

# Dual Credit Academic and Workforce Education

Pathways Research Collaborative

CONNECT VIRTUAL

May 21, 2026

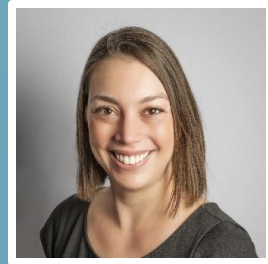


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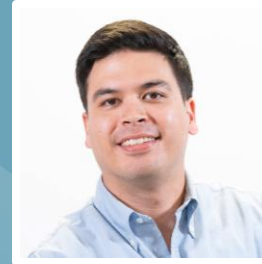
# Research Collaborative



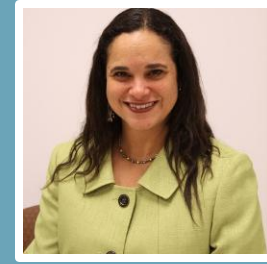
**Han Bum Lee, Ph.D.**  
Assistant Professor,  
The University of Texas at San Antonio



**Jessica Gottlieb, Ph.D.**  
Associate Professor  
Texas Tech University



**Robert Stein, M.P.Aff.**  
Research Analyst  
E3 Alliance



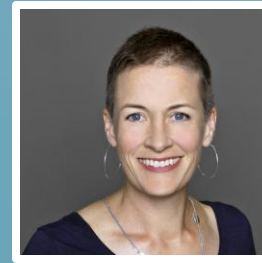
**María Teresa de la Piedra, Ph.D.**  
Professor  
The University of Texas at El Paso



**Sharon L. Nichols, Ed.D.**  
Professor and Chair  
The University of Texas at San Antonio



**Annelies Rhodes, Ph.D.**  
Senior Director of Research and Data  
E3 Alliance



**Katherine S. Mortimer, Ph.D.**  
Associate Professor  
The University of Texas at El Paso



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# Overview of Research

*Dual Credit Academic and Workforce Education*



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# Research Question(s) and Relevance

- Our research questions are organized by three key goals:
  - (1) to understand the landscape of Dual Credit by studying course availability and course taking utilization patterns,
  - (2) to understand the landscape of AP and IB availability and utilization patterns, and
  - (3) to explore the factors that influence students' course taking decision making.
- Why is this research question important to Texas?
  - Accelerated coursework opportunities continue to expand across Texas.
  - Statewide emphasis on college and career readiness continues to grow (e.g., HB8).
  - Access to and participation in these programs vary across school contexts.
  - Understanding student decision-making can inform more equitable supports.



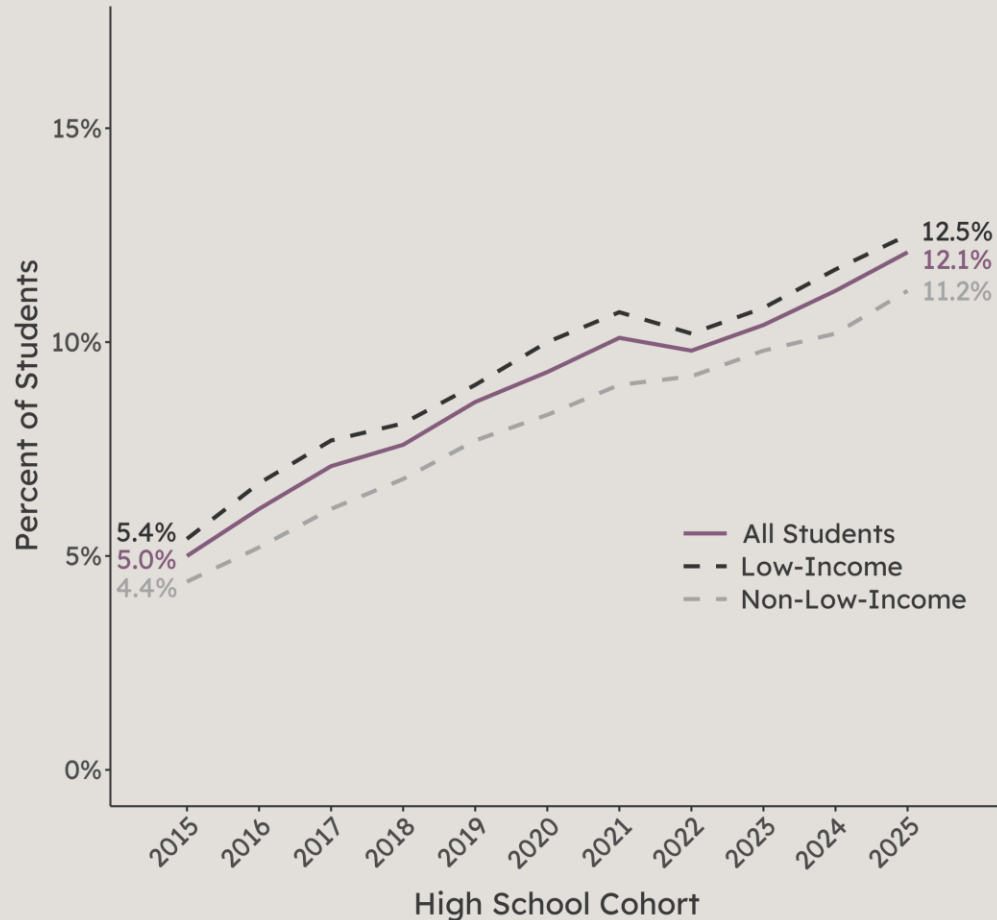
# Initial Finding #1 (Quantitative)

