



TO: Chief Executive Officers
Chief Instructional Officers
Chief Student Services Officers
Chief Business Officers

FROM: John Stankas, Vice Chancellor, Educational Services and Support Division
Office of Equitable Student Learning, Experience, and Impact (ESLEI)

RE: Expanding Educational Opportunities for Justice-Involved Youth through Dual Enrollment

“Building upon shared commitment to expand educational opportunities to justice involved youth through dual enrollment”

Purpose of this Memo

Young people who have experienced the juvenile justice system face profound barriers to college and career access and success. These barriers disproportionately affect youth of color, primarily Black and Latino students, students with disabilities and youth in foster care, who are overrepresented in California's juvenile court schools. Many of these students endure fragmented educational journeys, often attending multiple middle and high schools. Dual enrollment serves as a transformative strategy to bridge these gaps, unify their educational experiences, and open pathways to meaningful careers and brighter futures.

In 2018, the State of California committed to serving incarcerated and formerly incarcerated students through one-time funding of \$5 million, resulting in 44 grants to California Community Colleges. The participating colleges and students demonstrated phenomenal successes, showing the State what is possible when community college is made truly accessible to justice-involved community members. In 2021, the State furthered its commitment to serving this population of students with a \$10 million ongoing allocation in the 2021 State Budget Act and the passage of Assembly Bill 417 (McCarty, 2021), which established the Rising Scholars Network as a categorically funded program. This program now supports Rising Scholars programs at 80 California Community Colleges.

The announcement of the closure of the Division of Juvenile Justice left counties in California wondering how to best support the young people who were housed in state run facilities. The

Rising Scholars Network was leveraged as a resource to enact the expansive vision for juvenile justice youth realignment found in SB823. To ensure the colleges were prepared to support juvenile justice-involved youth, the 2022-2023 Budget Act allocated \$15 million to establish Juvenile Justice programs within the community college system. These programs are currently launching at 44 community colleges, and each participating college will integrate dual enrollment as a condition of their grant to lead this work. Rising Scholars Juvenile Justice programs change lives, build stronger communities, reduce recidivism, and demonstrate what's possible when young people are provided the support, advocacy, and learning environments all students deserve. Dual enrollment is a key component in this work, allowing students to find themselves through education amidst a difficult moment in life.

Historically, students who attended court and alternative schools have not had access to dual enrollment and have received little exposure to postsecondary opportunities. While SB716 opened the door to college for high school graduates in youth detention facilities and some exemplary colleges have been serving juvenile justice involved youth for years, equitable access to post-secondary education has not previously been provided to detained youth throughout the state. The high-touch support model of Rising Scholars' Juvenile Justice grant program is expanding equitable access to colleges for juvenile justice involved youth throughout California, and dual enrollment is a key component of these efforts.

AB 102, signed into law in 2022, clarified that juvenile court schools are included in the College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) partnerships and authorized county offices of education, which run court schools, to enter into CCAP agreements. While relatively new, this expansion charts a new course for juvenile justice involved youth, enabling them to access postsecondary education through dual enrollment inside juvenile justice facilities—and it constitutes “a step forward in building truly inclusive college access pathways for all youth, no matter their background or circumstances.”

The expansion of the Network dovetails perfectly with the implementation of Vision 2030. Vision 2030 calls out justice-involved and dually enrolled students as populations of focused attention to be served equitably through access to higher education. Consequently, the Rising Scholars Network programs across the state are positioned to put Vision 2030 into practice. Moreover, the Chancellor's Office is making substantive investments in intersegmental coordination and interagency cooperation support, providing equity centered professional development and leveraging systemwide strategic planning, programming and policy efforts to support equitable dual enrollment for justice impacted learners.

Senate Bill 1244 (SB 1244) introduces provisions that can significantly benefit juvenile justice-involved students in alternative learning settings by fostering expanded access to dual enrollment opportunities.

Here's how:

1. Increased Educational Access

SB 1244 permits a community college district (CCD) to enter into College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) agreements with high school districts or county offices of education outside the primary CCD's service area if one of the following conditions are met:

- The primary community college district has declined a request from the school district or county office of education: or
- The primary community college district has failed to act within 60 calendar days of a request by the school district or county office education, to either amend into the existing CCAP partnership the requested courses, or to approve another community college district to enter a CCAP partnership to offer those courses.

For additional guidance, please refer to memo [ESLEI 24-73](#) SB1244 College and Career Access Pathways partnerships. This flexibility ensures that juvenile justice-involved students in alternative learning settings—such as continuation schools, juvenile detention facilities, or other correctional education programs—can access high-quality, college-level coursework regardless of service area limitations.

2. Addressing Gaps in Service

Juvenile Justice-involved youth often face geographical or systemic barriers that prevent them from accessing educational resources and services. By allowing high school districts and county offices of education to collaborate with any community college district (CCD) willing to establish a CCAP agreement if one of the following conditions are met:

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CCAP partnership the requested courses, or to approve another community college district to enter a CCAP partnership to offer those courses.

SB 1244 ensures that these students have alternative pathways to enroll in courses that might not otherwise be available in their region.

3. Alignment with Equity Goals

Juvenile Justice involved youth are historically underserved and disproportionately racially minoritized learners, and SB 1244 aligns with California's broader equity goals by addressing disparities in access to educational opportunities. The bill supports programs designed to engage students who face unique challenges, thereby fostering a more inclusive and equitable education system.

4. Expanded Program Options

The flexibility introduced by SB 1244 enables high school districts and county offices of education to tailor partnerships to meet the unique needs of juvenile justice youth involved. This could include specialized courses and pathways that focus on skill-building, career readiness, or college preparation tailored to alternative learning settings.

5. Faster Pathways to Completion and Employment

Dual enrollment can accelerate juvenile justice involved youth progress toward earning college credits or certifications, achieving baccalaureate attainment, and reducing the units needed for transfer completion. This provides them with tangible benefits for post-incarceration reintegration. SB 1244's facilitation of these agreements empowers students to develop skills and credentials that support long-term success.

6. Fostering Cross-Sector Collaboration

The bill encourages greater collaboration between high school districts, county offices of education, community colleges districts, and justice system agencies, resulting in more cohesive and comprehensive educational planning for juvenile justice involved youth. By enabling expanded and flexible dual enrollment opportunities, SB 1244 helps ensure that juvenile justice-involved youth in alternative learning settings have access to the resources and support they need to succeed academically and prepare for meaningful career pathways.

For questions concerning this memorandum, please contact:

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