

DUAL ENROLLMENT INSTITUTIONAL PROCESSES AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT
EXPERIENCES: A CASE STUDY

by

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(Under the Direction of Deryl Flynn Bailey)

ABSTRACT

This study examined the phenomenon of dual enrollment in a public high school setting and how processes relate to underrepresented student experiences with dual enrollment. The study was guided by two research questions. The research questions for this study were, *How is dual enrollment implemented in a public high school setting?*, and *How do underrepresented high school students describe their experience with dual enrollment?*

The study followed a case study observational research method for data collection based on observations as the primary evidence that guided the analytic framework. Non-observation data was collected in the form of documents and participant interviews. Observational and non-observational data was used to identify required processes for dual enrollment within a public high school institution. Roles, responsibilities, actions, and skills were described for the faculty and staff members employed at the research site implementing processes required for dual enrollment as well as the students who apply to and participate in a in a post-secondary institution's dual enrollment program. Observation data was positioned as the central component of the research design. This study utilized by Lent, Brown, and Hackett's social cognitive career theory (SCCT) (2000) as a framework to understand how dual enrollment participation impacted participant's self-efficacy, decision making, and behavior.

Findings revealed the phenomenon of dual enrollment as (1) the high school institution following legislation, regulations, and policies to deliver dual enrollment information and programs; (2) School staff and faculty members engagement in dual enrollment training, advisement, counseling, consultation, and records management to fulfill duties and responsibilities required to implement dual enrollment; (3) A student process taken to learn about, receive advisement on, and apply to participate in dual enrollment; (4) A student's experience with taking college course(s) while enrolled in their public high school. Themes were identified as process management and support, as well as influence.

Conclusions for this study outlined that dual enrollment processes can be developed to increase equity and access for underrepresented students through examining policies and regulations for participation. This study also makes recommendations for the implementation, marketing, and management of dual enrollment programs for school counselors.

INDEX WORDS: Case study; dual enrollment; self-efficacy; school counselor; social cognitive career theory; underrepresented student

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family and friends who have supported me throughout this journey.

My grandmother, Hyacinth Hart, who I lost along this journey, thank you for sharing your unconditional love and teaching me that it takes all kinds to make a world.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	x
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xi
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
Need for the Study.....	3
Purpose of the Study.....	4
Research Paradigm.....	5
Theoretical Framework.....	6
Significance of the Study.....	7
Research Questions.....	8
Definitions.....	9
Assumptions and Limitations.....	9
Chapter Summary.....	11
2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	12
Dual Enrollment.....	14
First generation students	25
Dual Enrollment Legislation	51
Student Perceptions	63

	Dual Enrollment in Georgia.....	67
	Dual Enrollment Research Gaps.....	75
	Gatekeepers.....	77
	College Counseling and Advisement.....	92
	Social & Cultural Capital.....	94
	Chapter Summary	100
3	METHODOLOGY	103
	Paradigm	104
	Theoretical Framework.....	107
	Research Design.....	110
	Site and Participant Description.....	113
	Research Questions.....	115
	Data Collection	115
	Data Analysis	132
	Research Credibility	137
	Confidentiality	146
	Ethical Rights	147
4	FINDINGS.....	149
	Research Site and Student Population.....	151
	Dual Enrollment Processes.....	153
	Dual Enrollment Student Experiences.....	178

	Analysis.....	189
	Themes.....	191
	Chapter Summary.....	211
5	DISCUSSION.....	213
	Summary of findings.....	214
	Implications.....	223
	Recommendations.....	231
	Limitations of the study.....	233
	Conclusion.....	236
	REFERENCES.....	239

APPENDICES

A	UGA Informed Consent.....	269
B	UGA Parental Permission Form.....	272
C	Minor Assent Form.....	274
D	Request for Permission to access site.....	276
E	Case Study Protocol.....	278
F	Participant Demographic Survey.....	282
G	Participant Interview Protocol.....	284
H	Participant Recruitment flyer	287
I	Observation Guide.....	288
J	Reflection journal documentation template.....	289
K	Dual Enrollment Local School Agreement.....	290
L	Dual Enrollment Student Advisement Plan.....	292
M	Dual Enrollment Checklist for 2022-23.....	294
N	School Counseling Duties.....	295
O	Internal department memo for dual enrollment deadline extension.....	296

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1: Data collection outline.....	124
Table 2: Participant profile summary.....	129
Table 3: Student demographic information.....	151
Table 4: Student services provided by the research site.....	151

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1: Model of person, contextual and experiential factors affecting career related choice behavior.....	107
Figure 2: Case study design graphic.....	113
Figure 3: Graphic of data collection sequence.....	117
Figure 4: Data collection timeline.....	118
Figure 5: Themes and subthemes.....	191

Chapter 1

Introduction

Dual enrollment serves as a mechanism that enables high school students to enroll in a two- or four-year postsecondary institution and earn course credit to help fulfill requirements to graduate from high school as well as college (Bailey et al., 2002; Boecherer, 2016; Clark, 2001; Griffin & McGuire, 2018; Karp et al, 2007; Puyear, 1998). One of the first dual enrollment programs in the nation was offered by the University of Connecticut (Grant, 2019) in the 1940s. Options have expanded to over 80% of high schools throughout the United States offering dual-credit programs to students and approximately two million course enrollments during the 2010 – 2011 school year (Thomas et al., 2013). As dual enrollment options and student participation has continued to increase, state legislative bodies and policymakers have adjusted eligibility requirements and funding measures that have impacted student access and participation in varying parts of the U.S. (Pretlow & Preston, 2015; Roach et al., 2015; Taylor et al., 2015).

Specifically for the state of Georgia, students may enroll in a dual enrollment program in grades tenth through twelfth and can save tuition and time towards completing a two- or four-year degree program while enrolled in high school (Georgia Student Finance Commission, 2022a). The delivery of information about dual enrollment options is required through the Georgia General Assembly’s BRIDGE (Building Resourceful Individuals to Develop Georgia’s Economy) Act, and House Bill 444 (Move on When Ready Act, 2010) which stipulates that schools survey high school students in grades ninth, tenth, and eleventh on the receipt of dual enrollment information as an accountability measure. Findings from this study validated that the delivery of dual enrollment advisement and counseling and coordination of duties required to

assist students and schools in meeting program requirements is generally facilitated by school counseling practitioners. School counselors are uniquely positioned to aid Georgia high school students as they provide college and career advisement, assistance with identifying appropriate coursework to develop students' post-secondary aspirations, as well as resources and programs that develop knowledge about college options for students and caregivers.

The BRIDGE Act (2010) requires public schools in Georgia to collect data about students' receipt of dual enrollment information, but at this time very little is known about high school students' knowledge and experience with dual enrollment options available in Georgia. An internet search using Google Scholar, the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), EBSCO Information Services, and ProQuest enlisted only one dissertational study by Jenkins (2018) on the experiences of former dual-enrolled students in Georgia and the influence of participation on their college admissions decision. Jenkins (2018) held that the growing body of research around dual enrollment contained almost no scholarship examining how participation influences students' college choices and aspirations.

Various authors (Holland, 2017; Kanny, 2012; McDonough et al., 1997; Ryan et al., 2009) encouraged the value of learning about the lived experiences of individuals who engage in phenomena that little is known about. Research studies have examined the influence of dual enrollment on high school outcomes (Bailey & Karp, 2003), college students' freshman GPA (An & Taylor, 2015), and persistence through the first year and second year of college (Karp et al., 2007) but many authors have been unable to account for individual differences between dual enrollment participants and non-participating peers. Authors have examined how state legislation impacts dual enrollment requirements and tuition options (Pretlow & Patteson, 2015), school counselors' perspectives (Hanson et al., 2015; Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020), and college

instructors' experiences (Caples, 2017) with dual enrollment students. Literature centered on the perspectives of dual enrollment students has revealed a range of positive and negative feelings, experiences, and outcomes (Felder, 2017; Kanny, 2015; Speroni, 2012). These authors have indicated a need to listen to student voices to better understand how dual enrollment influences students' educational experiences and subsequent choice to attend college.

Need for the Study

At the time of this study, there is limited research literature (Jenkins, 2018) on how high school students in Georgia learn about dual enrollment and why they choose to participate. The research literature on dual enrollment participation in Georgia reflected an overrepresentation of students identified as female and White and an underrepresentation of students identified as Black and Latinx (Rauschenberg & Chalasani, 2017; University System of Georgia, 2020a). As program costs have increased significantly over time, recommendations have been posed to state legislators to add goals and objectives in relevant state statutes to aid institutions with identifying trends in participation and measuring outcomes, but Georgia has yet to do so (Griffin & McGuire, 2018). Scholarship (Felder, 2017; Rankin Gonzalez, 2018) on dual enrollment has typically examined the perspectives of individuals who previously participated (i.e. college students attending a two- or four-year institution) but there are persisting gaps in research literature around how high school institutions carry out dual enrollment as a curricular option and how institutional processes impact current high school students experience with dual enrollment (Kanny, 2015; Karp, 2012).

Another need for this study is evidenced by the steady increase in dual enrollment students in the state of Georgia. Between the fiscal year 2016 and fiscal year 2019 the number of students in Georgia in dual enrollment programs nearly doubled from approximately 27,000

students to 52,000 students (Lee, 2019; University System of Georgia, 2020a). Jenkins (2018) pointed to the dearth of evidence around dual enrollment student experiences in Georgia and that while there is a growing body of academic literature on dual enrollment, almost no research has centered on how participation impacts students' decisions on where they choose to attend college following their successful completion of high school.

A need for this study was to reduce gaps in research around how dual enrollment functions in Georgia and why high school students choose to participate. To achieve this, I conducted a qualitative case study to explore how dual enrollment processes were carried out by high school personnel and students in a public high school. To better understand this complex phenomenon and the unique needs of this student group, it was beneficial to explore how dual enrollment functioned from within a public high school that served a diverse population of students. As dual enrollment student data reflected a lack of gender and ethnic diversity in participation rates (Rauschenberg & Chalasani, 2017; University System of Georgia, 2020a), there was a need for this study to uncover the experiences and perspectives of underrepresented students. Participant voices outlined specific factors that encouraged their desire and ability to participate in dual enrollment as well as environmental and personal attributes that contributed to their college and career aspirations.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to learn about how dual enrollment is implemented in a public high school setting and how institutional processes impacted student experiences who participate in a dual enrollment program. Through examining institutional processes at a single school, I learned about the experiences of high school students who participated in dual enrollment and the effect participation had on their college and career aspirations. Studying

institutional processes required for dual enrollment participation can help reveal how, when, and where information is specifically delivered to a student body as well as who are the key faculty and staff members to do so. To understand how students understand and utilize institutional processes required to participate in dual enrollment, it was necessary to explore the factors that students identified as influencing their decision-making to learn about, apply to, and enroll in a dual enrollment program before graduating from high school. Understanding these factors from the perspective of students helped to develop recommendations for educators and caregivers to foster students' college and career aspirations and strategies to better support high school students who participate in dual enrollment. One advantage of dual enrollment participation supported by scholarship is to enable a smoother transition between high school and college as well as reduce the amount of time and tuition towards completing a degree program (Greenberg, 1989; Karp et al., 2007). I believe that learning about the experiences of high school students who engage in dual enrollment can help high schools and college institutions better serve this student demographic and aid them in the development of their self-efficacy to meet identified post-secondary objectives and goals.

Research Paradigm

A constructivist-interpretivist paradigm was adopted for this study as I sought to expand my knowledge about how the experiences of dual enrollment students influenced their educational decision-making. Scholars that hold a constructivist paradigm view the world as socially constructed through the lens of human experiences (Ponterotto, 2005). Via this paradigm, individuals make meaning of their experiences in the world in which they live and work (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It is important for researchers using the constructivist paradigm to understand that multiple realities and perspectives exist among participants (2018).

A case study framework was used to understand and make sense of the experiences of high school dual enrollment students through interviews. Case studies seek to provide a detailed account of the characteristics and dynamics that exist in one or more cases (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). A case study design helped enabled my understanding of the context and experiences of participants bounded by the same time, place, and context through holistic, thick, rich descriptions. This entailed all participants being enrolled during the same semester (i.e. Fall 2022), in the same high school institution (i.e. the proposed research site) that participated in an eligible postsecondary institution's dual enrollment program in the state of Georgia. Serving as a school counselor in this study provided ample opportunity to collect observations from vantage points not available to other educators. Applying a constructivist interpretivist lens as well as a case study observational research design aided my ability to integrate collected evidence and make meaning of multiple sources of data that informed my understanding of dual enrollment processes and their impact on student experiences.

Theoretical Framework

This qualitative case study described high school students' experiences with dual enrollment and how participation influences their college and career aspirations guided by Lent, Brown, and Hackett's social cognitive career theory (SCCT) (2000). SCCT provided a framework to examine how an individual's self-efficacy, expectations, and goals affect their career development. Bandura (1998) viewed self-efficacy as the confidence or level of proficiency an individual holds in their ability to perform behaviors. Self-efficacy has a main role in guiding an individual's behavior to outcomes that encapsulate the setting of goals, the effort consumed toward the goal, and the success in reaching an identified goal. Proponents of self-efficacy have identified it as a necessary component of academic success, but it is primarily

viewed in the context of goal attainment (Bolkan et al., 2021). Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory builds upon the concepts of self-efficacy and goal attainment by centering how learning occurs in context with interactions between a person, environment, and behavior.

SCCT is closely linked to Krumboltz's (Mitchell et al., 1999) learning theory of career development and incorporates Bandura's triadic reciprocal model of causality (1985) where self-efficacy mediates between personal, environmental, and behavioral determinants. Lent and colleagues (1994) SCCT was selected as a framework to trace links between dual enrollment student participants' educational and career-related contexts to account for how their environment impacted educational and career decision-making.

Dual enrollment programs can influence a student's educational decision-making and long term college and career goals. SCCT worked well with this study as a theory to reveal connections between cognitive processes and interpersonal factors that relate to students' individual choices. Lent (2013) identified three components of choice-making as (1) the expression of a primary choice to enter a field of work or study, (2) taking action to implement one's goal (e.g. enrolling in a dual enrollment program), and (3) subsequent performance experiences. Lent (2013) viewed these experiences as feedback stemming from success or failure, which in turn develops a feedback loop as influential learning experiences that influence future choices, self-efficacy beliefs, and outcome expectations. The components of choice-making were utilized to analyze participant interview responses.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study can provide significant contributions to the field of school counseling and college admissions as well as the overall understanding of dual enrollment programs. The lived experiences of dual enrollment high school students provided insights into

factors impacting their educational decision-making and how personal and contextual variables impact their self-efficacy, expectations, and goals toward attending college. The results of this study may be valuable to school counselors and dual enrollment coordinators as they educate students about dual enrolment opportunities and develop new ways to recruit and assist students in the transition to dual enrollment programs while in high school. The findings collected from this study may also guide high schools and post-secondary institutions in developing collaborative relationships to improve partnerships that support dual enrollment students in their transition between K-12 and higher education institutions.

Research Questions

The research question that guided this study was, *How is dual enrollment implemented in a public high school setting?* The primary research question examined how dual enrollment was implemented in a public high school setting and how institutional processes impacted student experiences who participate in a dual enrollment program. To answer the underlying elements of the research question, a second research question that guided this study was, *How do underrepresented high school students describe their experience with dual enrollment?* The secondary research question examined how high school students who are traditionally underrepresented in dual enrollment programs in Georgia described their experience with participation. The second research question also explored how students became aware of dual enrollment options and how they gained more knowledge and skills to enroll in a two- or four-year college institution before graduating from high school.

Definitions

Dual enrollment - postsecondary credit-bearing coursework available to students who are concurrently enrolled in high school (U.S. Department of Education, 2019)

Dual enrollment advisor – an individual serving in a local high school or independent school with a role to educate, provide advisement and counseling, and assist students with processes to enroll and participate in a dual enrollment program of study

Dual enrollment student – a student who is concurrently enrolled in both a public high school or independent school as well as a two- or four-year college institution

First Generation student – An individual who will be the first member of their immediate family to enroll and attend a post-secondary institution (Redford, Mulvaney Horner, & U.S. Department of Education, 2017)

School counselor – an educational mental health practitioner who works in primary schools or secondary schools to provide information and resources geared towards developing knowledge and aspirations towards academic, career, and college access/affordability/admission, as well as social-emotional competencies to all students through a comprehensive school counseling program (ASCA, 2018, 2019).

Assumptions and Limitations

Assumptions

This study investigated the experiences of high school students participating in a dual enrollment program as relayed directly by participants through semi-structured one-on-one interviews. It was assumed that participants would answer all questions and relay their experiences with honest responses. Due to eligibility criteria restricting study participation to individuals associated with dual enrollment at a single comprehensive public high school, it was assumed that participants shared a similar experience of dual enrollment (Wargo, 2015). Lastly, it was assumed that the sample of high school dual enrollment students chosen for the study was

representative of the population of students enrolled at the high school that is the proposed site of this study (Simon, 2010)

Limitations

In this study, participants will rely on memory to relate to their dual enrollment experiences, some of which may have occurred almost six months to one year ago depending on the participants' time of program participation. Some participants' recollections and the emotions they will report based on those recollections may be compromised by the passage of time. An additional limitation is the anticipated sample size of five to seven participants. Although this size is deemed appropriate to reach data saturation (Yin, 2014) findings will not be generalizable beyond the public high school that has been selected for this study. Further, the participant demographics are unique to the setting and region which is influenced by factors that differ from other high schools and public school districts across the United States. Finally, the research site of this study is a part of a school district that partners with various two- and four-year college institutions in a suburb in proximity to a metropolitan area located in the southeastern U.S. For this reason, the findings of the study may only apply to schools in the public school district of the proposed research site and may not be representative of a larger population of high school students who offer dual enrollment due to differences in program requirements and legislation pertaining to participation and eligibility for students (Institute for Work and Health, 2014). Methodological limitations of this study include the use of participant observations, documents, and interviews as collection tools. Participants were required to be currently enrolled high school students in the state of Georgia during the fall 2022 semester that are 16 years of age or older during the 2022 – 2023 school year.

Chapter Summary

This chapter described dual enrollment as an educational pathway for high school students to earn college credit before completing their high school education. The state of Georgia mandates that students receive information on dual enrollment annually in grades eighth through twelfth via the BRIDGE Act (2010). High schools in Georgia often utilize school counselors to ensure that students learn about and complete surveys that are under BRIDGE Act requirements. At the time of this study there was virtually no research supporting how students learn about dual enrollment and how students' experiences as participants shape their college and career goals as well as educational decision-making.

Research literature has acknowledged that dual enrollment students encounter a range of positive and negative experiences as well as varied outcomes such as earning college credit (Kanny, 2012; Karp, 2012;) or failing coursework that negatively impacts their high school GPA and college-going aspirations. Lent, Brown, and Hackett's social cognitive career theory (SCCT) (2000) was used as a framework to understand how dual enrollment students' experiences impact their self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals towards developing their college aspirations and career development.

This qualitative study explored the experiences of high school dual enrollment students and the factors that influence their decision to enroll in a college institution before graduating from high school. Participants' stories, thoughts, beliefs, and perspectives provided insight to understand how personal and contextual factors influence their educational decision-making and reasons for entering a dual enrollment program.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The following chapter will provide a review of literature pertaining to dual enrollment programs and legislation in the state of Georgia, educational outcomes for underrepresented college students, and the role of school counselors in public high schools. Research studies pertaining to how legislation and state policy impact access and delivery models for dual enrollment participants in different regions of the United States will be explored. A description of dual enrollment outcome research and studies examining student perspectives will be provided. Thereafter, implications for high school counselors and how their role affects dual enrollment advisement and participation for high school students will be discussed. Finally, a review of theoretical orientations relating to college choice theory, social and cultural capital, and Yosso's cultural wealth model will be presented prior to a chapter summary.

Introduction

In 2009 President Barack Obama introduced the American Graduation Initiative to drive two-year community college institutions to increase access and provide training through an allocation of \$12 billion to increase the number of graduates from community colleges by five million new graduates by the year 2020 (Jaschik, 2009). Due to disproportionate graduation rates between Black and Latinx college students still waning far behind White students, current admission and graduation rates indicate that Obama's anticipated outcome may not be realized until after 2040 due to the reduced amount of 18 – 24 year old students enrolling in college (Marcus, 2019). The disproportionate rates of college enrollment and graduation on a national

level between White students and students of Color reinforces barriers to social mobility that affect access to income, healthcare, and other quality of life measures.

Dual enrollment programs offer high school students who meet eligibility criteria to enroll and earn credit in college coursework that may concurrently satisfy requirements for a high school diploma and college credential (i.e. certificate or degree). In the state of Georgia, dual enrollment participation increased significantly between 2016 and 2019 (i.e. approximately 27,000 students to 52,000 students) indicating that more students were able to engage in the opportunity to attend college prior to graduating from high school (Lee, 2019; Sturgis, 2020; University System of Georgia, 2020a). During the same time period (2016 to 2019), Georgia's high school graduation rate increased from 79.4% to 82% under the four-year adjusted cohort model as required by federal law (Frick, 2019). While these figures portray a positive trend, a report by the Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement indicated that female students as well as White students are overrepresented in dual enrollment programs in Georgia (Rauschenberg & Chalasani, 2017).

High school graduation data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) *Condition of Education 2021* report indicated that Georgia's 2019 graduation rate for students identified as Latinx and Black trailed behind White students (i.e. 76%, 80%, and 86% respectively (Irwin et al., 2021). In a similar fashion, the Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement reported that White students accounted for over 55% of dual enrollment students in 2016 while Black and Latinx students made up 35% of students. Although this data does not align in the same cohort graduation year, it depicts a landscape where students of color in Georgia have reduced access to participate in dual enrollment programs while in high school. This could be due to numerous factors such as the quality of schools attended by students in the

state of Georgia, students' physical proximity and ability to access two- and four-year college institutions offering dual enrollment, or students knowledge about dual enrollment programs and their aspirations to attend a college while still enrolled in high school.

At the time of this study, there are gaps in research literature pertaining to how students in Georgia describe their experience with dual enrollment and why they choose to participate in this education pathway (Jenkins, 2018). By addressing this need in research literature, educators who serve dual enrollment students could have a more comprehensive understanding of students' reasons for participating as well as their expected outcomes and goals from participation. To better understand how individuals describe their experience with dual enrollment it is worth examining its history, delivery models, legislation, and outcomes for participants. The following section will provide an overview of dual enrollment.

Dual Enrollment

Access to a college education is viewed as a mechanism that increases social mobility for all individuals regardless of their background (Carnevale & Desrochers, 2003; Nunez & Clark, 1998). As the U.S. job market has become an increasingly competitive river current, a higher education credential serves as the paddles needed to navigate a successful path upstream. The transition between high school and college poses numerous challenges on both a personal and institutional level throughout the U.S. (Bailey et al., 2002; Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020). Students and families often look to resources in their schools such as teachers, school counselors, and other stakeholders to gain early exposure to a rigorous curriculum to prepare for college. Students can access opportunities to bridge the gap between high school and college through programs such as dual enrollment enabling greater exposure to the rigor of college coursework

while increasing their chances of graduating from high school and matriculating to college (Bailey et al., 2002; Giani et al., 2014; Kim & Bragg, 2008; Puyear, 1998).

For students who have traditionally been underrepresented in higher education institutions due to their personal background (i.e. race, ability, sexual orientation, citizenship status, socioeconomic status) and sociopolitical status in the United States, dual enrollment can remove barriers to college access while increasing students level of college readiness (An, 2013; An & Taylor, 2015; Bailey et al., 2002; Chatman & Smith, 1998; Roach et al., 2015). Dual enrollment is commonly defined as a college credit bearing course that high school students may enroll in and receive college credit that also meets high school diploma requirements (An & Taylor, 2015; Boecherer, 2016; Chatman & Smith, 1998; Kleiner & Lewis, 2005; Marken et al., 2013; Puyear, 1998; Zinth, 2014). Dual enrollment may take on varying names including dual credit, joint enrollment, concurrent enrollment depending on the format of the program and articulation agreements between local high school and post-secondary institutions (An & Taylor, 2015; Boecherer, 2016). Laws, policies, and regulations governing how dual enrollment programs are implemented vary between states (Pretlow & Preston, 2015; Taylor et al., 2015;) influencing participation rates among different school communities and student populations (Lowe, 2010; Zinth, 2014).

Settings for dual enrollment programs may take place at the post-secondary institution (two year technical college or four year college/university), local high school, virtually (distance learning models for synchronous and asynchronous coursework), or a hybrid option (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). Enhancements in the format and availability of dual enrollment programs have increased opportunities for student to participate throughout the United States. Kleiner and Lewis (2005) reported that during the 2002 – 2003 school year, 98% of public two-year institutions had

high school students taking classes for college credit in comparison to 77% of public 4-year institutions and 40% of private 4-year institutions. The authors' 2005 study estimated that amongst the approximately 813,000 high school students enrolled in college-level credit bearing courses through postsecondary institutions in SY2002 – 2003, roughly 84% (680,000) of students took courses for college credit within dual enrollment programs (Kleiner & Lewis). Participation has continually increased as 82% percent of all high schools in the U.S. offered a dual enrollment program during the 2011-2012 school year (Marken et al., 2013; Zinth, 2014).

Research suggests there may be great value in dual enrollment programs (An, 2013; Kanny, 2012; Karp et al., 2007; Puyear, 1998) as well as a great deal of challenges and inconsistencies as it pertains to legislation (Griffin & McGuire 2018; Taylor et al., 2015), funding (Pretlow & Preston, 2015), and program implementation (Taylor & Lichtenberger, 2013). The 2019 Conference on College Composition and Communication identified dual enrollment programs proliferation to be driven by four areas being college- and career-ready standards the U.S. Department of Education, rising college tuition and costs, nationwide budget cuts in education, and a trend to reduce students time to degree completion. To better understand the rise in dual enrollment's popularity the following section will provide a historical overview of early college programs in the United States.

History

The development of concurrent enrollment program spans back to the 1940s through the efforts of Albert E. Waugh, provost of the University of Connecticut, who sought to form a *Connecticut Junior Academy of Arts and Letters* for identified academically superior students from local high schools (Grant, 2019). Due to the influence World War II posed on U.S. society at the time, the executive committee of the Land Grant Colleges' Presidents passed resolutions

calling for an increased acceleration for students to earn a college credential (2019). As the university continued to grow during WWII, Waugh encouraged university administrators to expand enrollment to outstanding high school students to enable a head start on their college career. A primary benefit was to fulfill critical needs of the wartime effort through students joining the workforce or armed forces early (2019). Waugh also identified a need for institutions of higher learning to engage with area superintendents and high school principals to offer introductory college level courses to offer more intensive academic rigor during the senior year and to promote greater interest in learning for students (2019). In 1955 the University of Connecticut began implementation for its “cooperative program for gifted students” enabling accepted students to take college courses in their high school setting and is now known as the *Early College Experience* program (Grant, 2019).

During the mid-1990s a professional movement enacted the creation of a national accreditation agency for concurrent and dual enrollment programs. In 1997 the first national meeting of concurrent enrollment professionals was held at Syracuse University at the American Association for Higher Education conference (National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships, n.d.a). This conference led to the development of the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP, n.d.a) with member institutions seeking to enhance policy, regulations, and oversight for dual enrollment programs.

Program Format

Dual enrollment’s popularity has been substantiated by studies that indicate that considerable increases in student participation between 2000 and 2015 (Bailey & Karp, 2003; Giani et al., 2014; Thomas, et al., 2013). During the 2010-2011 school year, 82% of high schools reported that students were in dual enrollment courses accounting for approximately two million

enrollments in dual credit courses (Thomas et al., 2013). Bailey and Karp (2003) define three formats of dual-credit programs available to high school students as singleton, comprehensive, or enhanced comprehensive programs.

Singleton programs seek to expose students to college level coursework and enrich their curriculum without requiring navigational aspects of the transition process such as completing applications or preparing financial aid forms. Examples of singleton programs include Advanced Placement (AP) coursework taught by high school faculty certified to teach college level courses providing a *head start* to students (Bailey & Karp, 2003). Bailey and Karp (2003) caution that although the program and policy language of singleton programs purport meeting the needs of a variety of students, many research studies describe students in these programs as highly motivated and strong academic performers (Rauschenberg & Chalasani, 2017; Zinth, 2014).

Comprehensive programs encompass much of students' educational experiences by requiring that they take most, if not all, their coursework under an early transition program bearing college credit, such as an International Baccalaureate program or other dual credit program, usually occurring in their last two years of high school (Bailey & Karp, 2003). Coursework may be offered at a high school or college campus with either high school teachers or college faculty members serving as course instructor. Although the intensity of comprehensive programs offers greater opportunity for students to learn about attitudes and behaviors promoting success in college, the overall focus is centered upon enhancing college readiness through rigorous coursework and the opportunity to earn college credit (Bailey & Karp, 2003).

Enhanced comprehensive programs are the most intensive form as these seek to prepare students for college by providing additional support services such as assistance with applications, counseling, mentoring, in addition to a rigorous academic course of study (Bailey & Karp, 2003).

These programs rely on maintaining close student-stakeholder relationships due to the need to address all elements of the transition between high school and college making them much less common (2003). Enhanced comprehensive programs may take shape as early college high schools or dual enrollment programs designed for specific student groups. Due to their intentional nature these programs may be better suited to support the needs of underrepresented students and assist non-academically advanced students with successfully accessing college coursework while still enrolled in high school. Bailey and Karp (2003) acknowledged that these programs are traditionally delivered on a college campus and employ restrictive participation standards despite their primary focus on students who are identified as middle or low achieving that face social or economic disadvantages.

The diversity of program options may influence student participation rates at varying lengths and frequencies of time. Some individuals may participate in dual enrollment once or twice under a school's AP program whereas others may earn enough credits to be awarded an associate degree or equivalent credential through an enhanced comprehensive program. To better understand how dual enrollment programs are implemented and marketed towards high school students, it is necessary to examine studies examining outcomes for participants (Karp et al., 2007) as well as institutional policies and state legislation that subsequently affect program funding and operations (Taylor & Lichtenberger, 2013). Dual enrollment has been held as a sociological intervention to cure "senioritis" by offering new course options and pathways to students and aid the transition to college (Syracuse University, n.d.). Despite the benefits to participants, there is a dearth of research supporting how students become aware of dual enrollment opportunities and their perspectives on how participation influences their educational

decision making. To better understand potential benefits and drawbacks of dual enrollment, the following section will examine outcomes from dual enrollment research.

Outcome research

Many dual enrollment studies point to short term research outcomes such as increased high school graduation rates, higher freshman college GPA, and persistence through the first and second year of college versus peers who did not participate in dual enrollment (Bailey & Karp, 2003; Carey & Ohio Board of Regents, 2013; Karp et al., 2007; Taylor & Lichtenberger, 2013; Zinth, 2014). Studies have identified benefits to students including early exposure to navigating the college environment (Karp, 2012), building relationships with peers and college faculty members (Kanny, 2012), increased range of course options after meeting entry level prerequisite (Bailey & Karp, 2003; Boecherer, 2016), and reduced financial college costs (An, 2013; Srinivas, 2012). Different authors (Clark, 2001; Greenberg, 1989; Karp, 2012; Puyear, 1998) also promote dual enrollment programs for easing the transition to college as well as providing a “hidden curriculum” of different skills and practices expected of college students (Kanny, 2012).

Dual enrollment programs have the potential to yield unanticipated negative consequences for students and caregivers. A poor experience in a dual enrollment program may discourage students who are academically or emotionally unprepared to handle the demands of college or have negative effects when students enroll in a program with low academic quality (Speroni, 2012). States with inconsistent funding practices for dual enrollment programs may result in increased out of pocket expenses for families (Kim & Bragg, 2008) as well as an increased liability for underage high school students on college campuses (Nelson & Waltz, 2019). Speroni’s (2012) research indicated that more competitive dual enrollment programs have no effect for college enrollment and completion when they are primarily geared towards serving

college bound students. Despite calls for state legislations and policymakers to increase access to underrepresented groups (i.e. students of color, students from low-income households) and middle academic achievers (Borden et al., 2013; Carey & Ohio Board of Regents, 2013), research depicts the typical dual enrollment participant as a college bound, affluent, white, high achieving student (Bailey et al., 2002; Karp et al., 2007; Rauschenberg & Chalasani, 2017; Taylor and Lichtenberger, 2013; University System of Georgia, 2020a; Zinth, 2014). Zinth (2014) examined student access to dual enrollment and found that minoritized and low-income students were underrepresented in statewide dual enrollment programs, with Massachusetts as the sole outlier. Data for Illinois, Ohio, and Washington revealed White students and students from high income families were overrepresented in dual enrollment programs (Zinth, 2014).

To develop opportunities for students through dual enrollment, research efforts should seek to explore the perceptions of high school students who participate. Kim and Bragg (2008) caution that without an abundant research base, it is difficult to generalize results from previous dual enrollment research. As participants in dual enrollment programs are required to meet specific criteria (i.e. minimum GPA, college entrance exams, prerequisite coursework), these opportunities have typically been restricted to students with greater academic ability enrolling in more advanced classes (Karp et al., 2007). Unless studies specifically control for ability differences between dual enrollment participants and non-participants, it is impossible to determine if positive or negative outcomes may be attributed to individual academic ability or qualities specific to a dual enrollment program (Kim & Bragg, 2008).

Nitzke (2002) as well as Spurling and Gabriner (2002) attempted to control for prior academic performance when examining the influence of dual enrollment participation and found a positive effect where dual enrollment students performed better whereas studies by Chatman

and Smith (1998) and Speroni (2012) found no differences in outcomes in comparison to peers who did not participate in a dual enrollment program. Nelson and Waltz (2019) suggested that if dual enrollment programs are limited in scope, gatekeepers should be mindful of the potential harm it may cause to students. An and Taylor (2015) found that dual enrollment increased academic success for all students, but low-income students benefitted less in comparison to higher SES peers. An and Taylor (2015) speculated this outcome may be due to low-income students reduced access to accelerated coursework in high school prior to beginning a dual enrollment program (2015).

Kim and Bragg (2008) identified associations between students taking math and science dual enrollment courses as being better prepared for college due to fewer participants subsequently enrolling in remedial coursework. The authors (2008) encouraged that greater inquiry is needed regarding the specific type of dual enrollment credit to determine how coursework options influence a student's level of college readiness and enhance their ability to persist through a degree program. Future research should seek to examine student perspectives regarding course advisement for dual enrollment to determine how this knowledge develops students aspirations and goals to participate in a two- or four-year college.

Qualitative studies by An (2013) and Boecherer (2016) have explored the impact of dual enrollment on academic achievement in relation to family SES to better understand the educational decision making of parents and students seeking to participate in dual enrollment. Via a propensity score matching model, An (2013) assessed the impact of dual enrollment on academic performance and college readiness. An's findings indicated that dual enrollment had a positive effect on students regardless of their identified SES, however participation in itself did

not close the achievement gap between low, middle, and high SES students due to parent education gaps and other baseline differences (2005).

Boecherer (2016) conducted a mixed methods study to examine household income and dual enrollment participation in the University of Connecticut's *Early College Experience* (ECE) program to determine if there was a relationship to student's matriculation to college. At the time of the study, the ECE program did not collect individual student household income data leading Boecherer to utilize town median household income and student ECE participation rates in regression models. Findings indicated that as household income rose, students identified in the upper income quartile were less likely to participate in the ECE program while students in the lower- and middle-income quartiles had a spurious relationship (2016).

Research by An and Taylor (2015) indicated that dual enrollment programs bolster high school graduation rates as well as a college's retention rates via enhanced partnerships and networks between institutions. Dual enrollment programs have the capacity to enhance college readiness and level the educational playing field via easing the transition to college (Kanny, 2015; Karp, 2012) and offering expanded coursework options to students (Boecherer, 2016). Findings from research literature are often limited in generalizability due to failing to control for urbanicity, student demographic, and type of dual enrollment credit (Giani et al., 2014).

Participation rates for dual enrollment programs vary greatly between states and local communities which impacts access for different student groups (Giani et al., 2014; Pretlow & Patterson 2015; Rauschenberg & Chalasani, 2017; Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020). Although the rules for students to participate may be similar by geographic territory, research studies indicate that access to dual enrollment programs are disproportionate as high achieving, White, affluent students make up the bulk of participants (Bailey et al., 2002; Karp et al., 2007; University

System of Georgia, 2020a; Rauschenberg & Chalasani, 2017; Zinth, 2014). Authors such as Kim and Bragg (2008), Karp (2012), Roach and colleagues (2015), and Zinth (2014) indicate that dual enrollment programs can increase college access for students who are underrepresented, but there is a lack of scholarship around how students become aware of dual enrollment opportunities and subsequent processes such as navigating steps for admissions and enrollment (i.e. course registration, financial aid processes). Few research studies (Felder, 2017; Karp, 2012; Rankin Gonzalez, 2018) have sought to understand students' perceptions of dual enrollment advisement and required processes to matriculate to a dual enrollment program prior to completing high school. By examining student perspectives, educators could enhance their understanding of how students develop their aspirations to pursue college coursework while in high school and enroll in a dual enrollment program.

Research that elucidates student perceptions of dual enrollment advisement can help inform educators and policymakers to enhance outreach programs and advising models to recruit and support future participants from underrepresented college populations. Scholarship by Freeman (1997), Holland (2017), and Tolliver et al. (2019) acknowledge the wealth of information from underrepresented college populations to developing solutions to overcome barriers. Research by Manzano-Sanchez and colleagues (2019) encouraged the exploration of perspectives, experiences, and beliefs of individuals who have navigated barriers to college enrollment to gain a better understanding of how high schools and postsecondary institutions can better support student's college going aspirations and educational decision making. To better understand barriers to higher education in the United States the following section will examine patterns for high school graduation as well as college enrollment and completion rates for a primarily underrepresented group, first-generation college students.

First generation students

First generation students are individuals who are enrolled in a K-12 or post-secondary institution whose parent(s) or caregiver(s) attained level of education is a high school diploma or less (Nunez, Cuccaro-Alamin, & MPR Associates, 1998; Thayer, 2000). Students of color often are the first generation in their family to attend college (Pike & Kuh, 2005) and often encounter barriers to enrollment such as a lack of college readiness skills and knowledge (Adelman, 1999), familial support, and financial stability (Stebelton & Soria, 2012). First-generation students experience lower high school and college graduation rates than peers whose parents attended college (Engle & Tinto, 2008). Research indicates there is a sizeable gap between first and second generation college students' persistence (Cataldi et al., 2018; Nunez et al., 1998). To identify first generation students it is necessary to examine college enrollment rates by student demographic given enrollment patterns differ greatly according to gender, race/ethnicity, and socio economic status (Cataldi et al., 2018; Engle & Tinto, 2008; Pike & Kuh, 2005). The following section will describe patterns of high school graduation rates and college enrollment in the United States.

High School Completion

Greene and Winters (2006) reported that in 2003 the U.S. national high school graduation rate was approximately 70%. Greene and Winters (2006) utilized 2003 Common Core Data publicly available through the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) to analyze state and district level graduation data based on students grade, race, and gender. These authors found that approximately 78% of White students and 72% of Asian American/Pacific Islander students graduated in 2003 while little more than half of Latinx (53%) and Black/African American students (55%) graduated that year (2006). More female students graduated from high school at a

rate of approximately 72% compared with males at 68% (2006). For each racial group, female students had higher graduation rates with substantial differences amongst Latinx and Black/African Americans (2006). Greene and Winters estimated that about 58% and 59% of Latinx and Black/African American female students graduated in 2003, while only 49% and 48% of males from each respective group graduated that same year. White female students held the highest graduation rate (79%) with Black/African American males having the lowest rate (48%) (2006). Greene and Winters findings indicated graduation rates were consistently below 60% in the nation's ten largest school districts as well as that many large districts graduated far fewer male and African American students in comparison to female and White students (2006). These findings indicate that a student's community may also impact educational outcomes.

College access

A report on first generation students in higher education by the Postsecondary National Policy Institute (2021) identified 25% of White and Asian-American students as first generation college students contrasted with 61% of Latinx students and 41% of African American students identifying as first generation in 2012. NCES data (Walton Radford et al., 2016) identified 31% of first time college students in 2011 – 2012 as the first in their family to attend college with a parent who attained a high school diploma or less. While there has been an overall increase in college enrollment rates for students of color from fall 1976 to fall 2017, enrollment data still depicts troubling lags for students who identify as Black/African American, Latinx, and Native American in comparison to peers identified as White or Asian American/Pacific Islander (Snyder et al., , 2019). During this time span, college enrollment rates for Latinx students increased from 4% to 19% while there was no significant change for Native Americans' being .7% (2019). Enrollment rates for Black/African American students saw an increase from 10% in 1976 to 14%

in 2017, yet this reflects a decrease from 15% in 2011 amongst this student group (2019). Enrollment declined for White students from 84% to 56% and rates rose with Asian American/Pacific Islander enrollment from 2% to 7% (2019). Overall, these figures portray a disproportionate landscape where students who are Black/African American or Latinx do not enroll or attend college in similar fashion to students who are White.

Regarding gender and college enrollment, the number of female students in post-secondary institutions surpassed the number of male students as of fall 1988 (Snyder et al, 2019). Spanning from 2007 to 2017, there was a rise in enrollment with the number of males being 5% greater and the number of female students being 8% higher (2019). Concerning ability status, during the 2015–16 school year 19% of undergraduate students reported having a disability with variation occurring along characteristics such as veteran status, age, dependency/marital status, and race/ethnicity (2019).

For the 2011-12 school year, NCES data indicated that the proportion of first-generation students in higher education was roughly 33% (Cataldi et al., 2018; Skomsvold, 2015). It is difficult to capture the total number of low income students participating in higher education, a 2019 Congressional Research Service report estimated that the number of low income students has steadily been increasing since 2008, in part stemming from the Great Recession at that time (Fountain, 2019). Data from the 2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) was used in conjunction with poverty guidelines issued by the Department of Health and Human Services to form a portrait of student enrollment by income level. Low income students (defined as living at 200% below poverty guidelines) were estimated to be roughly 50% of undergraduate populations (Fountain, 2019). The Congressional Service Report identified students of color as roughly 50% of the undergraduate population and tended to have a lower income in comparison

to White students (2019). White students accounted for the majority in any income category, but notably were overrepresented in the highest income bracket where 73% of students with incomes 500% over the poverty guidelines identified as White (2019). In contrast, Latinx and Black/African American students made up about 35% of undergraduate enrollment, but constituted 45% of students with an income 100% below the poverty level (2019). Students identified as Asian American/Pacific Islander had relatively stable proportions across income levels in comparison to undergraduate enrollment rates (2019).

Data from NCES reports and other studies (Cataldi et al., 2018; Greene & Winters, 2006; Skomsvold, 2015; Snyder et al, 2019; Walton Radford et al., 2016) depict an educational landscape where students of color and low income students are less successful in completing high school, have reduced enrollment rates in higher education institutions causing them to be underrepresented, and are more likely to be identified as first generation college students when compared to White students and those from more advantaged backgrounds. The following section will examine barriers that diminish the path to accessing and completing college for students identified as first generation.

Barriers

Students of color and those from low-income families often encounter unique barriers to accessing and completing a college degree program in comparison to peers from more advantaged backgrounds (Engle & Tinto, 2008; Hodara, 2017; Pike & Kuh, 2005; Stebelton & Soria, 2012; Terenzini et al., 1996). Pike and Kuh (2005) identified first generation students as having lower persistence and graduation rates in college, as well as lower standardized test scores, which result from differences in precollege characteristics between first- and second-generation college students. Terenzini et al. (1996) found that first generation students have a

greater tendency to come from families with lower annual incomes and reduced engagement in high school further impacting success in college.

