



SB 1227 Supports College Access with Student Advising for Dual Credit

IDRA Comments on SB 1277 and Submitted by Dr. Altheria Caldera before the Texas House Higher Education Committee, April 20, 2021

To Chairman Taylor and the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Dr. Altheria Caldera, and I serve as an Education Policy Fellow at IDRA (Intercultural Development Research Association). We are an independent, non-partisan, education non-profit committed to achieving equal educational opportunity for every child through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college. We support SB 1277.

Student advising for rigorous college preparation options is an integral aspect of college access for high school students. Advising is especially important for students who have been historically underserved in academic institutions, including Black students, Latino students, students from families with low incomes, and first-generation college students (Bojorquez, 2019).

Although their value is immeasurable, school counselors often are tasked with far too many duties to give necessary attention to advising students about post-secondary opportunities. Students have many options to pursue advanced coursework in high school, but not enough guidance on how to make decisions that are best for them.

HB 4403 requires that all prospective dual credit students be provided with an academic advisor before they enroll in these courses. The majority of school counselors spend at least 75% of their time performing tasks that have nothing to do with college and career counseling (Bojorquez, 2019). Dual credit advisors would help students explore advantages and disadvantages of their course options, determine which courses best prepare them for their post-secondary plans, and assist in registering and funding course enrollment.

By improving academic advising for dual credit courses, Texas will ensure that students receive appropriate advising for their curricular pathways (IDRA, 2015) and the support they need for to understand their “college preparation choices, career and professions options, and the practical mechanics of applying to college” (Avilés, 2019).

We recommend that SB 1277 be adopted to provide students with advising that will enable them to make informed decisions about dual credit and expand equitable opportunities for college access.

IDRA is available for any questions or further resources that we can provide. Thank you for your consideration. For more information, please contact Chloe Latham Sikes, Ph.D., IDRA Deputy Director of Policy, at chloe.sikes@idra.org.

Resources

- Avilés, N. (May 2019). Characteristics of College-focused Schools. IDRA Newsletter. <https://idra.news/nlMay19c>
- Bojorquez, H. (2019). School Counselors Express Concerns about College and Career Advising in Texas. IDRA Newsletter. <https://idra.news/nlMay19a>
- Cortez, A. (2015). Comprehensive Advising Needed in the Aftermath of Changes to Texas High School Curriculum Requirement. IDRA Newsletter. <https://www.idra.org/resource-center/more-comprehensive-advising-needed/>
- IDRA. (2021). College Preparation and Access that Expands Opportunities – IDRA Texas Policy Brief. Intercultural Development Research Association. https://www.idra.org/education_policy/college-preparation-and-access-that-expands-opportunities-idra-texas-priority-brief/

IDRA is an independent, non-profit organization led by Celina Moreno, J.D. Our mission is to achieve equal educational opportunity for every child through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college. IDRA strengthens and transforms public education by providing dynamic training; useful research, evaluation, and frameworks for action; timely policy analyses; and innovative materials and programs.