- Dual credit CTE participation is a growing opportunity to expand college and career pathways.
  - ***Postsecondary Access Point***: Reaches students who access college-prep opportunities at lower rates.
  - ***Uneven Participation***: Course completion has grown rapidly but varies widely across ESC regions.

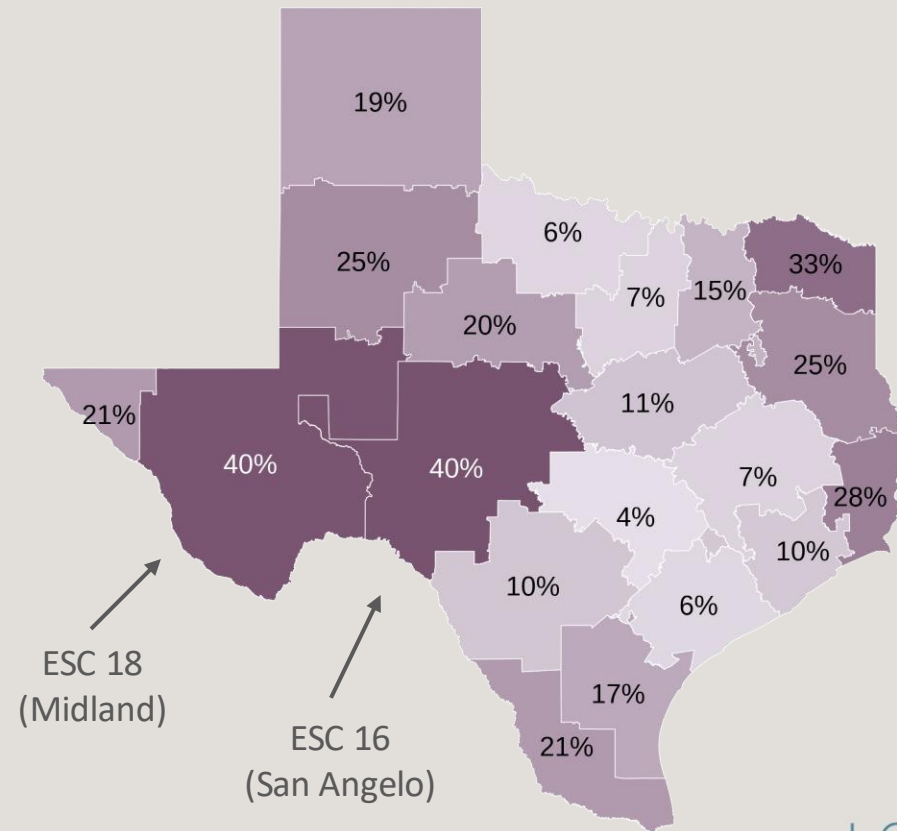


# Students from Low-Income Households Complete DC CTE at Greater Rates; Wide Variation in ESC Regions

High School Seniors Who Completed Dual Credit CTE Course by Household Income Status, Texas, 2015-2025