Hodara (2017) found that first generation students lack awareness and information about financial aid programs that may significantly reduce the cost of college attendance. The myriad of perceived steps to file and complete the financial aid process can intimidate individuals new to the process. Hodara's (2017) findings indicated that many students who would qualify for federal financial aid and state aid programs often do not take advantage of completing and submitting a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) application due to a lack of resources in schools and communities. Engle and Tinto (2008) found that first generation students typically work more hours while borrowing more money to attend college, have a greater likelihood of attending two-year and for-profit institutions, as well as a decreased likelihood of graduating from college in six (6) years in comparison to more advantaged peers.

Holt and Winter (2018) point to the intersectionality of academic, cultural, and systemic barriers as a common issue for first generation students. First generation students who are low-income often are required to work more hours and care for dependents resulting in less time to engage in academic and social interactions in college due to their family and financial responsibilities (Engle & Tinto, 2008; Pike & Kuh, 2005; Terenzini et al. 1996). Engle and Tinto (2008) examined data from the 2003-2004 NPSAS and found first generation students tended to come from minoritized backgrounds, were more likely to live off-campus, be financially independent of their caregivers, be single parents, and have dependent children. These barriers prohibited participation in academic and social experiences that foster greater success in college such as participating in study groups, interacting with faculty members and students, and

utilizing various support services (i.e. financial aid, academic advisement, counseling) (Engle & Tinto, 2008).

Stebelton and Soria (2012) surveyed the experiences of students who attended six large research universities to better understand how first generation students assessed potential obstacles to their success in college. Findings indicated that family and work demands compounded a series of barriers encountered by first generation students such as having weak skills in math and English, inadequate study skills, and navigating feelings of stress and depression limiting their academic engagement (2012). Kuh (as cited by Stebelton & Soria, 2012, p. 9) found that being unable to participate in “high impact educational practices” (i.e. learning communities, first year seminars, and study abroad programs) compromised the academic success of first generation students. First generation, low-income students experience college differently from their more advantaged peers, and thus it is necessary to consider the unique challenges and needs they come with. Terenzini et al. (1996) identified social emotional factors that impacted first generation students feelings of belonging such as holding negative perceptions of faculty members concerning their development, not receiving encouragement from peers to continue their enrollment, as well as experiencing racial/ethnic and gender discrimination when compared to traditional college students.

Thayer’s (2000) research indicated first generation students experiences differed greatly by SES and that difficulties were compounded for college entry and degree completion for students who identified as non-White and low-income. This group of students had reduced awareness of academic and cultural expectations of the college campus environment when compared to more advantaged peers (2000). These students also encountered greater difficulty with understanding finances, time management, and the bureaucratic operations of higher

education institutions due to limited opportunities for information through family and peer networks (2000). One challenge specific to first generation students is the need to renegotiate relationships as they learn to navigate between the cultures of their family and college institution (Terenzini et al., 1996; Thayer, 2000). This task often requires a great yield of time and energy on behalf of the individual student and may result in feelings of isolation, depression, fatigue, and alienation limiting their ability to persist (Stebelton & Soria, 2012; Terenzini et al., 1996;).

Diminished Achievement

Using longitudinal data for a cohort of 2002 high school sophomores over 10 years Cataldi and colleagues (2018) found first generation students lagged behind peers whose parents attended some college or earned a bachelor's degree when accessing an academically focused high school curriculum. This curriculum was identified as students earning four credits of English, four credits of math including a course beyond Algebra II, four science credits with a course beyond biology, a United States or world history course and any two other credits in social studies, and two credits of the same world language. First generation students were less likely to earn credit in a higher level math course (i.e. statistics or pre-calculus) as well as an AP (Advanced Placement) or IB (International Baccalaureate) course (Cataldi et al., 2018). As AP and IB coursework are considered as dual enrollment singleton programs (Bailey & Karp, 2003) these findings suggest first generation students have reduced opportunity to access college level coursework during high school. First generation students experience lower high school completion rates, college enrollment rates, and were less likely to matriculate to college within three months of earning their high school diploma (58% respectively) in comparison to peers with parents who attended some college (63%) or earned a bachelor's degree (78%) (Cataldi et al., 2018).

First generation students were found to have higher matriculation rates at two-year institutions (46%) versus public four-year (26%) and private four-year institutions (7%) (Cataldi et al., 2018). More advantaged peers whose parents earned a bachelor's degree held higher proportions of attendance at public four-year (45%) and private four-year institutions (23%) than two-year institutions (26%) (2018). Enrollment patterns may differ due to students of color and students from low income backgrounds encountering limited pathways to college. Two year technical and community colleges offer more flexible enrollment options with tuition rates at more competitive costs than four year institutions (Cohen, Brawer, & Kisker, 2014). These institutions employ an open door admissions policy and typically require applicants to meet less stringent admissions requirements with the minimal requirement of attaining a high school diploma or GED (General Educational Development) credential. These admission policies result in increased opportunity for students from minoritized backgrounds to participate in the college experience, but research suggests that community colleges have higher rates of enrollment in remedial non-credit bearing coursework as well as reduced student retention and graduation rates (Kim & Bragg, 2008).

Cataldi and colleagues (2018) examined data from the 2004/09 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study to analyze persistence and degree attainment amongst a cohort of first-time college students. Findings indicated that after three years of college proportionally fewer first generation students stayed on track to earn a credential from their original institution or one on the same level (48%) than continuing-generation peers whose parents attended college (53%) or completed a degree program (67%) (2018). First generation students who began college in fall 2003 had higher rates of leaving post-secondary institutions without returning by 2006 when compared to the continuing-generation peer groups (respectively 33% vs. 26% and 14%)

(Cataldi et al., 2018). An evident pattern emerged of first generation students having lower rates of degree attainment or remaining enrolled after six years in two-year and public/private four-year institutions when compared to peers whose parents had college experience (2018).

Authors such as Cataldi and colleagues (2018), Engle and Tinto (2008), Fountain (2019), and Pike and Kuh (2005) presented findings that revealed a high correlation between students of color, students from low income families, and students identified as first generation that encounter reduced educational opportunities. These students systemically encounter reduced access to an academically focused high school curriculum and subsequently fewer opportunities to pursue college level coursework while enrolled in high school. Research efforts (Green & Winter, 2006; Snyder et al., 2019) examining NCES data clearly delineate reduced high school and college outcomes for students of color, specifically African American and Latinx students. To understand barriers that these students navigate, it is worthwhile to examine literature seeking perspectives centered on their unique situation. The following section will examine barriers to college enrollment and completion encountered by students identified as African American and Latinx.

Black/African American males

The Schott Foundation (2010) examined educational outcomes for Black/African American males within their 2005/06 cohort which indicated that over 50% of the Black males in their study did not receive a high school diploma. When examining outcomes at the state level, the 2010 report revealed that Florida and Nevada graduated less than a third of Black male high school students within four years. The state of New York had three of the ten districts in the U.S. with the lowest graduation rates for Black males and there was a variety of states throughout the country (i.e. Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, South Carolina, Wisconsin) that graduated Black male

students at a reduced rate (Schott Foundation, 2010). NCES data from 2006 revealed that the national high school dropout rate for Black students (10.7%) only trailed behind students identified as Latinx (22.1%) in comparison to peers identified as White (5.8%) and Asian American/Pacific Islander (3.6%) (Laird et al., 2008).

These figures affirm that Black/African American male students have been denied an opportunity to learn and pursue greater outcomes in life. Black male students have an increased likelihood to attend public schools with the fewest resources and highest levels of segregation, justifying the need to consider how chronically reduced educational outcomes specifically impact this group (Schott Foundation, 2010). Black men in the U.S. persistently are more likely to be unemployed and underemployed, experience reduced health outcomes while having reduced access to healthcare resources, reduced life expectancy, and an enhanced likelihood (much greater in comparison to males from other ethnic and racial groups) to be incarcerated with significantly longer sentencing periods (2010).

The Schott Foundation (2010) identified states and specific school districts with the highest graduation rates of the 2005/06 cohort of Black male students providing evidence of the stark quality and resources between educational institutions throughout the U.S. The authors of the 2010 report argued that Black male students perform better in schools with majority White, non-Hispanic/Latinx students whereas White, non-Hispanic/Latinx and Asian students perform more poorly in schools where students are majority Black. The authors noted it is not the influence of sitting next to a peer of a different race that impacts performance, but that a higher proportion of White, non-Hispanic/Latinx and Asian students attend schools with greater resources than Black students (Schott Foundation, 2010). Access to highly effective teachers, a well-trained support staff, caring administrators, challenging curricula, and an adequate supply of

resources clearly delineate the differences between well-performing schools and institutions underequipped to meet the educational needs of students (McDonough, 2005; Schott Foundation, 2010). The common difference between schools at the top and those at the bottom are that students of color are disproportionately represented in schools significantly lacking the resources for a successful transition to college.

Research literature suggests that African American male students have reduced access to college educated adults in their immediate and extended family (Holland, 2017). Freeman (1997) and McDonough (2004a) suggested that African American male students have an increased likelihood to attend schools where personnel are unable, unavailable, or unwilling to assist them with pursuing their educational goals beyond high school. Holland (2017, p. 797) identified college knowledge as information pertaining to “important practices and procedures, in addition to academic skills and competencies, that prepare students and their families to navigate college admissions and financial aid processes.” This may involve specific information or experiences around academic preparation (ex. taking college preparatory coursework), financial aid (ex. methods for financing college), and college planning (ex. preparing and submitting college entrance exams and applications). Students who lack college knowledge may be uncertain as to how to make their college aspirations a reality and those with college knowledge are in a greater position to select, enroll in, and graduate from post-secondary institutions that fit their academic and social development (Holland, 2017). There has been growing support for schools to offer post-secondary education preparation across students K-12 careers to disseminate ongoing college information and engage students and families with opportunities that help them determine the best path following graduation (Holland, 2017).

College knowledge and preparation are necessary for all students who plan to pursue a postsecondary education. Holland (2017) holds that students from traditionally under-represented college populations can benefit from skills and strategies associated with community cultural wealth. Utilizing this approach can enable students to garner support from individuals who are most accessible and invested in them for college preparatory activities and instill a sense of confidence and pride in students, as well as their families and communities (2017). Using a community cultural wealth framework can also help individuals with institutional power to have greater awareness and acceptance of the strategies underrepresented students employ to access educational resources despite a limited availability, or absence, of traditional sources of college knowledge in their social networks (2017).

Community cultural wealth provides a framework for understanding how students from underrepresented college going populations navigate the college preparation process as well as identify and address obstacles that are conducive with the transition from high school to a post-secondary institution (Holland, 2017). Yosso (2005) encouraged this perspective when examining the historical perspectives of individuals from disenfranchised populations as well as acknowledging the economic, political, and social climate where students receive an education. A community cultural wealth lens can enable educators to better understand the ways in which students from underrepresented populations learn about college knowledge and preparatory practices that differ from peers with traditional college knowledge while also relying on non-conventional skills and strategies. This framework views the unique skills and strategies as forms of capital based on the history, knowledge, language, aspirations, and culture of communities that have been alienated or ignored by dominant mainstream society (Yosso, 2005).

Holland (2017) interviewed African American university students to better understand how urban youth from traditionally underrepresented college populations developed college knowledge in nontraditional ways. Findings indicated that participants described many instances where college knowledge was not passed down from previous family generations, nor school faculty and staff members, but instead from similarly aged peers and family members (Holland, 2017). Participants shared accounts of how family members and peers shared instrumental college preparatory and financial aid information and provided examples of peers who worked alongside participants as they simultaneously navigated processes for submitting college applications and enrolling after graduating high school.

A community cultural wealth perspective can enable students from marginalized backgrounds to see their college aspirations as more attainable when they find themselves navigating barriers and predicaments that other similar peers overcame (Holland, 2017). When students simultaneously experience and share college planning information with similar aged peers a “normative culture of academic engagement and achievement” can develop (2017, p. 806). Holland’s study found that having access to peers and family members who prepared for, enrolled in, and graduated from college enhanced participants ability to navigate and understand their own college experiences as well as develop greater resilience to combat negative stereotypes and naysayers for their college aspirations (2017). Many participants described a “liberal, bidirectional process” where they could share and receive college information from similarly aged family members and peers (2017, p. 807).

Tolliver, Kacirek, and Miller (2019) noted that African American men are historically underrepresented in higher education and their lack of achievement at the post-secondary level contributes to multiple inequities regarding quality of life. Post-secondary institutions have

historically struggled to recruit, retain, and graduate students from underrepresented populations (2019). NCES data (Tolliver et al., 2019) indicated that of the 28.5% of African American men who attend college only 7.8% become college graduates. Problems associated with low academic outcomes and participation for African American males are varied. Without access to rigorous academic curricula and resources, this group of men encounter reduced financial stability, constrained career opportunities, reduced choices for a healthy lifestyle, and an increased likelihood to become incarcerated (Tolliver et al., 2019).

Eckholm (2006) examined differences between African American men who had received a college education and those who had not completed high school. The author noted that amongst African American men who had not enrolled in college by age 20, 21% were incarcerated and that over 70% of African American males who had dropped out of high school were unemployed. African American participants who identified as being unable to complete high school identified race and boredom with academic studies as reasons to leave school, but also noted regretting this decision later in life (Colbert, 2017).

Tolliver and colleagues (2019) described college choice theory as a critical reflection of factors (i.e. finances and personal ambition) that result in an individual balancing emotional and pragmatic variables to select a post-secondary plan. These authors examined environmental variables with the potential to impact individual growth and future aspirations. Themes describing factors enabling participants to attend college were identified as church, formal schooling, family members, social engagement, and mentoring (2019). Church was the only element of both deciding to attend, and ultimately graduating from college, mentioned by every participant. Churches assumed community building roles that enabled participants to communicate and share personal experiences and situations about college.

Formal schooling (i.e. high schools) fulfilled a variety of roles for participants by offering both positive and negative experiences and motivation to pursue a college education. Participants who were involved in extracurricular activities noted the benefits of gaining new ideas and perspectives that influenced their world view. Sports coaches as well as school counselors who took the time to explore career and life options helped increase confidence in participants and their abilities. One participant's account offered how the experience of attending a nearly all minority high school almost kept him out of college. The individual's specific environment compelled him to develop a peer group that was positive and maintained greater future aspirations.

Authors (Tolliver et al., 2019; Holland, 2017), reference the importance of having at least one family member who pursued college as an influential factor for African American males. Participants in Tolliver et al.'s (2019) study referenced mothers as the most significant individual encouraging a need to attend college and reinforcing an expectation to continue beyond high school. Findings indicated that African American males with siblings who attended college could access help to enroll in college and apply for financial aid. Tolliver et al. noted participants' need to identify and connect with better friends and peer groups while others identified the benefits of peers who challenged them academically and socially to pursue their goals by encouraging personal motivation. Participants in this study all identified mentoring from various community agents (i.e. barbers, sports coaches, teachers, counselors, and family members) who took personal interest in getting to know them and focus on their future (2019). Tolliver and colleagues noted that while a majority of mentoring figures identified by participants were other African American, there was little discussion of father figures.

Tolliver and colleagues utilized interview data to examine how higher education institutions could be more effective in helping African American men succeed and graduate from college. Three primary categories emerged as pre-enrollment factors, academic assistance, and social awareness. Few participants had immediate family members with prior college enrollment experience. Many identified the need for early exposure programs hosted by individual universities and the need for state level programming to assist future students and parents understand and learn how to seek and navigate college preparation activities. “A lot of us didn’t know what we didn’t know” described the complexity and difficulty of one participant learning processes to apply and enroll in college without the help of family members (Tolliver et al., 2019, p. 436). A need for academic assistance in the form of tutoring and finding out what the expectations were for the classroom while at college was also described by participants. Interview data indicated the importance of social awareness in college and a critical need to identify a social support group that engaged African American males academic success and thinking about future opportunities after college (2019). Awareness of college norms and values are very important for individuals from underrepresented groups to successfully navigate organizational structures and spaces. Tolliver et al. (2019) found that colleges and universities struggle with recruiting and graduating African American men is evidenced by low enrollment, low graduation rates, and high attrition.

Freeman (1997) identified a need for researchers and policy makers to include individuals and groups in developing programs and models that can improve life outcomes. The author noted “African American high school students are rarely, if ever, asked for their perceptions of the problems or... for their ideas about possible solutions” (1997, p. 523). Researchers seek to focus on increasing the motivation and aspirations of African American students to attend college

while excluding cultural considerations. When recommendations for recruiting and retaining students of color are based on models that give minimal attention to the culture and heritage of African Americans, outcomes will show little success (1997). The college choice process is complicated and cultural considerations are necessary to develop solutions, otherwise models will not fit the unique circumstances of African Americans. To increase participation in post-secondary education Freeman (1997) encouraged educators and policy makers to better understand how African American students perceive what has worked for them based on their experiences.

Freeman noted that despite a great deal of information in college choice research being available in the form of college destination, understanding matriculation decisions, and marketing college programs, efforts had failed to include factors specific to individual cultures of students. Bourdieu and Passeron's (1977) research on cultural capital is widely cited and provides an examination of social and cultural capital issues across all groups, but the authors' specific experiences with different cultures in U.S. remains unclear. Authors such as Hossler et al. (1989) and McDonough et al. (1995) recognize a need to better understand the college choice and decision making for students from minoritized backgrounds and factors that impact their aspirations to attend college. Hossler and colleagues (1989) noted that conversations around college decision making centered around cultural and social capital, economics and financial capital, or some combination.

Freeman's (1997) analysis of group interviews indicated two broad categories of barriers to higher education as psychological and economically related. African American participants described economic and financial barriers as a fear of not having enough money to attend college or not getting a job that yields an appropriate income for a college education. Psychological

barriers were described as college never being an option, the loss of hope, and the intimidation factor of college. Freeman (1997) warned that psychological barriers may pose an even greater challenge to educators and policy makers as internal beliefs can inhibit individuals from effectively completing tasks. Participants presented solutions that closely aligned to their perceptions of barriers encountered by African American to participate in college. Themes emerged as improving school conditions, the recruitment, employment, and provision of teachers and counselors who are active and interested in African American students wellbeing, instilling college opportunities early on, and expanding cultural awareness in programs geared towards increasing students participation in higher education.

Improving school conditions and contents (ex. available computers and classroom space) is a prime form of physical and financial capital available to communities. Participants also emphasized the need for interested teachers and active counseling programs to motivate them towards enrolling in college (Freeman, 1997). Freeman (1997) noted a correlation between schools with structured counseling programs and a greater number of students interested in pursuing their education beyond high school. Participants pointed to the value of college related events and counselor's active involvement in assisting students in college processes (1997).

Freeman's (1997) study encouraged cultivating college aspirations as early as possible due to the evident need for underrepresented college populations to gain awareness about opportunities to attend a post-secondary institution from an early age. This took shape as being provided with information, possibilities, requirements, and outcomes prior to students enrolling in ninth grade (1997). Participants also shared how their passion for their culture as African American students created a need to increase their own cultural awareness via greater curricula with African American history (1997). The author (1997) observed that participants expressed a

great pressure to be accepted, especially for those who attended independent or private high schools.

Research findings from Freeman (1997), Holland (2017), and Tolliver et al. (2019) portray a need for school districts to meet the needs of Black/African American male students. These authors affirmed the benefits of researchers directly seeking the perspectives of underrepresented students who have been systemically marginalized in K-12 schools and post-secondary institutions. As NCEs data reported reduced educational outcomes for students who identify as Latinx (Greene & Winters, 2006; Snyder et al, 2019) it is beneficial to explore the experiences of this student group to see how their barriers may be similar and different from African Americans. The following section will review literature pertaining to the educational experiences of Latinx students.

Latinx students

A 2013 Pew Hispanic Center study (Fry & Taylor) reported that the college enrollment rate for Latinx/Hispanic students surpassed that of White students (69% vs 67% respectively) in 2012 as well as that the high school drop-out rate for Latinx/Hispanic students in 2011 fell to half the level in 2000 (14% vs 28%). Fry and Taylor (2013) caution that although these statistics portray a more level playing field, Latinx/Hispanic college students still lagged far behind White students in four year college enrollment (56% versus 72%) and were less likely to attend a selective four year college. Additionally, Latinx students were less likely to be enrolled in college full time and were less likely to complete a bachelor's degree program (2013). These authors speculated if the rise in college enrollment occurred in conjunction with the onset of the Great Recession in late 2007, due to declining fortunes in the job market for Latinx/Hispanic youths (2013). Another factor cited in the report for the increase in college enrollment included

the importance of a college education in Latinx families. This was correlated to a 2009 Pew Research Center survey where 88% of Latinos ages 16 and older responding that a college degree is necessary to get ahead in life today (2013).

Latinx students are amongst the fastest growing groups of students in U.S. schools (Colby & Ortman, 2015) who possess high educational aspirations despite facing unique challenges and barriers to attending college (Manzano-Sanchez et al., 2019). While the overall undergraduate college enrollment rate for Latinx students doubled between 2000 and 2016, Latinx student continue to fall behind their Asian and White peers (2019). Literature has documented reasons for the gap in college enrollment amongst Latinx students as being enrolled in high poverty schools as well as attending schools with school counseling programs not adequately staffed to prepare students for post-secondary opportunities (Manzano-Sanchez et al. 2019; McDonough, 2005). Contextual and personal factors that further widen the gap between Latinx students ability to apply and later enroll in college included a “lack of financial support, reduced school support, limited safety in their neighborhoods, family problems and little knowledge of post-secondary options” (Manzano Sanchez et al., 2019, p. 26).

Manzano-Sanchez and colleagues (2019) positioned that to better understand the experience that Latinx students undergo there is a need to identify and further explore specific contextual and personal factors that influence their college aspirations and choice. The authors believed that developing a lucid picture of the environmental influences that Latinx students navigate may help identify factors that both constrain and facilitate their educational aspirations.

Manzano Sanchez et al. utilized Social Cognitive Career theory (SCCT) as “it posits that contextual background variables exert influence over career choice and thus higher educational attainment and its relationship to career trajectories” (2019, p. 26). Lent et al. (2000) held that

these variables are determined by (a) personal factors (e.g., gender, ethnicity); (b) background contextual factors (e.g., social support, environment); and (c) proximal contextual variables (e.g., perceived barriers such as self-confidence). Manzano Sanchez viewed contextual variables as supports and barriers that may enable or constrain the aspirations of adolescents during their career development, in particular their family background. Lent et al. suggested SCCT holds that “support and barrier perceptions are inversely related or reflect opposite poles on a positive-negative continuum” (2000, p. 42). This relates to McWhirter and colleagues’ (2013) findings that families of Latina high school students provided both supports (encouragement, understanding, and motivation) and barriers (lack of parental support, problems within the family system). In a related fashion, teachers were found to provide active encouragement, caring expectations, understanding, and acceptance, as well as negative attitudes toward educational attainment among Latinx students (McWhirter et al. 2013).

Manzano-Sanchez and colleagues (2019) posed that while scholarship has promoted interest in further exploring barriers and supports for Latinx students in higher education, there is scant literature about how these students actually cope with barriers to college enrollment and how they gain access to available supports in their school and community environments. The authors further explained that when Latinx high school youth are unable to determine a career trajectory, there are great social capital and economic losses that impact Latinx households and U.S. society in general.

To better examine how Latinx students navigated socio-institutional and structural barriers to their aspirations of attending college, Manzano-Sanchez et al. (2019) conducted focus groups with Latinx high school students receiving free and reduced lunch services. The authors (2019) determined that participants’ lack of financial resources became further strained when

students held the role of primary supporter for their families. Findings acknowledged participants' difficulty of accessing scholarships and other financial aid documents as an economic barrier (2019). This was in part due to a lack of knowledge of how to identify and complete financial aid applications, but also not having awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of procuring a student loan (2019). Family responsibilities was an additional college going barrier as participants shared having greater responsibilities than their younger siblings and needing to contribute to regular or unexpected family expenses (2019). Parental responsibilities were assigned according to gender where females often had to complete household chores while males were required to provide economic support. Participants shared difficult circumstances had caused them to take on adult responsibilities in the event their caretakers were severely ill (2019). Meeting their family's economic need required many participants to work which interfered with their goal of enrolling and remaining in college (2019). Increased work responsibilities or economic obligations can cause students to drop out of college or extend their time until degree completion. Participants shared that time management was a necessary skill to manage both educational and job activities simultaneously (2019).

Manzano-Sanchez and colleagues (2019) reported a lack of opportunity as a perceptual barrier specific to Latinx males. Themes of participants perceptions included too much competition, a lack of belonging in college environments, and more outreach programs being advertised towards female students, specifically in STEM fields (2019). Participants in this study shared notions of their high school not preparing them to be academically successful and described feelings of insecurity around taking college entrance exams due to prior academic experiences that lacked success (2019).

Manzano-Sanchez et al. (2019) found a common perception described by participants was not receiving enough help in identifying resources and information about the processes necessary to enrolling in college. This related to participants citing a lack of support from teachers and school counselors as a barrier to attending college (2019). “They’re some teachers that don’t really teach you because they don’t really care about your education” (2019, p .34). Participants college aspirations were also impacted by a lack of preparation to attend college which negatively impacted their confidence. Different reasons for lack of preparedness took form as lacking access to a rigorous high school curriculum, receiving negative feedback from faculty members, and few teachers taking the additional time to assist students with preparing college essays (2019). This is supportive of Tierney and colleagues (2009) report that students attending low income schools have diminished access to a rigorous high school curriculum and reduced opportunities to receive individualized help to prepare them for college in comparison to peers in more advantaged schools.

When Latinx students attend schools with a culture employing messages of inferiority and discrimination due to students phenotype or ethnic identity further undermines their confidence to be successful in college (Manzano Sanchez et al., 2019). These stigmatizations result in structural disadvantages causing barriers that increase the difficulty for Latinx students to prepare for and access college (2019). To overcome these barriers, participants indicated a high degree of importance centered around receiving help, encouragement, and advice from parents, siblings, and relatives as the most valuable supports (2019). Access to emotional and financial support from family members increased participants college aspirations as well as leaning on relatives with college experience (2019). Findings also described a desire of participants to surpass parents educational attainment as a source of motivation to attend college.

Counselors and teachers were identified as reliable information sources to develop knowledge and skills required to navigate the path to college. Positive peers and friendships were viewed as significant support systems that placed participants in a greater position to overcome barriers that stood in their path to college as these relationships served as protective factors upholding college aspirations (2019).

Freeman (1997), Manzano Sanchez et al. (2019), and Tolliver et al. (2019) portray a value for research efforts to include participants voices from underrepresented college populations to develop solutions that may increase college access. The role of elementary and secondary school environments increases substantially for African American and Latinx students whose parents did not attend college, so it is worthwhile to conder how students of color perceive solutions to the unique barriers they face (Freeman, 1997; Manzano Sanchez et al., 2019; Tolliver et al., 2019). As indicated by African American high school students in Freeman's study, the pipeline for college information needs to be incorporated earlier in a structured format within schools, particularly those whose students do not have the benefit of family members who have experienced college.

Improving access for underrepresented students

Gandara and Bial (2001) suggested that college preparation programs can develop students educational goals, increase educational and cultural capital assets, and have the capacity to increase college enrollment and graduation rates. Dual enrollment has the capacity to serve as a mechanism benefitting the college and career aspirations for students from underrepresented groups, but scrutiny is warranted due to a disproportionate landscape of college enrollment and completion rates in the United States for students of color and students from low income families.

Authors (Engle & Tinto, 2008; McDonough, 2005) point to pre-collegiate outreach and intervention programs designed to help disadvantaged students prepare for college. However, these programs mainly elicit opportunities for individual students, rather than altering the functioning or supporting structures in schools, by taking on a student-centered focus opposed to school centered (McDonough, 2005). McDonough (2005) viewed outreach programs as inequitable due to only targeting small groups of students. By their design, outreach programs are unable to consistently meet the needs of all students which is indicative that inadequate preparation for college is not an individual problem, but an institutional problem (2005).

To better address concerns around college advisement and preparation in high school settings, it is necessary to learn about factors that students perceive to bolster college and career aspirations based on their unique background and specific experiences. Authors such as Allen (2003), McDonough (2005), and Snyder et al. (2019) have indicated that although the number of African American and Latinx students enrolling in college has risen, data continues to paint a picture of these student groups being represented far below what would be projected base on their numbers in K–12 schools. As students of color and low income students have reduced participation in dual enrollment programs in comparison to peers who are White and more advantaged (Rauschenberg & Chalasani, 2017; Taylor & Lichtenberger, 2013), it is worthwhile for future research efforts to investigate why students choose to participate and what they perceive helps as well as hinders their aspirations to enroll and participate in dual enrollment.

Research literature supports college readiness as a primary factor stemming from students engagement and access to a rigorous high school curriculum (Adelman, 1999; Kim & Bragg, 2008; Pike & Kuh, 2005). Students who complete rigorous academic and elective courses in high school have been found to have higher rates of performance, persistence, and degree completion

in two and four year college institutions (Adelman, 1999; Kim & Bragg, 2008). McDonough (2005) explained that this is in large part due to the opportunity for college being limited by an individual's opportunity in K-12 schools they attend. By examining the perspectives of students who participate in dual enrollment, educators and policy makers can determine better ways to knowledge of early college opportunities and hopefully increase access for students who have been underrepresented.

Research has posited that opportunities to learn are reflective of parameters in schools such as the rigor of curriculum, learning environment and its resources, the quality of the school's faculty and staff members, as well as the level of expectations and encouragement that school faculty relay to students and parents (McDonough, 2005; Schott Foundation, 2010). Other identified factors include the "persistent and pernicious racial and ethnic segregation in American schools" (McDonough, 2005, p. 5) as well as the accessibility, volume, and quality of high school counseling services, dropout rates, and financial constraints of a school (Gandara & Bial, 1999). Bailey and colleagues (2002) proposed that dual enrollment can serve as a mechanism that aids the academic and psychological transition to college for underrepresented populations such as first generation students (i.e. students of color and students from low income families), however, few research studies have sought out the voices of student participants themselves (Felder, 2017; Karp, 2012; Kanny 2015; Jenkins, 2018; Rankin Gonzalez, 2018).

Bailey et al. (2002) considered specific non-academic factors that prevent students from persisting in college such as being overwhelmed, difficulty adjusting to the academic workload, or having unrealistic expectations. These important considerations need to be considered by educators when working with students from underrepresented groups. Students of color as well as those from minoritized backgrounds may encounter imposter syndrome, resulting in

psychological feelings where one doubts their skills, talents, and/or accomplishments coupled with a persistent internalized fear of being exposed as a fraud. This may result in feelings of anxiety, self-doubt, and fear of failure undermining focus and motivation in students (Canning et al., 2019). Students perspectives on their experience with dual enrollment advisement can help to confirm if practices offered by the high school are beneficial or need to be improved upon based on students experiences and their feedback.

Research literature has depicted how dual enrollment programs can aim to reduce equity gaps via free or low cost tuition options for students who encounter physical and perceptual barriers to accessing college (Roach et al., 2015). To better help students utilize academic pathways such as dual enrollment, future research efforts should examine how students gain awareness and why they choose to pursue this option. Reports by Carey (2013) and Rauschenberg and Chalasani (2017) indicate that a disproportionate number of White students participate in dual enrollment at the state level, and although this literature contains recommendations for legislators and K-12 school leaders, they do not address how equity gaps will be narrowed.

To understand how students gain information about dual enrollment it is necessary to examine the criteria set forth for schools and districts by policy makers who create legislation for dual enrollment. The following section will provide a review of literature around dual enrollment legislation and its impact on state policy regulations in the delivery of dual enrollment programming and access for educational consumers.

Dual Enrollment Legislation

The prevalence of dual enrollment programs throughout the United States has grown significantly to the point that almost all community colleges offer some form of dual enrollment

(Marken et al., 2013). This is encouraging and indicative that the number and diversity of participating students has increased over time. While dual enrollment and its rapid growth are a widely studied phenomenon, less attention has been afforded to dual enrollment legislation and the role state policy plays in shaping operations and requirements (Pretlow & Preston, 2015; Taylor et al., 2015). At the time of Karp and colleagues' (2004, 2005) study, 40 out of 50 states had legislative or regulatory policies pertaining to dual enrollment. Karp et al. (2004, 2005) identified ten areas where dual enrollment policies varied by state: target population; admissions requirements; location; student mix; background characteristics of course instructors; course content; method of credit-earning; program intensity; funding; and state mandates. While policies related to student admission requirements and finance were most prevalent in the 2004 study, Karp et al. noted that program structure was the least regulated.

Karp and colleagues (2004) caution that legislative policy can promote or inhibit the availability of dual enrollment programs. Barriers to implementation can be caused by restrictive protocol limiting course location or strictly regulating dual enrollment instructors' credentials (2004). Student access may also be limited by states who implement rigorous entrance requirements in the form of college entrance exams, school recommendations, prerequisite courses, or a combination of these factors (2004). The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education state policy study (WICHE) (2006) performed a comprehensive policy audit and found that 42 states reported having a dual enrollment state statute or board policy. Six dimensions of dual enrollment were described as program eligibility, application of course credit, carrying the cost burden, information sharing and counseling, institutional accountability, and incentives for success. A noteworthy finding by the WICHE was the use of institutional accountability to maintain standards for dual enrollment students and stakeholders. Ten states

were identified with institutional accountability mechanisms in state policy such as the inclusion of dual enrollment metrics in school performance reports, annual reports to state legislature, and establishing shared responsibility and accountability between institutions for supporting at risk students (2006).

Karp et al.'s findings (2004; 2005) and the WICHE (2006) reported significant variation among dual enrollment legislation as well as that student eligibility was the most noted policy. Another theme presented was the underrepresented emphasis on maintaining "quality" standards. Research literature has reported that states with formal legislation or board policies addressing dual enrollment increased from 33 states in 2001 (Education Commission of the States, 2001) to 47 states in 2012 (An & Taylor, 2015; Borden et al., 2013), however despite dual enrollment's rapid expansion and increased concerns on state legislation safeguarding program quality, Taylor and colleagues (2015) found gaps in empirical research regarding state policy to regulate and ensure quality.

The National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP, n.d.a) is a national organization offering professional membership to partnering high schools and colleges seeking to maintain standards of quality instruction for students participating in concurrent enrollment programs. The NACEP (n.d.a) has member institutions in 48 states and provides accreditation to 116 concurrent enrollment programs as of May 2020. NACEP offers policy recommendations to state agencies and organizations on standards in areas such as curriculum, assessment, and program evaluation (n.d.b). As membership is noncompulsory, students and stake holders must rely on state policies to maintain the quality of dual enrollment programs (Pretlow & Preston, 2015).

As of April 2019, New York was the only republic without a statewide dual enrollment policy (Kelley & Rowland Woods, 2019). The diversity of state-by-state policy is evidenced in the Education Commission of the States (ECS) dual enrollment database which depicts great variation according to areas such as program access, finance, program quality, and transferability of course credit (2019). Along the dimension of program quality, the ECS database outlined 13 states without a dual enrollment program reporting requirement in state policy, 17 states were reported as not having a program evaluation component. The identified four states without a program evaluation component warrant further inquiry as to how quality is maintained and depicted through annual reports to state boards and other governing bodies.

Pretlow and Patterson (2015) investigated how dual enrollment policy diversity impacted operations in Ohio and Virginia through policy analysis and the experiences of a dual enrollment coordinator who had worked in both states. While each state instituted policies sanctioning dual enrollment programs, prominent differences included institution access, student eligibility, financing, and transferability. At the time of the study, dual enrollment in Virginia was offered by the 23 member institutions of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS), while any accredited Ohio post-secondary institution, including for-profit institutions, were permitted to offer dual enrollment coursework (Pretlow & Patterson, 2015). A local high school in Ohio could potentially have two or more institutions offering dual enrollment coursework in the same building whereas Virginia employed a specific institution to serve school districts and individual high schools.

Student eligibility in Virginia was limited to students enrolled as high school juniors and seniors in comparison to Ohio's programs which set a high school grade point average requirement of 3.0 or greater for interested students (Pretlow & Patterson, 2015). In contrast to

using a student's GPA, eligibility requirements in Virginia included a placement exam and recommendation from a student's high school (2015). At a superficial level, it appears that Ohio provides greater opportunity for dual enrollment participation, but each postsecondary institution could mandate specific eligibility requirements (i.e., placement testing, prerequisite coursework) limiting access for students (2015). Finance was another program feature where Virginia and Ohio differed. Virginia seeks to give "both the high school and community college full credit in state funding formulas" as a means of encouragement to provide tuition free dual enrollment coursework to students whereas financing is a local decision in Ohio (2015, p. 23). As the set tuition rate was approved by the Ohio Board of Regents, postsecondary institutions were welcome to determine tuition costs (2015). Regarding the dimension of transferability, Ohio employed a uniform policy which specified coursework as "Transfer Admission Guarantee" compared with Virginia where dual enrollment credits are viewed as community college credits that were only accepted by certain four year institutions (2015).

Clarity and cooperation were identified as two important themes emerging from interviews with the dual enrollment coordinator who had worked in Virginia and Ohio (Pretlow & Patterson, 2015). Transferability of dual enrollment coursework caused confusion amongst students and parents which placed limitations on subsequent college options due to not knowing which specific four year Virginia institutions may accept credit (2015). As Ohio employed a defined uniform system outlining transfer credit, students and parents had greater clarity easing the work of high school counselors who served as gate keepers for dual enrollment programs (2015).

Pretlow and Patterson (2015) advocated that in the absence of clearly defined legislative policy outlining a credit transfer system, there is an increased need for high school counselors to

effectively advise students and stakeholders on transfer issues. This has the potential to harm students if they receive incorrect information. Given the demands of a school counselor's caseload, duties, and responsibilities, (McDonough, 2004b, 2005; Perna, 2008) policy makers should implement regulations about the clear transference of credits between institutions as that may reduce confusion and ease the burden for high school counselors. It is an unrealistic expectation for a single counselor to possess knowledge of all courses that would or would not transfer to a four-year institution, as this goes beyond the scope of post-secondary advisement as well as that transfer agreements can be amended on an annual basis. Policy makers should seek to bolster the advisement opportunity for dual enrollment versus placing the burden on a single group of educational practitioners.

Clarity also surfaced as having a defined point of contact for dual enrollment service areas (Pretlow & Patterson, 2015). As Virginia delivers dual enrollment coursework via its community colleges, each postsecondary institution has a specific point of contact associated with a specific school district and high school (2015). Ohio operates a market system with an undefined dual enrollment service area. Feedback from the dual enrollment coordinator offered an account of one Ohio high school offering dual enrollment chemistry from two separate institutions (2015). In addition to varying tuition rates, parents and students expressed confusion regarding "which institution offered what dual enrollment course and why the cost of the course varied" (2015, p. 25).

One potential benefit of dual enrollment is enhanced communication and collaboration between local high schools and colleges (Chatman & Smith, 1998; Kirst, 2001; Pretlow & Patterson, 2015). Increasing the relationship and coordination between these historically distinct areas can bolster the high school curriculum and link it to general education requirements of the

first year of college (Kirst, 2001). Once a single high school employs multiple partner institutions for dual enrollment in a single subject area, the potential benefits for curriculum alignment can be lost (Pretlow & Patterson, 2015).

The dual enrollment coordinator interviewed by Pretlow and Patterson (2015) acknowledged how Ohio's dual enrollment market system emphasized competition while Virginia's policy enabled more cooperative relationships between program coordinators. Due to a lack of defined service areas in Ohio, postsecondary institutions offered dual enrollment tuition rates between \$0 to \$180 per credit hour (2015). Some program administrators went so far as to contact high schools to determine what other institutions were charging so they could offer a more competitive tuition rate for the same coursework for students (2015). While a reduced tuition rate benefits individual students and families, the benefits of dual enrollment on a macro level are limited for the state under a zero sum game. Pretlow and Patterson (2015, p. 26 - 27) offered that the state can benefit when "the greatest number of students experience the most effective dual enrollment course and continue on to earn a postsecondary credential." Pretlow and Patterson provided an example of the research benefits yielded from interviewing individuals with direct experience on obscure topics such as dual enrollment. The following section will provide specific examples of dual enrollment policy changes for specific states and how legislation can help increase access to dual enrollment programs.

Policymaking and participation

Different dual enrollment policy studies (Karp et al., 2004, 2005; Kelley & Rowland Woods, 2019; Pretlow & Patterson, 2015; Roach et al., 2015) point to how state regulations and governing boards can increase or hinder access for students through legislation based on dimensions such as eligibility, finance, and state mandates. Roach and colleagues (2015)

examined policy barriers to students pursuing dual enrollment in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) supports dual enrollment initiatives by requiring all public high schools to provide information on dual enrollment and granting full tuition waivers to participating high school students. Roach et al. (2015) pointed to how admissions policies favored upper-academic students due to OSRHE policy of 21 ACT or 3.5 GPA for juniors and 19 ACT or 3.0 GPA for seniors. At the time of the study, the Tulsa Community College (TCC) president and the superintendents of Tulsa Public School (TPS) district and Union Public School (UPS) districts were seeking to expand dual enrollment access via policy discussions at the P-20 Council Meeting (2015).

On behalf of the P-20 Council, TCC submitted a request to the OSRHE to provide the *EXCELeRate* pilot project in a partnership effort with TPS and UPS to eliminate barriers to dual enrollment (Roach et al., 2015). An exception was granted allowing high school students attending TPS and UPS schools to participate in dual enrollment at TCC with a 19 ACT score or 2.5 GPA (Roach et al., 2015). Other policy exceptions granted the inclusion of sophomores with a 19 ACT score to participate, allowing high school teachers who met faculty qualifications to teach dual enrollment coursework at their local high school, permitting students who fell below a 2.0 college GPA to be placed on academic probation for one semester, as well as enabling dual enrollment participants to enroll in remedial coursework to bolster academic skills (2015). A final policy exception was allowing the ACT PLAN, a preliminary assessment to the ACT taken by all public school students enrolled in tenth grade in the state of Oklahoma, to be used as a qualifier for dual enrollment (2015). The rationale for this provision was that the cost of college entrance exams, such as the SAT and ACT, are economic barriers for low income students, whereas the OSRHE pays for students to take the ACT PLAN. As this assessment is viewed as a

valid predictor for student's later performance on the ACT, this exception enabled an affordable and accessible means for students to qualify for dual enrollment regardless of their background.

Educational and community leaders on the P-20 Council also sought to address transportation and financial barriers that could limit access to the EXCELeRate program (Roach et al., 2015). At the time of the study, 85% of TPS students and 62% of UPS students qualified for free and reduced lunch services (2015). Given the potential high cost of tuition, fees, and textbooks required for participation in a dual enrollment program, a policy exception and financial agreement between TCC, TPS, and UPS was formed enabling students to enroll in dual enrollment coursework at a high school campus at a greatly reduced tuition rate from \$100 to \$12.50 per three-credit hour course (2015). Another aspect of the financial agreement was allowing full-time TCC faculty members to serve as EXCELeRate program liaisons to part-time faculty to provide guidance on best practices in a high school setting. TPS and UPS also agreed to purchase textbooks that TCC liaisons guaranteed could be used on a two year cycle so high schools would not have to absorb annual costs of new textbooks.

TCC's Planning and Institutional Research Department provided data analysis from five semesters during the EXCELeRate pilot program (Roach et al., 2015). EXCELeRate students were compared as a cohort group against high school students taking TCC coursework on a TCC campus. Findings from chi-square tests revealed demographic data that a significantly greater proportion of students identified as Black/African American, Latinx, and eleventh graders became enrolled in the EXCELeRate group than in the group of non-EXCELeRate high schools students who took coursework on TCC campuses (2015). Regarding outcomes for student success and retention, chi-square tests revealed that dual enrollment students who took classes at

TCC had higher retention rates and grades that were a “C” or higher in comparison to participants in the EXCELeRate group (2015).

Roach et al., (2015) caution that greater exploration is warranted to clarify these differences. Given that EXCELeRate students enrolled with a lower GPA and test score requirement, this cohort could be expected to have lower success rates in general. An important takeaway from this pilot program is that collaborative efforts between K – 12 leaders and higher education systems can effectively address policy, financial, and transportation barriers enabling students from marginalized backgrounds to have increased access to dual enrollment and subsequent life outcomes.

