enrollment and local dual credit opportunities for students in targeted career and technical education courses (CTE). | We have seen increases in students participating in dual enrollment at TCAT over the past several years and have expanded program for the 2016-17 year. | The department will need to train district CTE directors and Centers of Regional Excellence (CORE) consultants to monitor programs to continue to expand. |
| Perkins Reserve Grant | Competitive grant funding through Carl D. Perkins IV to allow districts to receive funding to pay for student industry certifications. | We have seen a 59 percent pass rate on industry certifications for districts who received Perkins Reserve Grant funding for industry certifications. 675 students earned an industry certification in the 2015-16 year through this grant. | The department is expanding this grant from \$10,000 to \$12,000 to continue support for students. The department is also allowing districts to receive additional grant funding to become a testing site to allow easier access for students to take exams associated with industry certifications. |
| Statewide Dual Credit Pilot | Creation of statewide learning objectives and challenge exams for select courses, allowing students to earn postsecondary credit at any public institution by meeting the cut score of challenge exam. | Throughout the life of the pilot, nearly 2,500 students have earned postsecondary credit. Courses have expanded from three in 2013-14 to eight in 2016-17. | Continued increases in staff capacity and annual funding to support the annual expansions of the program (additional courses and students) are crucial to the sustainability and success of this initiative. |
| Development of Early Postsecondary (EPS) Database | Creation of virtual database to house credits earned through statewide dual credit courses. | We have seen successful deployment of database and training of appropriate secondary and postsecondary stakeholders. | Expand the EPS database to include other postsecondary credits earned, and link to student information systems, such as EIS, and the state's longitudinal database, P20W. |

¹³ Klafehn, Amanda. [Advanced Placement and Industry Certification Exam Fee Pilot Programs: Conclusions and Policy Considerations](#). Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury. October 2015.

Where are we now?

As shown in Figure 1 on page two, Tennessee school districts offer a wide breadth of early postsecondary opportunities, with nearly every high school offering at least one type of opportunity. However, only about half of students who have demonstrated academically that they are prepared to enroll in an early postsecondary opportunity actually do, and we see further drop offs in both sitting for the aligned exam and passing those exams to earn credit. We need to understand the current barriers to student success in order to enact strategies and activities to meet our goals.

Barriers to Student Success

Though our current EPSO portfolio of offerings and initiatives is one of the largest of any state, our data show few of our students ultimately go on to earn credit prior to graduation. When looking at each step in the EPSO process by geography, race, economic background, and subject-area interest, we are able to see stark differences in the outcomes of subgroups in our student population. Understanding the barriers our students face in earning postsecondary credits will allow us to implement strategies targeted at reducing or eliminating these barriers so that more students—across all subgroups—are successfully earning credit and matriculating to a postsecondary institution. Figure 5, below, outlines some of these challenges at each step of the EPSO process.

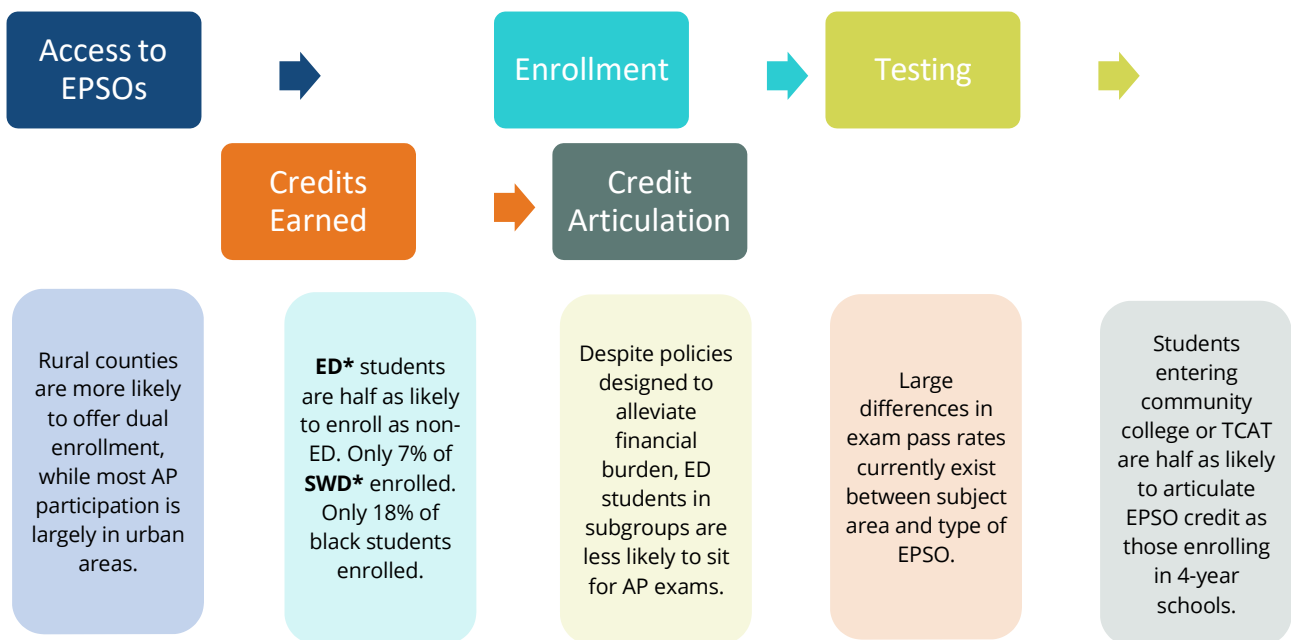


Figure 5. Current Barriers to Student Success for graduating class of 2015 (2011 Cohort Study)

***Economically Disadvantaged (ED):** Students that meet the direct certification eligibility guidelines. A “directly certified” student is one who is participating in state or federal assistance programs, such as: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Head Start.

***Students with Disabilities (SWD):** Students who meet the eligibility criteria to receive special education services in the state of Tennessee

By increasing access to all students who are ready to participate in early postsecondary opportunities¹⁴, regardless of their background, providing more and better aligned opportunities for all students, and overcoming obstacles to earning and articulating credit (such as testing fees, teacher quality, and credit-acceptance policies), we will be able to continue to increase the number of students earning postsecondary credit while in high school.

