

Bakersfield College

Bakersfield, California

Dual Enrollment Snapshot

Collaborating to deepen and broaden college access

Bakersfield College aims for every high school student in its vast service area to have the opportunity to enroll in college courses while in grades 9 through 12. Hundreds already are simultaneously graduating high school and attaining associate degrees each year. Early data show encouraging correlations with both an increase in high school GPA and higher college course completion rates (among students who have gone on to Bakersfield College). This is a clear strategy for equity. Here are some key features:

1. **Conditions at Bakersfield College were ripe.** The college grounded its approach in the pursuit of equity, and it set a norm of responsive and creative leadership with high expectations for college staff, as well as for students.
2. **Strong relationships are key.** Staff, faculty, counselors, and administrators have collaborated closely in many ways—both within the college and between the college and area high schools—from engaging early with local school boards to offering joint workshops for college and high school instructors and counselors.
3. **Work started where the need was greatest.** Some communities in Bakersfield’s service area have among the lowest rates of college attendance and degree attainment in California. So the team focused first on rural areas north and south of the city and as far as 40 miles east.
4. **Intentional design.** Dual enrollment at Bakersfield rests on a firm sense of purpose and a focus on students; related work on campus included creation of a bachelor of science pathway, for example, which starts with dual enrollment courses and is informed by local labor market demands.
5. **Bakersfield sees dual enrollment converging with Guided Pathways** redesign as a strategy for equity that includes carefully structured career pathways.



“Without dual enrollment, I don’t think I would have been as efficient of a student [or] as confident of a student.... And it allows me to save a lot of money and time — two years of going to UCLA — and I can start on the next chapter of my life and join the workforce a little bit sooner.”

— Mariano Balbueno, dually enrolled while attending Delano High School

QUICK TAKEAWAYS

Dual enrollment is growing fast across Kern County

(7,697 individual students in 2018-19):

- College courses are available at 24 high schools
- Six offer complete certificate and degree pathways

Former dual enrollment students who attend Bakersfield College complete up to 92% of their courses (compared with 69% average). The positive correlation is even greater among students of color:

- African American students: Up to 91% (compared with 52% among all African American students)
- Latinx students: Up to 92% (compared with 67% among all Latinx students)