Research examining how dual enrollment policy is implemented across states is necessary to unpack the stark differences between participation rates for future students and families seeking to participate. National data indicates that 82% of US public high schools offer dual enrollment programs, however, Zinth (2014) cautions this figure masks great variability in participation rates both between and within states. A 2013 report by Chancellor John Carey and the Ohio Board of Regents indicated that fewer than 5% of Ohio public school students participated in dual enrollment. The 2013 (Carey & Ohio Board of Regents) report highlighted that Ohio’s minority and low-income students participated in the state’s *College Credit Now* dual enrollment program at significantly lower rates. Amongst 31,000 dual enrollment students for fiscal year 2013, 78% were identified as White whereas 7% of participating students were Black/African American and 2.6% were of Hispanic/Latinx descent (2013). This report calls attention to Ohio’s legislation requiring that “all high schools provide students with the opportunity to participate in a dual enrollment program, and that each high school provide at least one dual enrollment option” (Chaney & Ohio Board of Regents, 2013, p. 6). Given the low

participation rate for a state with approximately 560,000 students, Chancellor Chaney's critical lens is justified to call other policy makers to the table and analyze how Ohio law impacted access to dual enrollment programs and subsequent participation.

Specific policy recommendations included creating a transparent funding system for dual enrollment where both secondary schools and higher education institutions share program costs as well as enhancing communication to students and caregivers to access comprehensive and consistent information about opportunities and requirements for dual enrollment. Other recommendations included the development of a statewide data collection system for secondary schools and higher education institutions to consistently collect and share student participation rates, program outcomes by specific coursework and institution and data about instructor qualifications and agreement innovations (Chaney & Ohio Board of Regents, 2013).

Taylor and Lichtenberger's (2013) analysis of dual enrollment participation in Illinois indicated that dual enrollment participation highly varied according to the location of specific high school. The study indicated that out of 664 public high schools in Illinois, those with the lowest participation rate had the highest proportion of minority students. Conversely, high schools with the highest participation in dual enrollment programs had the lowest proportion of minority students, larger percentages of White students, met Annual Yearly Progress (a distinction under the No Child Left Behind Act), and were more likely to be located in towns or rural areas (2013). Taylor and Lichtenberger (2013) suggested that these findings depict an equity gap that bolsters findings from other literature (Bailey et al., 2002; Chaney & Ohio Board of Regents, 2013; Rauschenberg & Chalasani, 2017; University System of Georgia, 2020a) that shows White students as more likely to participate in comparison to non-White peers. Taylor and Lichtenberger (2013) offered that White students have greater opportunity to participate in dual

enrollment due to having greater access to schools with larger proportions of White students than non-White students with access to a rigorous curriculum and other educational resources. This study's analysis indicated that access to dual enrollment programs is partially dependent on the geographic location of a high school in that high schools in towns and rural areas had greater participation in comparison to high schools in urban areas (2013). Illinois state policy does not require high schools and colleges to offer dual enrollment (Borden et al., 2013; Taylor & Lichtenberger, 2013) which suggests there may be systemic barriers preventing students from taking advantage of dual enrollment opportunities simply based on where they attend high school.

Students who attend schools in urban areas have a higher likelihood to be students of color and students from low income families (Schott Foundation, 2010) as well as that the schools they attend in urban settings tend to be racially segregated and have reduced access to resources (McDonough, 2004a). As dual enrollment legislation in some states require high schools to disseminate information on pathways to participate in college while still enrolled in high school, it is necessary for research efforts to scrutinize how these processes take shape at the local school level. Scholarship presented by Freeman (1997), Manzano Sanchez et al. (2019), Pretlow and Patterson (2015), and Tolliver et al. (2019) describe the benefits of speaking with individuals who have direct experience with unique experiences as they relate to college access for underrepresented groups and dual enrollment. To better understand how students themselves perceive the actual experience of participating in dual enrollment the following section will review literature on dual enrollment student perspectives.

Student Perceptions

Few studies have sought to examine the perceptions and experiences of students participating in dual enrollment (An, 2013; Karp, 2012, Kanny, 2015) as well as controlling for program urbanicity (Karp et al. 2007). Phenomenological dissertation studies have sought to address gaps in these areas by examining perspectives of dual enrollment course instructors (Caples, 2017), low income college students perceptions of dual enrollment participation (Felder, 2017), and perspectives of technical college students perceptions of their dual enrollment experience (Rankin Gonzalez, 2018).

Kanny (2015) examined student's perspectives who participated in dual enrollment for the first time and indicated that participants were unprepared for the level of independence and autonomy as early college students who possessed the freedom to come and go from a class or study as they pleased. Students' perceptions revealed unexpected consequences from participating in dual enrollment such as issues with credits, negative encounters with other students and faculty, and limited support systems (Kanny, 2015). Students specifically expressed frustration regarding the lack of transferability of credits earned, poor grades negatively impacting their high school transcript, repeated disdainful remarks about the presence of high school students from college faculty, as well as insubstantial support from their high school and community college to assist with staying on track while navigating new challenges and norms with adapting to college (2015).

Felder's (2017) dissertational study explored the experiences of low income college students who had participated in dual enrollment during high school. Themes from semi-structured participant interviews included course location, lack of information, and lack of motivation (2017). Participants described the experience of dual enrollment being taught by high

school teachers at their local high school as convenient, but not fully encapsulating the college student experience. Participants who participated in dual enrollment on a college campus indicated the experience developed personal insight on the expectations and role of a traditional college student as it enhanced their understanding of the pace and rigor of college coursework. Participants who attended a college campus described feelings of intimidation due to a perception of being much younger than their fellow classmates, but that their experience developed their confidence to be successful in college through creating relationships with faculty and staff members (2017). This contrasted responses that described their dual enrollment course as another high school class due to their perception that they were not taking college level classes, limiting the impact on their college preparedness (2017).

Felder's (2017) study identified participants lacked information noted by varying degrees of participation and individual level of understanding of dual enrollment. A lack of understanding was one of the greatest barriers to students fully participating. Participants were aware they could take dual enrollment classes at their respective high school, but none could articulate the extent they were able to engage in courses at the college campus offered for free. Participants described a mix of information sources about dual enrollment stemming from high school counselors, teachers, as well as peers (2017). Findings indicated a high desire by participants to have pursued a greater number of college classes while still enrolled in high school, had they possessed a clearer understanding of potential savings. While some participants expressed responsibility for their personal lack of participation, others expressed that they would have benefitted from more one-on-one conversations prior to pursuing dual enrollment as well as that "not every student had an equal opportunity to participate in the program" (Felder, 2017, p. 89). Findings described participants regret upon gaining a lucid understanding of the missed

opportunity to reduce their college costs had they increased their level of participation in dual enrollment (2017). Only two of seven participants specifically mentioned their high school counselor's encouragement to participate while others identified high school teachers as agents who communicated benefits of dual enrollment and recruited them to participate (2017). As college staff do not engage with students until they express interest, participants did not identify the college as an initial source of information. Felder's study also acknowledged maturity and motivation as a factor impacting high school student's willingness to engage in a dual enrollment program to the fullest degree possible (2017).

Felder (2017) identified lack of motivation and lack of information as a primary barrier to participating in dual enrollment for low income students as well as that dual enrollment coursework taken at the high school lacked the authenticity provided by on campus coursework. Findings also described students as lacking social capital in that parents were the most influential on their college decision making, but were not identified as sources of information for dual enrollment and not being highly involved in the college enrollment process following the completion of high school (2017). High school counselors were described as providing limited information on dual enrollment but as relatively uninvolved regarding the transition to college (2017). Participants found their teachers provided academic and emotional support to students as they prepared to transition to college (2017).

Rankin Gonzalez (2018) examined the perceptions of community college students who participated in a dual enrollment program between 2009 and 2017 to explore how participants' experiences impacted their college readiness, persistence, and completion rates. The author conducted semi structured interviews to explore participants perceptions learning about dual enrollment and the application process, selecting coursework, and how taking part in a dual

enrollment program influenced their knowledge and expectations about college. Findings indicated that participants overwhelmingly gained awareness about opportunities for dual enrollment via teachers, school counselors and parents.

Rankin Gonzalez (2018) reported participants learning about dual enrollment from school faculty members who offered a range of support from receiving personal one-on-one help from their counselor to attending a mandatory assembly to learn about dual enrollment from teachers and a community college representative. Participants reported learning about dual enrollment from a parent who was either very involved in their education or had heard about opportunities through a friend. Very few participants described researching dual enrollment independently and researching benefits and program options available to them. One participant offered having to navigate the application process on their own due to their high school not advertising dual enrollment while another shared that they had to navigate the decision to participate and apply without assistance due to their school counselor having “disappeared in the middle of the year and never came back, was never replaced” (2018, p. 114).

Rankin Gonzalez identified *family motivation* as well as inherent notions of *already college-going* as reasons participants chose to apply to a dual enrollment program (2018). Participants identified being influenced by positive friends experiences with attending a community college as well as parents having very high expectations that they would attend and complete college. Participants shared being motivated by their own career goals and aspirations that required a college education as motivation to pursue dual enrollment (2018).

Caples (2017) qualitative phenomenological study examined the lived experiences of community college instructors teaching dual enrollment courses to qualified eleventh and twelfth grade high school students. To develop a better understanding of how dual enrollment

participation impacted high school students' academic skills and noncognitive learning as a transitional tool to college, Caples conducted interviews with 12 community college instructors teaching in a face to face dual-enrollment program. Findings revealed participants had high expectations for their students but also that “students must step up to the challenge associated with the freedom, independence, and responsibility as a college student” (2017, p. 270).

Participants referenced school counselors and parents as critical stakeholders to enabling student access to dual enrollment in addition to a central need to prepare dual enrollment students as independent learners (2017). Participants also shared the imperative to develop meta-cognitive skills (ex. critical thinking, problem solving, social skills, motivation, and work ethic) in their dual enrollment students so they could understand the accountability and significance of demanding coursework at the collegiate level. Findings also indicated that participants' beliefs on decision making concerning the program would be enhanced via cohesive communication among legislators and administrators in conjunction with school districts and community colleges (2017). The following section will provide an overview of dual enrollment programming and legislation in the state of Georgia.

Dual Enrollment in Georgia

In the state of Georgia, students enrolled in an eligible public or independent high school program or eligible home study program may participate in a dual enrollment program at eligible institutions belonging to the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), University System of Georgia (USG), and Georgia Independent College Association (GICA) (Georgia Student Finance Commission, n.d.). Georgia high school students have been able to participate in dual enrollment since the early 1990's (Lee, 2019; Sturgis, 2020) and until fiscal year (FY) 2019 students enrolled in grades 9th through 12th at eligible high schools and home school programs could

participate at an approved TCSG, USG, or GICA institution without having to pay for tuition, mandatory fees, as well as required course textbooks (Georgia Student Finance Commission, n.d.). Minimum requirements set forth by Georgia's Board of Regents in FY 2019 for students to participate included being on-track to graduate from a Georgia high school program, submission of a qualifying entrance exam (SAT, ACT, PSAT, or Accuplacer at eligible institutions), exemption of all learning support requirements, a minimum academic (core) 3.0 high school GPA as calculated by the postsecondary institution, and a completed student participation agreement submitted to a student's high school and postsecondary institution (Georgia Student Finance Commission, n.d.).

As of May 2010, Georgia's General assembly passed the BRIDGE (Building Resourceful Individuals to Develop Georgia's Economy) Act, House Bill 400, requiring school districts to provide middle- and high-school students with career counseling and annually scheduled advisement meetings each school year to select a focused plan of study. Requirements for local schools and districts as set forth by the Georgia General Assembly mandated that high schools furnish dual enrollment information to students enrolled in grades eighth through eleventh on an annual basis by February 1, as well as providing counseling to interested students and caregivers prior to enrolling in a program (Georgia Student Finance Commission, n.d.). This may occur through written or virtually disseminated information, classroom counseling lessons, or some combination thereof. The BRIDGE Act (2010) also requires middle and high schools to survey students on the receipt of dual enrollment information in grades eighth through eleventh to ensure that information is disseminated (Georgia Student Finance Commission, n.d.). As school counselors serve as gate keepers to dual enrollment programs in most public high schools in

Georgia, this group of practitioners have become the identified school staff members to disseminate information on dual enrollment and verify BRIDGE Law survey completion.

Legislative recommendations

Reports from the Atlanta Journal Constitution (Sturgis, 2020), the University System of Georgia (2020a), and the Georgia Budget and Policy Institute (GBPI) (Lee, 2019) indicate that student participation in dual enrollment programs nearly doubled over a four year span of time from FY 2016 (approximately 27,000 students) to FY 2019 (approximately 52,000 students). As enrollment increased, state costs to operate the program followed suit with an increase by more than 325% according to a review by the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts (GA DOAA) (Griffin & McGuire, 2018; Sturgis, 2020). Between FY 2014 and FY 2018, program costs for tuition, books, and fees increased from \$18.5 million to \$78.8 million (Griffin & McGuire, 2018; Sturgis, 2020). The GA DOAA report stressed that undefined goals and objectives for the program made it difficult to determine if its intent was to decrease students' time enrolled in college to complete a degree program, increase the number of students matriculating to postsecondary institutions following graduation from high school, or simply increase the percent of students earning a college credential (Griffin & McGuire, 2018).

Recommendations from the GA DOAA (Griffin & McGuire, 2018) called for the General Assembly to consider adding goals and objectives for dual enrollment in the relevant state statute (Georgia Code Title 20. Education, 2021) due to only having one identified goal for students as *completing postsecondary credit and high school diploma requirements* at the time of publication (Move on When Ready Act, 2020). Representatives of the USG system as well as Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) agreed with these recommendations as enhanced goals would better enable the GSFC to “apply other regulatory and programmatic oversights to

ensure that the program is being administered most efficiently” (Griffin & McGuire, 2018, p. 16). USG officials also encouraged that any goals and objectives of dual enrollment should align with statewide efforts and educational initiatives such as Complete College Georgia to increase educational achievement throughout the state (2018).

The GA DOAA report recommended that the General Assembly identify a single state agency or group to produce comprehensive data collected from participating two- and four-year institutions with the goal of offering a more transparent picture to measure and report student success rates while participating in a dual enrollment program (Griffin & McGuire, 2018). Similar to recommendations provided by Carey and Ohio’s Board of Regents (2013) and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (2006), the GA DOAA determined a need for institutions to identify trends in dual enrollment via invoice data submitted to the GSFC. The GA DOAA report revealed inconsistencies in the data inhibiting accurate analysis such as dual enrollment student records without approved applications, course records lacking a definitive identification method for students, as well as student grade levels being inaccurately reported (2018). The GA DOAA reflected that approximately 1,600 course records for FY2016 and FY2017 provided by different post-secondary institutions could not produce a matching dual enrollment application as maintained by the GSFC on different indicator’s such as student’s identification, postsecondary institution attended, academic term, or postsecondary course name (2018).

A 2017 report by the Georgia Governor’s Office of Student Achievement (Rauschenberg & Chalasani) indicated that more female students participated in dual enrollment programs in Georgia. Studies also indicated that White students are overrepresented in dual enrollment programs and students identified as Black and Latinx as underrepresented (Rauschenberg &

Chalasani, 2017; University System of Georgia (2020a). Data for program participation In 2015-2016 indicated that White students accounted for 43% of the student population but 58% of dual enrollees. This was contrasted by Black and Latinx students being 51% of all students in Georgia but only 35% of dual enrollees. (Rauschenberg & Chalasani, 2017). Regarding dual enrollment participation by institution type of institution, a GBPI report outlined that approximately 25,000 high school students enrolled in Technical College System of Georgia coursework, 12,000 students enrolled in University System of Georgia courses, and 5,000 students enrolled in private colleges (Lee, 2019).

Griffin and McGuire (2018) cautioned that the absence of an accurate identification system between the GSFC and post-secondary institutions would prohibit dual enrollment applications, invoices, and other student records from being accurately linked and compared. Additionally, failure to maintain accurate grade level information for participants would diminish the fidelity of any analysis of high school graduation rates or the length of time to post-secondary degree attainment (2018). Despite different agencies such as the GA DOAA (Griffin & McGuire, 2018), GA Budget Policy Institute (Lee, 2019), and the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (Rauschenberg & Chalasani, 2017) recommending for the state to better examine post-secondary outcomes of dual enrollment students, Georgia has still failed to do so as of December 2021. A final recommendation from the GA DOAA report was for the General Assembly to consider placing limitations on the "the total number of dual enrollment credit hours per student per term in a manner similar to limitations established for the HOPE scholarship" (Griffin & McGuire, 2018, p. 32). The GSFC offered support for this recommendation and legislative leaders proposed new measures to streamline dual enrollment participation and curb

financial concerns due to dual enrollment being amongst the fastest growing state budgets according to House floor leader Bert Reeves (Sturgis, 2020).

Emergency Regulations

Following a statewide quarantine lockdown beginning in March 2020, many two- and four-year institutions employed test optional admission policies stemming from testing centers being closed throughout the United States and worldwide due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Jaschik, 2021; Moody, 2020). Due to the difficulty and uncertainty of safety with testing centers, the Georgia Student Finance Commission (n.d.) instituted an emergency regulation to assist “affected students” resulting from the public health emergency. GSFC (n.d.) created a temporary extension where

Students in the 10th grade which have been prevented from taking the ACT or SAT due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, shall have until December 30, 2020, to obtain a qualifying ACT or SAT score required to enroll in any approved Dual Enrollment core courses at a TCSG, USG or private eligible participating postsecondary institution.

Nevertheless, such students may enroll in Dual Enrollment courses for the Summer 2020 and Fall 2020 academic terms subject to this subsection. Students described in this subsection shall be referred to as “Affected Students” in this regulation.

In April 2020 House Bill 444 was signed into law limiting dual enrollment participation in the USG system to 30 total hours, 11th and 12th grade students, and new modifications on course retake and withdraw policies ((Move on When Ready Act, 2020; USG, 2020a). House Bill 444 (Move on When Ready Act, 2020) also created new criteria for students such as tenth grade students only being able to take CTAE (career technical agricultural education) coursework at TCSG institutions unless they met specific testing standards (i.e. a single testing

administration score of 1200 on the SAT or composite score of 26 on the ACT) to take coursework at a four year institution (University System of Georgia, 2020a) as well as a student losing their eligibility to receive any funding for dual enrollment following their second course withdrawal (Georgia Student Finance Commission, n.d). In August 2020, the University System of Georgia (2020b) implemented a policy change mandating all public four year institutions to waive test scores requirements for any applicants seeking to enroll during the spring, summer and fall 2021 semester due to uncertainty about the scheduling of SAT/ACT testing during the COVID-19 pandemic (University System of Georgia, 2020b).

It is noteworthy that Georgia's post-secondary institutions waived testing admissions requirements for all applicants regardless of status during the summer and fall 2020 semesters, yet the state's sole higher education finance agency upheld a testing requirement in order for students to receive dual enrollment funding despite the acknowledgement of a public health crisis (Georgia Student Finance Commission, n.d.; USG, 2020b). While students enrolled in tenth grade were still eligible to participate in dual enrollment during the summer and fall 2020 semester at a four year institution, caregivers were required to pay all tuition, mandatory fees, and required textbook costs (USG, 2020b). Georgia families also were required to complete a waiver agreement that all payments were made at their own risk and that a student had to receive the qualifying test score by December 30, 2020 for funding to be reimbursed (2020b). The financial requirement placed on *affected students* could limit the ability of individuals from underrepresented groups as dual enrollment students were previously not required to cover the cost of tuition, fees, and textbooks. As the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (Rauschenberg & Chalasani, 2017) and the University System of Georgia (2020a) identified an overrepresentation of White and female students in dual enrollment programs, the emergency

regulation could restrict participation to students from more advantaged backgrounds who already have access to college.

Dual enrollment policies and financial regulations have the potential to bolster or block out well qualified candidates from middle and lower income backgrounds who would be eligible to participate save for a tuition requirement (Roach et al., 2015). Regulations on program hourly “caps” such as HB 444 may reduce the cost for the state budget, but also impact short term outcomes for total credit attainment. Regardless of a family’s income, the cap in program participation limits all students across the state of Georgia. When considering students from minoritized backgrounds such as those from low income families as well as individuals who immigrated to the United States after birth, Georgia’s legislation around dual enrollment simultaneously opens the door of college access while limiting benefits to its participants.

Roach and colleagues (2015) study provided an example of Ohio institutions adapting enrollment policies to better meet the needs of its student population to increase participation and enhance educational outcomes. Studies (Anderson, 2019; Bridgeman & Wendler, 2005) indicate that students of color and students from low income families are less successful on the SAT and ACT exams in comparison to their White peers. College entrance exams pose barriers to enrollment for students from marginalized backgrounds due to factors such as cost and diminished access to a rigorous high school curriculum.

Educators and researchers are warranted to explore how the implementation of a test optional admissions policy impacts access to college enrollment for students from marginalized backgrounds. As Georgia waived the need for students to submit test scores during the 2020 – 2021 school year, a greater number of high school students could have potentially participated in a dual enrollment program due to a less restricted path. This could generate increased college

access for underrepresented students in Georgia who identify as first generation students, students of color, students with disabilities, and students who immigrated to the U.S. after birth. The following section will provide an overview of research literature pertaining to dual enrollment outcomes.

Dual Enrollment Research Gaps

As the popularity of dual enrollment has increased authors (Giani et al., 2014; Kim & Bragg, 2008; Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020) have identified limitations in research regarding the effects of dual enrollment participation on student outcomes. Scholarship by An (2013), Giani and colleagues (2014), and Speroni (2012) have implemented observational methodologies to study post-secondary outcomes for dual enrollment participants. Giani et al. (2014) pointed to how this technique may result in skewed estimates based on a premise that students who participate in dual enrollment are high achievers in comparison to their peers. Researchers have sought to limit the potential for the self-selection bias by implementing quasi-experimental techniques such as regression discontinuity (Speroni, 2012) and propensity score matching (An, 2013; Giani et al., 2014) however this area of research remains limited.

Giani et al. (2014) examined a cohort of ninth grade students in Texas enrolled during the 2000–2001 school year, however, the original sample was greatly restricted due to approximately half of the school districts at the time not offering any dual-credit coursework. The authors (2014) were unable to account for unobserved covariates such as the location and format of dual enrollment coursework as well as student's individual college goals which could impact performance on an individual level. Quantitative research has characterized dual enrollment credit attainment as a dichotomous treatment variable that assumes the benefits of participation and program completion are equal for all participants (Giani et al., 2014). This fails to consider if

and how variables such as the number and type of dual enrollment credit, location, and course delivery model impact desirable outcomes for students once they matriculate to college.

Qualitative studies examining dual enrollment student perspectives have sought to reveal how sociological factors impact student performance as well as their understanding of the roles, expectations, and behaviors of college students (Felder, 2017; Kanny, 2012; Karp, 2012; Rankin Gonzalez, 2018). Karp's (2012) study on dual enrollment as a college readiness strategy outlined that the location (high school vs college campus) of a dual enrollment course impacted participants understanding of college expectations and the role of college students. The author noted one participant's exclamation, "I don't know, I've never been to college!", when they were probed for deeper insight about the difference between a dual enrollment course offered in their local high school in comparison to the college campus (Karp, 2012, p. 24).

Kanny's (2012) research on dual enrollment student perspectives highlighted the impact of negative interactions from college instructors and peers as well as a lack of support systems at both the high school and college level which led to. Participants perceived these factors as negatively impacting their grades in dual enrollment courses as well as their high school transcripts. Rankin Gonzalez (2019) noted in a dissertational study that there is a need to address specific factors that influence individuals to participate in dual enrollment and the specific role dual enrollment programs may play in college and career aspiration. Felder's dissertational study (2017) highlighted a lack of motivation and lack of information as a primary barrier preventing participants from taking full advantage of dual enrollment. Findings from the study outlined interpersonal factors such as participants motivation, maturity, and social capital that impacted their ability to be successful in a dual enrollment program.

Future research endeavors should focus on student perspectives while controlling for other variables as possible. Karp and colleagues (2007) caution that dual enrollment research is unable to be broadly generalized due to employing a restricted sample size, however, there is a need to consider how interpersonal and systemic factors impact dual enrollment student perspectives and experiences. In reviewing literature on dual enrollment policy and participant's perspectives there is a lack of evidence pointing to how students initially gain information on available programs. To better understand how students acquire knowledge about dual enrollment programs it is necessary to explore how high school students are advised by school counselors, dual enrollment coordinators, and other stakeholders. To better understand how educators interact with and advise students on dual enrollment, the following section will examine gatekeeping practices and institutional constraints on school counseling practitioners.

Gatekeepers

Dual enrollment research has focused mainly on program outcomes, but less is understood about how dual enrollment functions at the local school level (Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020). Clarifying the specific details of how dual enrollment programs are implemented at the base level can assist post-secondary institutions with delivery models for dual enrollment participants (Hanson et al., 2015; Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020). Few studies have examined the role of gate keepers to dual enrollment programs and how they seek to recruit and advise students and parents on eligibility requirements, program expectations, and possible benefits and consequences (Hanson et al., 2015; Mitkos & Bragg, 2008; Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020). High school counselors serve a critical role in identifying students who may benefit from dual enrollment while restricting access to students who may not be successful (Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020).

High school counselors are charged with multifaceted roles that vary between the individual needs of their school communities and student populations (American School Counselor Association, 2004, 2005). This may take shape as balancing administrative roles (student enrollment; schedule development; transcribing academic records), non-counseling duties (test administration; supervising campus spaces; disseminating student accommodations) and supporting students social emotional and interpersonal development (providing advisement on coursework options, graduation requirements, post-secondary college and career options) in addition to responding to individual mental health needs and crises (McDonough, 2005; Perna, 2008; Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020). As the role of school counselors have expanded to involve supporting the individual needs of dual enrollment students and institutions, more administrative, counseling, and collaborative work has been added to the list of their responsibilities (Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020).

School Counselors

School counselors are educators with unique training to identify students who are underserved and seek to meet their specific needs through a comprehensive school counseling program with targeted interventions (American School Counselor Association, 2016, 2017, 2018). The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) (2016, 2017, 2018) provides ethical standards and position statements to enhance and guide the role of school counseling practitioners as stakeholders that provide advocacy for all students regardless of their background or ability level. School counselors specifically contribute to the educational and academic outcomes of their school by developing student engagement and performance via the design, implementation and assessment of school counseling programs (ASCA, 2017).

A pivotal function performed by high school counselors is the coordination and verification of course schedules to ensure students concurrently meet graduation requirements and admissions requirements to college. School counselors serve as gate keepers to coursework promoting college access, (i.e. classes holding the distinction of honors, Advanced Placement [AP], and dual enrollment), through systemic outreach via classroom counseling lessons, parent information sessions, school counseling media outlets. This is done to provide all students and caregivers information that develops awareness of how to access and participate in academic programs offered by their school and district (Hanson, Prusha, & Iverson, 2015). Given the increased structural constraints of counseling caseloads in public high schools and the myriad of duties and responsibilities held by school counselors (ASCA, 2020; McDonough, 2004b, 2005; Perna, 2008; Wingfield et al., 2010; Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020), current practitioners are encouraged to develop targeted interventions through a comprehensive school counseling program driven by the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2018, 2019). To better understand the major roles that school counseling practitioners have played overtime in addressing the needs of underachieving students, the following section will describe school counseling models spanning the past century in the United States.

Vocational Guidance

Research literature suggests that the role of professional school counselors began in the era of vocational guidance as a response to social reforms advocating against child labor and the industrial boom of the late 1800's (Krumboltz & Kolpin, 2003; Wingfield et al., 2010). Prior to school systems formally providing vocational guidance, the field was primarily devoted to assisting individuals find occupations that would enable them to become active contributors to society. Frank Parsons is credited as a key advocate for training professionals to provide

vocational guidance in schools at the turn of the 20th century and is held as the *father of guidance* due to his efforts as a social reformer (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Wingfield et al., 2010).

World Wars I and II later compounded the need for systemic vocational assessment due to the U.S. armed forces needing to efficiently and effectively ascertain the abilities and skills of soldiers to form a united and dominant work force (2010). School counselors addressed this need via career assessments that removed the uncertainty of what roles countless soldiers would fulfill in service to their country. During the vocational guidance era academic achievement concerns purported the need for character development and preventing problematic behaviors, which are still elements of most school current school counseling programs according to Schmidt (1999). Although professionally trained guidance counselors were able to meet the vocational needs of students, mental health concerns were not formally addressed by counseling professionals until the middle of the 20th century (Krumboltz & Kolpin, 2003).

Mental Health Movement

The vocational movement addressed students career needs but was unable to account for how student's learning and occupational choice would be impacted by the unique personal and social needs of students (Wingfield et al., 2010). Schmidt (1999) found that Carl Roger's nondirective (remedial) approach to counseling enabled school based practitioners to concentrate more on the mental health needs of students opposed to solely focusing on approaches geared at direct assessment. Prior to the 1950's, scholarship had not focused on diversity issues, however societal changes such as civil rights issues, changes in family structure (e.g. divorce), and increased crime rates caused mental health professionals to begin responding to growing diverse needs of students (Dollarhide & Saginak, 2008). Due to this Wingfield and colleagues (2010) found that school counselors assumed greater leadership roles in schools, provided consultation

services to educational stakeholders, as well as individual counseling and small group services to students.

Following the Soviet Union's successful launch of the Sputnik satellite into space in 1958, U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower passed the National Defense Education Act to promote scholarships and programs to enhance nationwide academic achievement in mathematics, science, and world languages (Wingfield et al., 2010). This law also called for more school counselors to be trained and hired to encourage large numbers of students to pursue studies in math and science. This push also challenged school counselors to develop school counseling programs that could meet the needs of all students to maximize their academic potential through developmental programs in schools (Wingfield et al., 2010).

Developmental Guidance

Myrick (2003) wrote that it was not until after 1960, that school counseling services were increased from high school to all K – 12 schools following the renewal of the National Defense Education Act which called for training counseling practitioners to serve in elementary and middle schools. Developmental guidance at each level focused on comprehensive, proactive programs that could reach all students, opposed to remedial approaches designed for small groups of identified students. Myrick (2003) wrote that school counselors used the *law of parsimony* as an identified goal for school counseling services to reach as many students as possible.

As the Civil Rights movement took shape, leading to the desegregation of schools across the U.S., many believed that integration would increase academic outcomes for minoritized students, however, an abundance of literature and scholarship depict a minimal (if any) impact on desegregation's ability to positively impact achievement among students of color and students

from low income families (Jencks & Mayer, 1990). In addition to greater scrutiny and evaluation of school counseling programs taking shape in the 1960's, legislation such as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 have greatly impacted the school counseling profession (Wingfield et al., 2010). Legislation has required school counselors to develop data driven programs to increase practitioners' accountability in closing the achievement gap for identified students (2010). These laws have created intense pressure and a need for transparency for counseling practitioners to meet the needs of all students. Schools that are unable to meet performance based standards are at risk of losing staff, funding, and most importantly, the students they seek to serve (Wingfield et al., 2010).

To address the needs of schools while meeting legislative demands, ASCA developed the *National Standards for Students* (2004) and the *ASCA National Model* (2005) to better meet the needs of all students. As a result, developmental guidance programs have transformed into comprehensive school counseling programs based on competencies that seek to promote a range of learning and behavioral outcomes for students through programs that are comprehensive, preventative, and developmental (ASCA, 2017). The following section will provide an overview of the ASCA National Model and its application in contemporary school counseling programs.

ASCA National Model

In 2003 the American School Counselor Association published the ASCA National Model, a national comprehensive school counseling program model, to provide consistent standards for school counseling programs across the United States (Gysbers, 2010). In response to accountability legislation such as No Child Left Behind (Le Floch et al., 2007), ASCA developed competencies for school counseling practitioners to be data oriented in their efforts to

better identify school concerns and students' needs (Gysbers, 2010). The development and proliferation of comprehensive school counseling programs was driven in part by *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs* (ASCA, 2019). This book (2019) defined the role of school counselors in implementing, managing, and assessing specific components within a comprehensive school counseling program to positively impact on student achievement, attendance, and discipline.

ASCA's fourth National Model has provided guidance to practitioners to develop school counseling programs that are driven by interventions based on data-informed decision making that are delivered systematically to all students (ASCA, 2019). The ASCA National Model also calls for practitioners to provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum focused on specific mindsets and behaviors that seeks to close achievement and opportunity gaps for postsecondary readiness and success (2019). Practitioners following the National Model's objective to close achievement and opportunity gaps for students can use local school data and research literature to support interventions geared towards assisting students. As dual enrollment programs provide a means for underrepresented students from low income and minoritized backgrounds to develop knowledge and skills to navigate the transition to college, school counselors can follow the ASCA National Model to identify specific student groups to increase post-secondary outcomes. As the role of school counseling practitioners has altered greatly over the past century (Gybers, 2010) it is worthwhile to explore challenges and barriers that school counselors navigate in their professional settings.

Challenges for School Counselors

McDonough (2004b, 2005) claimed that high school counselors are inadequately prepared to advise students on post-secondary options due to having an undefined role in schools

and inadequate training in preservice programs. Research indicates that school counselors lack of awareness of different types of post-secondary options can diminish students perceptions and scope of options available following graduation (McDonough, 2005). Mitkos and Bragg (2008) examined the perceptions of school counselors and their college advisement practices at a large urban Midwestern high school through one-on-one interviews. The authors study (2008) revealed inconsistent college advisement practices amongst school counseling participants.

Mitkos and Bragg noted advisement practices varied greatly between participants resulting from the “district policy of using professionals with varying credentials” (2008, p. 382). Other advisement methods included a “shotgun approach” by the high school to distribute information relating to postsecondary options with the intent to “hit” as many students as possible at one time (2008, p. 382). Using this style of college advisement failed to include systematic means to target specific student groups with specific, relevant information meeting students’ unique needs (2008). The use of large scale senior meetings in auditoriums or recorded videos on college planning limited opportunities to address specific questions students may have Mitkos and Bragg (2008) found individual consistencies between counselors’ postsecondary advisement practices where some counselors called students into their offices for personal meetings about college planning whereas others who assisted only in the event of a student popping by their office. Findings indicated that students who enrolled in more rigorous coursework were more likely to be served by an experienced practitioner whereas lower performing students were assigned to a less experienced counselor with limited knowledge on college. One recommendation to reduce inconsistencies in postsecondary advising practices was the provision of additional time to school counselors while redistributing clerical duties and other non-counseling assignments to other school faculty and staff members (Mitkos & Bragg, 2008).

Establishing specific guidelines to enhance targeted outreach interventions pertaining to specific student groups was a recommendation to shape college advisement events geared towards students identifying as first generation and/or having an immigrant status (2008).

School counselors are uniquely trained to impact a school's college going culture by developing student and parent perceptions of college options and reinforcing their aspirations (McDonough, 2005; Perna, 2008). Counselors can enhance students understanding of college as well as their academic and social emotional preparation needed to persist through a post-secondary institution (McDonough, 2005; Perna, 2008). Research by Adelman (1999), McDonough (2005), and Plank and Jordan (2001) support that school counselors positively impact student achievement and financial aid knowledge when they are consistently and frequently available to provide direct services to students and caregivers. Increasing the number of counselors and allotted time devoted to college advising tasks is seen as a necessary reform to increase college access (Gandara & Bial, 2001; McDonough, 2005; Perna, 2008). When schools seek to enhance counseling and college advisement services, college access has increased for low income, rural, and urban students as well as students of color (Gandara & Bial, 2001; Plank & Jordan, 2001). While college counseling is viewed as an important aspect of the school counselor's role, practitioners and advocates describe many severe structural restraints and demands that diminish counselors' availability to serve students and families (McDonough, 2005; Perna, 2008). McDonough (2005) examined barriers to college advisement and identified issues such as school counselors preservice training, role conflicts from differing expectations between counselors and principals, outrageously high student-to-counselor ratios, and a myriad of counseling and non-counseling duties. The following sections will present counseling literature pertaining to these barriers.

Preservice Training

As of 2008, the *Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs* (CACREP) has not required school counselors in training to receive professional development for understanding financial aid (Perna, 2008). A primary focus is placed on providing mental health services and referrals in school systems, yet school counseling practitioners have professional development needs to understand and distribute information on college admissions and financial aid (McDonough, 2005). When school counselors lack knowledge and training about their state's specific student aid systems and changes in college costs and programming, they are less equipped to assist students, caregivers, and other educators (i.e. teachers and administrators) to gain the necessary information and understanding about the cost of college and how to most effectively navigate the financial aid system (2005).

Counselor Caseload Ratios

In 2020, ASCA provided recommendations for a 250:1 ratio of students to school counselors contrasted with data 2019–2020 school year that indicated U.S. national average was approximately 424:1 students to one school counselor. ASCA (2020) examined national student to school counselor caseload ratios between 1986 – 2019 and found that the average caseload has decreased by over 150 students over the past thirty years. This is in part attributed to there being a greater number of school counselors in schools throughout the nation (2020). It is important to note that generally there are fewer school counselors in schools serving urban and rural communities, as well as schools serving low SES students and students of color, restricting time and availability of school counselors for the process of college advisement (McDonough, 2005).

School counselors working in high schools often encounter student caseloads much greater than what ASCA and other state governing bodies recommend (Perna, 2008). The state of

Georgia mandates for a 450:1 counselor to student ratio (GA Code Title 20; 2021) despite most public schools having caseloads that are much larger with some counselors working with caseloads greater than 600 students (Patel & Clinedest, 2021; Perna, 2008). Patel and Clinedinst (2021, iii) found that counselor caseloads varied substantially across states in the 2015 – 2016 school year, with caseloads in “Arizona (902), Michigan (744), and California (708)” being amongst the highest and “New Hampshire (217) and Vermont (195)” having the lowest caseloads. Patel and Clinedinst (2021) caution that general state averages may obscure substantial differences between communal student-to-counselor ratios within states. The disproportionate access to school counselors across states and districts combined with other disparities in resource allocation compounds disadvantages for students attending schools in low income areas (2021). Perna interviewed school counseling practitioners across 15 schools in five states and found that school counselors in low-resource schools often encounter caseloads so large their job duties cannot be adequately completed,

It’s overwhelming and it’s unreal—the counselor to student ratio. And, you know, everybody—the teacher, the administrators, the community—expects all the answers to come from the counseling office. And with a ratio of 500 or 600 to one, that’s not really that possible. (counselor, Georgia, low-resource school) (2008, p. 142)

McDonough (2005) drew comparisons between low-SES and high-SES students access to competitive college programs and identified private counselors as a resource utilized by more advantaged families. The college admissions process has become increasingly competitive making the application process a more complex and stressful task. Even with the presence of a comprehensive college advisement high school counseling program, some high-SES parents hire private college counselors due to increased availability during off school hours (McDonough,

2005). Private college counselors are seen as possessing greater specialized knowledge about accessing elite colleges and scholarships, coaching on entrance exams and essays, as well as provide “hand holding” throughout the admissions process by keeping things organized and on an identified schedule, and navigate special circumstances that may jeopardize students admissions chances (2005).

Non-counseling duties

Research has illustrated the use of school counselors time being spent on non-counseling duties that are inappropriate to their role and training (ASCA, 2020; McDonough, 2005; Perna, 2008). On any given school day, a counselor may be told to perform bus duty or supervise other campus areas, coordinate testing, respond to a disciplinary action, cover a classroom, complete administrative tasks such as data entry and the coordination of special plans such as Response To Intervention or medical 504 plan meetings (ASCA, 2020; McDonough, 2005; Perna, 2008).

Perna (2008) interviewed school counselors in schools with varying SES levels to examine constraints on college counseling and differences in the availability of college counseling across 15 high schools in three states. One counselor from a low SES Pennsylvania school stated they do not make appointments and instead took an ‘on demand’ approach to increase their accessibility and flexibility to meet with students and parents as they come into the office.

I never have parents make appointments. They just show up—“I need to see you.” Same with my students. Students show up, “Hey, I got to talk to you.” . . .

And I found that if I say to the student, “You better go back and get a pass and then come back to see me,” I never see them again. So I’m more flexible with that. I deal with chaos all day. My day is governed by constant interruption. (Perna, 2008, p. 144)

Counselors tend to numerous duties, responsibilities, as well as a deluge of interruptions daily leaving students, parents, and other stakeholders at a deficit due to limitations on counselors time and availability (2008). McDonough (2005) and Perna (2008) shared that counselors devoting greater time and direct service to college advisement tasks would more effectively bridge gaps with student populations who are traditionally underrepresented by four year college institutions.

McDonough's study (2005) on college counseling in American high schools highlighted that no available data was available on the amount of time counselors devote to college advisement. Providing advisement and resources on postsecondary planning is viewed as a cornerstone of the high school counselors role (Johnson et al., 2010). Descriptive studies (Beesley, 2004; Chapman, DeMasi, & O'Brien, 1991; Johnson et al., 2010; Libsch & Freedman-Doan, 1995) have documented widespread frustration with the availability of college counseling services. Studies have specifically indicated that students (Johnson et al., 2010; Libsch & Freedman-Doan, 1995), parents, (Chapman, DeMasi, & O'Brien, 1991), teachers and other stakeholders (Beesley, 2004) believe that school counselors should allow greater time and devotion to college advising practices. These requests are validated by research literature that students enhanced access and direct time with school counselors leads to greater outcomes regarding attendance, graduation, perceptions and knowledge around college preparation, and parents support for their children's college aspirations (ASCA 2016, 2017, 2018).

Role Conflict

Research literature (Karp, 2012; McDonough, 2005; Mitkos & Bragg, 2008) depicts students who take honors and AP coursework as having greater access to school counselors and college advisement services. Perna (2008) indicated that students and parents in low achieving schools often must initiate contact with their school counselor to access college counseling

services due to unusually high student-to-counselor ratios. Beesley (2004), Chapman et al. (1991), and McDonough (2005) found that negative perceptions of school counselors accessibility was influenced by their lack of visibility to students and other stakeholders. Due to very high caseloads, some high school counselors must hold large group counseling lessons to deliver college information and resources via a “shotgun” approach (Mitkos & Bragg, 2008). This is done to justify a means that serves all students in a school, despite a lack of specificity for marginalized groups with unique college counseling needs (Mitkos & Bragg, 2008).

Limited information is available regarding how first-generation students and students from low income families view school counseling services to promoting post-secondary opportunities (McDonough, 2005). Dockery and McKelvey (2013) examined how school counselors provide support for college planning and transitions amongst first generation students. Students of color that participated in the 2013 study expressed low expectations of school counselors to provide college counseling and that practitioners should seek to offer college programming with an emphasis on underrepresented students. Participants identified a need for assistance with effective career planning and academic advising, learning the value of a strong academic record, and discussions outlining how college differs high school” (2013). Particular emphasis was placed on participants need for discussing college options from the onset of beginning high school and offering college application and financial aid workshops that may aid an individual’s transition to college (2013).

Bemak and Chung (2005) as well as Dockery and McKelvey (2013) stressed the importance of providing opportunities to all students that enable a greater understanding, awareness, and enhanced comfort level with the expectations, demands, and requirements of a college education. School counselors are uniquely positioned to address systemic barriers

limiting underrepresented students access to a post-secondary education. Literature (Dockery & McKelvey, 2013; Johnson et al.; 2010) has indicated school counselors are not perceived as helpful entities when navigating the college process elucidating a need for practitioners to design and implement proactive, targeted programs that ensure support and provide information to their students (Bemak & Chung, 2005)

If students of color hold lower expectations of school counselors and infrequently seek out their services, it becomes even more imperative for school counselors to reach out and intentionally provide targeted support and services to students of color and other underrepresented populations. Otherwise, these students will continue to have low expectations for support from school counselors and may not be receiving critical information regarding the college admissions process. (Dockery & McKelvey, 2013, p. 17)

Pre-service counselors and practitioners in the field share a need to engage in professional development and supervision to develop knowledge of equity and advocacy practices centered around the needs of students who have traditionally been underserved (Bemak & Chung, 2005). Providing school counseling practitioners with in-service trainings geared towards increasing access to dual enrollment and enhancing college advisement could bolster participation rates for special student populations with unique needs. This may include, but is not limited to, students who identify as first generation or low income, students with disabilities as well as students with an immigrant status. Scholarship (Borden et al., 2013; Karp et al., 2004; Taylor et al., 2015; Taylor & Lichtenberg, 2013)) examining dual enrollment legislation has illustrated a landscape of varying tuition rates and curricula options at two- and four-year college institutions. A school counselors level of awareness regarding changes in state policy is critical to provide accurate information and appropriately advise students and caregivers. Examining how students perceive and utilize school counseling services pertaining to college advisement

and dual enrollment can help enhance practitioners use of time professionally and how they implement college planning programs. Collaborative relationships between high schools and college institutions can smooth the transition to college and positively influence perceptions for students and caregivers who may not have relationships with individuals working in two-year or four-year institutions (Mitkos & Bragg, 2008). The following section will describe how counseling practitioners seek to deliver college counseling and advisement for post-secondary planning.