High School Seniors Who Completed Dual Credit CTE Course by ESC Region, 2025



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## Initial Finding #2 (Quantitative)

- Dual credit teachers maintain high levels of teacher certification and educational attainment, contrary to broader Texas trends
  - **Certification:** ~95% of DC/AP/IB teachers are certified, based data from 2020-2025
  - **Educational Attainment:** IB teachers are most likely to have a doctoral degree (1.8%) compared with AP teachers (1.2%) and DC teachers (1.1%). DC teachers are most likely to have a master's degree (25%) compared with AP teachers (18%) and IB teachers (23%)
  - Next steps include focusing on out-of-field teaching and regional variation



# Initial Findings (Qualitative)

- To date, we have interviewed (n=51):
  - 28 participants from institutions of higher education (IHEs):
    - 6 high-level administrators
    - 4 college-campus administrators
    - 3 college advisors
    - 15 dual credit college faculty
  - 21 participants from independent school districts (ISDs):
    - 12 district-level administrators
    - 2 HS campus administrators
    - 4 HS counselors
    - 3 DC HS teachers
  - 2 college seniors



# Initial Findings (Qualitative) – TSI Focused Findings

- The Texas Success Initiative (TSI) is a state-required test that measures your reading, writing, and math skills to determine if you are ready for college-level courses. All degree-seeking high school students must pass the TSI to take 15 or more college credit hours (i.e., dual credit).
- Recently (2024) the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) passed Rule 4.52(b)(4), which states that “non-degree seeking students<sup>1</sup> are **not required to be TSI-met** (i.e., “college-ready”) to enroll in dual credit classes.”
- We are finding that there is variation in the ways districts are responding to this rule change and the resources they have available to support students who are yet to be TSI-met.
- Participants are sharing that they’ve had to **restructure their dual credit advising for non-degree seeking students** who are struggling to pass the TSI. For example, many are encouraging students to enroll in highly transferrable courses (i.e., English & US History) or funneling them to enroll in AP instead.

1. The THECB defines a non-degree seeking student as “a student who has not filed a degree plan with an institution of higher education and is not required to do so pursuant to Texas Education Code, §51.9685.”



Student interested in DC

**Fails TSI**

Targeted TSI Support;  
college prep courses;  
embedded advising

Limited DC Enrollment  
(English/US History)

Retakes TSI

Passes TSI

Continued DC participation +  
Degree Planning

**Fails TSI**

Additional Prep + continued enrollment

Reduced DC access or alternative coursework pathway

Student enrolls in AP coursework with option to prepare for TSI retest

Student chooses to continue with solely AP courses

Limited DC Enrollment  
(English/US History)

Student has limited options for TSI prep, all of which are dependent on them

Repeated TSI struggles

No interest/success in or access to AP

Reduced access to ECC

# Initial Findings (Qualitative)—DC Course Delivery

- Dual Credit instruction comes in the following forms:
  - In-person @ college campus, taught by college faculty.
  - In-person @ high school campus, taught by college faculty.
  - In-person @ high school campus, taught by credentialed HS teachers
  - Online @ high school campus, taught synchronously.
  - Online @ high school campus, taught asynchronously.
- From our interviews, we are learning that variation in course delivery often depends on district & college resources (i.e., faculty or teachers to teach DC, number of seats available in college course, & lining up of schedules).
- Overall, majority of participants preferred DC courses to be taught by credentialed high school teachers on their campuses due to familiarity with students and experience teaching in K-12 settings.
- When staffing or resource constraints required DC courses to be delivered online, participants emphasized the importance of knowledgeable on-site proctors or support staff who could assist students with coursework, communication, and navigating college expectations (i.e., staying on top of deadlines).
- Districts and IHEs are expanding efforts to credential more high school teachers to increase DC course offerings. However, districts varied substantially in their ability to recruit and retain credentialed instructors.