At each step in the EPSO process, specific changes to close the gaps listed above could mean drastic increases in the total number of students benefiting from EPSOs, increasing their likelihood of success in obtaining a credential or degree. For example, closing the gap between student subgroups (such as economically disadvantaged, non-white, and students with disabilities) with the overall student population would nearly double the number of students participating in EPSOs statewide. Overcoming barriers to testing, such as the cost of Advanced Placement exams, could mean an additional 10,000 students who are already enrolled in an EPSO leave high school with postsecondary credit.

In addition to the challenges listed for each of the steps in the EPSO process, there are additional challenges from a state administration perspective, including communication and data analyses. The inability to accurately see how many students are taking advantage of a given opportunity and a notable lag-time in matching student data through the state's longitudinal data system have proven to be a challenge for real-time, data-based decision making. However, focusing on accurate data reporting will allow us to make the best decisions possible, based on the highest quality information available.

Alignment with ESSA State Plan & Accountability Framework

Tennessee's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan especially calls attention to the role of early postsecondary opportunities in increasing the likelihood of students progressing on to successfully enroll in, persist through, and complete a postsecondary program to earn a credential or degree. By drawing attention to these links, the ESSA state plan aims to use EPSOs as a proxy for student readiness for postsecondary and career. Specifically, the department believes that the accumulation of postsecondary credit in high school a key factor to determining if both an individual student has a probability of success after graduation from our K-12 education system and also the success of an individual school and district in preparing students for postsecondary credentials and degrees.

Elements of EPSOs in the ESSA plan include:

- a reference to developing goals, strategies, and action steps to increase EPSOs as a part of school and district improvement plans and annual program monitoring (p. 293);
- suggestion of using Title IV block grant funding to offset the cost of EPSOs (p.286-295); and
- addition of a new indicator, "Ready Graduate," in the state accountability framework to recognize and reward schools who are producing graduates who have earned a significant number of postsecondary credits while still in high school (p. 68).

¹⁴ In the graduating class of 2015, only 55 percent of students who scored at or above college-ready benchmark on exams administered during their sophomore year attempted an EPSO during high school.

Strategic Recommendations

The following recommendations, by core priority area, are a result of an in-depth review of current early postsecondary patterns in Tennessee, from access to enrollment to success. Action items and strategies have been recommended to both capitalize on the success of current initiatives as well as overcome barriers that continue to inhibit our students' success. These action items will build toward the goals outlined above in the next four years.

Core Priority One: Expand Access



Expand Access

- Increase number of schools offering EPSOs
- Increase number and diversity of EPSO offerings

Expand access to early postsecondary opportunities by increasing the number of high schools offering EPSOs and the number and diversity of offerings at each school.

This core priority is meant to close the gap in the number of students who have the ability to enroll in an early postsecondary course and ensure that all high schools are offering a portfolio of opportunities to meet students' diverse needs and abilities

Aligned goal: *By 2020, all Tennessee high schools should offer a portfolio of 3–4 diverse types of EPSOs.*

Recommendations Impacting All EPSOs

- Complete a full census of early postsecondary opportunities offered by district along with data audit of student enrollment in order to create a district-by-district hot/cold spot analysis to effectively target districts for support to expand opportunities.
- Through “hot spot” analysis and district visits, identify promising practices within the state to promote appropriate programmatic decisions to expand the number of students who participate in EPSOs.
- Complete data-gathering activities (e.g., digital surveys, calls, and school visits) to identify barriers to offering specific EPSOs in specific district contexts in order to address barriers with additional technical assistance and support.
- Develop school mentorship program and networking opportunities to partner “cold spot” schools/districts with schools/districts with strong EPSO programs to provide peer mentorship on how to effectively start or expand programs.
- Conduct a literature review, meet with EPSO partners (such as College Board), and reach out to other states to identify promising practices across the country and evaluate potential of implementation in Tennessee.
- Publish full list of substitutions of EPSOs for graduation requirements in order combat misconceptions and increase enrollment.
- Pursue state funding through legislative appropriation to scale pilot expansion programs and support annual EPSO growth.
- Provide technical assistance and partnership connection support for districts who are interested in starting or expanding virtual/distance course options for providing EPSOs to students, particularly in rural areas.

| Recommendations for Specific EPSOs | |
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| Advanced Placement (AP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create project materials, compile planning documents, and effectively record progress of AP Rural Expansion initiative in order to gain traction for program and evaluate progress to date. • Expand AP Rural Expansion initiative by adding new sites and increasing number of teachers going through professional development training to start new AP programs. • Work with regional and national organizations (such as College Board, Code.org, and National Math and Science Initiative) to increase student participation and success in AP through grant-funded partnership activities, such as teacher training and curriculum support. • Investigate potential to support schools and districts in developing relationships with other districts and/or postsecondary institutions to offer virtual AP offerings to expand access, particularly in rural areas. |
| Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and proactively share marketing and communications materials about the Cambridge program with district and school leaders; providing a clear point of contact at the department for inquiries into new programs. • Work closely with CIE regional, national, and international program staff to target and support potential new program locations and share data on existing programs. • Intentionally highlight the promising practices of existing CIE programs in public communications channels reaching school and district leaders. |
| College Level Exam Program (CLEP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete full analysis of all available CLEP tests and publish full alignment document (with available high school courses and aligned postsecondary acceptance scores/credits) to encourage educators teaching aligned high school courses to allow—and encourage—their students to sit for identified exams. • Develop and proactively share marketing and communications materials about the CLEP program with district and school leaders. • Expand data-sharing agreements with College Board in order to gather data on existing CLEP test usage and target growth by district. |
| Dual Enrollment (DE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor progress of institutions participating in US DOE Pell Grant Experiment and offer technical assistance as new programs develop. • Continue to identify and expand secondary programs of study in CTE that can be linked with instruction at TCATs in order to better serve students, including publishing full vertical alignment document between CTE programs of study and TCAT programs. • Create project materials, compile planning documents, and effectively record progress of TCAT/CCTE pilot program in order to gain traction for program and evaluate progress to date. • Create uniform statewide memorandum of understanding (MOU) template(s) that clearly outlines terms of agreement and expectations of both the secondary and postsecondary institutions for dual enrollment programs in TCAT, CC, and four-year schools. • Update and publish dual enrollment crosswalk document to serve as a resource for postsecondary dual enrollment coordinators to discuss appropriately aligned courses with local secondary schools. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) institutions and local districts who are interested in creating early college models for expansion of dual enrollment programs. • Proactively message and promote online/virtual opportunities for TBR courses, in which DE students may participate. |
| International Baccalaureate (IB) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and proactively share marketing and communications materials about the International Baccalaureate program with district and school leaders. • Work closely with IB regional, national, and international program staff to target and support potential new program locations and share data on existing programs. • Intentionally highlight the promising practices of existing IB programs in public communications channels reaching school and district leaders. |
| Local Dual Credit (LDC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create uniform statewide memorandum of understanding (MOU) template(s) that clearly outlines terms of agreement and expectations of both the secondary and postsecondary institutions for local dual credit programs in TCAT, CC, and four-year schools. • Work with TBR, University of Tennessee (UT), and TICUA staff to develop comprehensive statewide expectations for prior learning assessments, including cost, and proactively share information with school and district leaders. |
| Statewide Dual Credit (SDC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to expand number of courses offered each year by developing new course content annually. • Make concerted effort to target specific schools and districts for expansion of SDC programs where there are currently no SDC offerings. • Monitor progress of courses transitioning out of pilot in order to allow for statewide implementation success. |
| Industry Certification (IC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with CTE career cluster consultants to support targeted expansion of student access to certifications based on current program implementation and alignment and technical assistance on Perkins Reserve Grants. • Work with the department’s talent improvement team to offer educator training for industry certification programs during annual <i>Institute for CTE Educators</i>. • Publish—and update annually—clear list of department-recognized industry certifications and their alignment to department-promoted CTE programs of study and available postsecondary credits/hours and proactively share information with school and district leaders. |