College Counseling and Advisement

McDonough's (2004b; 2005) research on college advisement recognized counselors ability to enhance resources, programs, and college opportunities for students and families regardless of their level of education, SES, and other unique factors. School counselors that implement a comprehensive program seek to provide information and organize activities that are accessible to all students in their school (ASCA, 2017, 2018). Aspects of a college counseling program may include the delivery of classroom lessons, inviting college admissions representatives to campus, holding college fairs and financial aid events, and providing ongoing college advisement to students and families throughout the school year. These combined interventions seek to develop and bolster students college aspirations and understanding of college options and their significance (McDonough, 2005). ASCA (2017, 2018) and McDonough(2005) viewed school counselors in a unique role to provide college information to develop caregivers understanding of their role in fostering and validating post-secondary goals, developing college expectations, and motivating their students. School counselors also develop students' academic preparation for college through advisement on course selection and providing

support to navigate decisions around the college application and financial aid process (McDonough, 2005; Perna, 2008).

During a student's final years of high school, counselors are expected to assist students and parents with navigating processes relating to college selection, admissions, and financial aid (Johnson et al., 2017). This occurs through formal and informal ways such as meetings to reduce anxiety about the transition to college, assistance with the application process, coaching for college entrance exams, as well as providing education and guidance on the extensive variety of college options and selecting the best personal fit. School counselors may also seek to present students in the most affirming manner by writing letters of recommendation as well as building networks and maintaining professional relationships with college admissions representatives and financial aid officers who may assist students with transitioning after high school (McDonough, 2005). Research presented by Kanny (2015) and Karp (2012) portrayed students' experiences in dual enrollment resulting in a mixture of positive and negative experiences. Improving students' academic and social emotional preparation in high school prior to matriculating to a dual enrollment program would help their transition between institutions and manage new academic experiences (Kanny, 2015). Former dual enrollment participants have indicated that enhancing support mechanisms via supervision from high school counselors, teachers, and college instructors throughout the course of a term may enable greater educational outcomes and increase students knowledge of student services available.

Chapman (1986) offered the use of a behavioral model to better understand how students and families navigate the college selection process. Five separate components identified in the model are *pre-search behavior*, *search behavior*, *application decision*, *choice decision*, and *matriculation decision*. College selection is based on different *search* and *choice* components

based on the needs of individuals (1986). Search includes values characterizing a two- or four-year institution such as cost, academic rigor, future career prospects and opportunity following graduation, one's quality of life while attending a college, and other considerations (1986). The search concludes with the onset of the application decision where an individual formally applies to identified college(s) (1986). Choice involves an individual's selection among the college(s) which they have been admitted. Although search and choice are distinct, they are interrelated in the college selection process. Chapman (1986) encouraged the benefit of recognizing each stage separately when analyzing student behavior due to considerations unique to the individual applicant. School counselors often aid students and families specifically with advisement processes related to college search and choice making them ideal social agents to help students and families learn about and initiate tasks to select and enroll in a college based on personal needs outlined by Chapman (1986). The following section will describe how social and cultural capital influence educational opportunity and college choice.

Social and Cultural Capital

In a basic sense, the concepts of social and cultural capital relate to assets or resources, in the form of behaviors in which individuals, families, and groups utilize to meet a specific set of established values in a society (Freeman, 1997). These societal values are typically established by a majority group in society to encompass ways of how individuals act. The better able someone can enact these established standards, the more they may feel accepted by institutions in society. Dimaggio and Mohr (1985) suggested cultural capital as a set of particular social behaviors that generates acceptance at varying levels of society. Coleman's (1988) analysis of students who chose to leave high school noted that although social and cultural capital are

interrelated, social capital takes shape as information channels and networks, social norms, and support systems for achievement.

Freeman's (1997) study on college choice reported that the social and cultural capital that students bring to school has expansive implications for how they will be treated, accepted, and given the necessary information to determine choices that encourage them to pursue a post-secondary education. Cicourel and Mehan (1985) believed that students receive different educational opportunities resulting from different types of cultural capital they come to school with. The specific places in society occupied by families of different status groups create positionality for resources in schools (Mehan, 1991). Mehan (1991) held cultural capital as the distinct ways in which groups act, communicate, and deploy cultural and economic resources available to them. As it relates to youth from low income families who experience a minoritized cultural or linguistic status, research has indicated that schools seek to reward the language and socialization practices of upper- and middle-income families while concurrently diminishing those of low income families (1991).

According to Freeman (1997) a general notion in U.S. society is that African American students do not bring the same kind of social and cultural capital to school as White students bring. Orfield and colleagues (1984) indicated that students who identify as African American and White form educational aspirations differently: "There has been little exploration of the social consequences of the huge gap between Black hopes and the reality of higher education for Blacks" (1984, p. 16). Hossler and colleagues (1989) model of student choice focused on factors that influenced aspiration. Expectations from others such as parents, caregivers, teachers, and peers influence aspirations. Orfield and colleagues (1984) identified that next to socioeconomic status, a student's high school environment is the key social institution to provide access to

college. Specifically it is a school's curriculum (i.e. academic and career-technical education programs), school counseling programs (i.e. college preparation and planning activities) and grading that have far reaching influence on a student's choice to pursue a college education (McDonough, 2004b, 2005; Perna, 2008).

Theorists such as Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) and Coleman (1988) suggested that college aspirations and high school academic decision making emerge from the social and cultural capital of families, so it is rational that aspiration and choice are based on a student's culture and not necessarily on (elite) societal values. Freeman (1997) pointed to the irony of college choice models seeking to increase aspiration as generally being based on society at large, ignoring the culture of African Americans. Parental income and educational attainment have a direct and indirect influence on college choice (1997). Indirectly, the lower a parent's income and educational attainment may result in reduced information available to assist their children with college decision making (1997). Orfield and colleagues (1984) identified family income as causing inequalities in educational access due to the need to depend on federal financial aid and other programs to afford a post-secondary education.

Freeman (1997) used the term channeling to define the environmental forces (e.g. individual, institutional, or circumstantial) that influence the direction of student's choice. As it relates to college choice, channeling affects social and cultural capital, as well as economics and financial capital (1997). The level of an individual's capital on their decision making is influenced primarily by forces internal to the home. Beyond the home environment, students are also channeled by high school teachers and counselors who impact their decision making to attend college. Barnes (1992) observed that the assignment of excellent teachers during students' senior year was an important factor to retaining African American males to graduate high school

within four years. Participants in this study (1992) emphasized the importance of access to the best teachers who promoted their attention and interest in schoolwork who helped them graduate. Morrison (1989) identified counselors as playing a pivotal role to students and parents from minoritized backgrounds. School counselors are adept at helping students access programs that offer current information on post-secondary options and funding, provide opportunities to interact with college faculty and alumni, and assist with ongoing questions to navigate the college choice and admissions process.

The quality of a student's high school greatly impacts their desire and opportunity to attend college. Freeman (1997) observed that students at the top of their class who attend inner city high schools have diminished college planning opportunities in comparison to peers who reside in affluent suburbs. This comes in the form of access to college recruiters, visiting a college campus, and possessing basic information related to college choice. Students attending independent schools and suburban schools are more likely to be influenced and channeled to continue their education beyond high school. More important than location, the services provided by teachers and counselors in these schools are what guide students towards a rigorous education and college planning programs. Jacks, as cited by Orfield and colleagues (1984, p. 28), stated "schools in affluent suburbs encourage college attendance and channel their students into college preparatory curricula; school in poor or working class neighborhoods tend to prepare students for jobs not requiring college training".

Channeling can be constructively implemented to mediate social and cultural differences in schools, influence the financial aid process and economic outlook for students, and impact students' choice of the type of post-secondary institution and college experience (Freeman, 1997). Research from student choice theorists has provided information for understanding the

factors that motivate students from traditional college going populations (i.e. White, advantaged, males) to participate in higher education, but studies by Hossler et al. (1989), McDonough (1984), and Orfield et al. (1984) contend that the best way to understand the motivating factors that impact the decision making of African Americans to aspire to attend college is to ask students themselves. Individuals possess great awareness in assessing their problems and can offer possible solutions to afford sustainable positive change in their livelihoods.

The negative side of the concept of cultural capital is that educators come to the classroom with established views of acceptable actions and values expressed in behaviors based on a majority cultural groups (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). In school settings where students do not align with the establishment's values, educators have the potential to strip away student's personal cultural values early and thereby lower perceptions of worth and diminish hopes of academic success and the desire to attend college (Freeman, 1997). To better support student perceptions and aspirations toward college it is worthwhile for researchers to elucidate how social and cultural capital can empower individuals and communities of color. Yosso's (2005) cultural wealth model provides as a strength based perspective to reinforce present forms of cultural capital students of color bring to educational settings. Manzano Sanchez and colleagues (2019) held that individual's access to their community's cultural wealth can serve as a protective factor to reaching their post-secondary goals, especially for minority and low-income students who are seeking to be the first in their family to attend college (Yosso, 2005). Forms of cultural capital may take shape as aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational, and resistant as a means for people of color to challenge traditional interpretations of cultural capital (2005). Support and encouragement from caregivers, peers, and educators has a high capacity for

enhancing individuals' aspirational and resistant capital to form higher academic pursuits, career decisions, and subsequently enroll in college.

Research paradigms rooted in social justice can provide discourse that empowers the voices of marginalized individuals and center their stories that have been covered. Frameworks such as critical race theory (CRT) realign the lens of communities of color away from a deficit view to instead a panorama that focuses on and learns from the cultural skills, knowledge, abilities, and contexts by marginalized groups that have gone unrecognized and unacknowledged (Yosso, 2005). Hiraldo (2010, p. 54) stated that CRT provides a lens that “analyzes the role of race and racism in perpetuating social disparities between dominant and marginalized groups”. As CRT seeks to uncover what has been taken for granted when examining race and privilege, a framework utilizing the cultural wealth model can help educational institutions to become more diverse and inclusive in forming curriculum and policy (Hiraldo, 2010, p 54).

As a successful transition to college requires new forms of knowledge, students must learn how to navigate their institution's bureaucratic requirements and systems, new study habits, strategies for managing time, and engage in new kinds of social relationships (Karp, 2012). Even for students who have the necessary academic skills, those who fail to develop knowledge of an institution's “hidden curriculum” are unlikely to be successful (2012). Karp viewed dual enrollment as a social intervention that enabled participants to *try on* the role of college students by learning about “norms, interpersonal interactions, and behaviors expected for college success” (2012, p. 22 – 23). Dual enrollment can serve as a broad strategy that addresses the post-secondary transition for students while still enrolled in high school. Students possessing strong academic skills still need to learn and acquire normative college behaviors, which can be

achieved by ensuring access to various support systems in their schools and communities that provide resources and safety from failure.

Chapter Summary

The discussion around dual enrollment and its application as a mechanism to increase college access has been topic for educators since the mid-1990s (National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships, n.d.a). In 2009 President Barack Obama introduced the American Graduation Initiative and proclaimed that the United States would have the highest proportion of college graduates of any nation worldwide by 2020 (Jaschik, 2009). Current college admission and graduation rates indicate that this goal will not be reached until at least 2041 due to the decreasing number of 18 – 24 year old students attending college as well as the graduation rate of Black and Latinx college students lagging far behind White students (Marcus, 2019).

To better understand barriers to higher education in the U.S. the literature review examined patterns of high school graduation as well as college enrollment and completion rates for underrepresented groups of students. Scholarship examining high school completion and college enrollment data portrayed an educational landscape where students who identify as White or Asian experience higher rates of high school graduation, college access, and college degree completion in comparison to students who identify as Black/African American as well as Latinx (Adelman, 1999; Greene & Winters, 2006; Pike & Kuh, 2005; Snyder et al., 2019; Stebelton & Soria, 2012). Research (Engle & Tinto, 2008; Hodara, 2017; Terezini et al., 1996) examining students who identify as low income and/or first generation encounter unique barriers in comparison to peers from more advantaged backgrounds. Traditionally underserved students who have been minoritized must overcome various issues to graduate from high school and matriculate to college such as diminished access to a rigorous curriculum, highly trained

effective teachers, family and community members with college going experiences, as well as reduced school and community based resources. First generation students who attend college often encounter financial barriers as well as potentially hostile spaces at institutions not built with Communities of Color in mind. Additional identified barriers took shape as attending underfunded high schools lacking quality resources and faculty members, a lack of awareness about financial aid programs by students and caregivers, a need to work more hours and care for independents resulting in low income and first generation students being prohibited from academic and social experiences that foster greater success in college.

The literature review then explored dual enrollment research pertaining to student outcomes, the impact of legislation on dual enrollment policies and student participation in different states, dual enrollment participant perspectives, and research gaps in dual enrollment literature. Research described the typical dual enrollment participant as affluent, White, and female across geographical regions in the U.S. (Zinth, 2014) and the potential for policymakers to develop initiatives to increase access to dual enrollment programs (i.e. use of non-traditional assessments for admissions, decreased tuition rates, and enhanced partnerships between college institutions and high schools).

Thereafter, the literature review described the role of school counselors as dual enrollment program gatekeepers and college advisors to students and families. Professional challenges facing school counselors were provided to show how a lack of time, preservice training lacking college and financial aid information, and the myriad of non-counseling duties impact practitioners ability to provide ongoing college counseling and services to students, in particular students who attend schools in low-income communities with higher enrollment rates of students of color. Information regarding how school counselors support students' college

aspirations and assist with the college selection, application, and financial process were presented. Chapman's behavioral model was presented as a framework available to school counselors for working with students navigating different stages of selecting a college institution.

The literature review concluded with a description of how social and cultural capital influence educational opportunity and college choice for students based on their personal background, family, and SES. Channeling was identified as a constructive mediator of social and cultural differences in schools to increase knowledge and skills for students to successfully navigate financial aid processes and expand choices of different types of post-secondary institutions and college experiences available.

To better support dual enrollment students as a group of learners with unique needs, it is worthwhile to examine the perspectives and experiences of underrepresented high school aged students who have participated in dual enrollment. Learning more about these students lived experiences can help school counselors and dual enrollment program coordinators develop practices to recruit and support underserved student populations to understand options for eligibility and participate. The following chapter will outline the proposed methodology and research questions for this study.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this descriptive qualitative case study was to investigate how dual enrollment is implemented within a public high school setting in the state of Georgia and explored how institutional processes impacted student experiences with dual enrollment programs available through their high school. Research literature (Felder, 2017; Kanny, 2012; Karp, 2012; Rankin Gonzalez, 2018) has identified a need to better understand how students become aware of dual enrollment programs. Researchers (Karp, 2012; McDonough, 2004b, 2005; Perna, 2008; Tolliver et al., 2019) have identified that students' opportunity and time to engage with school counselors may positively or negatively impact their educational and career aspirations further influence their decision making and life outcomes. This study explored processes required for dual enrollment participation for a high school institution, its personnel, and enrolled students. This study also examined how identified dual enrollment processes impacted underrepresented students' perspectives and how dual enrollment processes impacted their interests, academic goals, and subsequent actions toward college and career planning. Examining how underrepresented high school students navigated the application process for a dual enrollment program and utilized services available through their school enabled me to identify specific processes that students perceived as supports or barriers influencing their aspirations to attend college.

To produce a final report with thick and rich descriptions of the case of dual enrollment in a public high school setting, I collected observational data in the form of field notes and

reflective summaries from late August until mid-October at the research site. Before collecting any evidence I met with the school counseling department in early August during a counseling department meeting to notify all members of the parameters of his study. I outlined plans to conduct observations of processes related to dual enrollment at the research site. School counselors were notified that observational data would be collected through attending trainings and consultation about dual enrollment, the delivery of dual enrollment information and program options through counseling classroom lessons and dual enrollment advisement sessions, and during consultation and communication with students, parents/caregivers, staff, and faculty members at the research site. The school counseling department was also made aware that I would present a summary of observation data during counseling department meetings to collect feedback on other sources of evidence (i.e., observation, document, and interview data) that would support and corroborate the required dual enrollment process. The following chapter will present the paradigm that guided the study, and the methodology that was used for the study, including the research questions, data collection methods, data analysis techniques, as well as a discussion on protecting participants' confidentiality and ethical rights.

Paradigm

The constructivist-interpretivist paradigm recognizes the existence of multiple realities and seeks to provide understanding through discourse between the researcher and the participant (Ponterotto, 2005). A constructivist paradigm aligned with my belief that individuals seek to understand the world in which they live and work (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As multiple realities exist, individuals develop subjective meanings of personalized experiences that can take various forms toward objects, processes, or events. I collected information to be analyzed that looked for the complexity of multiple views due to meanings taking shape in multiple forms

(2018). Through this paradigm, I relied as much as possible on the perspectives of participants that were recruited for this study as a qualitative method of inquiry centers on the stories of people as opposed to measurable data (2018).

This study addressed how high school students interacted with educators that were a part of specific contexts for dual enrollment such as learning about program options, completing the application, and other required institutional processes for completing steps to enrolling in an eligible postsecondary institution. Following the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm, I interviewed participants in settings in which they lived and attended school to better understand their unique lived experiences. By employing a constructivist-interpretivist worldview, I recognized my background shaped interpretations and positioned myself in the research to address how personal, cultural, and attested history shaped my interpretation of events (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

I intended to form interpretations (i.e., find sense) of the meaning others have about the world according to their experience. Through a constructivist-interpretivist lens, I generated patterns of meaning inductively to better understand how participants' experiences with dual enrollment and their school environment impacted their college aspirations. As the researcher, I acknowledged my active participation in the research study and engaged in a cooperative, respectful relationship with the subjects of this study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The conclusions developed were subjective as they were based on observations, behavior, and interpretations of language.

The focus of this study was to explore how dual enrollment processes were carried out in a public high school setting and how required processes impact underrepresented high school students' experience and decision-making to participate in dual enrollment. Nieto (1992) stated

that students' voices often go unheard regarding the issues that impact their lives and that the voices of students who are marginalized and disempowered are often silenced. According to Nieto qualitative studies can enable research that examines "particular situations so that solutions can be hypothesized and developed" (1992, p. 5). Qualitative research seeks to develop an understanding of subjects that little is known about through inductive exploration and empathic understanding (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Research literature and scholarship (Capeles, 2017; Felder, 2017; Karp, 2012; Mitkos & Bragg, 2008; Rankin Gonzalez, 2019) have described gaps in dual enrollment literature around student perspectives and their interactions with school counselors as program gatekeepers. The discovery of new relationships, concepts, and understandings characterizes qualitative case studies (Merriam, 1988). This paradigm of qualitative research assumes there are multiple realities and that the world is not an objective thing but a function of personal interaction.

The constructivist-interpretivist paradigm aligns with the case study approach that was used for this study as a lens to understand dual enrollment institutional processes and students' perceptions of their unique reality within a specific time, space, and context. To develop a parallel experience between participants in this study, the constructivist paradigm enabled me to find sense and meaning of how dual enrollment students contextualized their academic experiences and decision-making to participate in dual enrollment. This study was structured to enable a case to be bound by the same moment in time (i.e. the fall 2022 academic semester), space (i.e. the proposed research site as a public high school offering dual enrollment), and specific context (i.e. dual enrollment procedures and regulations of their local school and district).

Theoretical Framework

I used a theoretical lens as a guide to collect findings that were coded into data for analysis. The research analysis incorporated Lent, Brown, and Hackett's (1994) social cognitive career theory (SCCT) as a framework to understand how dual enrollment institutional processes impacted student self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals to shape their college and career aspirations. The theory is represented in a model (see **Figure 1**) showing the application of theory to research.

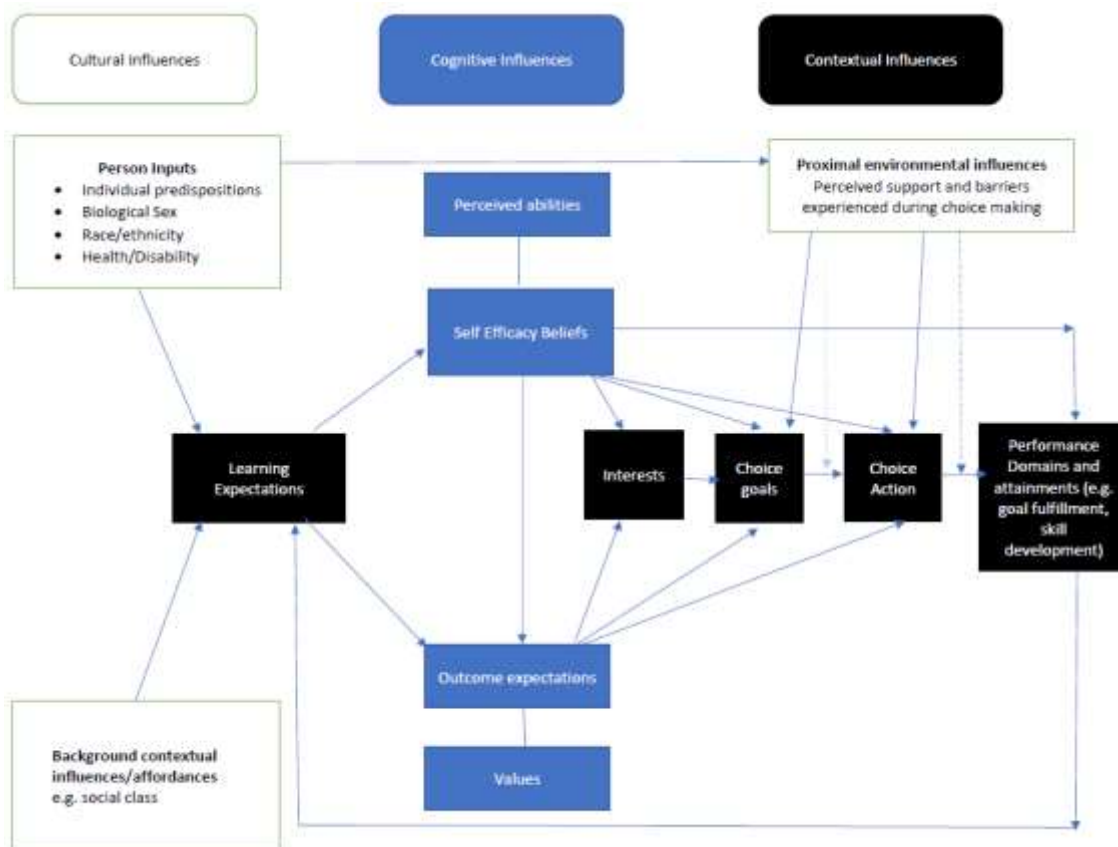


Figure 1

Model of person, contextual and experiential factors affecting career related choice behavior
(Lent, et al., 1994, p. 93)

According to Bandura (1998, p. 624), self-efficacy is an individual's perception or belief of their capability to "organize and execute courses of action required to produce given levels of attainments", or more simply an individual's confidence and level of ease they feel in their ability to perform certain behaviors (Bolkan, et al. 2021). Self-efficacy is central to human motivation and holds a core role in influencing behavior toward outcomes including the goals individuals set for themselves, the effort expended toward their goals, and the success in reaching identified goals (Bandura, 2004). Self-efficacy deals with one's belief in their ability to control their behaviors, motivations, and emotions.

Bolkan and colleagues (2021) indicated that while self-efficacy is a necessary component of academic success, this has been examined in the context of general goal attainment. A robust theory for goal attainment and self-efficacy is Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory. Social cognitive theory postulated that learning occurs in a social context with a dynamic and reciprocal interaction of the person, environment, and behavior. Research by Lent and colleagues (1994) have utilized this theory to examine academic success under the title of social cognitive theory of career and academic interest, choice, and performance, or SCCT (Social Cognitive Career Theory). Lent and colleagues (2000) believed that SCCT enables researchers to understand the process for how people form interests, navigate decision making, and achieve varying levels of success in educational and occupational pursuits.

SCCT proponents suggested that student's academic outcomes are a result of various contextual influences such as academic support systems (i.e., family and community members, local school resources, policies, and personnel) and their impact on cognitive variables that include self-efficacy, expected outcomes, and academic goals (Bolkan et al., 2021). As student achievement is affected by the context in which students pursue and receive their education,

Bolkan and colleagues (2021) contend that students are exposed to multiple environmental factors that impact their educational success. I found that deviations formed as the level and availability of educational resources, faculty support and encouragement, as well as support from peers, caregivers, and family members. Another proposition of SCCT is the individual cognitive reactions of students (2021). Supporters of SCCT argue that a student's experience with the environmental factors noted previously influences their beliefs of self-efficacy, expected outcomes, and academic goals (2021).

SCCT was viewed as a sound theoretical orientation for this research study as this theory incorporated an individual's self-belief about their ability to achieve their identified goals within the context of their personal and contextual background. Self-efficacy is at the core of human motivation and plays a key role in an individual's motivation (Bandura, 1986). As this study was centered on how dual enrollment processes were implemented in a public high school, SCCT provided a framework for understanding how school, family, community, and individual factors influenced a student's desire, motivation, and initiative to enroll and participate in a dual enrollment program. SCCT seeks to explain three interrelated aspects of an individual's career development as (1) how their basic academic and career interests develop, (2) how choices are made on one's education and career interests, and (3) how academic and career success is acquired (Lent et al., 2014). These aspects are all intertwined with individual and environmental factors described previously in this section. Lent and colleagues (2001) argued that individual cognitive reactions impact students' educational outcomes including coursework and career pathway selection, academic performance, and persistence. As I sought to understand factors that impacted students' academic decision making to enroll in a dual enrollment program, SCCT was appropriate to aid in identifying specific personal and environmental factors that dual enrollment

participants believed helped or hindered their self-efficacy through interviews. The following section will outline specific procedures that were carried out in this research study.

Research Design

Qualitative research is broad and seeks to utilize various methods for robust data collection (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Jacob & Ferguson, 2012). Qualitative researchers seek to “collect people’s life stories in order to study various aspects of the human experience” (Jacob & Ferguson, 2012, p. 1). Data may take on several forms, but research methodologists such as Creswell and Creswell (2018) believed data primarily falls into four categories being observations, interviews, documents, and audiovisual materials.

This model utilized a descriptive, single case study design guided by a qualitative method of inquiry centered on dual enrollment processes implemented by high school personnel and high school students’ experiences with dual enrollment processes to inform my understanding of how this phenomenon was carried out in a public high school in Georgia. This research design incorporated components such as research questions, theoretical propositions of social cognitive career theory, units of analysis, a model to link data to propositions, as well as criteria for interpreting findings (Yin, 2014). I explored how institutional processes influenced the educational decision making of underrepresented students who participated in dual enrollment while attending a large, comprehensive, public high school located in a suburb in the proximity of a large southeastern city.

Following recommendations by Creswell and Creswell (2018) I developed questions and procedures via a case study protocol before collecting data in the environment of participants. I then analyzed data inductively to develop specific details and points into general theory and finally render interpretations to make meaning of the data. I held an emic and etic perspective

positioning myself as both an insider and an outsider in this study (Johnson & Christensen, 2017; Suzuki, et al., 2007). I described how my presence impacted the study through participant observations and how his role impacted the selection of data, subsequent analysis, and reporting of findings. Any measures to minimize disruptions to the behavior of participants are described in the final report (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Johnson & Christensen, 2017). The following section will describe the research tradition selected for this research study.

Case Study

Case study research focuses on providing a detailed account of the characteristics and dynamics present in one or more cases (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). A rationale for a single-case design is when it represents the critical case in testing a well-formulated theory as an examination of an individual, group, event, phenomenon, or institution (Yin, 2014). I conceptualized the design as a single case study examining the phenomenon of how dual enrollment is implemented in a public high school setting and how institutional processes impacted underrepresented student experiences who participate in a dual enrollment program. Through examining institutional processes at a single high school, I learned from the perspectives of high school students who participated in dual enrollment and how these mandated processes affected their college and career aspirations through exploring their interests, goals, and beliefs on self-efficacy and behaviors to participate in dual enrollment. I also learned about how underrepresented high school students described their experiences with dual enrollment participation and how required institutional processes influenced academic decision making, goal development, and notions of academic success.

To carry out this study, I formulated a single case examination of a high school's dual enrollment program and institutional processes that existed within a system bounded by time,

space, and context to form a holistic, rich, thick description. Five participant interviews were conducted after the collection of documents and observations to be integrated to form a final report (see Case study design in **Figure 2**). When less depth is needed and when greater resources (i.e. documents and observations) are available, collective case studies of ten participants or fewer are common (Johnson & Christensen, 2017).

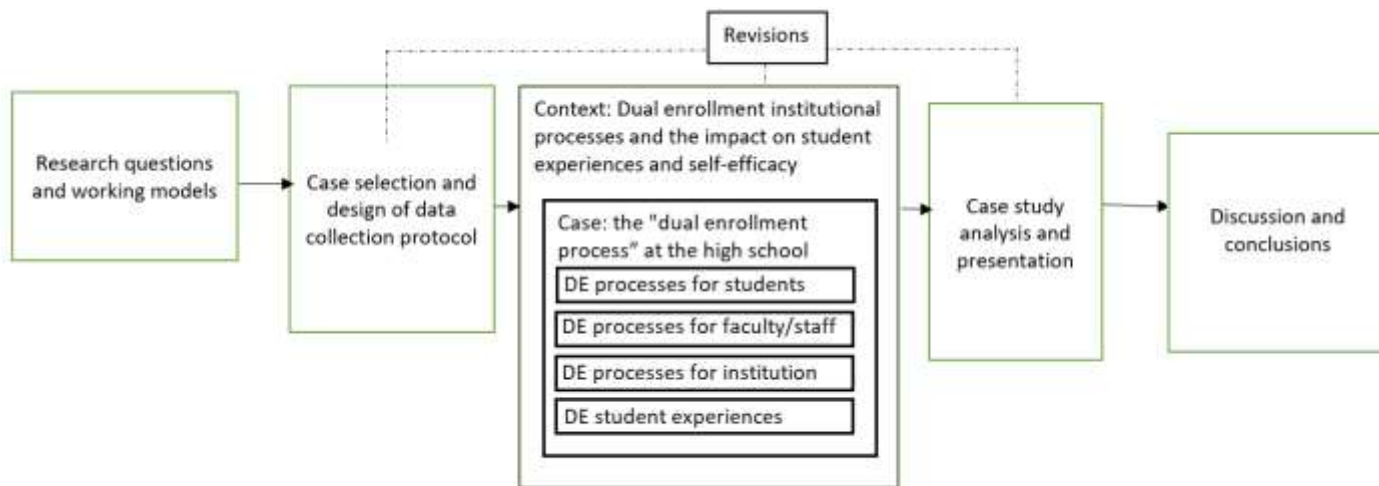


Figure 2

Case study design

This study explored the dual enrollment institutional processes and the impact they had on the experiences of high school students enrolling in a dual enrollment program using multiple data sources. A case study design was appropriate due to lines between how dual enrollment functioned within a high school (i.e. the phenomena of interest) and the impact on underrepresented student experiences and self-efficacy (i.e. context) were unclear. Research studies on dual enrollment supported the value of exploring the experiences of students who have participated (Felder, 2017; Jenkins, 2018; Karp & Jeong, 2008; Rankin Gonzalez, 2019). To maintain the case study model's integrity I conducted observations and collected interviews, documents, as well as participants' perspectives in their natural element, bounded by space and

time, and produce a research report that is thick and richly descriptive grounded in deep and various sources of information (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Merriam, 1988). The use of a bounded system was a deciding factor to adopt a case study model to examine the specific phenomenon of how dual enrollment processes are implemented in a public high school setting in the state of Georgia. Case studies are well suited to answer questions centered around how or why a process or phenomenon of interest occurs. As this study described how underrepresented students experience dual enrollment during the same time, space, and context, a case study design appropriately addressed the research questions. This single case study focused on units of analysis as the required processes for students to participate in dual enrollment, the required processes for high school faculty and staff members to implement dual enrollment, and the required processes for a public high school institution to carry out dual enrollment. An additional unit of analysis was dual enrollment high school student perspectives on their experience with dual enrollment processes and events. The following sections will provide a description of the research site and participants recruited for this study.

Site and Participant Description

As the researcher, I gained access to the educational institution where I was employed. This institution was a large comprehensive high school in a suburban area within proximity to a metropolitan southeastern city and two- and four-year college institutions offering dual enrollment programs to students. I submitted required documentation to the institutional review board (IRB) for the University of Georgia as well as the IRB of my school district of employment. Documentation submitted for IRB review included the following: an informed consent form (see appendix A), parent permission form (see appendix B), minor assent form (see appendix C), letter requesting permission to access the research site (see appendix D), case study

protocol (see Appendix E), participant demographic survey (see Appendix F), participant interview protocol (see Appendix G), observation guide (appendix H), participant recruitment flyer (Appendix I), and a reflection journal documentation template (see Appendix J).

Upon receiving IRB approval from both UGA and the school district of the research site I submitted a letter requesting permission to access participants to the local high school principal and the chair of the school counseling department at the proposed research site. Participants were selected via purposeful sampling. This method of recruitment centered on the selection of participants that had experience as current or previous participants in dual enrollment as a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Delimitations for participants were students currently enrolled in high school during the 2022 – 2023 academic school year and current or previous enrollment in a dual enrollment program through a public two- or four-year college institution during the 2021 – 2022 or 2022 – 2023 academic school year. Individuals who agreed to participate were concurrently enrolled in high school and at least one (1) course that was considered an eligible college course offered via a dual enrollment program. I recruited participants in traditional high school age groups (16 - 18) to learn about their insight around dual enrollment advisement and subsequent processes required to apply and enroll in a program of their choice. As this study was primarily interested in recruiting high school students from underrepresented groups, students enrolled at eligible private institutions offering dual enrollment were not included in this study.

Recommendations for participants were requested from the dual enrollment coordinators and school counselors employed at the proposed research site. Once recommendations were received, I contacted potential participants and their parents/caregivers via email requesting their participation with an informational letter and informed consent form explaining the key

procedures to be followed during the study. Informed consent forms and student assent forms outlined participants' rights to discontinue participation at any time and ethical obligations that I adhered to.

Research Questions

The research question guiding this study was, *How is dual enrollment implemented in a public high school setting?* The primary research question examined how dual enrollment was carried out in a public high school setting and how institutional processes impacted student experiences as participants in a dual enrollment program. I utilized a second research question to answer underlying elements of the primary research question. The secondary research question was, *How do underrepresented high school students describe their experience with dual enrollment?* The secondary research question examined how high school students who are traditionally underrepresented in dual enrollment programs in the state of Georgia described their experience with participating in a dual enrollment program. The second research question explored high school student's perceptions of their personal background, learning experiences, and environmental influences that influenced them to apply to, enroll, and participate in a two- or four-year institution's dual enrollment program in the state of Georgia. The second research question explored how students became aware of required dual enrollment institutional processes and how they acquired knowledge and skills to enroll in a two- or four-year college institution before graduating from high school. The research questions were addressed through a qualitative case study design using participant observations, interviews, and documents.

Data Collection

Yin (2014) identified six sources of evidence common to case study research as documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation, and

physical artifacts. Yin encouraged that “no single source has a complete advantage over all the others” and as various sources are complementary, the use of multiple evidence sources can bolster the credibility of findings (2014, p. 105). This research study utilized participant observations, interviews, and documents to provide multiple sources of evidence to corroborate findings and the credibility of the study.

Timeline

The timeline to conduct this study occurred between August – October 2022. In August 2022 I piloted the interview protocol with a former dual enrollment student who was eighteen years of age and had graduated from the proposed research site in May 2022. I conducted one pilot interview to refine procedures included within the interview protocol and my research skills (Yin, 2014) as well as receive feedback from individuals who participated in dual enrollment about the research protocol. After the completion of the pilot interview, the interview protocol was updated. The data collection began towards mid-August 2022 to coincide with the beginning of the 2022 – 2023 school year in the state of Georgia. A case study observational research (CSOR) model was utilized as the framework guiding data collection (see Figure 3) for this study. I initially collected observation data of staff and faculty members (i.e. school counselors, dual enrolment advisors, school registrar, scheduling administrator) engaged in dual enrollment coordinator trainings, dual enrollment advisement sessions, individual counseling, and counseling classroom lessons focused towards dual enrollment for approximately five weeks before conducting a preliminary analysis of evidence. This analysis was utilized to establish the analytic framework for a single wholistic case report of the proposed research site. Observations were collected during the delivery of dual enrollment advisement programs, individual counseling sessions with students, and consultative meetings between school counselors, dual

enrollment advisors, and other faculty and staff members at the research site during September and October 2022.

The collection period for non-observation data (i.e. documents and interviews) occurred from September 2022 through mid-October 2022 to allow sufficient time to collect documents as well as schedule and conduct the five (5) (7) interviews with high school dual enrollment students enrolled during the fall 2022 semester. Non-observation data was added to the descriptive case report so that all collected evidence could be integrated to generate specific themes that will be used to develop the overall findings in the final report. The procedures for collecting data are illustrated in Figure 4.

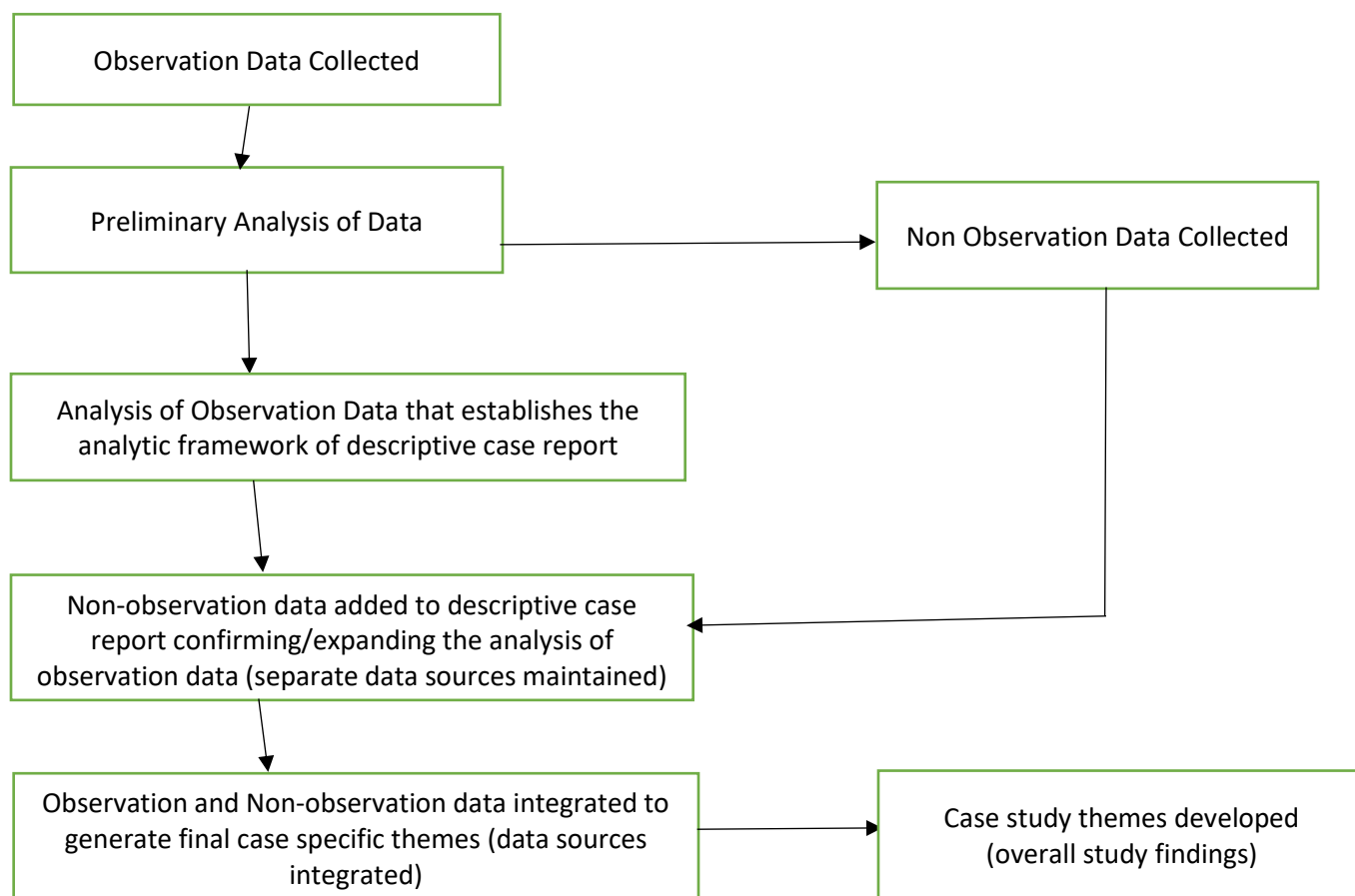


Figure 3

Graphic of data collection sequence (adapted from Morgan et al., 2017)

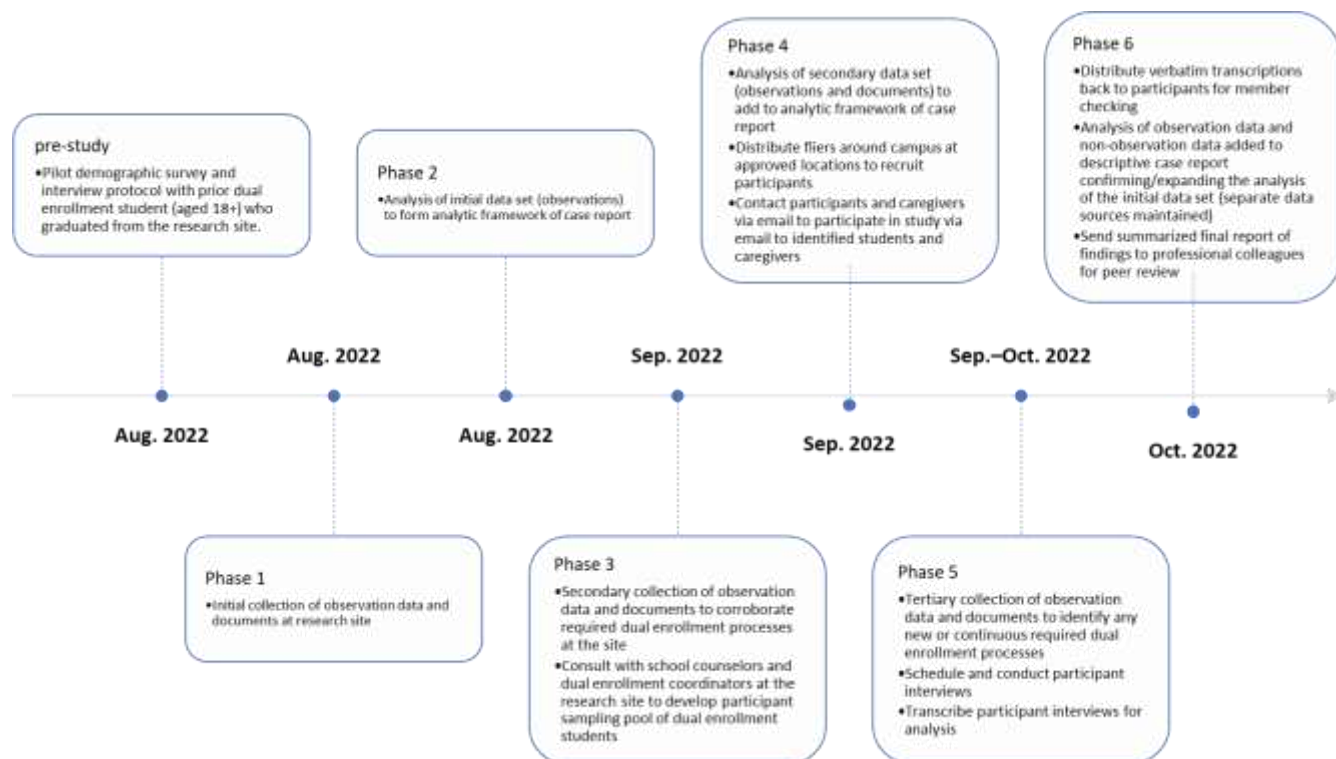


Figure 4

Data collection timeline

The study was approved by the Internal Review Board (IRB) of the school district in early August 2022. The district's IRB stipulated that an approved research study must commence on or after August 15 and be completed by December 1st of the semester. To follow IRB protocol for the school district and UGA, the initial phase of evidence collection commenced at the research site on August 26, 2022.