# Texas Policy Landscape

*Preparation for the 90<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session*



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# 2026 Texas Interim Legislative Charges

## Teacher Workforce

- Monitoring of HB 2 (89R) – *public school finance*
- Recruitment and Retention
- Compensation Investments

## Student Outcomes

- Improving Middle School Outcomes
- Investment in Special Education
- Student Enrollment and High-Quality Education
- School Choice
- Monitoring of HB 6 (89R) – *mental health services*

## Postsecondary Education

- Postsecondary Affordability and Financial Barriers
- Increasing Credential Completion
- Community College Funding
- Aligning Advising Initiatives
- Workforce Readiness and System Alignment

## Early Childhood Education

- Monitoring HB 4903 (Quad-Agency Child Care Initiative and Commission)



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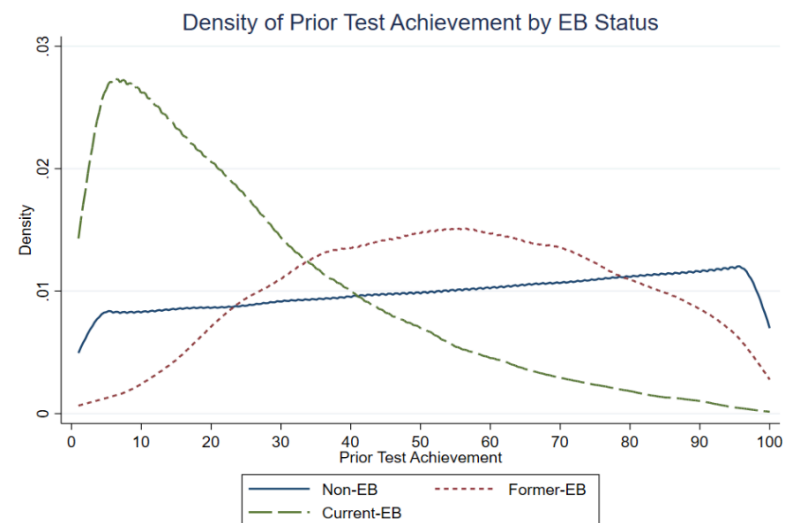
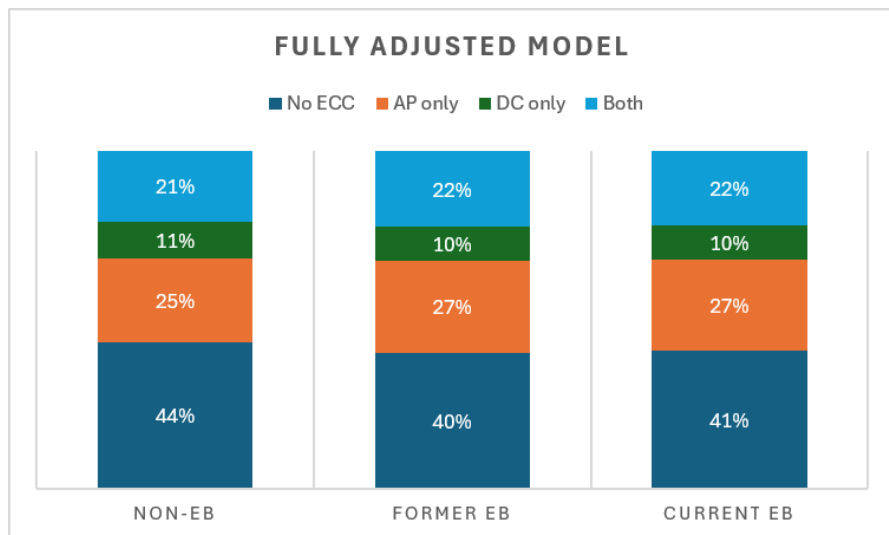
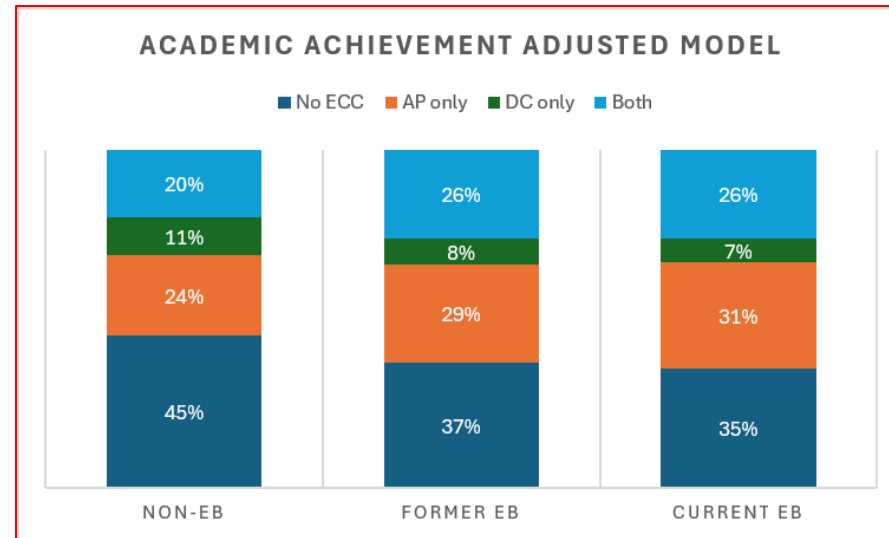
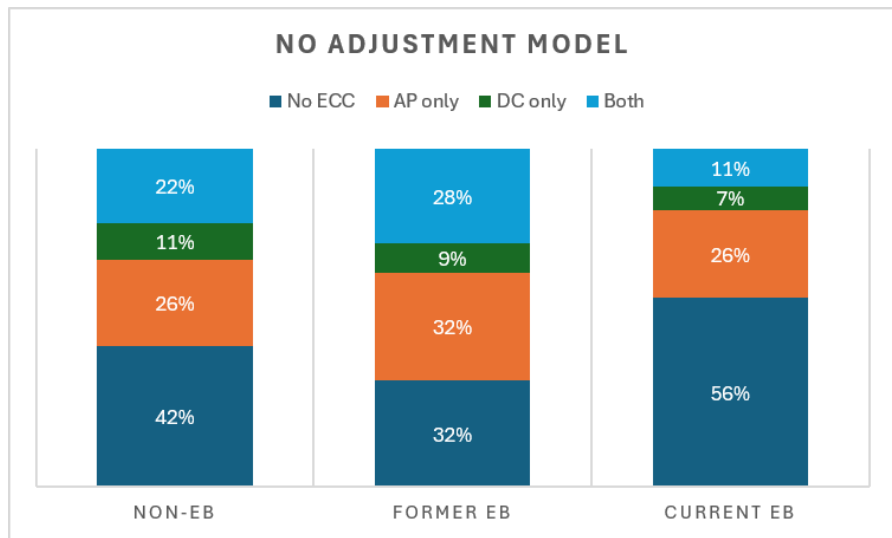