Core Priority Two: Enhance Quality & Relevance

Enhance Quality and Relevance

- Ensure vertical alignment to postsecondary standards
- Ensure rigorous instruction & teacher quality

Enhance quality and relevance of early postsecondary opportunities by (1) ensuring vertical alignment between student learning pathways in secondary and postsecondary and (2) improving instructional practices to improve student success and credit attainment.

This core priority is meant to improve the instructional quality of early postsecondary opportunities offered, thereby increasing testing success and credit earned, while also increasing the relevance of those opportunities to student learning pathways, which will increase student matriculation and ultimate success.

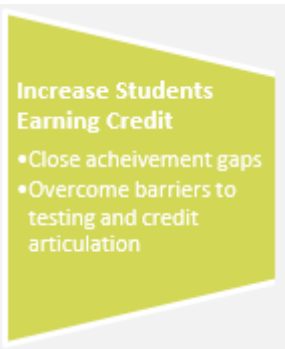
Aligned goal: *By 2020, all “ready” students in public high schools should participate in multiple EPSOs.*

| Recommendations Impacting All EPSOs | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a high school guidance document that makes recommendations for acceptance of appropriate early postsecondary opportunities for graduation requirements including working with accountability team for appropriate end-of-course (EOC) exam substitution information to incentivize placement of students into EPSO courses. • Complete full vertical alignment document to align general education and career and technical education programs of study and courses with available postsecondary programs, focus of study, and course(s). • Annually evaluate content of all recognized EPSOs and update individual program lists to ensure the course offerings are rigorous and relevant to both student and community needs and stakeholders understand which opportunities are prioritized over others (because of quality and alignment to—and recognition by—postsecondary). • Complete full data audit of student exam score results and identify specific subject area exams with lower “pass rates” to focus additional teacher preparation and support (including SDC, AP, and industry certifications). • Review data to evaluate how EPSO credit is articulated to postsecondary institutions (including if it is accepted for credit in a major program of study or just as an elective) and take steps to increase acceptance in programs of study/focus areas. • Collaborate with the department’s content and assessment design team to create and distribute instructional materials for teachers and students that focus on the literacy, research, and critical thinking skills necessary to be successful in a postsecondary-level course. | |
| Recommendations for Specific EPSOs | |
| Advanced Placement (AP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide professional development workshops for educators and AP Insight digital curriculum support through the AP Fee Pilot Extension program to increase teacher effectiveness and student pass rates. • Evaluate and continue to work toward a partnership plan with College Board to offer ad-hoc resources to schools and districts that desire additional support to grow AP programs. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive for general consistency in acceptance of AP examination scores across all postsecondary institutions and publish alignment document showing acceptance of courses and credits. • Through partnerships with other organizations, provide ongoing professional development opportunities to secondary teachers who are teaching AP courses to ensure rigorous classroom instruction. |
| Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and publish alignment document showing acceptance of CIE courses and credits by postsecondary institutions in the state. • Conduct anecdotal data-gathering of postsecondary students who graduated with CIE credits to evaluate relevance and quality of existing programs. |
| College Level Exam Program (CLEP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the department's talent improvement team to offer training for both general education and CTE educators on how to increase rigor of high school standards to align to CLEP exams during <i>Institute for CTE Educators</i>. • Identify CLEP exams aligned to CTE programs of study to promote as an embedded part of a program of study. |
| Dual Enrollment (DE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to attend meetings of the TBR Dual Enrollment Ad-Hoc Committee to answer questions and evaluate quality of dual enrollment programs throughout the state. • Develop and implement a "co-requisite remediation" pilot through dual enrollment programs to target students who are not yet hitting college and career readiness benchmarks to complete both postsecondary credit-bearing courses and developmental support while still in high school. |
| International Baccalaureate (IB) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and publish alignment document showing acceptance of IB courses and credits by postsecondary institutions in the state. • Conduct anecdotal data-gathering of postsecondary students who graduated with IB credits to evaluate relevance and quality of existing programs. |
| Local Dual Credit (LDC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct anecdotal data-gathering of postsecondary students who graduated with IB credits to evaluate relevance and quality of existing programs. |
| Statewide Dual Credit (SDC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revamp statewide dual credit teacher training, including an evaluation of instructional deliverables during training, to improve educator preparation and ultimately, student scores on challenge exam. • Conduct school-year follow-up observations and technical assistance for specific teachers, based on determined need, to increase challenge exam scores. • Continue to conduct an annual review/validation of all courses to ensure continued alignment to postsecondary standards and expectations as well as secondary and postsecondary programs of study. • Take steps to streamline data collection and registration (including instituting separate course codes for ease of use) for participating SDC schools and districts. • Conduct anecdotal data-gathering of postsecondary students who graduated with IB credits to evaluate relevance and quality of existing programs. |

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|------------------------------------|---|
| Industry Certification (IC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start, or in some subjects, continue, content-specific industry training for educators during <i>Institute for CTE Educators</i>, focused on areas with low pass rates for exams.• Increase collaboration between units within the division of CTE and with CTE directors to align EPSOs with the demand of business and industry based on results of industry advisory council meetings and local and regional data review.• Partner with professional organizations providing IC exams, as well as other state agencies (such as the departments of health, commerce, etc.), to provide technical assistance to programs who are testing students for the first time or who are experiencing low student exam pass rates.• Continue to promote Perkins Reserve Grant opportunities for districts to pay for student industry certifications and to pay for schools to become testing sites to allow for easier access for students to sit for and pass industry certification exams. |
|------------------------------------|---|

Core Priority Three: Increase Students Earning Credit



Increase number of students earning and articulating credit from secondary to postsecondary by (1) closing achievement gaps in student subgroups and (2) overcoming barriers to testing and credit articulation for matriculating students to allow more students to increase their probability of successfully obtaining a postsecondary credential.