Participant observations

Participant observation is a special methodology that enabled me to move beyond passive observation and assume a variety of roles by participating in the actions being studied (Yin, 2014). Morgan and colleagues (2017) proposed that several models of case study research exist, each with a different emphasis for philosophical positions. In comparison to observation methods, non-observation (i.e., self-report) qualitative methods such as interviews and document

analysis are less challenging to undertake but may encounter participant reporting problems (2017). Observations allowed me to see what people (i.e. school counselors and students) do, rather than what they say they do. Morgan and colleagues (2017, p. 1061) held that “systematically observing people in their natural occurring context could reveal more information than individuals may recall, be aware of, choose to report, or decide what is relevant” in comparison to other data collection methods using self-report. The authors (2017) encouraged the analysis of observation data to establish the analytic framework of descriptive case reports.

To better understand how dual enrollment processes were enacted and how they specifically impacted high school student experiences within a dual enrollment program, I conducted a case study at the institution where I was employed to learn about required processes and interview students who previously or currently participated in dual enrollment. As the researcher, I was immersed in day-to-day activities at the proposed research site where I recorded conduct under the widest range possible. Armfield (2007) conducted a case study to create a detailed description around teaching and learning in the Technology Integrated Learning Environment (TILE) program using participant observations in conjunction with additional methods (i.e. interviews and a questionnaire). Armfield triangulated findings to determine the key individuals involved with planning learning activities, how learning was assessed, and the intended and actual roles of teachers and students in the TILE program. Observations were collected from teachers and students midway through observation periods to consider how the classroom climate impacted learning. Teachers were additionally asked about their role following the completion of observation days and how they specifically utilized technology to present information to their classes. Similar to Armfield’s study, I asked school counselors and

dual enrollment advisors at the research site how they specifically presented dual enrollment information to students and to verify their knowledge about this educational option.

A case study observational research (CSOR) was selected as the guiding framework (see Figure 3) for this study. CSOR focused on three primary features differentiating it from conventional case study research: (a) observation data was collected prior to and informed the subsequent collection of non-observation data, (b) observation data determined the analytic framework, and (c) observation data was explicitly referenced in the final report (Morgan et al, 2017). Once the collection process for non-observation data (i.e. documents and interviews) was completed, I added non-observation data to the descriptive case report to either confirm or expand the analysis of observation data (with separate data sources mentioned).

I gained experience collecting natural observations in educational settings through my professional experience and graduate coursework in qualitative research practices warranting my use of a CSOR framework. My familiarity with the routines and sensitivities of school environments and experience working within school counseling departments for the previous ten years yielded a unique vantage point to collect direct observations of informal staff and student interactions. I collected participant observation data during dual enrollment coordinator trainings, a dual enrollment summit offered by the research site of the district, consultative meetings with school faculty and staff members on dual enrollment, as well individual counseling meetings with students and parents at the proposed research site. Observational periods occurred in duration from fifteen minutes to greater than an hour depending on the observation activity. During observational periods, I announced verbally or provided written notification that I was a passive observer to form jottings and notes to make reflective summaries for analysis.

I collected observations of dual enrollment processes through trainings and school counseling consultative meetings for dual enrollment instruction and advisement (i.e. August 2022), dual enrollment information sessions offered at the proposed research site (i.e. September and October 2022), as well as individual counseling sessions about dual enrollment (i.e. September and October 2022). Collected observations were used to form reflective journal summaries (see Appendix J) that were documented in a reflective journal on institutional processes required for dual enrollment. The theoretical foundation of SCCT was used to examine how observations of required institutional processes (i.e., learning about and applying to dual enrollment) and events (i.e., dual enrollment advisement sessions and individual counseling meetings) were viewed by dual enrollment student participants from underrepresented groups to determine if and how they provided supports or barriers as viewed by participants. SCCT was used to identify specific characteristics of events and processes relating to dual enrollment for high school faculty and staff members to determine how they related to supports or barriers for students participating in dual enrollment.

This yielded a distinctive opportunity to perceive reality from the vantage point of being "inside" the case as opposed to external to it. Collecting and analyzing observational data enabled me to corroborate specific institutional processes required to apply to and participate in a dual enrollment program. Observational evidence aided me to answer the study's primary research question, *How is dual enrollment implemented in a public high school setting?* Observational evidence was analyzed in conjunction with documents and responses from interviews to answer the second research question, *How do underrepresented high school students describe their experience with dual enrollment?*, to identify specific observational data

that corroborated institutional processes that participants identified as a support or barrier towards enrolling in a dual enrollment program.

Following recommendations by Hancock and Algozzine (2006), I used an observation guide (see Appendix I) that outlined features to be addressed during observations. When making observations, I formed a list to include the time and date, location/setting of observation, names and positions of individuals being observed, specific activities and events related to the research questions, and initial impressions and interpretations of activities. I initially recorded observations as handwritten detailed verbatim field notes with time markers. Collected notes were supplemented with post-observation summaries that were generated immediately following the period of observation. Summaries included my reflections through the use of a reflective journal guide to capture my feelings, actions, and responses to the situations observed. Field notes and reflective journal entries were circulated back to the school counselors and dual enrollment coordinators employed at the proposed research site for review, who did not add their own comments and observations. Reflective summaries helped determine if interview questions needed to be amended to better capture dual enrollment participant perspectives.

Following the preliminary collection of observations, I requested recommendations from members of the school counseling department at the proposed research site to identify students who met the criteria for participation. These recommendations determined the pool of participants via purposeful sampling. This information was further outlined by internal local school documents (i.e. current and prior semester dual enrollment student rosters, dual enrollment participation agreements) that identified students who were enrolled in both their local high school and an eligible public two- or four-year college institution offering dual enrollment. I also requested for school counseling staff members and dual enrollment advisors at

the research site to review the interview protocol and participant demographic survey to refine the interview protocol and questions before student participants were recruited.

Observations were conducted in varying settings at the selected research site's campus from late August until mid-October 2022. I conducted observations within the school counseling department, cafeteria, classrooms, gymnasium, and media center of the research site. Field notes and reflective summaries indicated that observations of the school counselor and dual enrollment advisor consultations occurred at the highest frequency during the initial phase of data collection. Observed consultations occurred in person, virtually via video conferencing software (i.e., Microsoft TEAMS), email, and phone. Reflective summaries described the perspectives of the dual enrollment advisors which detailed dual enrollment processes consuming a great deal of school counselors' time and energy on a regular and ongoing basis.

Reflective journal entries from observations during the second period of data collection centered on my participation in a district level dual enrollment summit, dual enrollment advisement sessions provided at the research site, individual counseling sessions focused on dual enrollment participation and ongoing consultation with school counselors and dual enrollment advisors on student interest and eligibility for dual enrollment programs. Observation data from the tertiary and final weeks of data collection described findings from a dual enrollment advisement session in addition to individual counseling sessions with students and parents/caregivers on dual enrollment participation, and consultation with school counselors and dual enrollment advisors on student eligibility for dual enrollment. Table 1 depicts observations collected during the primary, secondary, tertiary, and final period of this qualitative case study.

Data Collection Period	Observed events of required processes	Documents
Primary	DE coordinator/school counselor trainings (state and local) Counseling consultations	Website review Handouts from trainings
Secondary	District DE Summit DE advisement sessions Individual counseling on dual enrollment Counseling consultations	Presentations from district DE summit and research site DE advisement sessions; field notes and reflective summaries on DE advisement sessions, individual counseling, and consultations
Tertiary	DE advisement sessions Individual counseling on dual enrollment Counseling consultations	field notes and reflective summaries on DE advisement sessions, individual counseling, and consultations
Final	DE advisement sessions Individual counseling on dual enrollment Counseling consultations	field notes and reflective summaries on DE advisement sessions, individual counseling, and consultations

Table 1*Data collection outline***Interviews**

Yin (2014) identified interviews as an essential source of case study evidence that elucidates human affairs or actions. Interviews in this study were anticipated to resemble guided conversations utilizing a fluid approach as opposed to a structured query with rigid questions. Dissertational studies by Jenkins (2018), Raia Taylor (2012), and Rankin Gonzalez (2018) each used interviews as a primary tool to collect participant perspectives and experiences on their previous participation in a dual enrollment program. Rankin Gonzalez (2018) specifically examined how community college students felt their experience in dual enrollment influenced their belief in their ability to be successful in college as well as their desire and motivation to attend college. Rankin Gonzalez (2018) employed purposeful sampling to recruit participants due to the unique learning experiences of dual enrollment students which encouraged me to adopt a similar sampling method. Athanases and colleagues (2016) conducted a critical case

study using interviews at a single high school in California to determine how a school wide college going culture was enacted, and by whom, in the support of developing Latinx students' college aspirations. The authors collected over 40 hours of transcribed interviews with a range of participants (i.e. school leaders, teachers, counselors, parents, and students) to develop themes in triangulation with other data including classroom observations, annotated field notes, and student work samples. The authors triangulated collected evidence to further refine themes through the use of summary reflections from observational data (2016).

To address the research question, *How do underrepresented high school students describe their experience with dual enrollment?*, I conducted participant interviews to examine high school students' rationale for participating in a dual enrollment program before graduating from high school. Interviews are a validated method to collect students' voices and perspectives to form units of analysis to be coded and developed into themes to present findings for interpretation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2014). Felder (2017) and Karp (2011) identified gaps in the literature regarding how high school students navigate access to institutions offering dual enrollment programs and their unique lived experiences. Interview data addressed how students perceived services available within their high school that helped or hindered their path to participation in dual enrollment programs. Information on participants' experiences with dual enrollment from interview data was a unit of analysis integrated in the case study final report. Prior to participating in an audiotaped interview, participants were asked to complete a student demographic survey (see Appendix D).

Participants were asked to report information about their identified racial/ethnic group, parent/caregiver's level of education, and perceived household income in an online demographic survey. In anticipation of this survey question's potential to cause some discomfort the selection

Prefer not to respond was added to these survey items. I requested permission via informed consent forms for parents and assent forms for students to use the demographic survey to confirm processes to enroll and matriculate through a dual enrollment program.

I followed two primary objectives throughout the interview process as following the line of inquiry as reflected in the interview protocol (see Appendix F) and conversationally posing questions to serve the needs of the line of inquiry. Interview questions were structured enough to ensure I gathered the data relevant to the research questions, yet flexible enough to explore unanticipated topics or themes that emerge during the interview process. Following recommendations presented by Creswell and Creswell (2018), Merriam (1998), and Yin (2014), I audio recorded interviews to capture a verbatim account which allowed for greater engagement in the interview and ensure accurate data collection of participants statements. I conducted five (5) semi-structured participant interviews that lasted between 45 – 60 minutes with specifically worded open-ended questions to enhance data collection measures. Each interview informed my understanding of the case, which was how dual enrollment processes were enacted in a public high school, and were transcribed for analysis. Interview questions stemmed from research literature (Kanny, 2012; Karp, 2012), the study's research questions, and data collected via participant observations. The goal was to elicit responses about participants' experiences with dual enrollment and how their personal and environmental factors influenced their decision making to apply and enroll in a two- or four-year institution's dual enrollment program.

Interviews were scheduled and took place virtually through a video teleconferencing software program (i.e. Microsoft Teams). Following precautions presented by Yin (2014, p. 112), I took steps to minimize “the methodological threat created by the conversational nature of the interview”. This awareness was necessary as it helped me to be cognizant of mutual and

subtle influences between myself and the interviewee as this reflexivity may unknowingly have influenced the line of inquiry.

Semi-structured interviews were ideal to provide a system that enabled participants to provide insight into other areas based on their previous accounts and experiences (Oxley, 2016; Ryan et al., 2009; Yin, 2014). The interview protocol included a script for the initial and concluding portions of the interviews as well as prompts for collecting informed consent and information pertinent to the study. To maintain a successful interview protocol I employed strategies such as asking open-ended questions that were expansive and arranging questions in order from probes that were least difficult to more contentious over the course of the interview (Jacob & Ferguson, 2012). I also left space in interviews for “on the spot” revisions in the interview protocol as some moments may lead to deeper probes with participants (2012). Following recommendations from Creswell and Creswell (2018), this study used an emergent design discouraging the use of a tightly prescribed plan.

Participant recruitment

Prior to selecting student participants, I requested a roster of high school students enrolled in a post-secondary institution’s dual enrollment program from the dual enrollment advisors. I also consulted with school counselors at the research site for names of any students who may be open to sharing their experiences with dual enrollment. To advertise for the study, I requested to make classroom visits to two dual enrollment courses offered on campus at the research site, one senior AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination) class, one AP US Government class, and two dual enrollment courses delivered at the research site. I distributed flyers advertising the research study (see Appendix I) in classrooms as well as the lobby of the school counseling department. In the fourth week of the study I began the recruitment process for

student participants. Any students that met the research criteria and expressed interest in participating were given a printed copy of the dual enrollment consent forms (see Appendix A, B, and C).

Reflective summaries of observed conversations with dual enrollment advisors and school counselors at the research site documented encouragement for me to recruit students who attended different post-secondary institutions. Specific dual enrollment programs that students enrolled in via the research site included a distance learning advanced math program through a four-year public USG research institution, a four-year public USG comprehensive institution, and two courses offered on campus through a two-year public TCSG institution. The two courses offered on campus via the TCSG institution included a certified nursing patient care program in its fifth year and a dual enrollment U.S. Government class being offered on campus in its first term.

Each dual enrollment program option varied on credit-bearing course type (i.e., core academic course or career technical education) and admissions requirements via institution. The distance learning math course was offered online asynchronously by a USG university and applicants could only be admitted for the fall semester during the preceding summer application window (May 15 – June 15). Potential students needed to take specific math coursework (i.e., AP Calculus BC) and receive a specific test score on an AP exam (i.e., 4 or 5) to meet the admission standard for dual enrollment at the flagship university. The nursing patient care course offered by a TCSG institution had two prerequisite healthcare science courses in a CTAE (career technical agricultural education) pathway that was required before applying by the high school that students had to complete as a prerequisite. The US Government course offered by a TCSG

institution was available to students meeting the eligibility requirements for a core (i.e., academic) dual enrollment course.

Participant demographic profile

I initially recruited twelve high school students enrolled in a Georgia post-secondary institution's dual enrollment program during the fall 2022 semester to serve as participants in this study. Seven students were unable to participate either due to their current school workload, scheduling conflicts, or failure to return the required consent forms to participate back by the end of September. Five individuals made up the sample of participants as high school dual enrollment students enrolled at the research site (see Table 2). Students had to meet the following criteria to participate: current enrollment in the high school selected as the research site during school year (SY) 2022 – 2023; current enrollment as an eleventh- or twelfth-grade student during SY2023; current or previous enrollment in a dual enrollment program during SY2022 and/or SY2023; and identification by a CCSD dual enrollment coordinator as having completed all required processes to enroll and matriculate to a dual enrollment program during SY2022 and/or SY2023. High school students participating in dual enrollment were specifically sought after due to there being a lack of scholarship centered on the experiences of current high school students participating in a dual enrollment program.

Participant	Grade	Gender/Ethnicity	Institution	Enrollment status
#1	11	Male/African American	2 yr (technical college)	First term; part time
#2	12	Male/ Asian American	4 yr research university	First term; part time
#3	12	Female/ Asian American	4 yr research university	Third term; part time
#4	11	Female/ Asian American	2 yr (technical college); 4 yr comprehensive university	First term; part time
#5	12	Male/ African American	2 yr (technical college)	First term; part time

Table 2

Interview participant profile summary

Student participants were purposefully sampled to represent a racially diverse group as possible. The sample of students from the research site was recommended by school counseling colleagues, dual enrollment advisors, and teaching faculty members. The dual enrollment high school students who agreed to participate identified as Black/African American, Chinese, Indian, and Japanese. There were three males and two females in the sample with three participants being enrolled in twelfth grade and two students enrolled in eleventh grade. Participant data were collected in Table 3. The information provided verified that the participants met the criteria for the study.

Documents

Organizational and institutional documents are a staple of qualitative research that help provide a context where research participants operate (Bowen, 2009). Information contained in documents can suggest questions that need to be asked and situations that need to be observed in greater detail. Yim and colleagues (2016) conducted a case study to determine how *Google Docs* was integrated into middle-school literature classrooms in a school district through its laptop initiative. The authors' study utilized student documents, interviews, surveys, and classroom observations to develop initial coding and thematic coding methods for analysis. Document analysis of students' writing on *Google Docs* revealed students engaged more time revising their documents than they spent in the initial drafting of a single-authored document (2016). Similar to Athanases and colleagues' 2016 study, Yim, Warschauer, and Zheng (2016) utilized documents along with descriptive analysis of survey data and students' feedback patterns to triangulate findings into themes to examine the affordances of writing using cloud based technologies. I utilized documents along with other collected evidence to bolster the triangulation of data in a parallel fashion.

To address the primary research question, *How is dual enrollment implemented in a public high school setting?*, I collected observations and documents to corroborate institutional processes that were required for students to apply to and enroll in a dual enrollment program. I collected documents at the research site in the form of emails, administrative documents, academic records, and public domain websites about dual enrollment. Collected documents were used to provide background and context of participants' academic history, identify additional questions to be asked during interviews, form supplementary data, and serve as verification of findings from other data sources being observations and interviews (2009).

Documents in this study were utilized to yield specific details and augment evidence from other sources (Yin, 2014) to aid with the verification of titles, names, individuals, and institutions described during participant interviews. The final report addressed how documents confirmed how students learned about dual enrollment requirements and program options via internal school communication (emails), administrative files (dual enrollment student rosters, participation agreements, student advising plans, funding agreement contracts), and electronic public domain documents from the proposed research site's institutional website.

Document Review

The initial collection of documents for the study came from online web resources provided by the research site, school district, and the Georgia Student Finance Commission. Documents were collected to corroborate specific information collected with observation data. Collected internet documents were accessed virtually as public domain documents.

Documents aided in the corroboration of observation data as well as narrative data from interviews. Documents were collected throughout the course of the research study and supported evidence collected from observations of dual enrollment coordinator trainings at the state level,

information provided at the district level dual enrollment summits, dual enrollment advisement sessions offered at the research site, counseling sessions, and professional consultations between school counselors and dual enrollment advisors.

Data Analysis

I adopted a case study design to yield a final product that is a “rich” thick description of the phenomenon under study (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Merriam, 1988). A final report was developed to form a complete, literal, description of the phenomenon being investigated. My analysis interpreted the meaning of demographic and descriptive data relative to the cultural norms, community values, and deep-rooted attitudes of participants (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). The heuristic quality of this case study seeks to illuminate readers' understanding of the phenomenon being investigated and bring new meaning to extend readers' experience or confirm what is known about dual enrolment processes in a high school setting (Merriam, 1988). This case study relied on inductive reasoning arising from generalizations, hypotheses, and concepts developed from examining data that is grounded in context (1988).

The initial data analysis stemmed from the observation data as a stand-alone data set, which informed interview questions and educational documents to be collected. Once the data collection process had been concluded, I reviewed and analyzed all sources of evidence together to integrate the total collection of observational data (field notes and reflective summaries) and non-observation (self-report) data (documents and interviews) so that independently collected sources of data could form findings for the case (Yin, 2014; Morgan et al., 2017).

Document analysis involved skimming as a superficial examination, reading as a more thorough examination, and interpretation through an iterative process that combined elements of content analysis and thematic analysis (Bowen, 2009). I utilized observation data (i.e. field notes

and reflective journal summaries via observation guide reports,) and documents that were collected to corroborate processes required for students to apply to and enroll in a dual enrollment program at a two- or four-year institution while concurrently attending a Georgia public high school. I demonstrated sensitivity and outlined how his subjectivity influenced the selection and analysis of data from documents. This took place through offering a fair representation of research material as well as responding to even subtle cues to meaning.

I applied Lent et al.'s (2000) SCCT model to observations of required dual enrollment processes for students and high school personnel at the research site to analyze this phenomenon as a contextual influence on students' educational experience. I analyzed participant statements with tenets of SCCT to examine how student experiences with dual enrollment impact their notion of self-efficacy and goal attainment via their learning, behaviors, interests, goals, actions, and outcomes.

Interview transcription

I audio recorded and transcribed all participant interviews using an online data encrypted transcription software before listening and reading along to verify the accuracy of participants' statements. Manual coding and data analysis software (i.e., Microsoft Excel) was used to organize thematic categories and develop a summary of collected evidence. My goal for utilizing transcribing software was to strengthen the accuracy of the transcription process. Interview transcripts underwent a systematic process of reading and rereading, reflection, identification, description, clarification, interpretation, and contextualization (Oxley, 2016; Smith, 2004).

To effectively summarize and interpret the information that had been gathered, I adhered to the guidelines recommended by Hancock and Algozzine (2006). This entailed ongoing refinement of the study's fundamental research questions as well as maintaining a constant focus

on the research questions under investigation (2006). I primarily collected and interpreted only data that held potential meaning to the research effort (2006). I developed a method for labeling, storing, and gaining access to information acquired during the research effort through a case study database. To adhere to this guideline, all pieces of information were labeled to include the date, location, persons involved, and circumstances surrounding the collection of that piece of information. The incorporation of a sound data management system bolstered my ability to interpret the large amount of information that may accumulate over the course of the study.

Following the completion of each participant interview, I then transcribed the audio taped interview to later be read and coded for thematic analysis. I listened to the interview tape and wrote notes and memos on the interview transcription document to develop tentative ideas about categories and relationships. The content of participant interviews was analyzed with in vivo coding. This analysis derived codes directly from the language and terminology used by participants, in contrast to alternative methods where codes are researcher-derived (Johnson & Christensen, 2017; Maxwell, 2013). In vivo coding centered on the words and actions of participants and aided me to attain a more in depth understanding of the direct stories, meanings, actions, events, and ideas expressed by research participants during semi-structured interviews (Maxwell, 2013). My use of in vivo coding increased the validity of data analysis, decreased potential researcher bias, and enabled greater transparency via the accurate representation of participants' statements.

Inductive coding was utilized for document analysis supplementary to other research methods employed (i.e. participant observations, interviews) in the study. Inductive codes developed from the review of interview transcripts were applied to the content of documents. Following a first round pass of coding interview data, I identified participant statements to form

initial codes that later generated categories from focused coding. Categories were used to develop subsequent themes that were generated to integrate (observational and non-observational) data gathered by different methods of content and thematic analysis.

Content analysis involved me organizing information into categories from focused coding related to the central questions of the research study. I underwent a first-pass document review, where meaningful and relevant passages of text or other data were identified for later use. Thematic analysis involved me forming patterns of recognition within the data, with emerging themes that later become the categories for analysis (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Thematic analysis of transcribed interviews, documents, and participant observations called for undergoing a thorough and more focused re-reading and review of all collected data. The review process involved me taking a closer look at selected data to perform initial and focused coding to construct categories, based on the data's specific characteristics, to uncover themes pertinent to the phenomenon under investigation.

Sources of collected evidence were maximized by following four principles of data collection presented by Yin (2014). These principles assisted with establishing the construct validity and reliability of the evidence. I used multiple sources of evidence, created a case study database, maintained a chain of evidence to increase reliability, and exercised care with data from electronic sources. One of the greatest advantages of triangulating multiple sources of data was the development of "converging lines of inquiry" (Yin, 2014, p. 120). Successful triangulation of data allowed for findings to be supported by several sources of evidence. Through the development of convergent evidence, data triangulation strengthened the construct validity of this study as multiple evidence sources provided an array of measures on the same phenomenon (Yin, 2014).

I created a case study database to organize and document the sources of data collected (Yin, 2014). Documentation fell primarily into two collections as the data and the report (2014). The case study database was a separate and orderly compilation of all data and included observational and non-observational information including documents and other materials collected from the research to increase this study's reliability. The database included field notes (verbal and written memos regarding interviews, observations recorded as reflective journal summaries, and document analysis), case study documents (to be available for later inspection or perusal) tabular materials (i.e. participant survey and quantitative data from academic transcripts) and narrative compilations that arose over the course of the study.

Following recommendations by Yin (2014), I maintained a chain of evidence to increase the reliability of the information presented in this study. This principle of data collection called for an external observer "to follow the derivation of any evidence from initial research questions to ultimate case study conclusions" (Yin, 2014, p. 127). An external observer was able to trace steps presented in either direction with no original evidence lost so any data source can receive appropriate attention in considering the findings in a case study. I also exercised care when using data from electronic sources. This took shape as setting boundaries on the amount of time given and cross checking electronic sources and any information derived from them (Yin, 2014).

Participant validation of interviews

Lewis and Ritchie (2003) stated the validity of findings is understood about the correctness or precision of the research reading. Validity in the context of this case study referred to interpretation, representation, and understanding. I sought to accurately reflect the views and thus wanted to clarify for the dual enrollment student participants that the verbatim transcripts reflected their views in full. The participants and their parent/caregiver were presented with a

digital copy of their verbatim transcript in mid-October via email and print hard copy. Participants were notified that they had the opportunity to add, delete, or change their transcription until November 2022. In addition, students had the opportunity to meet with me if they sought clarification on any part of their interview transcript. As of the completion of this report, no participants requested an amendment to their transcript or a follow up meeting.

Research Credibility

To ensure the validity of this study, I followed the guidance of Guba and Lincoln's (2005) criteria for developing trustworthiness within a qualitative inquiry. The four criteria are identified as credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. I enhanced the internal validity of the study using strategies recommended by Merriam (1988) which included the triangulation of data, member checks, short-term observation, peer examination, and bias declaration. The study adopted the data triangulation technique by using a combination of data sources with the effect that the strengths and weaknesses in each source were compensated when used together.

The credibility of this study was reflected by way of research methods (i.e., observations, interviews, and documentation) that are well established in a qualitative investigation. Credibility was established by collecting interview data that was cross referenced with observations and documents to determine if interview responses support the research questions. Triangulation of data was generated from collected observations, documents, and participant interviews to be integrated in a final case study analysis of the institution proposed as the research site. Use of observations and documents that supported institutional processes for how students learn about and engage in dual enrollment were used to strengthen the credibility and integrity of this study.

Member checks referred to processes where I “checked in” with participants during this qualitative study to allow sharing interpretations to clear up any miscommunication and assure accuracy (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Participants were requested to review an emailed transcript of their interview and send comments and corrections to me. I additionally shared narrative statements from transcribed interviews along with the final research report with school counseling staff members, dual enrollment advisors, and the principal at the research site to increase the credibility of the study.

The dependability and confirmability of the study were entailed through a clear, step-by-step process that was undertaken. To establish the confirmability of findings via a detailed methodological description of the process I engaged in an audit trail. The audit trail took shape as a transparent description of the research steps taken through decisions and procedures from the onset of the research study to the development and reporting of findings (Shenton, 2004). An audit trail allowed others to examine my records regarding what was done during the investigation to ensure that any findings are consistent and can be repeated in another study.

To establish credibility for information analysis I engaged in uncovering biases that could skew my perspective through use of a reflective journal and sharing completed transcriptions with participants to enhance accuracy. Following recommendations provided by Wall and colleagues (2004), I employed the use of a reflective journal to help identify areas of potential researcher bias to minimize my influence. Journaling was implemented to record my biases, prior knowledge, and reactions during the study. Reflexivity was a key activity to assist my identification of potential influences that entered the research process (Primeau, 2003). While conducting data analysis, I separated observation and non-observation data into units, that were grouped in common category headings, to be analyzed, and summarized. The credibility of

subcategories were established by testing them with new information units until all relevant information has been assigned to a category. Through this approach, common codes were identified and differences between participants' interview responses were noted. Transferability is the magnitude to which the research findings may be generalized to another setting similar to the proposed site in this study (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). A thick description of the case study through a final research report will aid other researchers in the application of this study to other contexts, circumstances, and situations similar research endeavors.

Subjectivities

I acknowledged my role in this study introduces personal biases and will put protective measures in place to establish a quality case study. Prior to engaging in a doctoral program in counselor education, I served as a full time professional school counselor in the Atlanta metropolitan area since 2010. I identify as a first-generation American cisgender Black male whose parents immigrated to the United States from Jamaica. At the time of this study, I held a master's and educational specialist degree in school counseling from a public university in the southeast.

My cultural identity enabled me to understand the educational and social barriers encountered by students whose parents attended school outside of the United States. My primary and secondary school experiences were influenced by a need and desire to help his parents understand and navigate educational systems that were unfamiliar to them. Following the completion of my bachelor's degree, I served as a substitute teacher which developed my aspirations to become a school counselor through speaking with students about their educational and career aspirations.

As a school counselor, I seek to use my privilege and institutional power to remove barriers to learning for students. This takes shape as assisting individuals encountered in my work using the tenets of servant leadership to develop an organizational culture with humility and respect that values the opinions of all members and enhances the lives of students (Keith, 2019). A primary belief system that guides my service to others is my counseling orientation. This primarily aligned with a theoretical focus on humanism and existentialism with the belief that all individuals have the potential to thrive in society given they receive the appropriate environmental resources to do so. I view individuals as free agents in determining what is important for them to succeed and achieve happiness throughout their lifespan.

As a school counselor, I hold the belief that all students should be allowed to learn in a manner best suited to their unique needs and personal background. As a first generation doctoral student without an identified family member who has attempted a Ph.D. program I acknowledged my feelings of trepidation, anxiety, and isolation that stems from being the only member in one's family to pursue a doctoral degree program. For this reason, working with students who are the first in their family to earn a high school diploma and attend college has encouraged me to develop systemic school wide interventions to enable all students to foster college aspirations as well as knowledge and skills that help them successfully matriculate to a two- or four-year institution following graduation.

My interest in dual enrollment stems from serving previously as a dual enrollment coordinator and working with students and families on dual enrollment requirements and pathway options available to them. Working with first generation students and students from low-income families who have enrolled in dual enrollment programs in Georgia has positively influenced my outlook to use this mechanism as an accessible and affordable pathway to college.

I had unique access as an employed faculty member at the proposed research site to potential participants and documents as well as practices and operations conducted by the school counseling department. My access allowed me to utilize roles as a faculty member in an organizational setting as well as a key decision maker in school counseling department operations. I was aware of specific challenges my role posed as a part of the study such as (1) biases produced from not being a passive, external researcher and (2) following a common phenomenon of supporting students and the institution under investigation as a school counselor. My role as a faculty member at the proposed research site positioned me as both an instrument and an evaluator. My thoughts, opinions, and biases influenced methods for locating and selecting participants, collecting data, and interpreting the responses of participants. I conducted a case study at his current place of employment due to my interest in school counseling services, a desire to learn about students college aspirations, and to better understand how the school's college going culture impacted underrepresented students. These topics were tied to college access and dual enrollment as well as prior professional experiences as a dual enrollment coordinator and training a former colleague to serve in that capacity. The following section will outline how I established measures for trustworthiness and credibility with participants.

Establishing Trustworthiness

As a faculty member employed at the proposed research site, I took the following actions to establish trustworthiness for the study:

- (1) sharing the research questions and interview protocol with any potential student participants, caregivers for participants under the age of 18, as well as the site's high school principal and dual enrollment coordinators,
- (2) sharing transcribed interviews with participants for member checking,

(3) employing validation techniques through member checking and sharing potential themes with school counseling colleagues to verify the accuracy of the information,

(4) engaging professional peers (i.e., school counselors and dual enrollment coordinators) to review collected evidence and analysis of the final report.

I provided explanations of his relationships within the research site and personal biases brought to the setting (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). The final report conveyed how my role as a school counseling staff member impacted my biases, values, and experiences within participant observations. These were recorded as field notes and summarized reflective journal entries to be integrated with the final data analysis.

Reporting Findings

The final report employed quotes from participants, anecdotes, prose composed from interviews, as well as other literary techniques to further develop the complex stories with other variables inherent to the phenomenon of interest. The final report related back to the nature of research questions asked. This took shape as a holistic intensive description of how a public high school implemented processes for dual enrollment and how these subsequently impacted the experiences of underrepresented students who participated in dual enrollment programs.

My goal in composing the final report was to synthesize disparate pieces of information acquired throughout the research process to identify and report meaningful findings via thematic analysis, a process well suited for the novice researcher (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). This analytic strategy entails each new piece of information to be examined within a particular research question and construct a *tentative answer* to the question. As tentative answers became available I categorized them into subthemes that formed themes. This process continued until a point of saturation was reached and any emergent themes were thoroughly supported by all

available information. The saturation of the collected information required me to exhaust all information gathered in the study that was relevant to the research questions under investigation (2006).

Over the course of this study I thoroughly reviewed information from all possible sources to develop themes. The themes that supported tentative answers resulted from the predominant information were retained and reported with the findings. The specific information supporting themes that addressed the research questions are outlined in the following chapter (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). The themes that were identified were comparably complex and reflected similar magnitude from participants responses (2006).

Writing the report

The report for this research study articulated events, situations, and activities about required institutional processes for implementing dual enrollment in a public high school in the state of Georgia. I included literature presented in chapter two relating to the topic under investigation and how it informed the research in the final report (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). The final research report was richly descriptive and included findings from field notes, reflective journal summaries, documents as well as participants' key statements to elucidate significant findings. I also articulated strategies that were implemented to interpret, report, and confirm the case study's findings.

A primary characteristic of reporting findings is a "repetitive, continual review of obtained information to identify answers to questions being investigated" (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, p. 62). The identification of themes and subthemes involved me following a procedural path that concluded in a collection of parallel findings that represented the results of the investigation (2006). I composed a final case study research report to reflect all aspects of the

investigative process through integrating sections of texts and illustrative tables to reduce the wealth of available information into meaningful units for confirmation and dissemination (2006).

Confirming the report

To verify findings developed from the analysis of evidence, I shared results with participants who were interviewed. This helped bolster my intent to maintain an ethical obligation to participants who consented to take part in the study. A goal of soliciting feedback from the participants being studied was to gather their perceptions of the credibility of findings based on information that was previously provided by the participants themselves (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). Another strategy I implemented was allowing other individuals (i.e. the principal, dual enrollment advisors, and school counselors at the proposed research site) who were familiar with the goals and procedures of the study to review the final report. Lastly, I sought the assistance of other doctoral students enrolled at the University of Georgia to review collected evidence for data analysis. I recruited a peer review team to enhance the validity, quality, and originality of the research findings. As dual enrollment processes are traditionally carried out via school counseling practitioners, I sought feedback from professional peers within my school and professional network. Two school counselors outside of my school who were also enrolled in a Ph.D. counselor educator program helped to review the findings.

Following recommendations provided by Hancock and Algozzine (2006), I approached external individuals to systematically and thoroughly critique the case study's procedures and findings so that any discrepancies that potentially diminish the credibility of the research effort may be identified. I solicited scrutiny of the final report from experts within my network (i.e. high school counselors, high school dual enrollment coordinators, and dual enrollment advising

personnel employed within the school district office) on the topic under investigation to verify findings.

I articulated any personal biases brought to the situation and outlined any attempts to mitigate the potential effects of those biases as recommended by Hancock and Algozzine (2006). I provided acknowledgment of my biases via a subjectivity statement and offered a rationale for how I sought to limit the impact of my biases from influencing the research process and findings. This was done with the desire to diminish the likelihood of producing contrived findings.

Peer review of findings

To increase the validity of the findings of the study, I solicited the feedback of school counseling colleagues as a peer review team. Five school counselors across three schools (including the research site) agreed to provide a critique of the findings. Each counseling practitioner had a minimum of five (5) years as a dual enrollment advisor. I sent an initial document of identified findings believed to align with the required processes for dual enrollment in a public high school. Peer review team members were encouraged to offer feedback regarding identified processes for dual enrollment and to add, delete, or correct any initial findings. Peer review team members were provided a two week window to review findings and offer feedback for any changes following the completion of the data collection period. Peer review feedback supported the agreement with findings and that it was worthwhile to include students who participated in dual enrollment to share their experiences in future advisement sessions. This feedback was offered to enhance students' and parents' understanding of the processes required for dual enrollment and provide more opportunities to ask questions about students' experiences with applying and navigating their program.

Confidentiality

A primary objective in conducting this study was to maintain the protection of participants through fair and ethical treatment. Participants were requested to take part in this study via an informed consent form, parent permission form, and student assent form to be signed. These forms provided a written explanation of the study sent to the student and their parent/caregiver acknowledging participation was voluntary and that participants could discontinue at any time without penalty or retribution. As this study included human participants, any concerns of risks to participants and potential vulnerabilities were be addressed through the informed consent form (Sieber & Tolich, 2013). I ensured the study addressed ethical issues of equity and justice, beneficence, and respect for persons (National Institutes of Health, 2011).

Efforts to ensure equity and social justice issues were addressed through all potential participants having an equal chance of participation, being treated equally, and that this study did not have adverse effects on vulnerable populations due to working with adolescent minors (McCauley, 2014). Beneficence was maintained by ensuring that all risks (physical, emotional, psychological, social, legal, economic) of participation have been minimized and that participants' dignity, privacy, confidentiality, and integrity are protected at all times (Yip, Han, & Sing, 2016). The informed consent form (see Appendix A), parent permission form (see appendix B), and minor assent form (see appendix C) notified participants and their parent/caregiver that there are no anticipated benefits resulting from participating in this study. Respect for all individuals participating in the study was maintained through an agreement that voluntary participants maintain the right to discontinue at any time. All participants confirmed knowing and understanding the details of the research via the informed consent form and the interview protocol that followed (National Institutes of Health, 2011). I sought to minimize

potential risks and harm to participants by only carrying out necessary procedures. Processes to conceal identifiers as well as the storage and security of data to preserve the confidentiality of the participants and research site were outlined.

Ethical rights

Protections and ethical concerns for participants were addressed by following inclusion criteria that all participants were 16 years of age or older at the time of the study and provided participants and their parent/caregiver with a detailed description of the methods, purpose, and nature of the study (Ryan, Coughlan, & Cronin, 2009) along with contact information for myself as the researcher and the internal review boards. Prior to the study participants were made aware through an informed consent form that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw at any point in time without penalty. Participants were informed that the risks of the study were minimal and no greater than risks associated with everyday life or routine assessments.

Participants were made aware in advance that there were no benefits to participating. Specific measures were taken to ensure participants were treated with courtesy and respect during the scheduling, interview, and follow-up processes of the study. Participants' confidentiality was ensured via the use of pseudonyms when I transcribed, analyzed, and reported data involving the participants and the research site. Specific measures I followed to protect the identity of participants included the assigning of identification codes within the order that participants were scheduled to be interviewed (i.e. Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3). I assigned a pseudonym to the research site and masked geographical and other potentially identifying information. All collected data was digitally encrypted and password-protected files. I also provided secure storage for all physical data in a locked filing cabinet during the period of

the study. Finally, I secured all collected data in a locked safe accessible only to myself.

Following the completion of the final research report, all data was destroyed.

Chapter 4

Findings

The following chapter will present a summary of findings from this qualitative case study that described dual enrollment processes in a high school setting facilitated by personnel and underrepresented high school students' experiences with institutional processes for dual enrollment. The qualitative method was determined to be ideal for this study as it enabled a deeper understanding of the required processes for dual enrollment to occur in a public high school setting in the state of Georgia and how these processes subsequently impact student experiences. The research questions that guided this study were: (1): How is dual enrollment implemented in a public high school setting? (2): How do underrepresented high school students describe their experience with dual enrollment?

The final findings revealed the phenomenon of dual enrollment as:

- 1) The high school institution following specific legislation, regulations, and policies to deliver dual enrollment information and programs and comply with state agencies;
- 2) School staff and faculty members' engagement in dual enrollment training, advisement, counseling, consultation, and records management as day-to-day processes to fulfill duties and responsibilities required to implement dual enrollment;
- 3) A student process taken to learn about, research, receive advisement on, and fulfill required steps to participate in dual enrollment;
- 4) A student's experience with taking college course(s) while enrolled in their public high school.

To understand how dual enrollment processes were implemented in the selected high school, I collected observations and documents to form a descriptive analysis. To gain insight into participants' experiences, I conducted interviews for data collection to determine how current high school students described experiences and required processes with dual enrollment. Lent et al.'s (2000) social cognitive career theory model of personal, contextual, and experiential factors affecting career-related choice behavior (SCCT) were used as a framework to understand and make meaning of participant experiences with dual enrollment processes. This theory was used to determine how dual enrollment processes impacted participants' self-efficacy, decision-making, and goals. Tenets of SCCT also helped identify cultural influences (i.e., environment, background, predispositions), cognitive influences (i.e., values, expected outcomes, self-efficacy, and abilities), and contextual influences (i.e., learning, interests, goals, actions, and performance attainment) of participants experiences with dual enrollment processes. Using the constructivist paradigm, I sought to understand the lives and experiences of dual enrollment students who currently attended high school.

The research questions guided this study in describing the phenomenon of dual enrollment processes and underrepresented high school student experiences. This chapter will describe the research site as a public education institution followed by research findings and an analysis of themes. Research findings will be presented in two sections: required dual enrollment processes and underrepresented student experiences with dual enrollment, followed by themes. The first section will present findings about dual enrollment processes at the research site of the investigation followed by the experiences of dual enrollment students collected through participant interviews. The second section will describe emergent themes and provide an analysis of the findings. The themes identified include influence and support.

Research Site and Student Population

The research site was a comprehensive public high school located in a suburb outside of a large southeastern city. The high school served approximately 2,400 students and was selected for the accessibility of students participating in dual enrollment and my place of employment. The research site served a diverse student population based on student enrollment demographics and student services. Student demographic information obtained electronically from the research site for the 2022 – 2023 school year is reflected in Table 3. Student services offered at the research were examined to better understand the learning needs and supports available for student populations served at the research site. This information is reflected in Table 4.

Student identified racial/ethnic group	Percent of student body enrollment - September 2022
American Indian or Alaska Native	Less than 1%
Asian American	12.92
Black	33.74%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	Less than 1%
Hispanic	23.77%
Multiracial	4.46%
White/Caucasian	24.95%

Table 3

Student demographic information

Student service program	Percent of student body receiving service program
Economically disadvantaged	39%
Gifted	27.3%
Remedial	28%
IEL/ESOL	10.3%
Students with disabilities	9.7%

Table 4

Student services provided by the research site

The school services outlined in Table 4 portray the variety of student needs served at the research site due to each group having specific academic requirements and supports via educational service program. Student services data for the research site reflected over a third of its students

were identified as *economically disadvantaged* as well as more than 25% of its students receiving gifted services. The research site employed faculty and staff members that worked primarily with students enrolled in an IEL/ESOL (intensive English language/English secondary language) program, special education programs for students with disabilities (i.e., students receiving instructional support via an Individualized Education Plan or medical accommodations under a 504 plan). The research site also provided programs for students identified as gifted or meeting specific requirements to enroll in a STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) program as well as a Magnet program for math, science, and technology.