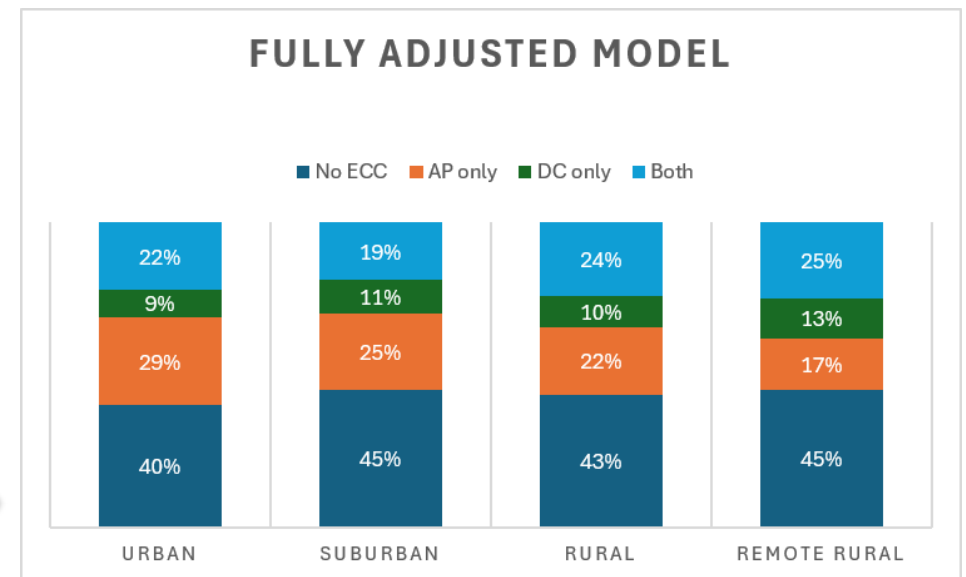
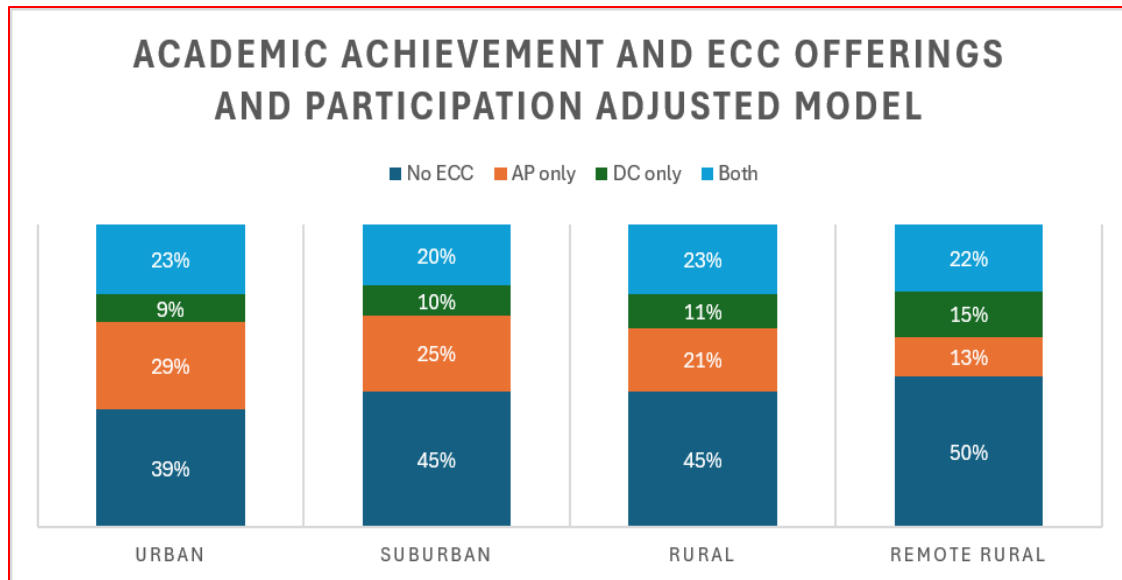