This core priority is meant to address significant gaps in student course-taking and earned credit, particularly by our students who are economically disadvantaged, minority students, and students with disabilities. Additionally, we must address challenges, such as test fees and logistical barriers, which may keep qualified students from earning credit.

Aligned goals: *By 2020, a majority of EPSO students should sit for the aligned exam; and all “ready” students should be earning the equivalent of 6 credit hours.*

Recommendations Impacting All EPSOs

- Continue to evaluate and improve the policies and processes of the department (including annual updates to the accountability framework) to transparently track, incentivize, and reward schools and districts who make progress on increasing students successfully completing EPSOs (including closing gaps in student sub-group achievement) and targeting support to schools and districts who are not making expected progress.
- Collaborate with the department’s office of research and policy and with the **Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC)** to review (and share with schools/districts) student data on participation, progress, and outcomes in secondary and postsecondary education in order to draw conclusions about successful practices and identify existing barriers to achievement.
- Pursue federal funding through ESSA block grant and Perkins Grant to provide test fee assistance for EPSOs (including AP, IB, Cambridge, local dual credit, CLEP, and industry certifications) to increase testing by economically disadvantaged students.
- Pursue state funding through annual legislative appropriation for economically disadvantaged student scholarships for fees associated with participation in dual enrollment programs not covered by current dual enrollment grant funds.
- Develop and promote data practices for districts to appropriately identify students for placement into advanced coursework and provide training on appropriate use of data, master scheduling, and other identified challenges, to support school and district capacity building.
- Proactively share data on student EPSO success, *Test Anxiety Toolkit*, and other materials to address student barriers to credit attainment through regional school counselor collaboratives, integrated leadership course, and TASL academies to build school and district capacity to address challenges and improve student outcomes.
- Explore potential of state funding to provide regional career advisories to support district student advisement approaches and industry engagement in K-12.

| Recommendations for Specific EPSOs | |
|---|--|
| Advanced Placement (AP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively distribute resources and strategies—and provide training—to counselors and other secondary school administrators that identify students with AP interest and readiness, including available resources produced by College Board as well as state-level academic data. • Target and provide technical assistance to districts/schools that have less than twenty percent of students enrolled in an AP course sitting for the exam (Use AP district data provided by College Board each year to determine targeted sites). • Explore policy and accountability measures (such as uniform grading, graduation with distinction, and accountability framework) to incentivize all enrolled students to sit for aligned exam. • Continue to fund test fees for students through existing pilots and federal grant funds (if available). |
| Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore policy and accountability measures (such as uniform grading, graduation with distinction, and accountability framework) to incentivize all enrolled students to sit for aligned exam. • Continue to fund test fees for students through federal grant funds (if available). |
| College Level Exam Program (CLEP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore policy and accountability measures (such as uniform grading, graduation with distinction, and accountability framework) to incentivize students to sit for any available aligned exam(s). • Continue to fund test fees for students through federal grant funds (if available). |
| Dual Enrollment (DE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) to complete data audit to understand make-up of students in dual enrollment courses, differences in student populations by school and/or subject, and pass rates, in order to create specific action plan to address gap areas. |
| International Baccalaureate (IB) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore policy and accountability measures (such as uniform grading, graduation with distinction, and accountability framework) to incentivize all enrolled students to sit for aligned exam. • Continue to fund test fees for students through federal grant funds (if available). |
| Local Dual Credit (LDC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore policy and accountability measures (such as uniform grading, graduation with distinction, and accountability framework) to incentivize students to sit for any available aligned exam(s). |
| Statewide Dual Credit (SDC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure understanding by pilot coordinator and SDC teacher on 100 percent student test policies, including using testing platform. • Update flagging and roster verification process for more effective student roster development for testing. • Increase pass rates through more effective teacher trainings, as measured by year-over-year increase in educator feedback during the summer SDC trainings. • Conduct school visits and teacher observations to evaluate extent to which SDC teachers are instructing using correct postsecondary standards which will be covered on challenge exam. |
| Industry Certification (IC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate CTE director trainings to ensure programs who have qualified students are aware of credit articulations to TCAT programs and are working toward certification for teachers and students. |

Core Priority Four: Increase Stakeholder Awareness

Increase Stakeholder Awareness

Increase stakeholder awareness regarding early postsecondary opportunities by providing high quality marketing and communication materials and goal-driven strategies to reach a diversity of stakeholders.

This core priority is meant to continue to expand awareness of early postsecondary opportunities, particularly for students and families, who can advocate for increased access and support locally. Also important are educators who assist students in advising, planning, and course taking, including school counselors and middle and high school administrators.