The school counseling department was comprised of seven school counseling practitioners with a school registrar and school scheduler. Two school counselors served as dual enrollment advisors whose duties and responsibilities included the coordination of dual enrollment advisement information sessions and follow-up individual counseling sessions for prospective students for dual enrollment. The dual enrollment advisors were responsible for managing the documentation and subsequent processes required for dual enrollment programs as set forth by the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC), the Georgia Department of Education (GA DOE), the University System of Georgia (USG), the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), and the local school district where the research site is located.

I selected the current high school where I was employed as a practicing school counselor as it allowed for greater access to observing processes required to implement a dual enrollment program. I conducted observations throughout the course of the study as the primary method of collecting evidence in addition to collecting documents to corroborate findings from observation data. To bolster the evidence collection of observation data and document data, I conducted participant interviews to corroborate the required processes for dual enrollment and strengthen

the results of the study via triangulation. Due to being employed at the research site where the study was conducted, I acknowledged that my presence created a dual role as both researcher and participant observer in the study. To maintain a sense of awareness of my presence that subsequently impacted the study, I engaged in reflexivity to examine my thoughts, feelings, and preexisting knowledge and notions about dual enrollment through reflective journal summaries. I also sought to minimize personal biases by sharing findings with school counseling colleagues who worked with dual enrollment through a peer review process.

Dual Enrollment Processes

To produce a final report with thick and rich descriptions of the case of dual enrollment processes in a public high school setting, I collected observational data in the form of field notes and reflective summaries from late August until mid-October at the research site. Before collecting any evidence I met with the school counseling department in early August during a counseling department meeting to notify all members of the parameters of his study. I outlined plans to conduct observations of processes related to dual enrollment at the research site. I informed school counselors that observational data would be collected through training and consultation about dual enrollment, the delivery of dual enrollment information and program options through counseling classroom lessons and dual enrollment advisement sessions, and during consultation and communication with students, parents/caregivers, staff, and faculty members at the research site. I also informed the school counseling department that a summary of observation data would be presented periodically during counseling department meetings to collect feedback on other sources of evidence (i.e., observation, document, and interview data) that would support and corroborate the required dual enrollment process. The following section will describe the required processes for dual enrollment for the high school institution, the faculty and

staff who served as personnel, and students attending the high school that was enrolled in a post-secondary institution's dual enrollment program.

High School Institution Processes

In the state of Georgia, a public high school must meet specific requirements for students to be eligible to participate in a post-secondary institution's dual enrollment program (Move on When Ready Act, 2022). These requirements were described via reflective summaries and field notes from my observations at dual enrollment training as well as document data stemming from the review of state legislation about dual enrollment, the policies and regulations of governing bodies for dual enrollment, and policies and regulations of the local school district.

Due to my lack of familiarity with current regulations and practices for dual enrollment, he requested permission from the school counseling department chair and high school administrator to attend dual enrollment trainings offered at the local district and state level. Field note summaries document that permission was requested to attend training due to needing to ensure sufficient coverage in the school counseling department and maintain regular operations. Analysis of observational field notes reflected that the social-emotional needs of students attending the high school were managed primarily by the school counseling department.

Observational data across periods in the study reflected it was common for the school counseling department to manage expected events (i.e., classroom counseling lessons, dual enrollment advisement sessions) as well as unanticipated occurrences (ex. a student in crisis due to anxiety or sudden grief/loss) on a regular day of school.

Before the study's commencement, I requested to engage in more regular communication with the DE advisors at the site to better understand the required institutional-level processes for dual enrollment. Field notes reflected early observations were collected during virtual dual enrollment coordinator trainings and presentations for school counselors. Another observed

event that informed my initial understanding was a dual enrollment information summit offered to students and families who attended the high school selected as the research site. These three observation periods spanned from one hour to over four hours in length and contained information regarding required dual enrollment processes for schools, school faculty, and students.

Field notes from local and state dual enrollment trainings documented that a public high school offering dual enrollment must follow the legislation of House Bill (HB) 444 (Move on When Ready Act, 2020) and House Bill 400, Georgia's BRIDGE Act (2010). Reflective summaries from these events noted legislation called for high schools to submit a four-year high school participation agreement as a requirement set forth by the Georgia Student Finance Commission GSFC (2022). Reflective summaries of field notes from dual enrollment trainings for school counselors in addition to legislative documents obtained from the GSFC (2022) and board of education policy for the school district (Cobb County School District, 2017) at the time of this study reflected eligible high school programs had to meet specific stipulations for students to be eligible to participate. These stipulations were outlined as providing dual enrollment information to students by February first of each school year, providing counseling to students and parents on dual enrollment opportunities and requirements, as well as obtaining documented consent from parents/caregivers for their student to participate.

Reflective summaries from trainings recounted the presenter's emphasis that before a student participates in dual enrollment, students and parents must sign a form made available by the eligible high school. This form referred to as the *dual enrollment local school agreement* at the research site (see Appendix K), documented that students are eligible for dual enrollment in grades tenth, eleventh, and twelfth, that students and parents had received counseling on dual

enrollment requirements, available program options, and that they (i.e., the student and caregiver) were aware of their responsibilities and regulations assumed by participating in dual enrollment. This document noted penalties the high school was required to uphold due to the local school agreement being a required form by the local school district for students to participate in dual enrollment. These penalties were described as receiving a final grade of ten (10.0) points for the approved dual enrollment course if a student withdrew from a class as well as that a student would be ineligible for dual enrollment funding after their second course withdrawal (see Appendix K).

Processes for high school institutions were identified through observation and document analysis via an iterative process. Field notes and documents (i.e., PowerPoint presentations) obtained from the dual enrollment coordinator trainings and dual enrollment information summit outlined specific details regarding students and parents being aware of the dual enrollment funding cap for thirty (30) semester hours of college credit before students could engage in a "self-pay" funding option. High schools also must agree to accept postsecondary credits for eligible dual enrollment students in approved courses towards their state, local, and school graduation requirements. Finally, high schools must accurately record on enrolled students' high school transcripts each approved dual enrollment course name, grade, and amount of credit hours as either a half (0.5) Carnegie unit for one to two semester credit hours or one (1.0) Carnegie unit for three and four semester credit hours to the Georgia Student Finance Commission (2022). The eligible high school must also complete a transcript upload to GSFC annually by September 30th for all enrolled students.

One regulation not under the research site but still documented via Georgia's BRIDGE Act (2010) and GSFC program regulations were for information and materials about dual

enrollment to be provided to each eighth-grade student enrolled in a Georgia public school at the time of developing their IGP (individual graduation plan).

High School Faculty and Staff Processes

The following section will describe processes and events implemented by high school personnel for dual enrollment. This section will describe the roles and responsibilities of high school staff and administration working with dual enrollment processes.

Thereafter events and systems maintained by high school counselors and dual enrollment advisors will be described. Thereafter a brief description of credentialing requirements will be provided for teaching faculty members at the research site who taught for a TCSG institution as adjunct course instructors.

Staff and Administrator

The following section provides a description of high school staff and administration who assisted with the scheduling and placement of dual enrollment students during the course of this study. Field notes and reflective summaries from dual enrollment trainings referenced school registrars and high school administrators/schedulers as key agents who worked with dual enrollment course numbers and student schedules. The accurate reporting of student's placement in dual enrollment coursework was supported by reflective summaries from virtual dual enrollment coordinator local and state level trainings I attended as well as document analysis of legislative requirements (GSFC, 2022a) and local school board policy (Cobb County School District. (2017).). Field notes from observations documented that school counselors working with dual enrollment were encouraged to engage in consultation with their school scheduler (i.e., administrator) as well as school registrar as a best practice to ensure that dual enrollment students were accurately placed in approved courses.

To better understand how students were scheduled for dual enrollment courses, I observed the school registrar and scheduler's interactions with processes required for dual enrollment. These processes were identified as consultation as well as managing duties and requirements for the accurate scheduling and grade reporting of dual enrollment students. The school registrar employed at the research site was responsible for managing a wide variety of student and curriculum information. Reflective summaries documented the registrar's responsibility for the day-to-day operations and maintenance of the school's information management system utilized for student scheduling and grade reporting. The school registrar routinely engaged in communication with school counselors and the school's scheduler to create course sections for Dual Enrollment classes during the first few weeks of the school semester. The registrar was responsible for posting grades to students' transcripts once counselors received them from corresponding post-secondary institutions. Field notes of observations between school counselors and the registrar recanted summer course grades that had been delayed by the post-secondary institution not being received until late August 2022. This process required ongoing communication between the registrar and school counselors due to needing to meet the state's transcript upload deadline of September 30 to follow the policies and regulations set forth by the Georgia Student Finance Commission (2022a).

Reflective summaries of consultations between the school scheduler and school counselors centered around verification of accurate course placement for dual enrollment students and the appropriate use of course numbers utilized for approved dual enrollment courses. The scheduler at the research site was responsible for planning and maintaining the master schedule for all students enrolled which involved ensuring that all course numbers aligned with state and district requirements for awarding credit. Field notes from observed

meetings with counselors and the scheduler reflected individuals working in conjunction with ongoing communication (i.e., email, Microsoft Teams, and hallway consultations) to schedule students in dual enrollment classes as well as find the appropriate approved course number or alpha-numeric course number to avoid duplicate credit. A reflective journal entry described an interaction between myself and the scheduler referencing the dual enrollment course list (GA Futures, 2022b) as a guiding document to determine the specific high school course number used by the Georgia Department of Education that aligned with approved dual enrollment classes and college course numbers. Field notes described observed consultative follow-up meetings and email documents depicting the scheduler's ongoing communication with dual enrollment advisors and post-secondary institutions when necessary to create a course number to avoid duplicate credit on a high school transcript. Field notes additionally documented the scheduler's description of duplicate credits on high school transcripts as having a higher likelihood for science due to students taking courses with increasing rigor (i.e., honors chemistry before a dual enrollment chemistry course). Field notes from a consultative meeting with the scheduler noted that transcripts became flagged when undergoing review by state reporting programs and the GSFC. Local high schools are required to address these errors and document provisions taken to avoid duplicate credit on student transcripts to be compliant with the policies and regulations of their school district as well as the GSFC.

School Counselors as Dual Enrollment Advisors

The following section will describe the roles, duties, events, and processes relating to dual enrollment that was fulfilled by school counselors serving as dual enrollment advisors employed at the research site. To increase my understanding of the requirements and responsibilities of high school personnel and students who participated in the phenomenon of

dual enrollment, I observed and engaged in ongoing consultation and collaboration with the two school counselors who served together as dual enrollment advisors at the research site. I sought to increase communication, consultation, and personal engagement with the dual enrollment advisors within the counseling department to better understand the different facets of delivering and maintaining a dual enrollment program in a public high school setting. Processes identified through the analysis of documents, field notes, and reflective summaries included attendance at required training(s) on dual enrollment and program updates; engagement in year-round communication with post-secondary institutions regarding student course placement, funding, and other needs; the provision of year-round counseling and advisement to students and parents on dual enrollment; the maintenance of accurate records of students participating in dual enrollment (i.e., documented review of approved courses, dual enrollment funding approval, and required paperwork for local high school, school district, and post-secondary institution); the verification of students completion of high school diploma graduation requirements while participating in dual enrollment; and processes to ensure that all dual enrollment course grades have been accurately received and posted to transcripts.

A description of the required trainings for school counselors serving as dual enrollment advisors will be provided followed by on-campus events led by school counselors to fulfill requirements for the advisement and counseling of high school students seeking to apply as prospective applicants for dual enrollment. Thereafter a description of individual counseling sessions for individuals seeking to participate in dual enrollment will be presented. Finally, a review of systems maintained by the dual enrollment advisors will be discussed.

Dual enrollment coordinator training.

In August 2022, I attended two (2) online trainings for new and experienced dual enrollment coordinators working as high school counseling practitioners in Georgia. I attended a one hour dual enrollment coordinator training provided by the school district of the research site. Field notes from observations documented the presenter of the district-level dual enrollment training encouraged any school counselor with time and availability to attend a dual enrollment training provided by the Georgia Department of Education via the CTAERN (Career Tech Agricultural Education Resource Network) due to it being advertised as more comprehensive in scope. I requested permission to attend the CTAERN training in August following consultation with the dual enrollment advisors. Field notes documented that both dual enrollment coordinators were unable to attend due to prescheduled meetings and that it would be beneficial for me to attend and take notes to share with the school counseling department later date in time.

Field notes and a reflective journal entry documented the CTAERN training was four hours in duration and covered a greater depth of dual enrollment policies, updated regulations including a new provision requiring male students to register with the selective service to receive funding, and recommended practices for school counseling practitioners. Reflective summaries documented topics covered in each training related to dual enrollment *option A*, for traditional high school students, and dual enrollment *option B*, which provides an alternate path to earn a high school diploma in the state of Georgia for students who attend school beyond their ninth-grade graduation cohort (i.e., a student who may be categorized as a fifth-year senior). Field notes and reflective summaries from each training held school counselors as the primary point of contact in a public high school for information, advisement, and counseling on dual enrollment programs and eligibility requirements. Analysis of reflective summaries reflected the trainings reviewed dual enrollment funding options made available via the Georgia Student Finance

Commission (GSFC) (2022d) which included high school dual enrollment students using up to thirty (30) credit hours initially provided as well as a *self-pay* option where students could utilize funding available via the HOPE (Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally) program funded by the GSFC, the CARES act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security), or funding tuition through another means. Field notes verified each training presented information on approved coursework for dual enrollment students attending a post-secondary institution as being limited to English/literature, mathematics, science, social studies, world languages, and CTAE (Career Technical Agricultural Education) course options. This information was further verified by a document review of the dual enrollment approved course list made available via the GA Futures website (GA Futures, 2022b). Field notes also included direction for the appropriate use of dual enrollment course number options as well as how to transfer dual enrollment course grades and quality points provided at each training. Other topics documented through reflective summaries at each training included scheduling requirements for dual enrollment students and regulations for local schools, dual enrollment advisors, as well as students enrolled at a two- or four-year post-secondary institution.

Document analysis between dual enrollment coordinator trainings revealed a greater focus on student responsibilities from the local school district whereas the CTAERN training focused more on school counselors' responsibilities. Reflective summaries emphasized a need for students to fulfill processes required for dual enrollment participation including submitting an application and other required documents to a post-secondary institution as well as meeting the dual enrollment application deadline of their local high school, district, and selected college. Field notes documented presenters at each training stressing the need for students to follow up

with their school counselor, but the local district coordinator training emphasized counselors as a critical component of the dual enrollment process.

Field notes from observations of dual enrollment advisors' discussions noted how the required training for dual enrollment coordinators regularly occurred without an actual PowerPoint or handouts to provide clarity on content. One advisor shared, "If I was presenting, I would use the specific forms required." Comments from the other advisor indicated that they had not been previously shown how to correctly complete the required forms for participation, "I know what they are and where to find them, but I feel I am often learning about rules after the fact."

Reflective journal entries from the initial phase of data collection recounted observations of dual enrollment advisors' encouragement for ongoing consultation due to numerous policies, procedures, and regulations of dual enrollment in the state of Georgia. In the context of school counseling, the purpose of consultation is to assist the consultee to respond in "effective and productive ways to situations and third parties" (Brown, Pryzwansky, & Schulte, 2011). Consultation is a regular aspect of school counselors' work and role in service to students and families. Consultation may occur with students, parents and caregivers, faculty and staff members, administrators, and personnel from post-secondary institutions, as well as between school counseling practitioners themselves.

Field notes from observed meetings and conversations between myself and dual enrollment advisors included a repeated emphasis of these counselors speaking to the importance of staying abreast of policy changes and the lack of consistency when information is delivered to high school faculty and administrators working with dual enrollment. Reflective summaries also documented observations that dual enrollment advisors regularly consulted with school

counselors in their department and with other high schools in their district to determine best practices for handling dual enrollment issues (i.e., advisement session delivery options, and late funding issues).

Dual enrollment advisement.

The following section will describe components from collected observations and documents of the district-provided dual enrollment summit attended by the school counselors working at the research site as well as dual enrollment advisement sessions offered at the research site. During the initial part of the fall semester, the school district provided a "dual enrollment summit" where each high school had dual enrollment advisors present at separate tables to meet with families in attendance from their local school as well as representatives from local eligible post-secondary institutions offering dual enrollment. Field notes from observations documented that both dual enrollment advisors employed at the research site attended with one presenting information in tandem with a counselor from another district high school on dual enrollment eligibility and requirements. Field notes and collected public domain documents from the school district (Cobb County School District, 2022) corroborated topics presented as potential benefits of dual enrollment, student eligibility from grades tenth, eleventh and twelfth, approved coursework through the dual enrollment course directory, option A vs option B participants, program costs, funding options, withdrawing from a dual enrollment course following the first ten (10) days, extracurricular participation, applying and meeting deadlines for students local high school, the school district, and the eligible two- or four-year college. One component emphasized by the presenters in the collected field notes was the necessity for students to follow up with their school counselor to determine best practices for meeting the required protocol for prospective participants. Documents in the form of PowerPoint

presentations and handouts verified field notes of the presenters posing considerations to students and families regarding the "end game" (i.e., where a student was seeking to attend college following graduation) as well as considerations for taking Advanced Placement (AP) classes versus dual enrollment depending on the selectivity of the college they sought to attend following graduation. Field notes from this event included a description of the district providing Spanish-speaking interpreters, American sign language interpreters, and remote headsets for participants to receive information in Spanish during presentations offered at the district summit.

Field notes and information available via the research site's school counseling website documented dual enrollment advisement sessions took place in the counseling department on a biweekly basis from early September through the completion of the data collection period in October 2022. I attended three (3) dual enrollment advisement sessions at the research site on a biweekly basis. Reflective summaries identified that attendance at dual enrollment advisement sessions took away time and energy from the needs of my school counseling caseload and other duties and responsibilities. For this purpose, I could only observe dual enrollment advisement sessions as my professional schedule permitted.

Reflective summaries documented that each session lasted approximately thirty minutes and featured the dual enrollment advisors working in tandem to present information for students who were seeking to begin a dual enrollment program during the spring 2023 semester or continue their dual enrollment program at the same identified two- or four-year college. Document analysis of public information made available through the school's counseling website noted that students specifically had to review and submit a required checklist (see Appendix L) of items to participate in dual enrollment. The checklist documented that "All new and returning students must attend a Dual Enrollment Advisement Session" (see Appendix L) as well as other

participation requirements identified as attending a dual enrollment summit provided by the school district, viewing the dual enrollment key points video, and completion of a required dual enrollment quiz where students needed to make a 100%. Collected online documents identified that the advisement sessions were offered twice a day to accommodate students' schedules.

Field notes documented the school counselors who served as dual enrollment advisors at the research site were responsible for a range of responsibilities beyond their school counseling role. Internal department documents of school counselor duties (see Appendix M) revealed a myriad of other tasks in addition to dual enrollment. Reflective journal entries of observed conversations and meetings with the dual enrollment advisors confirmed that these counselors shared in the maintenance, documentation, and record-keeping of dual enrollment processes for the school counselor department of the research site.

Reflective summaries and field note analysis from dual enrollment advisement sessions reflected school counselors presented information on student enrollment status (i.e., full or part-time college student), eligibility, approved coursework for dual enrollment, consequences for withdrawing after the first ten (10) days of the semester, roles and responsibilities of students and school counselors, scheduling, communication and how grades were placed on student's transcripts. The identified dual enrollment session advisement topics were corroborated by documents collected such as the advisement presentation PowerPoint obtained from the dual enrollment advisors, the school counseling public domain site for dual enrollment, and the required online dual enrollment quiz. Field notes from advisement sessions identified counselors' emphasis on student responsibilities to fulfill processes required to participate such as following up with questions, concerns, and submitting required documents such as the dual enrollment funding application (GSFC, 2022d) and college course schedule after being accepted. Reflective

summaries from each session also indicated that the counselors worked individually with prospective and continuing dual enrollment students to complete required documents and identify specific dual enrollment classes at the end of the advisement presentation.

Field notes and reflective summaries from each advisement session identified that school counselors working as dual enrollment advisors were responsible for (1) communicating dual enrollment opportunities to students and parents in multiple methods (i.e., email, on-campus advisement session, and through the school's public domain site); (2) providing academic advisement to the student/parent and answering questions throughout the process; (3) ensuring students are taking classes needed to graduate from high school; (4) signing required documents identified by the school district as the *Dual Enrollment Local School Agreement* (see Appendix K) and a *Student Advisement Agreement* (see Appendix M) and returning it back to students; (5) approving dual enrollment funding application once the student submits it on GAFutures.org; (6) ensuring that students' high school schedule includes all college courses the student is registered for as well as (7) ensuring final college grades are posted to a student's high school transcript.

Document analysis stemming from the dual enrollment coordinator trainings, public domain online information on dual enrollment legislation (BRIDGE Act, 2010; Move on When Ready Act, 2020) in Georgia as well as policies and regulations enacted by the Georgia Student Finance Commission (2022) corroborated the required responsibilities of the school counselors acting as dual enrollment advisors as outlined in the on-campus advisement sessions as well as the district provided dual enrollment summit.

Dual Enrollment Counseling and Consultation.

The following section will provide information about individual counseling sessions and consultations regarding dual enrollment. Document analysis of emails and reflective journal

summaries reflected my engagement in 12 counseling sessions with students and parents on campus at the research site. Field notes reflected individual counseling sessions took place in the school counseling department as well as over the phone for parents unable to come to campus due to work obligations. Reflective summaries and email documents identified counseling sessions and consultations with students and caregivers lasted between 15 – 40 minutes in duration and covered topics such as student eligibility for participation, dual enrollment deadlines, steps required to apply (i.e., use of dual enrollment checklist and public domain school counseling website), and other student responsibilities to participate.

Reflective journal summaries from different periods within the study detailed my emailing information as directly listed on the school counseling website's dual enrollment public domain page to provide follow-up information in a standardized format. Field notes and reflective summaries documented my concern about sending information in an equitable manner that did not portray favoritism or preference to students interested in dual enrollment. Field notes contained passages where I reflected on the need to identify my thoughts, feelings, and opinions on dual enrollment access for students who did not meet eligibility standards due to their grade level, having a GPA that was currently below the admissions requirement of eligible institutions, or students enrolled at the research site who had not yet taken a course of rigor. Reflective summaries from student and parent consultations around dual enrollment also included language for helping students to meet and consult with a current dual enrollment student who could better share their experience with participation and navigating coursework along with other responsibilities.

Maintenance Systems.

The Dual enrollment advisors at the research site had developed a system to maintain the needs of students participating in dual enrollment as well as those interested in attending advisement sessions. Analysis of the online Microsoft excel spreadsheet verified that the information was shared with all members of the counseling department to enable greater consultation and verification of the dual enrollment student caseload.

Field notes from observed conversations with the dual enrollment advisors reflected that the shared systems were developed to maintain the day-to-day needs and requests of dual enrollment students. The information included in the excel document pertained to dual enrollment students and approved classes for the 2022 summer and fall semesters as well as prospective and continuing dual enrollment students for the 2023 spring semester. Analysis of the counseling department's online dual enrollment excel document included specific information regarding student name and district identification number, their approved eligible coursework, their post-secondary institution, and contact information. Field notes from observed conversations between myself and school counselors not serving as dual enrollment advisors reflected that the majority of school counselors did not reference the shared document. Reflective summaries noted that most school counselors provided some initial information about dual enrollment during individual counseling sessions but more so encouraged students to visit the counseling website's dual enrollment page or attend a dual enrollment advisement session. Reflective summaries also documented that school counselors would share information about dual enrollment options during classroom counseling lessons as a requirement of Georgia's BRIDGE Act (2010) as well as the Move on When Ready Act (2020).

Dual enrollment adjunct instructor requirements

The following section will provide information on faculty members who served as adjunct dual enrollment course instructors during the 2022 – 2023 school year. Limited information was available regarding the credentialing requirement for high school teaching faculty serving as adjunct college instructors. Document review of the research site’s school faculty and staff member listing during the 2022 – 2023 school year reflected two certified teachers who served as dual enrollment adjunct instructors through a two-year post-secondary institution. Field notes from observations with a meeting between the dual enrollment advisors and outreach director of recruitment for admissions from the two-year post-secondary institution confirmed that each instructor had met the specific requirements of the college to serve as an adjunct faculty member.

Reflective summaries from this observed meeting and email documents between the outreach director and researcher confirmed that district teachers were each required to undergo a credentialing process to serve as college course instructors in their local high school. Field notes from an observed meeting with the principal at the research site also verified that teachers had to maintain the certification required to teach in GA public high school, meet certification requirements to teach a dual enrollment class as an adjunct instructor, and follow all policies of the post-secondary institution, district, and research site. Field notes of observed conversations between myself and adjunct instructors on-site reflected one teacher had served in this position for the previous five school years as a certified nursing assistant healthcare instructor and the other was beginning their first semester as an adjunct instructor delivering a college-level political systems course on the U.S. Government.

Field notes detailed recommendations from the consultative meeting with the college outreach director for local schools to identify a process for communicating while a high school teaching faculty member pursued their credentialing to teach a dual enrollment course. Notes from this meeting outlined a dual enrollment advisor referencing low student enrollment in the dual enrollment government course provided on the research site's campus. Reasons identified included a lack of communication between the course instructor and school administration as well as school counselors not having prior knowledge about the course and therefore were unable to advertise this course option to students and families during advisement and counseling sessions. Field notes from this meeting also identified a need to enhance communication between the research site and the college institution regarding any student concerns that arose after the start of the college semester as well as sending reports for mid-term grades.

Dual enrollment student processes

The following section will provide a review of the required processes for eligible high school students to participate in dual enrollment at a two-year or four-year post-secondary institution in the state of Georgia. The first section will present requirements for eligibility, enrollment status, student responsibilities, and administrative reviews and exceptions for participation as supported by observation data and non-observation data obtained through documents and participant interviews. Thereafter information about the experiences of dual enrollment students who were enrolled at the research site will be described. I developed my understanding and knowledge of requirements for student eligibility and participation in dual enrollment through collected observations at dual enrollment coordinator trainings, dual enrollment advisement sessions offered on the campus of the research site, document review of

public domain sites, state legislation documents, as well as via participant interviews with dual enrollment students enrolled at the research site to support the final findings.

Eligibility.

I reviewed observation data centered around dual enrollment coordinator trainings and dual enrollment information sessions that outlined student eligibility for dual enrollment as being enrolled in eleventh or twelfth grade to take an approved dual enrollment course through an eligible participating postsecondary USG (University System of Georgia), TCSG (Technical College System of Georgia), or independent institution (Georgia Student Finance Commission., 2022b). Field notes reviewed from the trainings and information sessions noted that students enrolled in tenth grade could take an approved Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) course through a participating two-year TCSG college institution only unless the student met a predetermined test score requirement (i.e., a minimum SAT score of 1200 or minimum ACT composite score of 26 in a single national test administration, taken before the term of enrollment). Field notes and documents obtained through the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC, 2022a), the school counseling website's dual enrollment public domain site as well as college dual enrollment websites (i.e., Chattahoochee Technical College, 2022; Kennesaw State University, 2022) confirmed that students enrolled in tenth grade who meet a predetermined testing requirement may enroll in any approved Dual Enrollment courses at a TCSG, USG or private eligible participating postsecondary institution. Document analysis of emails sent between myself and students and parents at the research site also corroborated the eligibility requirements for tenth-grade students. Document review of dual enrollment program regulations and legislation (BRIDGE Act, 2010; GSFC, 2022; Move on When Ready Act, 2020) in addition to the aforementioned field note observations stipulated that before a student

participates in the dual enrollment funding program, the student and parent are required to sign a student participation agreement (see Appendix K) in acknowledgment that they understood and assumed responsibilities by the student while participating in dual enrollment. Document review of the dual enrollment local school agreement as well as the district's school board policy verified that students who are eligible for dual enrollment are required to abide by the rules as set forth by their local high school and the eligible postsecondary institution and that students may be denied participation at any time in the dual enrollment program for rule violations. Analysis of these documents and policy regulations (GSFC, 2022) collected detailed that a student's length of dual enrollment eligibility concludes at the end of the term for the student reaching the age limit of 22, or the funding cap of thirty hours, or received a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma (i.e., option B). Statements from participant interviews supported students learning about dual enrollment eligibility through their middle school or other program. One participant recollected visiting the research site when learning more about programs available for gifted students in middle school, "Probably at that magnet open house and like.... I knew dual enrollment was a thing." Although this statement did not validate the specific staff or faculty member the participant received dual enrollment information from at their school it did confirm their school fulfilled a required process for notifying students about dual enrollment participation as an academic option to comply with state agencies.

Enrollment Status.

The following section will describe the requirements and policies for enrolling in a postsecondary institution for students attending a Georgia high school. A review of documents from the Georgia Student Finance Commission (2022a, 2022b, 2022c), the research site's district school board policy (Cobb County School District, 2017), and state college information websites

detailed that a student must be approved and classified through their eligible high school or home study program, as a dual enrollment student. Document analysis confirmed that students must also be admitted and classified as dual enrollment students by an eligible postsecondary institution through the final day of the eligible institution's drop/add period to be eligible for funding payments for their dual enrollment coursework. Observations from field notes and reflective summaries collected via dual enrollment coordinator trainings, the dual enrollment summit as well as advisement sessions at the research site documented that if a student withdraws from a dual enrollment course twice, they are ineligible to receive dual enrollment program funding. Other identified stipulations for enrollment were identified within my field notes from trainings and the dual enrollment summit. These stipulations outlined students could only take approved dual enrollment courses available through the dual enrollment course directory as well as that a student may enroll at two (2) or more eligible postsecondary institutions. Review of dual enrollment policy and regulations set by the GSFC (2022) allowed for a student who does not reside in Georgia to participate in dual enrollment if the student is enrolled and physically attending an eligible high school in Georgia while meeting all other eligibility requirements.

Student responsibilities.

The following section will describe the responsibilities of students to participate in dual enrollment. Information collected from dual enrollment advisement sessions at the research site, individual counseling sessions, participant interviews, and documents required for participation contained language about student responsibility.

Field notes of observations from three dual enrollment advisement sessions spanning six weeks in length outlined dual enrollment advisors speaking with students directly about student

and caregiver requirements to participate in dual enrollment. These responsibilities were also referenced in the school district's dual enrollment LSA (local school agreement) (see Appendix - K) where students and parents/caregivers provide their signatures to verify their understanding and responsibilities for the positive and negative consequences of dual enrollment as well as the school district's board policy (Cobb County School District, 2017). Another document supporting student responsibilities for dual enrollment were outlined in the dual enrollment advisement checklist provided by the school. These sources documented students' responsibility when (1) applying to the selected college by the local high school deadline, school district deadline, and college deadline; (2) submitting all required documents; (3) registering for courses agreed upon with the school counselor; (4) completing funding application on GAFutures.org; (5) Providing their school counselor/DE advisory with a copy of their college schedule before the end of the semester. Other student responsibilities outlined at the DE summit and DE advisement session included students' attendance at the college orientation, if required, following all the college requirements, as well as providing the official college transcript to the school counselor at the end of the semester.

Field notes from advisement sessions identified dual enrollment advisors speaking and emphasizing to students the need to ensure dual enrollment courses would transfer to potential colleges if they matriculated to a different school after graduation. Students were also notified that they must initiate contact with the college to secure FERPA waivers or services for students with disabilities through an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) or section 504 plan.

Reflective journal entries of individual counseling sessions with students enrolled at the research site contained notes on student responsibilities coming in the form of reviewing and completing all requirements of the dual enrollment checklist, attending a dual enrollment

advisement session, and making an appointment with a dual enrollment advisor. Field notes from counseling sessions also outlined student responsibilities taking a smaller portion of counseling sessions as students inquired about how and where to apply, funding, and class options that were available for dual enrollment.

Administrative Reviews and Exceptions.

Document analysis of the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) (2022a; 2022e) dual enrollment policy and regulations and public domain sites confirmed that students may request an administrative review in the event they believe their eligibility for dual enrollment was determined incorrectly. These documents revealed that a student requesting an administrative review would have a Commission staff review their eligibility determination and determine if program laws, regulations, policies, and rules were applied appropriately in the student's case (GSFC, 2022). To be eligible, students must submit a written document requesting an administrative review and any supporting documents for their administrative review case must be received within 45 days of receiving a notice of denial of their dual enrollment eligibility.

Document analysis of the GSFC (2022a) policies and regulations for dual enrollment and field notes from the dual enrollment coordinator training offered by the school district identified exceptions for students who undergo an extenuating circumstance that may qualify for a dual enrollment exception that enabled their eligibility to be reviewed. These exceptions were defined as a student experiencing serious illness, a serious injury, or a death in the student's immediate family or if the student were the sole caretaker for an immediate family member (GSFC, 2022e). Field notes documented that exceptions could first be granted at the local high school level by the building principal, the dual enrollment designee of the school district, or by a submitted request to the Board of Commissioners of GSFC.

An email document between the dual enrollment advisor, school principal, a dual enrollment student, their parent, and myself detailed the student's request to drop a class after the first ten (10) days of the fall 2022 semester due to the student's desire to take another non-required academic course at their postsecondary institution. Contents of the email document outlined that the advisor was unable to approve another dual enrollment course due to being beyond the dual enrollment funding deadline as well as the first ten (10) days of the school term.

The email document also included statements from the dual enrollment advisor that the student and parent had been informed of this policy in person and over the phone as well as the student's and parent's awareness of this school board policy by signing and submitting a dual enrollment local school agreement (page 2 under "course incompleteness, withdrawal, or failure") as well as signing off on a recorded dual enrollment information session video before the student's attendance at an advisement meeting in the spring 2022 semester. A separate email documented the principal's decision to uphold the administrative board policy and deny the student's request to amend their schedule. Field notes from an observed conversation between myself and the dual enrollment advisor noted that the student submitted the same request to the dual enrollment designee of the school district and that their request was denied due to the request coming after the first ten (10) days of the district school calendar and not the postsecondary institution. This section provided an overview of dual enrollment processes identified for eligibility, enrollment, student responsibilities, and administrative reviews and exemptions for student eligibility. To better understand students' engagement with dual enrollment processes I collected participant interviews to examine how the phenomenon of dual enrollment influenced their personal and educational experiences.

Dual enrollment Student Experiences

The following section will describe the experiences of dual enrollment students enrolled at the research site during the 2022 – 2023 school year who agreed to participate in an open-ended interview. Student participants were enrolled in the high school as well as an eligible postsecondary institution for at least one semester and agreed to share their experiences and perspectives on dual enrollment via a demographic survey and through an interview. This section will provide a description of accounts from high school students for learning about dual enrollment, applying to an eligible postsecondary institution, and taking dual enrollment courses while in high school. Thereafter information on supports identified by participants' dual enrollment participation will be provided.

Demographic survey data

The study included five (5) participants from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds (see Table 2) that met the criteria for participation. The selected participants simultaneously met the criteria to be considered as underrepresented students as well as college-bound individuals based on their backgrounds. Participants' survey responses indicated each participant identified holding high expectations to complete high school as well as attend college. Participants identified as living within a household with two parents and access to at least one immediate family member with college-going knowledge and experience. Survey responses additionally indicated that all participants had attempted advanced coursework through the research site. These courses were identified as honors, AP, or Magnet program classes. Document analysis of participant transcripts confirmed participants' successful completion of rigorous high school coursework as well as current placement in a dual enrollment course in addition to enrollment in classes at the research site. Analysis of students' academic transcripts also revealed 80% of participants

completed high school coursework in middle school enabling these students to start high school in a higher level course than other peers in their ninth-grade entry cohort.

Participants were identified as college-bound via access to rigorous coursework (honors/AP courses), college-going adults (family and school personnel), and coming from affluent backgrounds (i.e., identified family income level aligning with a middle/upper-middle-class household). Students identified their parent(s) as attending college and earning a bachelor's or master's degree and identified personal expectations to complete high school and attend college. Participants met the criteria as underrepresented dual enrollment students due to their first-generation American status, identified gender (i.e., male) and/or ethnicity (African American), as well as having a documented medical diagnosis that impacted their learning through a section 504 plan.

Learning about dual enrollment

Open-ended interviews for data collection revealed that participants initially learned about dual enrollment either before entering high school or in their ninth-grade year. Participants identified having initial exposure with dual enrollment through an older peer, a parent, or a school-related function. One participant recalled a memory of visiting his parent who worked at a school and speaking with a student their parent taught, "I remember this one student specifically.... she was taking all of these dual enrollment classes... she was a second semester junior in high school.... I was in seventh grade... With my mom in her classroom." Participants specifically identified the mother as exposing them to the idea of dual enrollment as well as providing help to research the process, "I started looking into dual enrollment... my mom had pitched it to me". One participant stated, "my mom asked on a Facebook like... who's taking this specific class... And then we reached out and asked people who had been in that college to get

more information about it.” Another participant shared, “freshman orientation... I was interested in it. Then I forgot about it and then my mother brought it back up to me.... So then I was like, oh, yeah, that would be great.” One participant noted first hearing about dual enrollment from their mother during her freshman year,

I had asked, So what are my plans for college? And she had told me about dual enrollment and when she had started explaining it to me, I figured, OK, this could be beneficial for me socially.

Participant interview responses supported having access to adults (i.e., family and educators) with college knowledge and experiences as well as early memories of attending college visits. One participant shared, "I was... only like a 6th grader. So... I didn't really know much about what was going on, but it was still really cool. I really liked MIT" as well as, "My parents and I talk about college, like, pretty frequently ... Like we should try to apply early action, or we should try to apply regular decision, like I've made my college application timeline and strategy with them mostly." Another participant shared having the opportunity to attend an immediate family member's college graduation ceremony as a formative experience that made him want to complete high school and attend college, "I do remember going to both of my [stepmother's] graduations... I want to be able to do something like this one day ... just feel accomplished in myself for being able to do that." A review of narrative transcription data only reflected one participant learning about dual enrollment processes from a school counselor before the decision to attend a dual enrollment advisement session, "It was in 8th grade... Because they were trying to prepare us for high school, but they also did talk a lot about dual enrollment." Narrative data about students' experience with formally applying to dual enrollment will be described in the next section.

Applying to dual enrollment

Participant interview data was analyzed for students' insight as to how they navigated the application process for dual enrollment. Narrative data reflected participants engaging in research on their own or with a parent as well as attending a dual enrollment advisement session before starting the application process. Transcript analysis of participant interview statements reflected research and consultation as an ongoing process for individuals seeking to participate in dual enrollment. A senior male participant noted using multiple online resources to learn about applying,

I want to crunch down and get to know this... I spent time on the Dual enrollment website for Wheeler. I spent time looking at the dual enrollment stuff on Georgia futures... I spent a lot of time on there looking at... requirements....The video that was uploaded for [the research site] it did help a lot too.

One participant shared that utilizing their sibling for help with the application process due to their parents attending college outside of the U.S.,

My parents went to college. Not here, though... I wasn't super familiar with the system... I had no idea. But my sister just the year before I started doing all this, had applied to college.... So because my sister went into it, that's like kind of the only place I got information about this kind of [process].

Another participant's statement recounted key information shared from an advisement session in September 2022 led by the dual enrollment advisors,

We went into the Career Center and we talked about, you know, just the requirements for what like what we're doing, dual enrollment and what could and couldn't be done... they were telling us about how it would count for high school credit and college credit...

Not all colleges will accept the credit.... You are not technically supposed to be on campus... Unless it's like with unless you have a reason to be here...you cannot drop the class after the 10 days or you will get a 10 on your high school transcript.

One participant shared consulting with friends about meetings with a school counselor following their attendance at an advisement session, “Hey, have you had your one-on-one session yet about doing enrollment yet... I remember talking to my friends about the funding application.”

Narrative data also outlined participants taking responsibility for completing the required processes to apply for dual enrollment. One participant recounted using documents available from the school counseling department website to navigate the application process,

I used a checklist specifically for dual enrollment students. So that really helped me... I had to submit my application online, the funding application, the local school agreement, and the student advisement plan that I turned into the counseling office.

Analysis of participant interview responses noted contrasting information from participants about test scores needed for the application process. Two participants attending the same four-year postsecondary institution described different processes and documents to apply. A participant in her third semester of dual enrollment reflected not having attended a dual enrollment advisement session but instead a webinar with classmates provided by the college itself,

We got on this like zoom call and [the college representative] told us ‘OK, you have to take the [AP] exam you have to get A “5” on the exam’, ‘you have to have like... this GPA.’ So the information was super accessible to us.

The participant shared that due to regulations passed in Georgia’s USG system following the COVID pandemic, she did not have to submit an SAT score, but was still required to sit for her

AP exam. This contrasted narrative data from another participant who applied in late spring 2022 and had to submit a copy of their SAT score in addition to their AP exam score. Narrative data also indicated other participants were not required to submit a college entrance exam when they previously applied, "For the test scores, I did not have to submit any SAT or ACT scores... the [Tech's] admissions office was not looking to take SAT and ACT scores because of COVID."

Narrative interview responses also identified participants' experience with the matriculation process following notification of their acceptance to their dual enrollment program via email, "Through KSU, there was an e-mail... to my student account that told me how to register for classes.... Choosing my classes all depended honestly on the time that it fit into my schedule at high school." Analysis of narrative data revealed participants' feelings of ownership about navigating the application process. One participant stated, "From the get go... I Understood. OK, I'm the person that's gonna be in charge of this." reflecting their understanding of guiding the process. Another participant disclosed the difficulty experienced with navigating the application process,

I think really the biggest stressor for me when I was applying was ... Like I said, the fact that the whole process was driven by me. And I know that there's really not much that counseling or... like, the school can really do about that.

Narrative analysis from participant interviews revealed high school students' successful ability to identify and execute the required processes to apply and matriculate to a postsecondary institution.

Navigating dual enrollment

The following section will describe participant perceptions on dual enrollment course taking. Narrative data will be reported on course rigor, differences between dual enrollment and high school, and participant behaviors. A participant's account of her virtual course to an AP class described an increased need for autonomy and self-regulation,

So with high school courses, even the AP ones, obviously you get a lot of like the teachers there teaching you the content. Even when we were virtual it was like a ... live kind of interaction... With the dual enrollment class, it was like almost completely asynchronous. They had office hours. But beyond that it was like you have to watch the lecture videos and you have to read the textbook and turn in the homework when it's due.

Interview analysis revealed participants' awareness of rigor as it pertained to their personal experience. One participant's reflection on the level of challenge noted dual enrollment as a primary focus, "Well, from what I've heard, the different dual enrollment courses have different degrees of difficulty. Like... At least through my experience so far, [Tech]... doing all this is pretty challenging." Another participant provided a need to commit to her dual enrollment course, "Math was like... my number one priority... I put more time into it than anything else."

Interview data described participants' view of their high school coursework in contrast to their dual enrollment coursework. Participant statements reflected there being much more independent time to study and complete work as well as a lack of repetition in assignments. One participant described her dual enrollment psychology course as more challenging due to pace,

I do have to prepare a significant amount because of how fast it moves and how little time we get in the lecture... But that's honestly just college, because you're not sitting in the classroom, five hours, five days a week for an hour and a half.

Another participant commented on the level of commitment to her course,

I definitely think... honestly, I wouldn't have been able to handle more than one like course per semester and that way... But I think that also like depends kind of on like what the course is. I mean right at right now I'm taking like a like a third year level course. It's not something I would be able to do with anything else.

Interview data reflected dual enrollment class sizes varied depending on the delivery model of their dual enrollment course. Interview data described class sizes for virtual classes well beyond the brick-and-mortar high school classroom. A participant taking an online course share "I mean, there are like hundreds of kids in that class. The office hours would maybe have like 20 people." Participants who took dual enrollment courses at the research site described class sizes ranging from six to fourteen students. One participant shared positive feedback for their on-campus dual enrollment course, "It's a very personalized experience... As long as you're trying to like... raising your hand, asking questions... You doing the work....Your teacher is going to know who you are. And they're gonna start to learn about you." These participant statements provided support for the subjectivity of participant experiences in dual enrollment.

Choice and behavior.