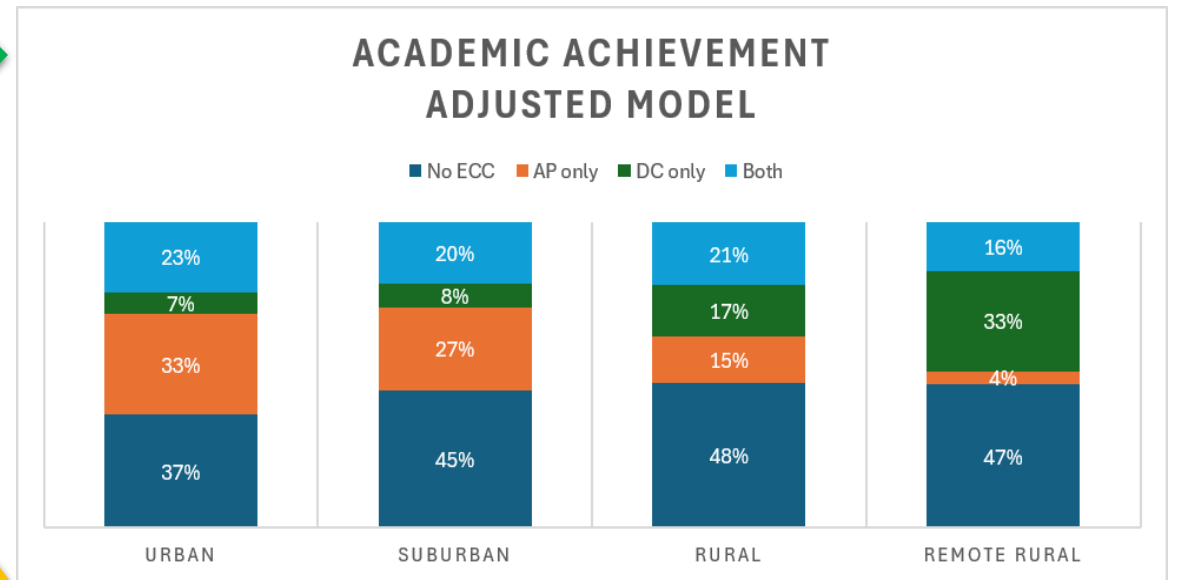
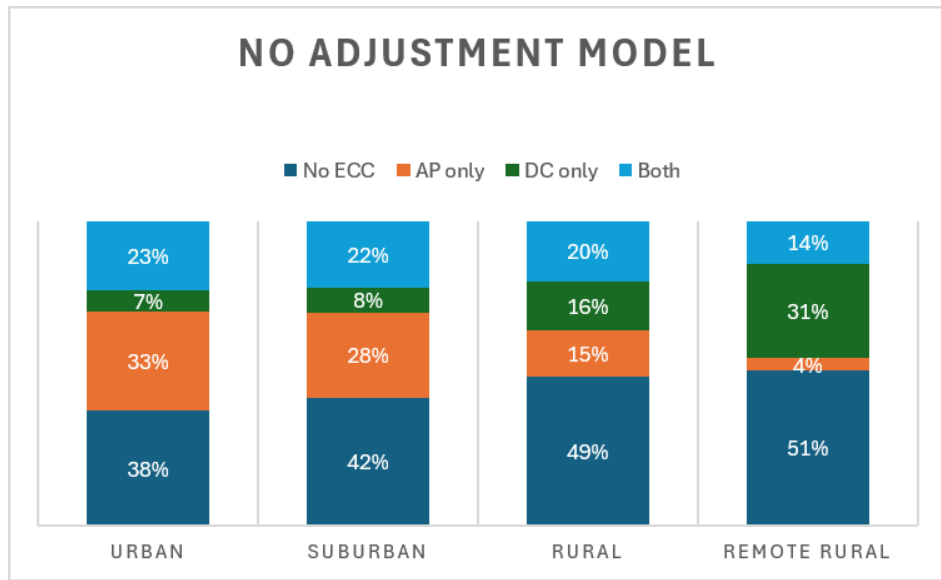
# Implications of Research for Policy