Aligned goal: *By 2020, all “ready” students in public high schools should participate in multiple EPSOs.*

| Recommendations Impacting All EPSOs | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and intentionally distribute physical copies of a full suite of marketing materials for students and families on each EPSO, including full poster (comparing opportunities) and individual posters for each opportunity. • Develop toolkit and materials, and proactively recruit districts to participate in statewide “EPSO Week” campaign, including distributing physical materials, conducting social media campaign, and supporting schools in hosting “parent nights,” in conjunction with THEC’s <i>Path to College</i> events. • Create targeted contact list of non-profit and community stakeholders with which to proactively share EPSO marketing materials and information, in order to build community advocacy capacity for expanding local EPSO availability and enrollment. • Conduct trainings with CORE directors and CORE office staff on how to facilitate conversations around expanding EPSOs in a local district, including providing case study materials, data, and diagnostic and planning questions. • Include EPSO awareness and messages training in available teacher and leader trainings offered by the department. | |
| Recommendations for Specific EPSOs | |
| Advanced Placement (AP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with commissioner’s office and communications team to publically celebrate “AP Honor Roll” schools and districts who increase participation and success. |
| Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with Cambridge International and existing Tennessee Cambridge schools to record and publish an informational webinar/video introducing the Cambridge program to stakeholders who may not be aware of its elements and benefits. |
| College Level Exam Program (CLEP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement ongoing check-ins with districts/schools who are testing students (according to College Board data) to share information around best practices, barriers, and additional support needed. |

| | |
|---|--|
| Dual Enrollment (DE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with TBR office of extra institutional learning to ensure communications are consistent with all postsecondary institutions. |
| International Baccalaureate (IB) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with International Baccalaureate and existing Tennessee IB schools to record and publish an informational webinar/video introducing the IB program to stakeholders who may not be aware of its elements and benefits. |
| Local Dual Credit (LDC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with TBR office of extra institutional learning to ensure communications are consistent with all postsecondary institutions. |
| Statewide Dual Credit (SDC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ongoing training and communications materials, updating annually, to ensure key messages regarding the statewide dual credit pilot are consistent across all participating districts/schools. |
| Industry Certification (IC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with CTE career cluster consultants to employ industry stakeholders and advisory councils in creation and dissemination of industry-specific materials. • Work with Pathways Tennessee unit to expand teacher-district-industry externship programs to expand awareness of educators and administrators in available industry pathways and certifications. |

Core Priority Five: Develop Strong Data Practices

Develop Strong Data Practices

Develop strong data practices that take place on an ongoing basis at regular intervals, to obtain high-quality, timely student outcome data to make policy, funding, and implementation decisions to continuously evaluate and improve programs.

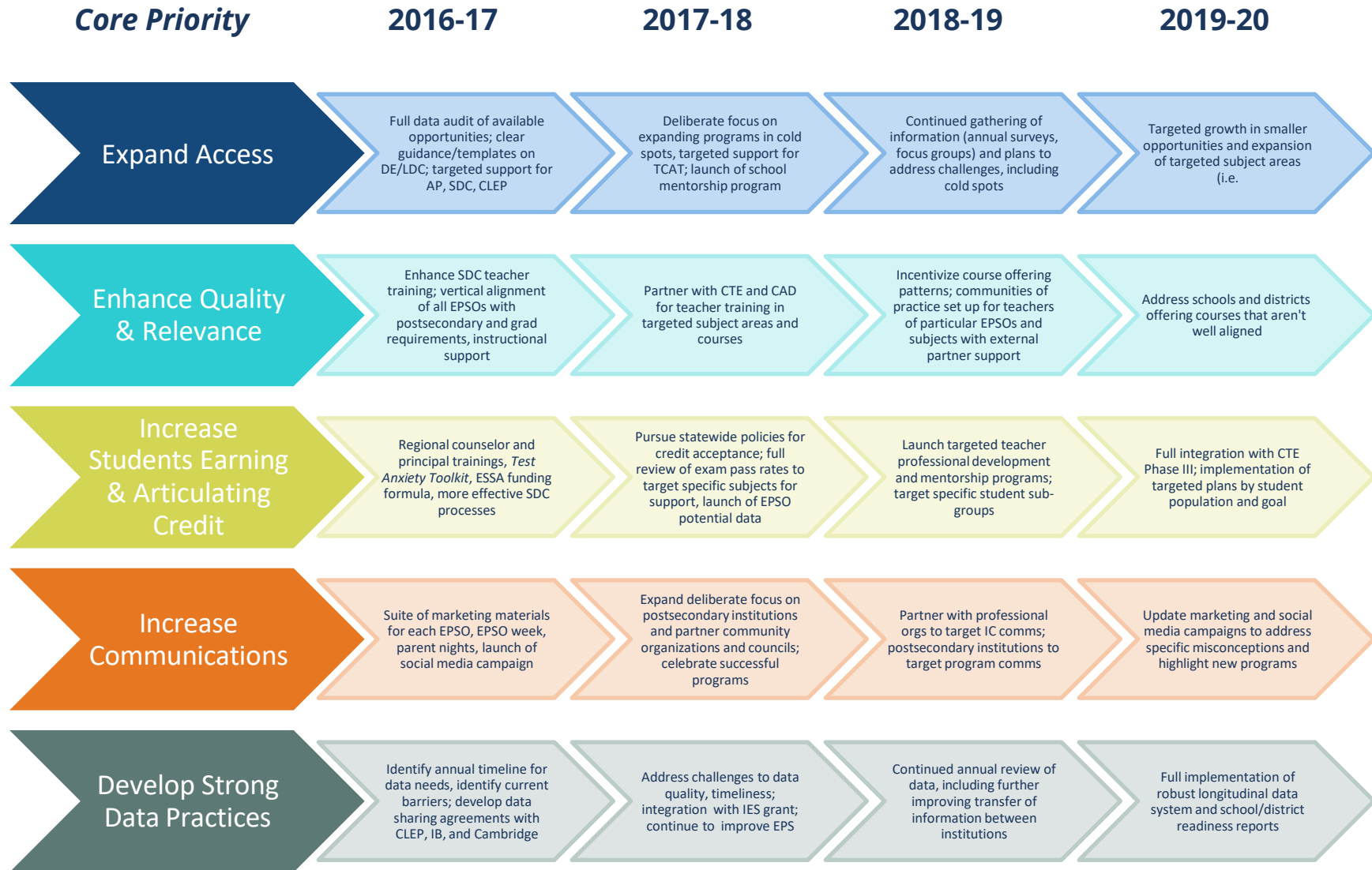
This core priority is meant to continue to expand the access to available data, including data quality and lag-time. Having access to higher quality and more real-time data will improve our ability to make decisions based on the most relevant information.

