

## USING DATA TO TARGET SUPPORT FOR POSTSECONDARY PREPARATION

Invest Forward Convening: July 2022 Session Recap



### ABOUT THE CONVENING

In **July 2022**, Invest Forward held a convening in Nashville, Tennessee, bringing together **leaders from 25 districts** to share ideas, learn from one another, and prioritize stimulus funding to support postsecondary pathway programs in their schools.

Research has shown that high-quality postsecondary education and training is the ticket to **long-term opportunity**. But since the pandemic began, we have seen declines in high school graduation rates, drops in direct college enrollment, a youth unemployment rate that peaked higher than it has in decades, and an education system that is still struggling to find a new “normal.”

Many schools have done tremendous work and invested heavily in strengthening and expanding their efforts to support students’ ability to obtain the training and credentials necessary to be successful beyond high school. **Invest Forward** is committed to recognizing and sharing those efforts widely, to build momentum and support for this important work.

## ABOUT USING DATA TO TARGET SUPPORT FOR POSTSECONDARY PREPARATION

Research has shown that **students who participate in early postsecondary courses are more likely to enroll and persist in postsecondary environments**; but, too often, the data on student participation in these early postsecondary courses is disparate or opaque to districts, making it challenging to assess participation, value, and success of these programs in real time, which limits a district's ability to identify promising programs and deliver targeted support for the students who need it most. Having a more complete data picture of postsecondary preparation participation also gives districts insights into possible barriers to access for these opportunities.

## HOW HAMILTON COUNTY SCHOOLS IS USING DATA TO TARGET SUPPORT FOR POSTSECONDARY PREPARATION INITIATIVES

Presenter(s): **Sarah Malone**, Lead College & Career Advisor, Hamilton County Schools and **Tammy Carneim**, Coordinator of Accountability and Research, Hamilton County Schools

**Early postsecondary opportunities (EPSOs)** include a course and/or exam that give students a chance to obtain postsecondary credit while still in high school. Tennessee's graduation requirements include student participation in EPSOs, which Hamilton County meets by offering AP, IB, Dual Enrollment, State Dual Credit, Local Dual Credit, Industry Certifications. While Hamilton County Schools met or exceeded all state requirements, they identified key challenges to expanding access to EPSOs.

## CHALLENGE: GAINING ACCESS TO REAL-TIME AND ACTIONABLE DATA

The district found that it was unable to look at **the full picture of EPSO participation** until high school graduation. They did not, for instance, have access to IB, State Dual Credit, Local Dual Credit, or Armed Forces Qualification Test exams in the data warehouse, and often exams were not connected to course codes. Additionally, they lacked access to data on industry certifications completed by students.

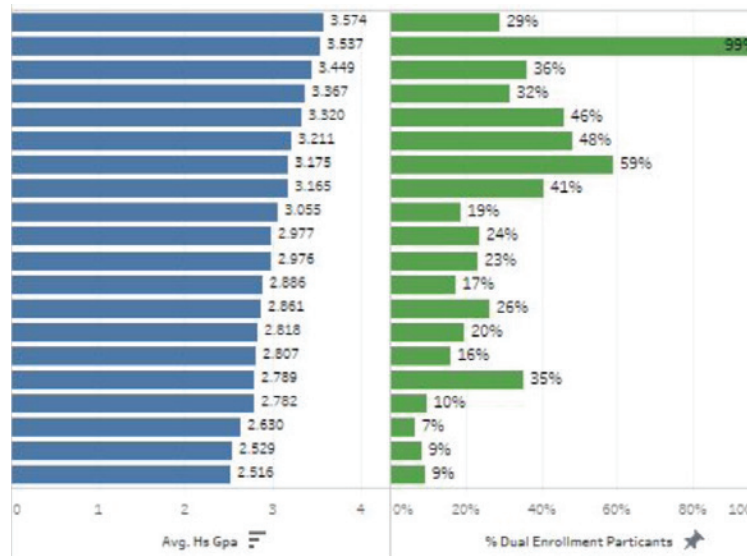
The district began a **process of collaboration** with the data team, counseling team, and district leadership to examine the data and create a process map to better understand EPSO participation. They worked to update back-end student information system to allow for real-time tracking of participation in EPSO courses, incorporate EPSO into On-Track Dashboard and Principal Reporting, and, critically, to assign a staff member to monitor progress and work with schools with the greatest room for improvement.

## CHALLENGE: EXPANDING ACCESS TO PROGRAMS THAT DELIVER RESULTS

After controlling for those with a 3.0 or higher GPA—those students who are “academically prepared”—the district saw great variation in the college enrollment rate, based on which **Early Postsecondary Opportunities (EPSO) students** participated in. The immediate college enrollment rate for all students 82 percent\*; but students who participated in Dual Enrollment programs enrolled at a rate of 92 percent\*. AP and SDC both had enrollment rates aligned with the district average of 83 percent\*.

*\*This analysis only applies to students with a 3.0+ GPA.*

Seeing the impact of Dual Enrollment, the district wanted to understand whether there was equal access to dual enrollment across the district; so they crosswalked GPA data with Dual Enrollment participation data, and were able to see many gaps, which they are now working to address.



[Click HERE to View the Presentation](#)



## CHALLENGE: BRINGING BUILDING-LEVEL LEADERS ON BOARD

EPSOs are managed 100 percent at the school level until submitted for high school graduation verification.

For the district initiatives to be successful, they needed to manage a successful rollout to principals and school staff. Working collaboratively with each site, school leaders worked to set goals to improve equity in EPSO participation at each school. The district office has a new coordinator that provides support to schools and counselors to identify ongoing challenges in program participation and data collection. Working collectively, the teams are finding creative solutions to collect data that has proven to be more challenging to collect, such as **local Dual Credit exams** and **industry certifications**. And data now drives important conversations about which EPSO opportunities are creating pathways to postsecondary success and certification or degree completion.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- [Using Data to Target Support for Postsecondary Preparation \(Hamilton County Schools\) - Slide Deck 1](#)
- [Using Data to Target Support for Postsecondary Preparation \(Hamilton County Schools\) - Slide Deck 2](#)