Interview data reflected participants' descriptions of necessary behaviors to be successful in managing their dual enrollment courses. Narrative analysis revealed behaviors such as time management, self-regulation, and independence as necessary to reach identified goals. One participant shared,

I would consider it like maybe 90% independent and then the other 10% was like... if you go to office hours you can ask questions. Or... send an e-mail and the professor would respond. But yeah, I was super independent... nothing like I'd ever done in school before.

Narrative analysis revealed participant descriptions of choice regarding actions and behaviors to persist through dual enrollment. One participant commented, "If you're not doing it for you, it's gonna be hard because you totally have to do it by yourself."

Participant statements reflected a need for motivation and accountability to manage their responsibilities within a dual enrollment class.

Like nobody's... getting on you about... Hey, you haven't submitted this assignment... Nobody's telling you to get stuff done. So if you're not self-motivated to do it, and if you really don't want to do it, it's not going to end well.

One participant outlined the importance of responsibility to oneself,

Dual enrollment... It is like a personal choice, so I mean, if you want to do it, then you have to like... hold yourself accountable for deadlines that, like, aren't exactly related to school.... You're not required to be doing them, so you have to hold yourself accountable.

Participants identified choices and behaviors as relating back to their ability to complete processes required to apply to and enroll in a desired dual enrollment program of study. The following section will describe supports identified through narrative analysis.

Supports.

Narrative interview data revealed participants utilized support through their peer networks, high school faculty members, families, and their postsecondary institution. A

participant who had attended her dual enrollment program for over a year identified multiple levels of support within her perception of the school culture,

There were definitely people that I could ask from [Tech] or from [my school] or students and stuff.... One of the largest benefits was coming from a school where so many students have already gone through this program. So it was very familiar to everyone around me. So super normalized.

Interview data described peer support through group study sessions and collaboration.

Participants who took online dual enrollment courses shared it was beneficial to consult with other students on assignments and exams. "I study with the kids who are also in marching band. So...there's only like 4 of us." One participant who enrolled in an online math course encouraged consulting with peers when possible, "Definitely collaborate with people. If you get the chance, because that helps a lot."

Interview data revealed all participants specifically referred a school counselor as faculty support during the dual enrollment application process. Participant responses indicated relationships and rapport with counseling practitioners in their school. Participants described the counselor's availability and ability to help, "[Miss T.], anytime I had any questions, any confusion, anything at all in this, [Miss T.] was my go to person", as well as, "I think the counseling department did a really good job of making sure we got [dual enrollment applications] done... like early *early*". Participant statements also reflected that faculty support helped them throughout the process,

My Counselor was a big one. I returned to her when I had questions. My teachers.... They were like, oh, we don't know too much about it, but we'll help you out... and they helped me out in whatever way I really needed.

Participant interviews also referenced caregiver support and utilizing college office hours as beneficial to their experience in dual enrollment. “My mom was definitely with me the whole way. She was in the loop with the counselor” was described by a participant who had to seek accommodations through her school’s office of student disability services. Other statements such as “If I needed anything, my dad, he went to chat tech. So he helped me with a couple things.” portrayed parents' availability for help. Interview data reflected participants' knowledge of academic tutoring through their postsecondary institution. One participant shared,

My professor was very clear about her office hours and I would go in after class or before class and talk to her about some issues that I was having... They also have tutoring. They have supplemental instruction and it's these students that have taken the class and have done really well in it. They do free open study sessions that I would like to go to where they review material, go over tests.

One participant described office hours as well as being able to access the support of their instructor if necessary.

They're definitely there if I needed them. I've never needed to ask any specific questions just because of the accessibility of office hours. I never had to reach out privately, but that was totally an option if I needed it.

This section provided a description of student's experiences and the processes they engaged in to learn about, apply to, and navigate dual enrollment. The following section will provide an analysis of the findings.

Analysis

This case study centered around observations that guided the analytic framework for findings related to how dual enrollment processes are implemented in a high school setting. Non-

observation data in the form of documents and participant interviews were used to support the analytic framework for the study. After careful review of the data, themes emerged as influence and support. The themes supported the research questions that guided the study as, *How is dual enrollment implemented in a public high school setting?* and *How do underrepresented high school students describe their experience with dual enrollment?* The following analysis of dual enrollment processes will present a summary of the data collection and evidence followed by thematic analysis of the study's findings. Thereafter an analysis of underrepresented student experiences with dual enrollment will be examined using Lent and colleagues' Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) (1994) as well as thematic analysis.

Data collection and evidence

The analysis involved the primary collection of observations during the initial phase of the study to form an analytic framework before the collection of documents as well as participant interviews. Documents were collected to aid the corroboration of field notes and reflective journal entries of observed events. I presented information regarding collected evidence for dual enrollment processes to the school counselors employed at the research site during a school counseling department meeting in early September. The school counselors provided approval for the initially observed events in the form of dual enrollment trainings, the dual enrollment summit, and consultative meetings between school counselors and students, parents, and other building personnel at the research site. Counselors encouraged me to collect observations of dual enrollment advisement sessions and individual counseling meetings related to dual enrollment. Counseling colleagues also encouraged to continue collecting observations of consultative meetings around dual enrollment processes at the research site. I followed recommendations and sought to collect documents that corroborated information in the form of field notes and

reflective journal summaries for dual enrollment advisement sessions, individual counseling with students and parents, and consultative meetings. I conducted participant interviews during the final phase of the data collection period to enhance his understanding of student experiences with dual enrollment and to triangulate overall findings for this study. Participants participated in semi-structured individual interviews consisting of ten questions. The ten questions (see Appendix G) were designed to be open-ended to assess any themes that emerged from the participants' experiences with dual enrollment participation. The participants were asked to discuss and explore their subjective experiences with family college expectations as well as applying to and participating in a dual enrollment program. Interview transcriptions were coded paragraph by paragraph and a structure of cross-referenced codes was created and compared among the participants.

Upon completion of the data collection process, I reviewed and analyzed all observational data (field notes and reflective journal summaries) and non-observation data (documents and narrative interview data) to form findings for the case via an iterative process calling for a repetitive sequence of review. The analysis of field notes and reflective journal summaries that arose from collected observations and document analysis required me to undergo an initial examination of skimming documents, reading in a more thorough examination, and forming interpretations for content analysis and thematic analysis.

Following the completion of the five participant interviews being audio recorded and transcribed using online data-encrypted software, I then listened once more to verify the accuracy of the participant's statements. Transcriptions followed a similar iterative process of reading and rereading as well as reviewing highlighted participant interview statements to form initial codes for the clarification, interpretation, and contextualization of narrative data. Interview

content was analyzed through in vivo coding which centered on the words and statements of participants. Inductive codes were developed from the review of field notes and reflective summaries as well as narrative data. Documents were reviewed to help corroborate information from observation and narrative data. The initial inductive codes were in turn applied to the content of documents. I then integrated the review of observational and non-observation data for content analysis to generate categories from initial codes. Categories were then utilized to develop themes identified as influence and support. The following section will provide an analysis of themes followed by an analysis of participant experiences in dual enrollment using SCCT as a theoretical framework.

Themes

The collection of evidence from observations, documents, and participant interviews supported findings that revealed themes regarding influence and support that aligned with the research questions. A total of two themes with three subthemes each (a total of six subthemes) emerged. Each theme and subtheme that emerged from the collected evidence are detailed in Figure 5 and are discussed below. Themes related directly back to process management for the phenomenon of dual enrollment.

Influence	Support
Legislation	Parent
Policy and regulations	School
Environment	Self and peers

Figure 5

Themes and subthemes

Influence

Subthemes developed from codes and categories for the theme of influence included legislation, policy and regulations, as well as environment. These subthemes were interrelated in

that they each impacted how dual enrollment processes were implemented and managed by the high school institution, its personnel, and students participating in dual enrollment in this study. The following section will present findings from the study on the subthemes of legislation, policy and regulations, and environment.

Legislation.

Legislation was determined to be a primary influence on how dual enrollment processes were governed and subsequently implemented by regulatory agencies working with the state government of Georgia. Two key pieces of legislation referenced in the findings were the Move on When Ready Act (2020) and the BRIDGE Act (2010). Each piece of legislation was repeatedly referenced in observations of dual enrollment coordinator trainings at the district and state level as well as public domain documents (GSFC, 2022a) I obtained to corroborate information with regulatory policies for dual enrollment in Georgia.

The Move on When Ready Act (2020) set specific requirements as a house bill (HB444) in the Georgia General Assembly that outlined specific coursework eligible for dual enrollment and revised provisions for student participation in tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade. HB 444 (2020) legislation also guided how students could use a self-pay option to fund their dual enrollment coursework which was referenced by coordinator trainings, the dual enrollment summit and advisement sessions, as well as observed consultative meetings with dual enrollment advisors and college personnel. This legislation (2020) specifically identified the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) as responsible for the collection and monitoring of enrollment and student recorded data as well as the annual measuring and evaluation of the state's dual enrollment program. The Move on When Ready Act (2020) also identified the GSFC

as the responsible agency to release enrollment and student record data to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget to allocate state funding for dual enrollment programs.

The BRIDGE Act (2010) set mandates for schools to deliver dual enrollment information to students enrolled in grades eighth through twelfth before February 1 of each school year and required that students receive advisement and counseling on an annual basis for an individual graduation plan. These provisions specifically required all public high schools across Georgia to comply with this legislation to receive state funding. Field notes from observed dual enrollment advisement sessions, classroom counseling lessons, and individual counseling meetings demonstrated that school counselors engaged students in the advisement, counseling, and follow-up planning to apply and participate in a dual enrollment program.

The literature review referenced the Move on When Ready Act (2020) as a key statute reforming dual enrollment policies due to the increasing budget of dual enrollment for the state legislature. These policy changes reflected sweeping changes in how regulations for dual enrollment were set as it restricted access to students enrolled in tenth through twelfth grade and implemented a testing requirement for high school sophomores to access academic core classes in a dual enrollment program. The literature review also referenced school counselors as the primary agent in high schools to carry out provisions of the BRIDGE Act (2010) as a state law that must be followed by schools. These pieces of legislation influenced how regulatory policies were carried out by the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC), the Georgia Department of Education (GA DOE), the University System of Georgia (USG), and the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) which will be explored in the next section.

Policy and regulations.

This study examined processes regarding regulations and policy for dual enrollment as it occurred on a societal, community, and individual level. The initial findings for this study stemmed from reflective journal entries from the dual enrollment coordinator trainings and the dual enrollment summit. Reflective journal entries and public domain websites revealed that dual enrollment policies were set by four state agencies working in conjunction as the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC), the Georgia Department of Education (GA DOE), the University System of Georgia (USG), and the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG). Document analysis of legislation identified the GSFC as the state agency responsible for the release of information regarding enrollment and student data for dual enrollment. The GSFC (2022a) produced documents for regulations that guide policies carried out by the GA DOE, USG, and TCSG.

The Georgia Department of Education (GA DOE) acts as the governing agency for public education and carries out laws and regulations about dual enrollment education as well as the appropriation allocation of state and federal money to local school systems. The Board of Regents for the USG as well as the State Board for the TCSG system each set standards, regulations, and policies for the operation of institutions in each respective system. These four agencies (GA DOE GSFC, USG, TCSG) work in conjunction to ensure that all outlined requirements are upheld by local education agencies and school districts. Policies set forth by the GSFC directly influence how regulations for dual enrollment were carried out by the GA DOE as well as the college systems, which in turn influence how dual enrollment processes are carried out in the local school community of the research site. These processes took place to abide by

school board policies of the school district (Cobb County School District, 2017) which further confirmed regulations set by state agencies (i.e., GA DOE, GSFC).

Narrative data from participant interviews reflected behaviors were influenced by students' knowledge of dual enrollment policies at the research site. One participant detailed his awareness of rules and regulations recounted at an advisement session,

I have to do well in this class now... because I can't drop it for one You cannot drop the class after ... [the school's] first ten days of school because then you will get a 10 on your high school transcript.

The case study's subjectivity was limited to the policies and regulations identified in this section. The specific location of this study influenced how policies and regulations influenced processes that were specific to the research site. The perception of how dual enrollment processes occurred was further reliant on my lens of spaces, events, and individual staff and faculty members observed as well as students that agreed to participate.

Environment.

Environment was identified as an influential factor related to codes for dual enrollment processes. Contributing factors were primarily evidenced via narrative analysis of participant interviews and then supported by observational data and the collection of documents. Interview statements supported participants' identification of dual enrollment processes at varying levels of systems as their school and family members.

One factor not identified by participant interviews was dual enrollment participation taking place in the state of Georgia. Analysis of the evidence collection indicated that state agencies influenced access and stipulations for student eligibility and participation in dual enrollment through their high school and the eligible postsecondary institution selected for

enrollment. Participants' focus on influences for dual enrollment may have been more geared towards elements of their school, and family environment due to their age and direct experiences.

Participants described influential characteristics within their school as access to faculty members that promoted participation as well as events that helped students fulfill requirements to apply and enroll. Specific events identified by narrative analysis included attendance at a college's dual enrollment information webinar, speaking directly with a teacher, or participating in counseling and advisement with a school counselor. The presence of a robust school counseling program with dual enrollment advisors who were accessible and offered advisement sessions was referenced as a support for navigating dual enrollment processes by participants.

Narrative analysis of participant interviews described contrasting statements of school culture with varying levels of dual enrollment student participation.

One interview participant noted access to dual enrollment was promoted differently at his school,

I just think it's ...the magnet program... these things are like brought up often... But in AVID, you know that's a primarily black and Hispanic [program]... We're more like ...underrepresented students... So it's like they are not really having those conversations despite that being AVID's purpose.”

This statement supported students' awareness of an unequal playing field for paths to excel. Ease of access to dual enrollment information was evidenced in a participant's statement recalling one calculus math class, "like everyone was able to access this webinar and we got on this like zoom call...So the information was super accessible to us." Schools have a great capacity to channel students into college-bound programs or to curtail access depending on the available resources and personnel of that specific campus (Freeman, 1997).

One participant described having access to students and teachers with dual enrollment experience through their Magnet program while another participant shared limited access to seeing other students of color, despite being enrolled in AVID, a college prep support program geared towards helping underrepresented students access college. “Everybody I've seen except for [my friend] she is the only other...African American that I've seen doing it...And not to say there aren't more because there obviously are but...” This participant’s statement contrasted narrative data from other participants who identified having access to other students while they applied to dual enrollment and participated in eligible classes,

I mostly heard from upperclassmen when I was younger. I remember when I was a sophomore ... Some seniors taking dual enrollment were telling me like, I can get a year head start when I go to college for at least for math.

These statements provided contrasting evidence that some students had been directly influenced by peers while others had limited access to classmates who had participated in dual enrollment.

This subtheme also supported notions of how school culture can channel students into varying academic pathways based on their academic history. Narrative analysis indicated some participants' belief that the research site promoted access and information to students in advanced classes but not through college prep (i.e., on-level) classes with greater student enrollment.

Document analysis of participant transcripts also provided support for access to courses of rigor which corroborated narrative statements of participants' access to highly trained teachers for previously completed honors and AP classes.

Parents and family members such as siblings were referenced as an influence for dual enrollment participation. Narrative data provided evidence for exposure to early college experiences such as campus visits and graduation ceremonies as well as regular college talks

with parents and other caregivers as influences to participate in dual enrollment. The encouragement of parents was evidenced by narrative data supporting participants decision-making to apply to and enroll in a dual enrollment program.

Support

The following section will provide an analysis of the theme of support from this study. Analysis of collected evidence identified student supports for managing dual enrollment processes as parents, school faculty members, as well as peers and self (i.e., individual) support. Each subtheme was found to enable dual enrollment processes at varying points in time for students stemming from applying, matriculating, or navigating the college learning environment.

Parent support.

Parents were referenced as a primary source for participants being exposed to college from a young age as well as providing support during the dual enrollment application process. The exposure events (i.e., college visits and graduations) were intertwined with influences previously reflected in a student's environment. Narrative analysis of participant interview responses evidenced engagement with parents in college talks was beneficial to developing knowledge and confidence to attend college. College talks were described as occurring frequently and covering topics on school type, course interest, majors, and career options.

Ever since I entered high school, even before that because my sister was applying ...to college. We had been talking about college. Kind of what it is. What do I want to do? Mainly focus on like career choice and how college is going to be like... beneficial to what I want to do.

Participants identified their mother as the parent who helped them engage in dual enrollment processes while fathers were identified as exposing participants to early college experiences.

Although fathers were scarcely mentioned during interviews narrative analysis indicated positive encounters, “He did talk to me about the importance of college, and he wanted to be able to give me that opportunity that he never had.” Statements also supported one participant’s awareness of different college institutions and populations, “My mother and my father have always been kind of like pushing their own colleges. So my dad went to HBCU, and my mom went to a... she went to a PWI.”

Parents were noted as a supporting factor during dual enrollment participation by way of helping participants manage college expectations and communication,

Me and my mom have worked together. We've really made a checklist for the next couple of months and until I think January.... My mom was always like, your first semester of senior year is probably the hardest.

Parent encouragement was also noted as a supportive factor that helped participants use their autonomy to work through required processes,

My mom had reminded me about it. She was like, hey, you know, you have a [accommodations] plan because she noticed I was getting a tiny bit overwhelmed with stress, anxiety....So I checked with my counselor at [C Tech] and [K College] about it.

The pattern of continued engagement with college-going conversations with parents was noted across interviews as a supporting factor for dual enrollment. "I know I don't like my mom to be on top of me, but I do thank her for it. And I think it's really important for at least for the first semester [of dual enrollment]". The parental support was inextricably tied to factors outlined for how parents and family members influenced participants' environment. A distinction in this analysis was that support was implemented to prevent a participant's failure to complete a required process for dual enrollment. The narrative analysis reflected parents letting participants

complete processes from a distance prior to giving direct assistance. This came in the form of contacting a dual enrollment advisor or community members with knowledge of a required process. Documents from parent emails validated caregivers seeking to gain information about completing or verifying dual enrollment processes required for scheduling and the verification of dual enrollment funding applications during the early phase of the research study. The following section will provide an overview of supports identified by participants in their school environment.

School.

Supporting factors within the school environment were identified as encouragement from teachers and staff members to participate in dual enrollment. Participant statements referenced the school culture of the research site as a factor supporting a desire to participate in dual enrollment, "One of the largest benefits was coming from a school where so many students have already gone through this program. So very familiar to everyone around me." Having access to a college-going school culture extended beyond the classroom. Participants identified adults in their high school environment as either a teacher or school counselors acting as dual enrollment advisors who helped develop their interest and knowledge for pursuing dual enrollment. Narrative data referenced teachers creating events to support participant interest through personal class visits. One participant disclosed that his social studies teacher invited an adjunct instructor to class to discuss dual enrollment,

I worked with [Miss L.] and through our class she brought [Dr. T] in... They're both in AVID and he pitched to us the idea of a dual enrollment class... a lot of people kind of shied away from it...But I was like, oh, that's a challenge. So I took that challenge and I decided to sign up immediately that same day

Another participant stated,

I wanted to have a professor that I could work with that would accommodate me if I needed extra help... Because it is my first time doing college classes...And at [C Tech] I already know what class I wanted to go into and [Miss P.], the healthcare teacher was able to guide me through that and just get into that pathway of patient care.

These interview statements entailed participants access to a trusted adult on their high school campus that was willing to encourage them to consider advanced coursework. Additionally, participants were able to have a new experience via dual enrollment with individuals they had previously learned from and developed rapport with.

The collection of evidence from this study provided support for school counselors as the identified school designee for troubleshooting issues that may arise with a student's dual enrollment scheduling, funding, or matters presented by the eligible post-secondary institution. Counselors were key agents in solving varying issues such as the use and creation of dual enrollment course numbers with student transcripts, communicating with the college institution about a late grade report, as well as providing ongoing counseling to students and parents as well as management to dual enrollment processes on a year-round basis.

My mom ... called [Miss M] or it was an e-mail or something during the summer and we got everything like hashed out. [Miss M] has been really helpful with that. Because if you just ask her something, she'll totally answer it. But specifically ... she tells us this is the formula to go through if you want to do this and we fill it out.

Narrative data as well as evidence from observed events and public domain documents at the research site provided support for students' access to counseling and advisement for dual enrollment information and participation. Public domain documents revealed that counselors

provided fifteen separate dual enrollment advisement sessions offered throughout the study. Reflective journal summaries from reflected consistency in topics and the length of advisement sessions. Field notes documented feelings of fatigue and exhaustion of the advisors' time resulting from offering advisement sessions at varying points of the school day and week which limited energy and availability of other counseling duties. Dual enrollment processes accounted for a great deal of these school counselors' time due to multistep processes to support student access and the school's successful implementation of requirements. Many participants disclosed meeting with a dual enrollment advisor in greater frequency to complete the processes required to apply and matriculate to their program of study.

Self and peers.

Analysis of narrative data from participant interviews revealed personal characteristics as a supporting component of participants' ability to research, navigate, and persist through their dual enrollment program of study. Interview statements supported that participants' knowledge and understanding of personal responsibilities and requirements supported their motivation and commitment to dual enrollment processes. While participants shared being encouraged and supported by parents and school faculty to participate, the decision to pursue dual enrollment was their own. "I value college very much.... [My parents] are not forcing me to go to college. It's something that I wanted to do, something that I want to study." Participant statements referenced self-advocacy as a skill that supported their ability to navigate dual enrollment processes. Participants described taking actions such as making follow-up appointments with their school counselor as well as communicating with their instructor when they needed academic support.

Individual desire to apply to and enroll in dual enrollment was evidenced as a supporting factor to complete processes. Narrative data evidenced that participants prior experience with rigorous high school coursework and completion of required processes for dual enrollment supported their ability to participate and experience success in their college coursework. Participant statements described that early exposure to rigorous classes in middle and high school developed positive self-efficacy to achieve success in a dual enrollment program. This finding supported scholarship that found students have a greater chance to enroll in college directly out of high school when they could access a rigorous academic curriculum in high school (Adelman, 1999; Kim & Bragg, 2008; McDonough, 2005).

Narrative data indicated participants successful execution of dual enrollment processes and course-taking experiences supported their self-efficacy, “I had expectations that everybody be kind of mean in college...It's flipped my whole perspective of college and it's giving me...I'm able to do this!... college can be a fun place, professors can be fun.” The influence of participants self-efficacy will be further explored in the analysis of participant interviews.

Narrative analysis provided evidence that participants were able to learn about and successfully engage in processes required for dual enrollment participation through peer networks. Access to knowledgeable peers with dual enrollment experience was a support that provided greater understanding about how to study and engage in resources provided by the postsecondary institution (i.e., tutoring, office hours, counseling center information) to bolster student learning.

Access to peers with dual enrollment experience provided lateral mentorship and normalized program participation for some participants from underrepresented populations. Identified supports from narrative data arose as participants gained information and

understanding around processes required to apply, matriculate, and manage their dual enrollment course(s) on a day-to-day basis. Participants referenced the influence of peers who had prior knowledge and experience with dual enrollment. One participant referenced the work ethic of other students as a supportive factor to push herself, "I had... peers who were... finishing their stuff way before the due dates and stuff. They're super driven.... And they really wanted to learn the content too. I think that makes a huge difference."

Narrative analysis revealed that participants' access to peers with dual enrollment experiences, parents, as well as faculty members with dual enrollment knowledge directly supported outcomes for the successful engagement and completion of required processes. Scholarship from the literature review validated these environmental supports as aspects of the participant's school environment that increased their confidence and ability to engage and work through required dual enrollment processes. The following section will provide an application of Lent and colleagues' social cognitive career theory (SCCT) for analysis of participants' experiences with dual enrollment.

Analysis of participant experiences

Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) guided me in developing open-ended interview questions that examined how participants' notions of self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals were impacted through dual enrollment participation. The following section will use these intricately linked variables to describe participants' development of college and career interests, choice and decision-making on dual enrollment, and how academic success was attained via their experiences with dual enrollment processes.

Self-efficacy.

Bandura (1998) viewed self-efficacy as the perception (i.e., belief) held by an individual to exert influence (i.e., capacity and skills) over conditions present in their lives to attain identified goals. Narrative analysis identified beliefs by participants that self-efficacy was developed via their desire to research, receive advisement and counseling, apply to, and participate in dual enrollment. Analysis of participants' statements revealed feelings of apprehension about dual enrollment due to a lack of knowledge or confidence until consulting with other individuals. One participant shared,

I wasn't super confident in my own ability going into... dual enrollment. I wasn't sure I'd be able to handle it, but a lot of people reassured me ... It's not as bad as a college course seems.

This statement demonstrated the value of encouragement in enhancing this participant's motivation and belief to perform well in dual enrollment. One participant reflected, "You're clearly capable since you've already been taking that kind of higher level course. So it just gave me a lot of peace of mind and more information just how that course works and stuff."

Participants' self-efficacy was associated with an internal drive to participate in dual enrollment from the onset of high school,

From the beginning I was trying to take this class.... I remember at Open house when I was a freshman... like they would show the graphic of the math pathway and I was like ohh, I can take a [Tech] class, sure.

In the application of SCCT as a model for choice and decision-making, I found that self-efficacy could be viewed as both a support and influence for participants' perception and ability to complete dual enrollment processes. Lent et al.'s model (1994) identified self-efficacy as

directly tied to other cognitive influences that took shape as perceived ability, outcome expectations, and values. Narrative analysis of participant data reflected an esteemed value in a strong work ethic, completing high school, and seeking career opportunities through attending and graduating from college. These values relate to self-efficacy through participants' belief in their capacity to learn the necessary skills to complete the processes required to enroll and persist through their dual enrollment program.

Participants disclosed perceived abilities such as being independent and proactive learners, self-advocacy, and consultation with knowledgeable adults (i.e., dual enrollment advisors, and college personnel) to complete required processes when they were unable to move forward. These abilities influenced participant behaviors which took shape as prioritizing the needs of their dual enrollment course of study while managing other commitments in school and their personal lives.

Analysis of narrative data revealed that participants' self-efficacy was in part influenced by factors such as social modeling (i.e., seeing peers' engagement in advanced coursework), mastering experiences (i.e., learning time management and self-regulation), verbal persuasion (i.e., peers, family members, and educators encouraging dual enrollment participation), as well as outcome expectations of being successful in completing their dual enrollment course to earn credit and continue with their dual enrollment program.

Narrative data revealed characteristics identified by participants that self-efficacy beliefs were related to learning strategies for self-regulation. I viewed these factors interdependently as each related to personal agency and notions of control. One participant reflected, "I have to stay on top of it... because if one little piece comes out, the whole thing is going to fall over",

referencing the priority of their dual enrollment class. Another participant identified the significance of self-control,

One of the most important things in dual enrollment is time management and self-regulation.... You really have to take initiative for yourself and do and be self-motivated. And if you need help, get it immediately.

Participants had identified notions of support from their family, high school and postsecondary institution that enhanced notions of self-efficacy to complete processes. One participant shared a positive experience with his instructors through dual enrollment,

College professors really care about you, and that they're going to do their best. They... they want to see you succeed... You're going through their institution, and they want you to go to the next level.

Narrative data indicated an innate desire to pursue more advanced coursework for themselves.

One participant shared, “if you figure out what your drive is and whatever it is you like, you can apply it to different situations”.

Self-efficacy was viewed as a powerful determinant of participant views of expected outcomes and goals resulting from engagement with dual enrollment processes. Self-efficacy is related to choices connected to a desire intention, value, and belief. Participants' decision-making was also connected to behavior, performance, and consequences that supported their self-efficacy. The following section will describe students' outcome expectations for participating in dual enrollment using SCCT.

Outcome expectations.

Outcome expectations viewed through the framework of SCCT referred to an individual's perceptions regarding the consequences or outcomes that resulted from carrying out

specific behaviors or actions. Choices made by participants about activities for engaging in dual enrollment processes, as well the level of effort and persistence needed, required consideration of perceived outcomes in addition to self-efficacy beliefs. Participants identified desired outcomes for engaging in dual enrollment processes as forging a path to better educational and career outcomes that would result from their participation. One participant viewed dual enrollment as, “working towards having a better life in the future” depicting a higher standard of living. Another participant held completing processes for dual enrollment would lead to future benefits in college.

This is going to show schools that... I have an academic rigor and I want to go to that next level of higher learning and plus this will save me money. I don't have to pay for like all these general education classes when I get to college.

A primary tenet of SCCT is that student achievement is “influenced by the context within which students pursue their educations” (Bolkan et al., 2021, p. 659). Proponents of this theory argue that academic outcomes and notions of success are impacted by the school environment that students are exposed to (2021). Participants in this study were identified as high-achieving students due to their GPA being above 3.5 and prior completion of honors and AP classes. Analysis of document data and interview data identified cultural factors within the participant's school environment as promoting access to rigorous coursework, adults who promoted college enrollment following high school, and events provided by the school counseling department to complete dual enrollment processes. I identified these factors within the participants' school community as cultural influences that developed expected outcomes for being successful in applying to dual enrollment. These factors were related to participants' beliefs and abilities to carry out the needed actions (i.e., studying, prioritizing school, and consulting for help) to be

successful in dual enrollment courses. I found that participants' outcome expectations were influenced by self-efficacy beliefs as interrelated variables that in turn impacted specific interests, goals, and actions that all tied toward goal attainment. The following section will examine how participants' engagement and completion of dual enrollment processes contributed towards the achievement of goals.

Goal attainment.

Personal goals can be identified as an individual's intent to engage in a specific activity (i.e., to pursue a dual enrollment program of study) or attain an identified level of performance (i.e., successfully achieving a specific college entrance exam test score). In SCCT, these two types of goals are viewed as choice goals and performance goals. I believed that goal setting enabled participants to establish and select sustainable behaviors through setbacks and short-term positive feedback.

Proponents of SCCT posit that goals are tied to self-efficacy and outcome expectations. For this study, goal attainment resulted from participants' perceived abilities and outcomes expected from their interaction with dual enrollment processes. One participant outlined learning tasks needed to participate in dual enrollment enabled him to complete the application process. This in turn led to successfully applying for dual enrollment before deadlines for admission,

After the information sessions... they gave us a checklist with forms on it with like what forms to complete, so I just did as much as those as I knew how to do.... Another thing on the checklist was... A On one conversation with... [Miss M]... so we talked about the application and what else I would need to do like on top of what I already filled out.... That went pretty smoothly I think... And so my application was done like... Well before the deadline.

Goal attainment was linked to courses of action and participants' success or failure in reaching personal goals, in turn, served as important information that altered or confirmed self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations.

Narrative data revealed one participant's performance goal from developing a deeper understanding of her learning style which impacted her study habits and ability to manage independence,

I don't think I would have figured it out [my study habits] this well if I hadn't taken this dual enrollment class just because I mean it is a real college course. So now I know, OK, so I'm like a video person and I like videos and I need to take the notes and I need to do the practice problems. And textbooks really kind of aren't for me... reading it... it just doesn't go in my brain, especially math textbooks.

SCCT can help identify how specific domains relate to an individual choice and interests to pursue college or career-related interest. In the context of this study, the application of SCCT provided a rationale for how participants' self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals were interrelated to the required dual enrollment processes. SCCT also provides a framework for how cultural, cognitive, and contextual influences impact choices and interests for individuals based on their previous experiences and current environment. This theory assumes that individuals are likely to develop interests in and choices to pursue specific activities in which they have strong self-efficacy beliefs. Beliefs of self-efficacy can be maintained as long as individuals can develop the necessary skills and environmental supports to pursue these activities. The participants of this study all identified factors in themselves and their environment that promoted the belief that they could successfully enroll and participate in dual enrollment processes as outlined by their school, school district, and state agencies. As all participants in this study were

underrepresented high school students participating in dual enrollment, SCCT enabled me to identify different variables contributing to participants' choices and interests to engage in dual enrollment processes. This theoretical framework can be used by school counseling practitioners and educators to help understand how factors within the school and home environments of students relay back to the development of choices and interests that encourage or alter a desire to attend college.

Chapter Summary

Evidence collected for this study provided support for dual enrollment processes being carried out by students and high school personnel on a day-to-day basis to comply with policies, rules, and regulations as set forth by the school, its district, and state governing agencies. Dual enrollment processes for counselors were identified as administrative scheduling and records management, providing advisement and counseling, as well as seeking training and consultation. School counselors were identified as regularly communicating and executing a range of tasks for dual enrollment daily throughout this study. The case study evidence documented dual enrollment processes as having varying levels of influence and support. Narrative data indicated student processes as learning about dual enrollment and receiving counseling, submitting an application, and participating in an approved course provided by an eligible postsecondary institution.

High school counselors were involved in managing their time, energy, and resources to become trained on dual enrollment regulations, policies, skills, and abilities to serve in an advisory role to students, parents, staff, and faculty members. Findings supported that other high school personnel (i.e., staff, administrator) engaged in administrative processes for dual enrollment or the delivery of content (i.e. high school teachers as adjunct instructors), however,

counselors were involved with the delivery of information on dual enrollment, the advisement and counseling of students and parents on dual enrollment requirements and options, as well as maintaining records management systems to ensure the correct approval of students required documents, scheduling, and funding of dual enrollment programs.

Student dual enrollment processes were evidenced as learning about program options, receiving advisement and counseling, and submitting required documents (i.e., a college application, high school transcript, and test scores). Underrepresented student experiences revealed being influenced by dual enrollment processes at varying levels of systems as well as being supported through parents, school faculty members, themselves, and peers. Lent and colleagues (2000) social cognitive career theory (SCCT) was used as a framework to explore how dual enrollment processes impacted student experiences regarding their self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goal attainment. This theoretical orientation was also utilized to examine how cultural, cognitive, and contextual influences related to participant experiences with dual enrollment processes.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to learn about how dual enrollment processes were implemented in a Georgia public high school and how identified processes impacted the experiences of underrepresented dual enrollment students. This study was conducted to develop scholarship on the experiences of dual enrollment students in the state of Georgia as well as research regarding how dual enrollment processes are implemented in a public high school setting. Previous research on dual enrollment has centered around student outcomes in college (Bailey et al., 2002; Kim & Bragg, 2008) as well as how high school students viewed experiences with dual enrollment (An, 2013; Karp, 2012; Kanny, 2015). Literature on dual enrollment has focused on student outcomes (i.e. graduation, college enrollment, and first- and second-year college persistence) (Bailey & Karp, 2003; Carey & Ohio Board of Regents, 2013) as well as the perspectives of school counselors and adjunct instructors (Caples, 2017; Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020) working within a dual enrollment program, but there are gaps in research regarding how dual enrollment functions in a high school.

At the time of this study House Bill 444 (Move on When Ready Act, 2020) and the Georgia BRIDGE Act (2010) were enacted by the Georgia General Assembly to oversee legislation for dual enrollment. The Move on When Ready Act (2020) outlined the purpose of promoting and increasing access to postsecondary educational opportunities for Georgia high school students while increasing high school graduation rates, in turn preparing a skilled workforce and decreasing time and cost to postsecondary credential completion. This study described findings regarding how dual enrollment processes were implemented and their

influence on underrepresented student experiences. This was achieved through an iterative analysis of collected observations and documents centered around the roles and duties of high school personnel that implemented dual enrollment processes as well as the requirements and responsibilities for high school students who applied and participated. This study described the experiences of underrepresented students who participated in dual enrollment and how processes impacted their self-efficacy, decision-making, and goals. Thematic analysis centered around the phenomenon of dual enrollment processes implemented by school personnel and high school students as well as processes that were required for the high school as an institution. The following chapter will discuss a summary of the findings of this study followed by implications for future research endeavors, equity and access for dual enrollment program implementation, and school counselors. Thereafter, recommendations for individuals working with dual enrollment programs and students will be provided followed by a conclusion.

Summary of Findings

This descriptive qualitative case study used a constructivist perspective to examine processes for dual enrollment to be implemented in a public high school in the state of Georgia as well as the experiences of underrepresented students who participated in dual enrollment. As is common in qualitative research studies, observations and documents were collected to identify processes required for implementing a dual enrollment program for a high school institution by its faculty and staff members, as well as students that were enrolled during the time of the study. Interviews were conducted with underrepresented high school students using open-ended questions to capture detailed descriptions of participants' experiences with dual enrollment processes. Through the analytic process an understanding of dual enrollment processes was reached and themes were formed.

Over the course of this study, I collected observations, documents, and interviews to develop my understanding of dual enrollment as a phenomenon. Five dual enrollment high school students were interviewed using semi-structured, open-ended questions. Two themes were identified through open coding and were identified as influence and support.

Influence

This study examined how dual enrollment processes influenced the responsibilities and actions of high school counselors and student participants. Findings identified that dual enrollment processes implemented at the research site were influenced by Georgia General Assembly legislation (BRIDGE Act, 2010; Move on When Ready Act, 2022) as well as policies and regulations of state agencies (Georgia Department of Education, 2022; Georgia Student Finance Commission, 2022a) to comply with requirements set by the school district's board of education to provide dual enrollment programs. Findings revealed that school faculty members employed at the research site serving as school counselors also held the role of dual enrollment advisor to deliver information, advisement, counseling, and support on dual enrollment processes. These findings supported research by Witkowsky and Clayton (2020) that identified school counseling practitioners as the point of contact to manage dual enrollment processes regarding student advisement in a public high school.

School counselors' engagement in dual enrollment training, advisement, counseling, consultation, and records management were documented processes that fulfilled the duties and responsibilities required to implement dual enrollment. Dual enrollment training and advisement sessions observed were held as influential to the roles and behaviors of school counselors who served as dual enrollment advisors. Practices for school counselors were influenced by specific policies and regulations governing dual enrollment that required all students to be notified as

well as be provided with advisement and counseling. This finding supported research by Pretlow and Patterson (2015) that dual enrollment policy impacted school operations and the experiences of dual enrollment advisors as school counselors engaged in practices to comply with regulatory practices.

The influence of dual enrollment processes for high school personnel and students at the research site selected for investigation was found to result from legislation created by the Georgia General Assembly. The Move on When Ready Act (2020) influenced processes for dual enrollment such as limiting student eligibility and placing a funding cap for participation. Georgia's BRIDGE Act (2010) mandated schools serving students enrolled in eighth through twelfth grade to deliver information on dual enrollment to students before February first. This legislation influenced how policies and regulations were implemented by the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) which subsequently influenced requirements set forth by the Georgia Department of Education (GA DOE), the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), and the University System of Georgia (USG). These four agencies in turn influenced dual enrollment processes set by the school district for the research site through school board policies and requirements to comply with the GSFC, GA DOE, TCSG, and USG.

A review of the school board's district policy for the research site under investigation mandated that dual enrollment coursework had to be taken off the school campus (Cobb County School District, 2017). This policy influenced dual enrollment processes outlined in documents such as the required dual enrollment local school agreement which impacted how dual enrollment advisors counseled students to comply with the requirements of their school district. Participants noted that this policy served as a barrier to student access and could potentially dissuade students who could not access transportation. Field notes from consultative meetings

referenced this policy as creating a barrier for students to dual enrollment at the research site that lacked transportation. This finding supported literature (Roach et al., 2015) that identified dual enrollment policies carried out by a school or district may block out well-qualified students from lower-income backgrounds.

The environment was also noted as an influence on participants' decision-making to engage in dual enrollment processes. Findings outlined environmental influences as participants' school and academic culture, family, and self. Participants stated that having ongoing access to teachers and school counselors with college knowledge and experience influenced their decision to engage in dual enrollment processes. Freeman's research (1997) noted a greater correlation between schools with a structured school counseling program and a greater proportion of students interested in pursuing a college education. Participants referenced specific events provided by their school as dual enrollment webinars, advisement sessions, and individual counseling sessions as positively influencing their decision-making to participate in dual enrollment and complete the required process. Participants identified family members who provided early life experiences with college as well as ongoing college conversations as influences to pursuing dual enrollment. These findings supported research literature by McWhirter et al. (2013) that showed evidence for families and teachers who provided active encouragement towards educational attainment as influential to students' goal to attend college.

Findings from document analysis supported legislation enacted by the Georgia General Assembly, policy and regulations carried out by state agencies, as well as the specific school and community environment influencing how dual enrollment processes were carried out. This occurred on varying levels of systems identified for the research site as a high school institution, its personnel, as well as students who sought to participate in dual enrollment. These influences

were found to be interrelated due to their combined impact on behaviors and decisions carried out by school counselors and high school dual enrollment students.

Support

Findings from this study revealed the subthemes of support for dual enrollment processes as relating to parents, schools, as well as peers and self. Parents were identified as developing support through college conversations as well as seeking assistance on behalf of interview participants. Participants described barriers as gaining access to information or completing a required process for dual enrollment. Participants primarily identified parental support from their mother which supported research literature by Tolliver and colleagues (2019) for female caregivers helping students to navigate and execute college decision-making processes. Fathers were referenced in narrative interviews for enabling conversations and exposure to college, however, mothers were described as the family member that would engage in troubleshooting processes as well as reaching out to points of contact at school (i.e., school counselors) for assistance.

Participants in this study also identified school faculty members at the research site who supported their navigation and completion of the dual enrollment process. Participants specifically referenced school counselors who supported the completion of processes required for dual enrollment. Narrative analysis of participant interviews supported students' ease of access when needing to meet or speak with a school counselor to complete processes required to apply and select coursework. Documents further supported evidence of participants meeting with school counselors at the research site through completed local school agreements and student advisement plans filed in the school counseling department.

Participants identified school counselors' availability and knowledge as a support to complete the required processes for dual enrollment. These findings contrasted research literature that reported school counselors as being inadequately prepared to advise on postsecondary options (McDonough, 2004b, 2005) and that college counseling practices varied greatly within a counseling department (Mitkos & Bragg, 2008). Observational data evidenced counselors working in tandem during dual enrollment advisement sessions to support prospective students' knowledge about dual enrollment processes.

While findings portrayed school counselors as a support, this study did not account for the level of college counseling experience between school counselors at the research site or their specific training with dual enrollment advisement. Taking this factor into consideration may have given more insight into the role of coordinating dual enrollment programs in a high school. Reflective journal entries detailed that school counselors acting as dual enrollment advisors at the research site had limited professional time due to their wealth of responsibilities. This finding was in part supported by narrative data participants provided about meeting with their school counselors a series of times to navigate dual enrollment processes. Although it may not be possible to quantify the amount of time school counselors in this study devoted to dual enrollment, findings provide support for this responsibility consuming time and resources regularly.

This study found that participants supported themselves through personal decision-making and behaviors. Participants identified reasons such as accessing rigorous coursework as well as saving money on college tuition as well as time as influences to pursue and complete dual enrollment processes. This notion supported research literature (Giani et al., 2014; Puyear, 1998; Rankin Gonzalez, 2019) for dual enrollment students having access to expanded

coursework options as well as a decreased amount of tuition and time towards completing a degree program. Research literature (Felder, 2017; Kanny, 2015; Rankin Gonzalez, 2018) supported high school students need to become aware of and receive support for dual enrollment processes to complete the necessary actions to enroll and complete a college course while in high school. Scholarship by Jenkins (2018) described a need to better understand dual enrollment student experiences in the state of Georgia. Research by Felder (2017) and Rankin Gonzalez (2018) encouraged future research to explore the experiences of individual students who had participated in dual enrollment. This study helped to address these research gaps by providing an analysis of dual enrollment participants' experiences with completing steps to apply and navigate college course(s) while enrolled in their public high school.

Theoretical discussion

I applied tenets of Lent, Brown, and Hackett's social cognitive career theory (SCCT) (2000) as a framework to understand how dual enrollment processes impacted participants' self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals. This career development theory was selected to better understand how interview participants' choices and interests related to dual enrollment processes via cultural, cognitive, and contextual attributes in their lives. Scholarship by Garrett (2015) utilized SCCT to explore how components of this theory related to choice behavior and academic performance in African American college students. Participants expressed a variety of beliefs relating to their self-efficacy before engaging in the dual enrollment application process. Participants identified perceptions that ranged from negative outcomes due to apprehension related to a lack of knowledge about how to complete required dual enrollment processes while others reflected confidence stemming from an inner drive to complete a dual enrollment course. Self-efficacy was associated with a participant's belief to use their influence and skills to attain a

goal as identified by Bandura (1997). Narrative analysis provided validation of cognitive influences related to participants' abilities who identified as being independent and proactive learners who engaged in self-advocacy and consultation with adults when necessary. This finding supported research (Caples, 2017, p. 270) on community college instructors teaching dual enrollment that identified high expectations to "step up to the challenge associated with the freedom, independence, and responsibility as a college student."