Aligned goal: *By 2020, the majority of public school graduates should seamlessly enter postsecondary with credits.*

| Recommendations Impacting All EPSOs | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to identify needed annual data and desired timeline, and work with THEC, the department, and TBR partners to identify and correct barriers to obtaining needed data in a timely fashion. • Work with state agency partners (including internally, the office of data and research, and externally, partners through the state’s longitudinal data system) to establish a method for collecting and storing information related to student participation in EPSOs. • Identify appropriate points of contact at partner organizations and instigate recurring touchpoints and an annual timeline to share student data, programmatic information, promising practices and barriers. • Continue to improve Early Postsecondary (EPS) database to be able to house additional EPSO credit information and push data seamlessly between other systems (such as EIS, Banner, and P20). • Develop timeline and data collection/review process for conducting an annual landscape analysis to identify “hot” and “cold” spots throughout the state for each EPSO. • Collaborate with grant manager and project manager for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) “Setting Students up for Success” project to identify, collect, review, and set target thresholds for student data in participating schools and districts, and use data to trigger student “nudges” to share information about EPSOs. | |
| Recommendations for Specific EPSOs | |
| Advanced Placement (AP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually review College Board AP state report and create specific action steps and timeline each year to address gaps. • Work with THEC, TBR, UT, and TICUA systems to develop methodology for sharing student credit articulation information, including improving data collection detail in P20W system. |
| Cambridge International | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop data-sharing agreement with Cambridge to obtain student-level data for annual exam participation and pass rates. |

| | |
|--|---|
| Examinations (CIE) | |
| College Level Exam Program (CLEP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand existing relationship with College Board to obtain CLEP data along with existing push of SAT and AP results. |
| Dual Enrollment (DE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with THEC, TBR, UT, and TICUA systems to develop methodology for sharing student dual enrollment information, including improving data collection detail in P20W system. |
| International Baccalaureate (IB) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop data-sharing agreement with IB to obtain student-level data for annual exam participation, pass rates, and diploma attainment. |
| Local Dual Credit (LDC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with THEC, TBR, UT, and TICUA systems to develop methodology for sharing student dual enrollment information, including improving data collection detail in P20W system. |
| Statewide Dual Credit (SDC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue training and awareness of EPS database with secondary and postsecondary stakeholders, including quarterly review of accounts at each postsecondary institution and evaluation of usage statistics. |
| Industry Certification (IC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support office of CTE's efforts to develop and secure data-sharing agreements with providers of industry certifications across the country to obtain student-level data for annual exam participation and pass rates. |

Strategic Plan Activity Timeline Overview 2016-2020



Prioritized School & District Actions

While this document is meant to frame a full, multi-year strategy for growth in early postsecondary opportunities across the state of Tennessee, there are several actions that local schools and districts can implement to ensure they are working toward the goals outlined in *Tennessee Succeeds*, the *ESSA State Plan*, and this document.

Diagnostic Questions

If school or district leaders are unsure of the strength and capacity of their early postsecondary programs, we recommend responding to the following questions to understand the current landscape.

What early postsecondary opportunities are currently available in each high school?

- Does each high school have a “portfolio” of 3–4 different types of opportunities that span student interest, career pathway/postsecondary goals, and student ability levels?
- Are students enrolled in current opportunities successfully obtaining postsecondary credit and articulating that credit to postsecondary institutions?

How many students are served by each of these opportunities? Is there a gap between capacity and demand?

- If there is a gap in capacity versus demand, what barriers exist to expanding access?
- Are there differences in EPSO enrollment/success by student sub-group?

How are student enrollment/registration decisions made to place students into early postsecondary opportunities? What data (if any) is reviewed for students? Are students encouraged to enroll based on prior performance/goals or is enrollment based solely on expressed student interest?

What policies govern early postsecondary opportunities in each high school? Could these policies be negatively impacting or positively contributing to early postsecondary enrollment and success? Policies could include:

- Student placement, registration, master scheduling
- Course add/drop timelines and procedures
- Testing requirements
- Grading policies (e.g., weighted GPA)
- Graduation with distinction
- Graduation requirement course substitutions

Goals and Action Items

Each school and district should strive to understand the current landscape of early postsecondary offerings, if and how students are benefiting from available opportunities, and what steps could be taken to expand student credit attainment.

Setting Goals

The department encourages each high school in Tennessee to have the following:

A **“portfolio”** of 3–4 different types of early postsecondary opportunities **in each high school**, with enough capacity to **serve all students** who are academically ready to engage in the work.

- Diversity of offerings appropriate for multiple types of student postsecondary goals (i.e., transferability to Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology, community colleges, and four-year universities) that are aligned to regional community needs and programs.

Written policies that encourage and incentivize early postsecondary opportunity enrollment. Strong teacher training and support to increase **instructional rigor** of coursework to meet postsecondary expectations.

Expectations that all students sit for challenge/exit/certification exams aligned to the early postsecondary opportunities for which they are enrolled.

- Participation in programs to offer **financial support** to economically disadvantaged students to offset the cost of exams.

Process for reviewing data (both student data and early postsecondary opportunity outcome data) to ensure appropriate student placement and success rates.

Next Steps

To get started as a principal or as a district leader, complete the following next steps:

Gather data on early postsecondary opportunities offered in high school(s), including responses to the diagnostic questions on the previous page.

Review data alongside community workforce needs and available postsecondary programs to identify gaps in offerings.

Review the [eight available early postsecondary opportunities](#) recognized by the state of Tennessee.

Develop an action plan to meet the goals outlined above.

Please reach out to Early.Postsecondary@tn.gov with questions.

Glossary

Access: A student’s ability to participate in an opportunity offered through his/her school. Student participation and placement into opportunities should be based on both academic and nonacademic indicators.

Advanced Placement (AP): The College Board’s Advanced Placement (AP) courses are college-level classes in a variety of subjects that students can take while still in high school. They offer challenging course work and an opportunity to experience what college classes are like. At the conclusion of the course, aligned culminating exams are available. Students who score high enough on the aligned exams are eligible for postsecondary credit and participating postsecondary institutions. The Tennessee Board of Regents has established standard cut scores for students attending TBR institutions to receive college credit for AP courses.

Cambridge International Examinations (CIE): Cambridge is a program that allows students to take rigorous courses, developed by international postsecondary faculty, in a variety of subject areas. Students sit for the aligned AS or A level exams in order to qualify for potential college credit at the end of courses. Exams are internationally recognized and credit is determined by individual institution.

College-Level Examination Program (CLEP): CLEP exams test master of college-level material acquired in a variety of ways—through general academic instruction, significant independent study, or extracurricular work. Developed by the College Board, the College-Level Examination Program has been the most widely trusted credit-by-examination program for over 40 years, accepted by 2,900 colleges and universities and administered in over 1,700 test centers nationally.