- Reducing ECC participation disparities requires targeted, multi-faceted strategies rather than a "one-size-fits-all" approach
  - **Academic Preparation:** Adjusting for middle school achievement significantly reduced the ECC participation gap between EB and non-EB students (*improving middle school outcomes*).
  - **Institutional Access:** Adjusting for school-level ECC course offerings and participation rates mitigates disparities between rural and urban regions (*teacher recruitment and retention*)



Analysis of ECC Participation Based on Students' EB Status





# Implications of Research for Policy

- Data underscoring challenges supporting students who are not TSI-met will have implications for (a) advising structures, (b) course enrollment decision making, and (c) may reveal insights on how to increase certification completion for more students. ***(aligning advising initiatives, increasing credential completion, student enrollment and high-quality education)***
- Data underscoring vast variability in course offering modalities and locations will offer insights into how schools that vary in resources and opportunities might maximize student success. ***(student enrollment and high-quality education, increasing credential completion)***
- Data may reveal that DC teaching workload causes increases in teacher attrition. ***(teacher recruitment and retention)***
- Other Research:
  - Emergent bilingual populations and DC (participation patterns)
  - Effective teaching practices and modality (student success)



# Implications of Research for Practitioners

Key areas of decision making for practitioners

Imagine Ms. Hernandez who is a principal of a high school in San Antonio ISD. She wants to expand dual credit course offerings next year while maintaining availability of AP courses. As she plans, she identifies a few decisions she needs to make:

1. The removal of the TSI requirement will allow more of her students to enroll in dual credit courses, but she will need to determine how to scale up her advising staff to ensure that students who struggle on TSI are taking highly transferable courses.
2. Additionally, while she is excited about expanded access, she wants to ensure that all students are set up for success, so she is considering if she needs to add TSI readiness supports. She's not sure if she has the budget to do this and increase advising capacity. ***(Key questions: How will practitioners help support students who are not TSI met? What options are available? What resources are available?)***
3. Finally, students seem to do better when they are enrolled in face-to-face DC courses, but the school already struggles with shortages of credentialed teachers. Ms. Hernandez is wondering about the trade-offs between face-to-face classes versus online classes taught by college faculty. Or, how will she incentivize more teachers to become credentialed to teach DC and if they do, how might this affect other courses/teaching needs?



# Thank You

## Pathways Research Collaborative

Have questions? Contact:

**Dr. Han Bum Lee**

**Hanbum.Lee@utsa.edu**

**Dr. Sharon L. Nichols**

**Sharon.Nichols@utsa.edu**



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