Dual Enrollment (DE): DE is a postsecondary course, taught either at the postsecondary institution or at the high school, by postsecondary faculty, or credentialed adjunct faculty. Students are enrolled at the postsecondary institution and earn postsecondary credit upon completion of the course. High school credit is awarded based on local policy.

Early Postsecondary Opportunities (EPSOs): EPSOs provide students with the opportunity to earn college credit while in high school, develop the confidence and skills necessary for success in postsecondary, make informed postsecondary and career decisions, and decrease the time and cost of completing a certificate of degree. Opportunities that help to support this culture of college and career readiness for all Tennessee students include the following: Advanced Placement, Cambridge, College Level Examination Programs, Dual Enrollment, Industry Certification, International Baccalaureate, Local Dual Credit, and Statewide Dual Credit.

Economically Disadvantaged (ED): Students that meet the direct certification eligibility guidelines. A “directly certified” student is one who is participating in state or federal assistance programs, such as: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Head Start.

Industry certifications (ICs): ICs are earned through secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs and courses. High school students are encouraged to focus their elective credits on robust, career-aligned learning pathways. As it pertains to industry certifications, all department-promoted certifications are aligned with postsecondary and employment opportunities and with the competencies and skills that students should have acquired through their chosen programs of study.

International Baccalaureate (IB): IB programs afford students the ability to complete a full program of internationally-recognized college-level courses to obtain an IB diploma. Aligned courses offer exams at the SL or HL levels, where certain exam scores qualify students for college credit. IB is internationally recognized, and credit is awarded individually by each institution.

Local Dual Credit: A local dual credit course is a high school course taught by high school faculty with an aligned challenge exam. Students who score at or above the cut score in the culminating exam qualify for postsecondary credit at the local institution that was responsible for developing and administering the exam. Local dual credit is the result of a partnership between a specific high school and a specific postsecondary institution through an articulation agreement and credit awarded is only guaranteed at the specific postsecondary institution upon enrollment.

Postsecondary: Postsecondary is defined as any educational institution that provides classes to students who have already completed high school. Postsecondary institutions include Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCAT), Community Colleges, four year colleges and universities, private colleges and universities, and specific advanced workforce apprenticeship training programs.

Prior Academic Performance: Students academic achievement and course progression in a specific learning pathway.

Portfolio: A diverse menu of early postsecondary options for all students regardless of background; differentiated by student interest and pathway, postsecondary aspirations, knowledge/skills, and support needs (financial, access, transportation, etc.) A portfolio approach is one that offers 3–4 types of EPSOs in a high school each academic year.

Ready Student: A high school student who has demonstrated knowledge and skills that increase their probability of successfully completing an early postsecondary course. Most often, this is measured by standardized test scores, such as state assessments or national benchmark exams (i.e., scoring at or above grade level or “on track” for college readiness).

Statewide Dual Credit (SDC): SDC is a high school course which is aligned to statewide postsecondary standards and is taught at the high school by high school faculty for high school credit. Courses and their accompanying challenge exams are created by Tennessee secondary and postsecondary faculty. Students who meet or exceed the established cut score set for the exam earn credits which can be applied to any public postsecondary institution in Tennessee.

Students with Disabilities (SWD): Students who meet the eligibility criteria to receive special education services in the state of Tennessee.

Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) The Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) system consists of 46 institutions with a combined annual enrollment of over 200,000 students, making it among the nation's largest systems of public higher education. TBR's six state universities, 13 community colleges, and 27 technology centers offer classes in 90 of Tennessee's 95 counties. The mission of the Tennessee Board of Regents system is to educate more Tennesseans in order to provide Tennessee with the workforce it needs for sound economic development. Technology centers are exclusively focused on workforce development, which is also a major emphasis in community colleges. The latter also provide degrees designed for transfer to a university. At TBR universities, the priorities are student preparation and research, with five of the six universities granting doctoral degrees.

Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) The Tennessee Higher Education Commission was created in 1967 by the Tennessee General Assembly to achieve coordination and foster unity with regard to higher education. The Commission coordinates two systems of public higher education: the University of Tennessee institutions governed by the University Of Tennessee Board Of Trustees, and the state universities, community colleges, and technology centers governed by the Tennessee Board of Regents. There are currently nine public universities, 13 community colleges, and 27 technology centers in Tennessee that serve over 250,000 students collectively. Tennessee's independent institutions (non-profit and for-profit) bring statewide enrollment for fall 2012 to more than 400,000 students.

Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCAT) There are 27 Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology across the state governed by the Tennessee Board of Regents. Through the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology Workforce Development mission, Tennessee residents are able to obtain the technical skills and professional training necessary for advancement in today's competitive job market. The network of Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology is strategically located across the state to ensure that businesses and industries throughout Tennessee have access to a qualified workforce. The Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology were formerly known as Tennessee Technology Centers (TTC).

University of Tennessee System (UT) The University of Tennessee is comprised of campuses at Knoxville, Chattanooga, and Martin, the Health Science Center at Memphis, and the statewide Institute of Agriculture and Institute for Public Service. The University of Tennessee System has a presence in each of Tennessee's 95 counties. Through the combined force of its education, research, and outreach, the University serves students, business and industry, schools, governments, organizations, and citizens throughout the state.

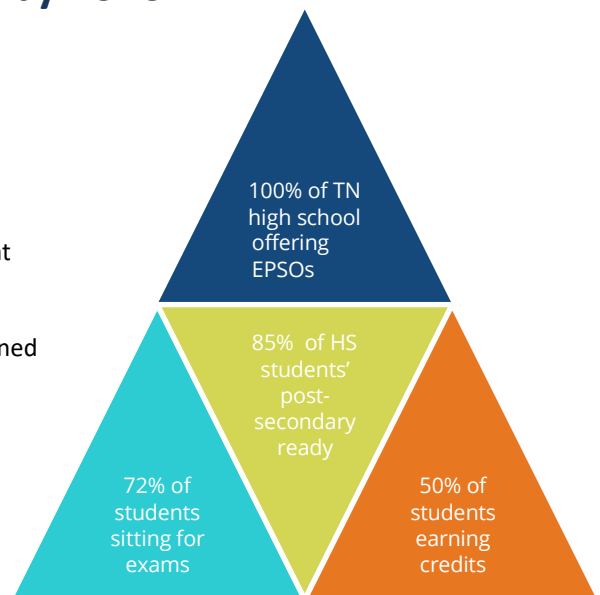
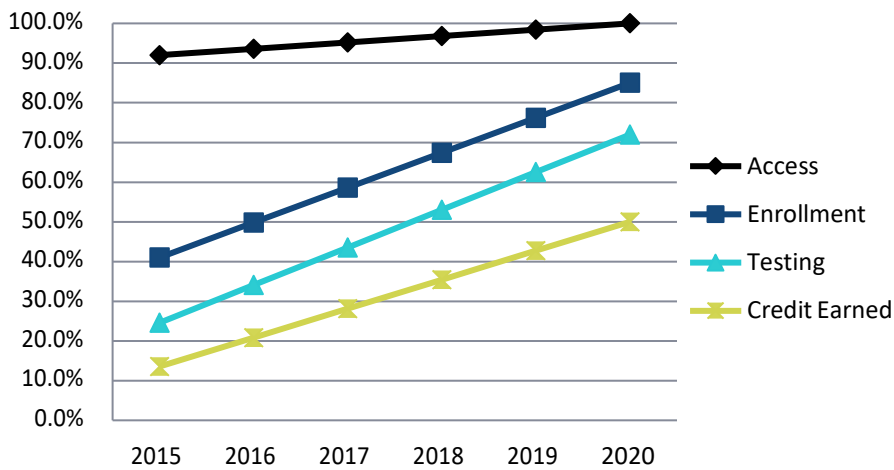
Appendix A: Tennessee Early Postsecondary Opportunities

| Advanced Placement (AP) | Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) | College-Level Exam Program (CLEP) | Dual Enrollment (DE) | International Baccalaureate (IB) | Local Dual Credit (LDC) | Statewide Dual Credit (SDC) | Capstone Industry Certifications (IC) |
|--|---|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| Nationally recognized program from The College Board that offers college-level high school courses in multiple subjects, culminating with a final exam. Students who score a 3, 4, or 5 on the exam may qualify for credit at participating postsecondary institutions | Cambridge International Examination provides internationally recognized academic programs for students age 5 to 19. The high school A and AS Level courses, available only through approved Cambridge International Schools, provide students the opportunity to earn postsecondary credit that is accepted by colleges in the U.S. and abroad. | Nationally recognized program developed by the College Board, CLEP exams are used to assess mastery of postsecondary-level material acquired in a variety of ways. Students can earn credit for postsecondary coursework in a specific subject. | Tennessee specific opportunity that is taught either at the postsecondary institution or at the high school, by postsecondary faculty or credentialed adjunct faculty. Students are enrolled at the postsecondary institution and earn postsecondary credit upon completion of the course. | Internationally recognized program available only through an approved IB World School provides high school students the opportunity to take a rigorous, pre-university course of studies. IB courses are aligned to internationally-benchmarked exams which provide opportunities for students to earn postsecondary credit while still in high school. | Tennessee specific opportunity aligned to a local postsecondary institution's course and exam. Students who pass the exam earn credits that are accepted by that local postsecondary institution only. | Tennessee specific opportunity aligned to statewide postsecondary standards and is taught at the high school by high school faculty for high school credit. Students who meet or exceed the established cut score set for the exam earn credits which can be applied to any public postsecondary institution in TN. | Earned through secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs and courses. High school students who complete career-aligned learning pathways and sit for exams that are recognized both in the state and nationally by industry and professional organizations may articulate credit at postsecondary institutions. |
| Course & Exam | Course & Exam | Exam Only | Course Only | Course & Exam | Course & Exam | Course & Exam | Exam Only |
| Exam fee | Exam fee | Exam fee | Course tuition, fees, books | Exam fee | Exam fee | No cost to students | Exam fee |
| Beneficial for students who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are interested in 4-year or private universities Have financial capacity to afford exams Have strong awareness of postsecondary-going processes and requirements. | Beneficial for students who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are interested in 4-year, private, or international universities Have financial capacity to afford exams Have strong awareness of postsecondary-going processes and requirements. | Beneficial for students who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested in 2 or 4-year colleges and universities Have financial capacity to afford exams Have awareness of postsecondary-going processes and requirements. | Beneficial for students who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested in TCAT, 2, or 4-year colleges Qualify for dual enrollment grant to receive funding for tuition costs Would benefit from support on college application and financial aid process. | Beneficial for students who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are interested in 4-year, private, or international universities Have financial capacity to afford exams Have strong awareness of postsecondary-going processes and requirements. | Beneficial for students who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested in TCAT, 2, or 4-year colleges Have limited financial resources or do not qualify for dual enrollment grant. | Beneficial for students who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested in TCAT, 2, or 4-year colleges Have limited financial resources Interested in technical programs not supported by other EPSOs. | Beneficial for students who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested in working while continuing learning or attending a technical college or training program. Desire to pursue a technical, apprentice, or TCAT program. |

Appendix B: Office of Postsecondary Coordination and Alignment Benchmark Goals 2017-2020

To meet the goals outlined at the beginning of this document, we must set clear benchmarks utilizing our identified programmatic choices and action steps. These benchmarks must be reviewed annually to evaluate progress toward overall goals. The tables below demonstrate current data for the four key components to the student pipeline: access, enrollment, testing, and credit earned. By demonstrating significant gains to these four components, the department will increase the number of high school graduates from the class of 2020 earning a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree.

Data Benchmarks by 2020



Appendix C: Office of Postsecondary Coordination and Alignment Strategic Plan 2012-2015 Excerpt

Belief Statements:

- *Access:* All students should have the opportunity to earn postsecondary credits while in high school.
- *Quality:* Early postsecondary offerings must be relevant and rigorous.
- *Mastery:* Secondary students can successfully participate in and complete postsecondary curricula and those who do should be allowed to demonstrate mastery for college credit.
- *Collaboration:* Successful transitions from secondary to postsecondary require collaboration between local education agencies, higher education, state agencies, and non-government entities.
- *Communication:* School and district administrators, students and parents, must have access to comprehensive accurate information outlining early postsecondary opportunities aligned with secondary and postsecondary programs of study.

Overview of Core Priorities:

- Expand early postsecondary opportunities.
- Enhance rigor and relevance of early postsecondary courses.
- Increase communication regarding early postsecondary opportunities.
- Encourage successful transitions from secondary to postsecondary.
- Ensure continuous improvement of early postsecondary opportunities.