Cognitive influences related to self-efficacy through participants' identified values of a strong work ethic, graduating from high school and developing career options through dual enrollment. Narrative analysis provided evidence for these values developing greater confidence that enabled participants to complete processes to enroll and persist through dual enrollment. These values also supported Caples' (2017) research findings that dual enrollment students need to develop meta-cognitive skills (i.e., motivation, problem-solving, critical thinking) to achieve success in college coursework. Problem-solving and motivation tied directly to scenarios where participants had to access help from a dual enrollment instructor or accommodations through the institution itself. The ability to reflect and recognize when a skill or ability was limited to completing a process also enabled participants to complete processes with the aid of outside help.

Participants shared that completing dual enrollment processes was connected to perceived outcome expectations. Narrative analysis revealed expectations were expressed as completing academically rigorous classes to increase participants' competitiveness for college as well as saving time and tuition towards earning a college credential. These findings supported literature by Kim and Bragg (2008) that identified students who took dual enrollment courses were better prepared for college due to fewer participants enrolling in remedial college classes. Bolkan

(2021) expressed academic outcomes and self-efficacy were impacted by the school environment that students are exposed to. Participants' school environment influenced academic outcomes via their access to rigorous courses, adults who encouraged college attendance, and events such as dual enrollment advisement and counseling sessions that enabled successful navigation of dual enrollment processes. These environmental factors helped develop knowledge of college and dual enrollment that led to participants' identification of successful outcome expectations from engaging in dual enrollment processes. This supported Tolliver and colleagues (2019) research that high schools employing teachers and counselors who expended time to assist students in exploring college and career options enabled greater confidence in participants' abilities to identify positive outcomes.

The SCCT framework aided my exploration of how self-efficacy and outcome expectations tied back to participants' skill development and goal attainment. Personal goals were identified as either engagement in a specific activity or the attainment of an identified level of performance. Narrative analysis revealed examples of performance goals such as applying for dual enrollment as well as developing a deeper understanding of participants learning styles to manage their college courses. Choice goals were defined as an individual's "determination to engage in a particular activity or to effect a particular future outcome" (Lent et al., 1994, p. 85). A basic argument for participants' choice goals could be a decision to engage in dual enrollment processes that resulted from a desire to be better prepared for college as well as decreasing their time to earn a college credential. Future research applications of SCCT can be used to determine how performance and choice goals relate to students' outcome expectations and the specific path they choose to pursue their college or career options.

School counselors and other educators can apply constructs of SCCT to understand the choice and behaviors of students who may not be college bound but still need to develop goals geared toward attaining the desired career outcome. This study suggested that SCCT models (Lent et al., 2000) can help explain how underrepresented students developed academic interests, set academic and social-emotional goals, and persisted in their goal of attending college.

Implications

The following section will describe implications for future research on dual enrollment, considerations for equity and access, as well as school counseling practitioners' management of dual enrollment programs.

Research

This study addressed gaps in research about how the phenomenon of dual enrollment occurred in a high school setting. While findings provided insight as to how high school students experience dual enrollment before graduation, further research is required to better understand the experiences of dual enrollment students enrolled in tenth grade, students participating in dual enrollment via an eligible private institution, as well as students who choose to discontinue participation with a dual enrollment program of study before completing high school. The findings from this research study can help bolster future research examining dual enrollment as well as the work of high school counseling practitioners. This study also provided support for the use of the case study observational research (CSOR) approach and social cognitive career theory (SCCT) in research about educational processes and high school students.

A case study observational research (CSOR) approach fits well to examine dual enrollment in a high school institution. CSOR was used to integrate multiple sources of data around the real-life context of dual enrollment processes that occurred during the length of this

study. Morgan and colleagues (2017) saw the potential for observation data to provide unique contributions to research findings. A key advantage of this approach was centering observations with documents and interview data to gain a richer understanding of how dual enrollment processes occurred through the efforts of high school personnel and the experiences of student participants.

My observation collection was unique to dual enrollment research as it centered on details and information gained through attendance at training, advisement events, counseling sessions, and other consultative activities related to my role as a school counseling practitioner. A future study could seek to apply a CSOR framework to the unique classroom settings of dual enrollment courses offered on a high school campus or focus on the knowledge and experiences of high school counselors and teaching faculty who carry out roles and actions for dual enrollment. As this investigation primarily focused on observations between school counselors and high school students, future research efforts can seek to apply CSOR to examine interactions and relationships between dual enrollment students and adjunct instructors within high schools and college campuses to examine how dual enrollment processes function.

This study used social cognitive career theory (SCCT) as an orientation to understand how dual enrollment processes impacted participants' notions of self-efficacy that influenced their interests and goals to attend college. The results of this study suggest that Lent, Brown, and Hackett's (2000) model helped explain how students in this population learned to persist in their choice and performance goals and fulfill dual enrollment processes. SCCT can be applied in future studies to other high school populations such as youth who are not college bound. To better understand how vocational interests and opportunities develop for underrepresented students, further efforts are needed to explore how research orientations geared towards college

and career interests such as SCCT may apply to the educational experiences and environments of diverse adolescent populations.

Equity and access

Interview participants enrolled at the research site identified support and access to family members and school personnel with knowledge of dual enrollment programs and processes as an important factor enabling their participation. Narrative analysis reflected a need to improve equity and access to dual enrollment programs for underrepresented students enrolled at the research site to overcome barriers to participation in this study. Participants encouraged for school officials to increase access to dual enrollment courses offered on their high school campus by offering general prerequisite classes (i.e., a college literature class) for students not participating in the school's AP program. Expanded dual enrollment course options were seen as a means to enhance student and faculty awareness of dual enrollment opportunities for underrepresented students. Participants also recognized the potential benefits of school-provided transportation to a post-secondary college institution offering dual enrollment. School counselors have the unique vantage point to partner with college student affairs professionals to create events such as campus visits and opportunities for students to complete testing assessment requirements, as well as create relationships to help students and families enhance high school outcomes from dual enrollment participation. This can result in cognitive skills developed such as self-advocacy and time management as well as greater achievement outcomes such as earning college credit and deeper knowledge about experiencing a college environment.

Triangulated data identified students who participated in dual enrollment courses through three course format options: at the eligible postsecondary institution, virtually (asynchronous or synchronous) off campus, and on the campus of the research site. The course area (i.e. specific

subject), delivery model, and student's background influenced how they described their experience with dual enrollment. Roach and colleagues (2015) research on dual enrollment indicated there were increased outcomes for underrepresented students (i.e. students of color, and students from low-income families) when school systems partnered with post-secondary institutions to provide dual enrollment courses on a local high school campus.

Findings from participant interview data and field notes from observations reflected dual enrollment students enrolled in a distance learning math program through a research university were given a choice to stay on campus or take the class from home. Document analysis of the district's dual enrollment local school agreement as well as field notes and reflective summaries from observed events (i.e., the dual enrollment summit and dual enrollment advisement sessions) documented that any student taking a dual enrollment course could not loiter on their local school campus. Field notes from consultative meetings with the dual enrollment advisors referenced this policy created inequity for students from low-income families taking a dual enrollment course virtually as these students referenced having transportation issues to come to campus late or leave early depending on the scheduled time of their online course.

Underrepresented high school students experience a higher likelihood of being first-generation college students and experience barriers such as family members having greater work demands and limited time for academic engagement (Stebelton & Soria, 2021). Without access to available transportation or a policy permitting students to take an online dual enrollment course on campus restricted access to pursue advanced learning options even if students met the academic and social-emotional criteria to be eligible. This is relevant given the purpose of dual enrollment as cited by Georgia legislation (Move on When Ready Act, 2020, p. 1) was to

“promote and increase access to postsecondary educational opportunities for Georgia high school students.”

Narrative data analysis revealed a lack of knowledge for students in college prep (i.e., on-level) courses about dual enrollment in comparison to peers who were enrolled in honors or AP-level coursework at the research site. When viewed through the concept of channeling, narrative data reflected that high-achieving students were encouraged to participate in dual enrollment while students in less rigorous classes were not made aware of dual enrollment as an option. Narrative statements indicated participants' awareness of unequal access to dual enrollment information and opportunities in their school. It also depicted the necessity for teachers and school counselors to encourage students from all backgrounds to enhance awareness of dual enrollment as an option. Equitable outcomes cannot be achieved when only a portion of a school's freshman cohort is exposed to dual enrollment options. Participants outlined events where their participation in a targeted program for gifted students gained specific information about dual enrollment. Institutional data for the research site indicated that only 25% of the student population received gifted services. It is important to critically examine how information about dual enrollment is specifically delivered to better understand participation patterns amongst a high school student population.

One identified barrier to dual enrollment identified through narrative data analysis was not having access to adults with college-going knowledge and college experiences that could be shared with students. Increasing parent and caregiver awareness about early college programs such as dual enrollment could increase access for students from underrepresented backgrounds. Narrative data also revealed that enhanced systems of support for both prospective and current dual enrollment students and their families were beneficial. Interview participants identified

academic assistance for tutoring, knowledge of how to request accommodations for students with a disability or medical diagnosis, as well as learning about other resources directly on the college campus.

Participant statements identified having access to other peers who had previously participated and experienced success in dual enrollment could help enhance understanding of the time management and other skills needed to balance dual enrollment with other roles and responsibilities for prospective students. One participant referenced the benefit of consulting with a peer if the option had been available,

Especially for somebody if... you have no knowledge on the process at all... to have a student advisor almost because... they went through the process... like they did it.

So they know it better than anyone else.

The benefit of a peer dual enrollment advisor was referenced by another participant's statement about social-emotional balance, "I feel like students that have been through it, they know how to handle it because it's a completely different type of stress." Feedback from my peer review team supported the idea of including a student with dual enrollment experience at future advisement sessions as well as having dual enrollment meetings geared specifically towards parents in the future so that counselors could provide advisement on necessary processes and recommended practices (i.e., use of tutoring service, attendance at office hours, and self-advocacy) that resulted from participant feedback and narrative data. Lastly, school counselors can seek to partner with teachers to increase outreach efforts to students and parents from underrepresented backgrounds to enhance knowledge and awareness about dual enrollment and support systems to enable more equitable access. The following section will discuss the implications of the study regarding school counselors.

School counselors

School counselors served as gatekeepers in this study to dual enrollment which supported research studies (Hanson et al., 2015; Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020) as counselors enabling access to a rigorous curriculum. As the delivery model of public education has changed from in-person to virtual to a hybrid model in Georgia public high schools, it is beneficial for school counselors serving as dual enrollment advisors to evaluate the delivery model utilized for dual enrollment information, advisement, and counseling. Field notes from observed consultative meetings between school counselors employed at the research site and counseling practitioners working within my school district reflected discussions around best practices to offer students and parents dual enrollment information as face-to-face meetings, virtual live sessions, or a pre-recorded video that individuals needed to sign off on. All of these models pose benefits and barriers that must be considered in terms of the specific school populations served by counselors.

Findings from this study indicated a greater need to consider diverse student populations as well as students with special needs when delivering dual enrollment information. All information on dual enrollment that was offered virtually and in person at the site under investigation was provided in English only. This contrasted how information was delivered at the dual enrollment summit meeting offered by the school district which provided Spanish-speaking interpreters and headsets for Latinx families to listen to a translated presentation in their native language. As the summit event was provided by the district with greater resources to enable students and parents to access information, counselors at the research site could seek to replicate this support mechanism through consultation with educators outside of their building. This could result in an enhanced understanding of dual enrollment options for students and parents from

underrepresented backgrounds and potentially produce greater outcomes regarding students enrolling in rigorous coursework and attending college.

School counselors are uniquely positioned to help underrepresented student populations access dual enrollment and other advanced learning programs through their ability to partner with both high school educators and college personnel (American School Counselor Association, 2016, 2017). As the researcher, I found the complexity of dual enrollment to require a great level of knowledge, time, and care which signaled the importance of school counselors staying abreast of changes in dual enrollment policy and college admissions requirements. One participant shared needing to take and submit a college entrance exam (i.e., SAT or ACT) while another stated they were not required to do so. This contrast in responses was supported by documented changes in admissions requirements supported by literature where the University System of Georgia (2020b) waived testing requirements for one year and then required them at a later time.

As school counselors are tasked with assisting students and families with navigating the college planning process the need for ongoing consultation within and beyond their school building is critical. Field notes and reflective summaries from consultative meetings with the dual enrollment advisors throughout this study evidenced ongoing consultation with students, school counseling colleagues, and college personnel.

Finally, school counselors can help increase the social and cultural capital of students and families with reduced access to college knowledge and experiences by inviting college admissions representatives and outreach staff from diversity and inclusion programs. Access to individuals who have persisted through similar barriers can help encourage students and parents to believe more in their path to college success. Yosso (2005) referenced aspirational capital and resistant capital as forms of cultural capital that can help encourage individuals from

underrepresented backgrounds as a positive factor in seeking their goals. School counselors are uniquely trained to work with individuals from diverse backgrounds and can seek to enhance the cultural capital of students through partnering with individuals from diverse backgrounds with college experience to develop students' self-efficacy and identified goals beyond the completion of high school.

Recommendations

Throughout the course of the study, I sought to collect recommendations for dual enrollment processes from participants, school counseling colleagues, and other professionals including college personnel. Participants encouraged school counselors at the research site to make dual enrollment information more accessible to general student populations as well as to parents and caregivers. Very few participants reflected learning about dual enrollment via classroom counseling lessons, but instead through other information networks such as family, teachers, and even peers. Participants recommended for counselors to consider how online content and presentations for dual enrollment were structured. Participants shared the dual enrollment video was helpful but struggled with the amount of information due to being over an hour in length. Participants expressed that providing online video content in smaller chunks as modules would be beneficial for students to review information. This was described as taking the online presentation and separating it into fifteen to twenty minutes segments on specific topics such as student eligibility and course options, the dual enrollment application process, and the next steps for once a prospective student had been accepted to an eligible postsecondary institution.

Participants encouraged school counselors to include former dual enrollment participants in future advisement sessions offered on campus. Providing access to a peer advisor at

information sessions for dual enrollment would help students, parents, as well as high school staff and faculty members, have an enhanced understanding of the processes required to apply and participate in dual enrollment. Participants referred to the need to enhance teachers' understanding of the rigor of a dual enrollment course. Participants expressed teacher encouragement for participation as a support, but also that teacher's lack of knowledge regarding the level of difficulty served as a barrier to engaging in the application process. Participants referenced a need for having a greater idea about the depth and time necessary for dual enrollment before committing themselves to this program of study.

Participants also recommended for counselors to offer a discussion panel comprised of former dual enrollment students to provide their experience with understanding the rigor, time management, and self-regulation needed for dual enrollment to help prospective students and their parents understanding. Former participants could provide information about support mechanisms (i.e., tutoring, student disability services, attending office hours) available as well as the outcomes resulting from participation so that students and parents could determine if this was the appropriate path while completing high school graduation requirements.

One recommendation to increase student access was to provide more dual enrollment course options on the high school campus. Expanded course options were recommended for core classes required for graduation (i.e., a first-year college English course) to improve equity and graduation outcomes for more students. Providing dual enrollment course options directly on campus would support access for all students enrolled at a school. Participants also noted the benefit of high school faculty and staff members following up with prospective students interested in dual enrollment. Encouragement and genuine interest expressed by teachers were viewed as supportive by students engaging in the dual enrollment application process.

Participants stated that even when teachers were not familiar with how to apply, it was still beneficial to have someone who would engage in the required processes with them to enroll in college.

Recommendations from the dual enrollment advisors in this study called for the need to continually reflect on how counselors seek to provide dual enrollment advisement and counseling. The dual enrollment advisors reflected that delivering information virtually in the previous school year (SY2021 – 2022) helped to standardize practices but students would either not watch the required video or would be unaware of key processes required for participation. The dual enrollment advisors expressed that meeting students as a co-led group enabled greater teaming and communication about required processes in real time and shortened the meeting duration in follow-up counseling sessions. The advisors also spoke to dual enrollment as a multistep process that required a great deal of time, support, and communication for counseling practitioners to develop clarity on requirements and best practices to implement dual enrollment within the needs of their local high school. Recommendations from the peer review team encouraged future dual enrollment advisement sessions to include current/former dual enrollment students themselves as well as to provide dual enrollment information meetings sheltered for parents and caregivers.

Limitations of the Study

In qualitative research, subjectivity can serve as both a strength as well as a limitation in a study. I acknowledged my assumptions and subjectivity regarding the phenomenon of dual enrollment and the participants that were included in this study. My interest in studying this topic was fostered by my own professional experiences working with high school students and families as well as dual enrollment programs. My subjectivity is a benefit and limitation of this

study as evidence was selected for collection and the subsequent outcomes were shaped by his worldview and prior experiences.

As a first-generation American and school counselor, I specifically wanted to include individuals from underrepresented backgrounds identified in the literature (Rauschenberg & Chalasani, 2017; University System of Georgia, 2020a) to inform this study. I attempted to account for my subjectivity through member checking of interview transcripts, sharing findings with school counseling colleagues and the peer review team of school counselors and counseling educator doctoral students, and triangulating data sources to develop inferences. Even with my attempts to suspend his assumptions and prior subjective knowledge, these factors still influenced the data analysis which prevented me from seeing other patterns or themes. Knaggs (2012) stated, "this limitation is inherent to all qualitative research."

The student participants interviewed for this study represented diverse backgrounds and attended different types of public two- and four-year institutions offering dual enrollment. The study did not include participants attending an eligible independent institution. It is important to understand the experiences of students who attended or currently attend eligible independent colleges and universities in Georgia to have a greater idea of how student participation experiences are impacted by the type of institution chosen for dual enrollment.

The study was limited to student participants who were actively participating in dual enrollment and did not include any students who formerly participated in dual enrollment and who had chosen to discontinue for the 2022 – 2023 school year. Despite efforts to recruit a participant pool of students who were either continuing, starting, or formerly had participated in dual enrollment, there were no participants who discontinued dual enrollment to provide insight into their experiences. The participant pool also did not include any students who identified as

White which further limited findings to underrepresented students of color. Recruitment efforts occurred in classroom settings as well as the school counseling department, but these efforts were unsuccessful in recruiting student participants who identified as White or who had discontinued their participation in dual enrollment. The sample of participants could have been a greater representation of dual enrollment students. Without a greater inclusion of students from all backgrounds, findings from this study cannot be generalized to other populations.

Limitations to the data collection process included unique constraints such as school counseling department personnel becoming sick with COVID-19 during the collection of observations. The school counseling department adjusted operations for dual enrollment and other services (i.e., section 504 meetings, RTI meetings, individual and family counseling appointments) due to having limited staff when the school scheduler, school registrar, and a school counselor were out for over a week at a time during late September and early October. The absences of school counseling personnel caused me and other school counselors at the research site to pivot and respond to unexpected needs resulting from absent staff and faculty members.

This event caused the school counseling department to shift the local school dual enrollment deadline from the first week of October (10/7/22) to the last day of the month (10/31/22) as substantiated by an internal department memo (see Appendix O). Field notes described this document was not distributed to faculty and staff members at the research site but was still offered to accommodate walk-in students to the school counseling department that had been impacted by unexpected high school personnel absences as well as comply with the district's dual enrollment deadline of 11/1/22. This unique situation demonstrated flexibility by

dual enrollment advisors at the research site which limited dual enrollment processes for high school personnel to other studies.

Conclusion

This study addressed gaps in the research literature regarding the required processes to implement dual enrollment in a high school in Georgia. Findings described dual enrollment as a process carried out by high school personnel on a day-to-day basis with varying duties and responsibilities. This study also provided information on how high school students experience processes related to applying and participating in dual enrollment. This is a contrast to research literature (Felder, 2017) that examined dual enrollment experiences with current college students or previous dual enrollment participants. Findings from this study also contrasted research literature in that school counselors were unavailable to students for advisement and counseling services (Kanny, 2015; McDonough, 2004b, 2005; Perna, 2008). Observations collected throughout the course of the study in addition to participants' statements verified that school counselors gave a great deal of time and energy to meet with students and helped navigate dual enrollment processes. It is important to also consider other supports that participants accessed through their family and school environment to complete processes for dual enrollment. Many participants identified using layers of support including themselves to achieve successful outcomes for dual enrollment participation.

The phenomenon of dual enrollment is a complex and multifaceted process due to the variety of different elements required by students and high school personnel. This study helped to demonstrate high school students' awareness of the required process for dual enrollment which contrasted previous scholarship findings that dual enrollment students lacked information on participation (Felder, 2017) as well as that students received insubstantial support from their high

school (Kanny, 2015). Findings from this study supported research by McDonough (2004a, 2004b, 2005), Perna (2008), and the American School Counselor Association (2016, 2018, 2019) that high school counselors partnered with parents, teachers, and colleges to facilitate enhanced communication for dual enrollment opportunities.

Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) was demonstrated to be a sound theoretical framework for this descriptive single case study. SCCT was selected to explore the choices and interests of participants and can be further used by school counselors and educators to better understand how variables related to cultural, cognitive, and contextual factors in students' lives contribute to their decision-making for college and career options. This study lends support for the use of this theory in future research efforts examining the behaviors and decision-making of high school students who seek both traditional and non-traditional paths to pursuing career interests and goals.

My position as a researcher in this study required the use of reflexivity in composing the research report due to working at the research site. My prior knowledge and rapport with the efforts of students as well as counseling colleagues made impartiality difficult. Positive relationships with students and school counselors would cause a positive bias despite my desire and effort to be objective about the research site. It is also possible that participants' statements could have been positively biased due to my being a part of their school environment. Reflexivity was achieved through journaling as well as regular consultation with counseling colleagues and other professional peers to determine how my subjective outlook was shaping the evidence collection and subsequent analysis of findings.

This study is beneficial to members of the general population to understand how dual enrollment functions in public school settings. Dual enrollment participation nearly doubled in

four years in the state of Georgia (Lee, 2019; Sturgis, 2020; University System of Georgia, 2020a) which accounted for an increase greater than 325% in state costs to operate the program (Griffin & McGuire, 2018). The rise in program operation costs led to recommendations from the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts (GA DOAA) for the Georgia General Assembly to add goals and objectives for dual enrollment in the relevant state statute (Georgia Code Title 20. Education, 2021). These changes in legislation had a sweeping impact on dual enrollment eligibility due to a funding cap placed on college hours for participants as well as restricting eligibility to students in tenth through twelfth grade (Georgia Student Finance Commission, 2021). Although Georgia's dual enrollment program is well regulated by state agencies, school counselors and other educators need to understand how legislation and policy impact access to students from underrepresented backgrounds. School counselors in this study availed themselves to students through both anticipated events (i.e., dual enrollment advisement sessions) as well as unexpected situations (i.e., students in crisis) that occurred on a daily basis.

Future research endeavors are encouraged to examine the phenomenon of dual enrollment and if it is related to positive outcomes for college completion and career satisfaction. This study was unable to account for the experiences of dual enrollment students attending a private college institution as well as explore the experiences of former dual enrollment students who chose to discontinue participation. Future research should also examine how the implementation of dual enrollment policies and regulations specifically impacts measures of equity and access for underrepresented students. School counselors are also encouraged to advocate on behalf of students by partnering with district leaders, college institutions, and state policymakers who can directly influence legislative processes.

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Appendices

Appendix A – UGA Informed Consent Form

Appendix B – UGA Parental Permission Form

Appendix C – Minor Assent Form

Appendix D – Request for Permission to Access Site

Appendix E – Case Study Protocol

Appendix F – Participant Demographic Survey

Appendix G – Participant Interview Protocol

Appendix H – Participant Recruitment flyer

Appendix I – Observation Guide

Appendix J – Reflection Journal template

Appendix K – Dual Enrollment Local School Agreement

Appendix L - Dual Enrollment Student Advisement Plan

Appendix M - Dual Enrollment Checklist for 2022-23

Appendix N - School Counseling Duties

Appendix O – Internal Department Memo for Dual Enrollment Deadline Extension

Appendix A – Informed Consent

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA INFORMED CONSENT FORM

High school student experiences with dual enrollment participation

Researcher's Statement

You are being asked to participate as a CCSD high school student who enrolled and participated in a dual enrollment program during the previous school year (SY2020 – 2021) or this current school year (SY2021 – 2022). If you are interested in participating in the study, please read the additional information on the following pages, and feel free to ask questions at any point.

The information in this form will help you decide if you want to be in the study. Please ask the researcher below if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

Principal Investigator: Dr. Deryl Flynn Bailey
Program Advisor: Department of Counseling and Human Development Services
dfbailey@uga.edu; 706-583-0126 (office); 706-614-7238 (mobile)

Co-investigator: Stephen Chung
Researcher Department of Counseling and Human Development Services
SCC13968@uga.edu; 678.907.4516 (c); 770.578.3266 x 044 (O)

The purpose of this study is to learn more about how dual enrollment is implemented in a public high school setting and how institutional processes impact students experiences who participate in a dual enrollment program. Students who agree to participate will be asked to complete a demographic survey and participate in a recorded interview that is anticipated to take place for 60 – 75 minutes in total duration. Students will be asked questions pertaining to:

- *How do high school students learn about dual enrollment?*
- *Why do high school students choose to apply to a dual enrollment program?*
- *How do high school students describe the experience of participating in dual enrollment?*

Your involvement in this study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Study Procedures and Time Commitment

Participants will be asked to complete a demographic survey and participate in an audio recorded interview on their experiences with dual enrollment and school counseling services offered by their high school. Participants are expected to contribute approximately 75 – 90 minutes of their time during a one time session scheduled to take place in April or May 2022.

Risks and discomforts

Participants will encounter the common risks of simple every day, life activities and no psychological or physical harm is expected to result from participating in this study.

The probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical and psychological examinations or tests and that confidentiality is adequately protected.

Benefits

There are no anticipated benefits to you as a prospective participant. Your responses will help in the completion of a research report that will contribute to addressing gaps in research literature on dual enrollment and high school student experiences.

Confidentiality of records

Only the researcher will have access to information that identifies participants directly (e.g., name, e-mail address) and indirectly (renaming participants via the use of codes). The research will not share this information with anyone who is not connected to this research study.

The Office for Human Research Protections and departments at the University of Georgia responsible for regulatory and research oversight may access the records obtained in this study.

The principal investigator will maintain confidentiality in this research study that will only be broken in the event a participant discloses information regarding the mental health or physical safety of themselves or another individual they identify being in jeopardy. As a mandated reporter, the researcher will report allegations of child abuse or neglect or indication of suicide ideation if disclosed.

The researcher will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent unless required by law.

Participant rights

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at 706.542.3199 or irb@uga.edu.

If you agree to participate in this research study, please sign below:

_____ Name of Researcher	_____ Signature	_____ Date
_____ Name of Principal	_____ Signature	_____ Date
_____ Name of Participant	_____ Signature	_____ Date
_____ Name of Parent/Guardian	_____ Signature	_____ Date

Please keep one copy and return the signed copy to the researcher.

Appendix B – Parental Permission Form

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM
[High school student experiences with dual enrollment participation]

You are being asked to allow your child take part in a research study. The information in this form will help you decide if you want your child to be in the study. Please ask the researcher(s) below if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

Principal investigator: *Dr. Deryl Flynn Bailey*
Program Advisor *Department of Counseling and Human Development Services*
dfbailey@uga.edu; 706-583-0126 (office); 706-614-7238 (mobile)

Co-investigator: *Stephen Chung*
Researcher *Department of Counseling and Human Development Services*
SCC13968@uga.edu; 678.907.4516 (c); 770.578.3266 x 044 (O)

Your child is invited to be in this research study because he/she/they have participated in a dual enrollment program prior to graduating from high school. We are seeking to learn more about how dual enrollment is implemented in your student's school and how your student's experiences with dual enrollment and services available in their high school shape their college and career aspirations.

Individuals who agree to participate will complete one demographic survey and take part in an audiotaped interview between 60 to 75 minutes in duration. With your permission, we will collect and analyze their responses to form recommendations for educators who work with dual enrollment programs. Participation is voluntary. Anyone can stop at any time without penalty. The decision to take part or not to take part in the study will not affect your child's grades in school.

The co-investigator/researcher will take steps to protect your child's privacy by replacing your child's name with a code. The list that links the code to your child's name will be securely stored in a separate place. No identifiable information will be shared with anyone who is not connected to this research study. The principal investigator will keep the list with names long enough to ensure the accurate completion of the research report. Upon completion of the study the list with names will be destroyed, we will not use or share the de-identified data for future research.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact Stephen Chung via email (SCC13968@uga.edu) or phone (678.907.4516 or 770.578.3266 x 044). If you have any complaints or questions about your rights as a research volunteer, contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at IRB@uga.edu or 706-542-3199.

If you agree to allow your child to participate in this research study, please sign on the following page:

Appendix B – Parental Permission Form

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM
[High school student experiences with dual enrollment participation]

Name of Child:

Name of Parent/Guardian

Signature

Date

Name of Principal

Signature

Date

Name of Researcher

Signature

Date

Please keep one copy and return the signed copy to the researcher.

Appendix C – Minor Assent Form

Project Title: ***High school student experiences with dual enrollment participation***

Researcher: Stephen Chung, *SCC13968@uga.edu*; 678.907.4516 (c); 770.578.3266 x 044 (O)

Program Advisor: Dr. Deryl Bailey

Hello,

I am doing a research study about how dual enrollment works in high school and the perspectives of high school students who participate in dual enrollment. A research study is a way to learn more about people. If you decide that you want to be part of this study, you will be asked to complete a demographic survey about yourself as a high school student and participate in a 60 – 75 minute audiotaped interview. During the interview, you will be asked questions about your experiences with dual enrollment advisement and the process of enrolling in a college/university as a dual enrollment student. During the interview, you are permitted to stop participating at any time if you feel the need to do so.

The researcher believes there are no individual benefits from participating in this study. It is hoped that your responses and insights will provide recommendations to K-12 educators and college professionals about how to improve services for dual enrollment students. If you do not want to be in this research study, there will be no penalty.

When this research study is completed, the principal investigator, Stephen Chung, will present a copy of the audiotaped interview transcribed for your review to make sure your statements are accurately captured. With approval of your transcribed interview, the principal investigator will write a report about what was learned. This report will not include your name or that you were in the study.

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be. If you decide to stop after we begin, that's okay too. Your parents know about the study and have been informed that it is your right to participate.

If you decide you want to be in this study, please sign your name.

I, _____, want to be in this research study.

(Sign your name here)

(Date)

Name of Principal

Signature

Date

Name of Researcher

Signature

Date

Appendix D – Request for Permission to Access Site

Date: July 15, 2022

Stephen Chung
1124 Dekalb Avenue NE unit 3
Atlanta, GA 30307
Scc13968@uga.edu
678.907.4516

Mr. Paul Gillihan
Wheeler High School
375 Holt Rd NE, Marietta, GA 30068

Re: Request to access Wheeler High School dual enrollment students for a research study

Dear Mr. Gillihan,

I hope this letter reaches you well. I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Georgia and am doing my dissertational research on high school students perspectives on dual enrollment and the required processes to matriculate to a postsecondary institution offering dual enrollment coursework to students enrolled in the Cobb County School District. I am writing to kindly request your help on a case study of dual enrollment processes at your school and how students describe their experiences to verify my research.

Research supports interviewing students directly to determine how to better support their college aspirations, however, few studies have specifically sought to examine the perspectives and voices of students regarding how to improve advisement practices to access dual enrollment and college, especially for students from underrepresented groups. With your permission, this study is seeking to explore the following research questions (RQ) via a case study model:

- *RQ1: How is dual enrollment implemented in a public high school setting?*
- *RQ2: How do underrepresented high school students describe their experience with dual enrollment?*

The case study procedures will include:

- Interviews of students who currently or previously enrolled in a TCSG or USG dual enrollment program while enrolled at Wheeler high school. (proposed main method)
- On site observations of faculty members who serve as members of the school counseling department and individuals identified as dual enrollment coordinators
- Use of academic documents such as dual enrollment participation agreements, student schedules, and academic transcripts to confirm processes required of students to enroll in a dual enrollment program

I am seeking to conduct five (5) to seven (7) interviews with students either during non-instructional time or outside of school hours depending on the ways agreed and availability of

the interviewees. The targeted interviewees will only include students who have been accepted to a dual enrollment program while enrolled in a CCSD high school.

Other terms of collaboration:

- Participation in the study is entirely voluntary and any participants can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. Participants may also ask questions at any time and discuss any concerns with either myself (Stephen.Chung@cobbk12.org; Scc13968@uga.edu; 770.578.3266 ext. 044 (office); 678.907.4516 (cell)) or my PhD advisor Professor Deryl Bailey (dfbailey@uga.edu).
- The findings of the study will form part of my doctoral thesis
- All information provided during the interviews will be held anonymously so that it will not be possible to trace information or comments back to individual contributors.
- Information will be stored in accordance with the current Data Protection Act
- A formal confidential agreement will be signed before the study starts.

In return for the case study, your school administration and counseling department will receive a formal report that outlines student perspectives of how they experience dual enrollment with recommendations for school faculty and staff members to increase students college and career aspirations.

If you need additional information about the research project and its protocol, please feel free to contact myself or my dissertation chair, Dr. Deryl Bailey. Dr. Bailey may be reached via email at dfbailey@uga.edu, or 706-583-0126 (office) or 706-614-7238 (mobile).

I thank you in advance for your consideration and hope to hear back from you soon.

Warm regards,

Stephen Chung, M.Ed., Ed.S, NCC
PhD. Student
University of Georgia
Stephen.Chung@cobbk12.org
Scc13968@uga.edu
770.578.3266 ext. 044 (office)
678.907.4516 (cell)

Appendix E – Case Study Protocol

- A. Overview of Case Study**
- B. Data Collection Procedures**
- C. Data Collection Questions**
- D. Guide for Case Study Report**
- E. Case Study Framework**
- F. Case Study Matrix**

A. Overview of Case Study

Mission/goals – The purpose of this case study was to better understand how dual enrollment functions in a public high school setting in Georgia.

This study examined the phenomenon of dual enrollment in a public high school setting and how processes relate to underrepresented student experiences with dual enrollment. The study was guided by two research questions. The research questions for this study were, *How is dual enrollment implemented in a public high school setting?*, and *How do underrepresented high school students describe their experience with dual enrollment?*

The study followed a case study observational research method for data collection based on observations as the primary evidence that guided the analytic framework. Non-observation data was collected in the form of documents and participant interviews. Observational and non-observational data was used to identify required processes for dual enrollment within a public high school institution. Roles, responsibilities, actions, and skills were described for the faculty and staff members employed at the research site implementing processes required for dual enrollment as well as the students who apply to and participate in a in a post-secondary institution’s dual enrollment program. Observation data was positioned as the central component of the research design. This study utilized by Lent, Brown, and Hackett’s social cognitive career theory (SCCT) (2000) as a framework to understand how dual enrollment participation impacted participant’s self-efficacy, decision making, and behavior.

Findings revealed the phenomenon of dual enrollment as (1) the high school institution following legislation, regulations, and policies to deliver dual enrollment information and programs; (2) School staff and faculty members engagement in dual enrollment training, advisement, counseling, consultation, and records management to fulfill duties and responsibilities required to implement dual enrollment; (3) A student process taken to learn about, receive advisement on, and apply to participate in dual enrollment; (4) A student’s experience with taking college course(s) while enrolled in their public high school. Themes were identified as process management and support, as well as influence.

Conclusions for this study outlined that dual enrollment processes can be developed to increase equity and access for underrepresented students through examining policies and regulations for participation. This study also makes recommendations for the implementation, marketing, and management of dual enrollment for school counselors and high school administrators.

B. Data Collection Procedures

Name of contact doing field work	<i>Stephen Chung</i> <i>Department of Counseling and Human Development Services</i> <i>SCC13968@uga.edu; 678.907.4516 (c); 770.578.3266 x 044 (O)</i>
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This case study is seeking to collect observation and non-observation data regarding high school students experiences with dual enrollment and school counseling services. Participant observations will be collected to provide memos, fields notes, and reflective summaries on school counseling services/operations in a comprehensive high school setting. I will share initial observation data with school counseling staff members and dual enrollment coordinators at the proposed research site to determine the analytic framework for this study. This will entail refining the data collection process for documents and participant interviews.

Documents will be collected to corroborate how students learn about and apply to a two- or four-year institution offering dual enrollment. I will then use purposeful sampling in the form of recommendations from school counseling staff members to recruit students who currently or previously enrolled in a dual enrollment program. Parents of students recommended for participation will be contacted via email with an information letter and informed consent form outlining procedures for the study. Student participants will also receive an informed consent form outlining participation is voluntary and that they may choose to discontinue at any time.

Individuals who agree to participate will be asked to complete a demographic survey and a one-time interview anticipated to last between 60 – 75 minutes. I conducted five (5) participant interviews to support observations that were collected. Following the completion of each participant interview, I used online encrypted software to transcribe interviews prior to listening to the interview tape and writing notes and memos to develop tentative ideas about categories and relationships for thematic analysis.

C. Data Collection Questions

Primary Research Question (PRQ)	<i>How is dual enrollment implemented in a public high school setting?</i>
Secondary Research Question (SRQ)	<i>How do underrepresented high school students describe their experience with dual enrollment?</i>

D. Guide for Case Study Report

Audiences for report: School counselors, dual enrollment coordinators, high school administrators, and higher education professionals who work with dual enrollment students

E. Case Study Framework

	Stage	Activity	Task/Notes
Phase 1	Getting Started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining research Questions • Identifying possible a priori constructs 	Focus research efforts via Primary Research Questions and sub Research questions
	Selecting Cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specified population • Neither theory nor hypothesis • Theoretical Sampling 	How will I maintain theoretical flexibility?

			Name potential constraints on extraneous variation and how will I enhance external validity
	Crafting Instruments and Protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple data collection • Qualitative case study model 	How will I Use Triangulation to strengthen research findings
Phase 2	Entering the Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iterative data collection and analysis • Flexible opportunistic data collection 	How will I identify emergent themes?
	Analyzing the Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within-Case analysis • Use of documents and participant observations to corroborate required processed for dual enrollment students • Cross-Case analysis 	<p>How will I gain familiarity with data and preliminary theory generation?</p> <p>How will I look beyond initial impressions?</p>
	Shaping hypothesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iterative tabulation of evidence for each construct • Replication of logic across cases • Search for causes, i.e. the <i>Why</i> behind relationships 	<p>How will I sharpen construct definition, validity, and measurability</p> <p>How will I confirm/extend/sharpen theory</p> <p>How will I build internal validity</p>
Phase 3	Enfolding the Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparisons with conflicting literature • Comparisons with similar literature 	<p>How will i...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build internal validity, raise the theoretical level, and sharpen construct definitions • How can I improve the generalizability?
	Reaching closure	Theoretical saturation	How will I know when marginal improvements have become small?

F. Case Study Matrix

Research Subquestions <i>What do I need to know?</i>	<i>Why do I need to know this?</i>	Sampling Decisions <i>Where will I find this data?</i>	Data Collection methods – <i>What kind of data will answer these questions?</i>	Whom do I contact for access?	Data Analysis
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<i>How do high school students learn about dual enrollment?</i>	To understand how students become aware of and engaged in opportunities for a DE (Dual enrollment) program	1) Participant-observations of school counseling operations and documents. 2) High school students who previously participated in a dual enrollment program.	1) Field notes and post observation-reflective summaries 2) Semi structured participant interviews	1) Researcher as participant-observer; 2) School counselors and dual enrollment coordinators; Parents and high school students with dual enrollment experience	1) coding immediate field notes memos and summaries 2) Audio taping Transcription Coding Re-reading
<i>How do high school students apply to a dual enrollment program?</i>	To determine if students knowledge of applying to college enables them to identify a DE program, submit an application and required documents, and enroll in a college institution.	1) Academic documents outlining requirements to enroll in DE program. 2) High school students who previously participated in a DE program.	1) Academic documents available through school counseling services at the research site; online web pages outlining DE admission requirements. 2) Semi structured participant interviews	1) school counselors and dual enrollment coordinators; 2) Parents and high school students with DE experience	1) skimming, reading, and iterative interpretation via content analysis and thematic analysis. 2) Audio taping Transcription Coding Re-reading
<i>Why do high school students choose to apply to a dual enrollment program?</i>	To determine how high school students college and career aspirations influence their academic decision making to enroll in a DE program	High school students who previously participated in a DE program.	Semi structured participant interviews	Parents and high school students with DE experience	Audio taping Transcription Coding Re-reading
<i>How do high school students describe the experience of participating in dual enrollment?</i>	Collecting students perspectives will help K – 12 and higher ed professionals understand how students experience and navigate a DE program.	High school students who previously participated in a DE program.	Semi structured participant interviews	Parents and high school students with DE experience	Audio taping Transcription Coding Re-reading

Appendix F – Participant Demographic Survey

Participant Demographic Survey

Researcher: Stephen Chung

Dear Participant,

The goal of this study is to learn more about high school students experiences and perspectives on dual enrollment. The questions below will assist the researcher in writing the final research report. Your responses will be analyzed with information discussed during your interview to strengthen the credibility of research findings from this study.

Name:	
Email:	
Estimated Grade point average (self report)	High school GPA:
	College GPA:

Demographic Questions:

1. What grade are you in?
 11th 12th

2. Which grade levels have you been enrolled at Wheeler High School (select all that apply)?
 9th 10th 11th 12th

3. What is your identified race/ethnicity (select all that apply)?

<input type="radio"/> African American/Black	<input type="radio"/> Chinese	<input type="radio"/> Japanese
<input type="radio"/> White	<input type="radio"/> Filipino	<input type="radio"/> Korean
<input type="radio"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	<input type="radio"/> Hispanic/Latino	<input type="radio"/> Vietnamese
<input type="radio"/> Asian Indian	<input type="radio"/> Other Pacific Islander _____	
<input type="radio"/> Other Asian _____		

4. What is your parent/caregiver's highest level of education?

<input type="radio"/> Attended high school	<input type="radio"/> Completed high school/earned a GED
<input type="radio"/> Attended college	<input type="radio"/> Completed college/earned Associate's or Bachelor's degree
<input type="radio"/> Completed a Master's degree or equivalent	
<input type="radio"/> Completed a Ph.D., M.D., or other advanced professional degree	
<input type="radio"/> I am unsure	

5. How many people live in your household? _____

6. Who are the people who live in your home (select all that apply)?

- Mother Grandmother Step-mother Brother Aunt Cousin
 Father Grandfather Step-father Sister Uncle Unrelated
 person

7. What is the estimated yearly income of your household?

- Less than \$10,000 \$10,000 to \$19,999 \$20,000 to \$29,999
 \$30,000 to \$39,999 \$40,000 to \$49,999 \$50,000 to \$59,999
 \$60,000 to \$69,999 \$70,000 to \$79,999 \$80,000 to \$89,999
 \$90,000 to \$99,999 \$100,000 to \$149,999 \$150,000 or more

8. List any two- and/or four-year college institutions that you applied to for dual enrollment?

9. List any two- and/or four-year college institutions that you have enrolled in a dual enrollment program?

10. Current College Enrollment status

- Full Time (All classes taken via DE) Part Time (Classes taken at high school and DE)
 Inactive: Returned to high school

11. Have you participated in any of the following coursework prior to enrolling in a dual enrollment program?

11A. Support classes (i.e. math support/study skills)	YES	NO
11B. Accelerated/gifted/Target middle school classes	YES	NO
11C. Honors coursework	YES	NO
11D. AP/IB high school classes	YES	NO

12. Prior to applying to a dual enrollment program, select how frequently you met with a school counselor at your high school?

A.	B.	C.	D.	E.
Weekly	Monthly	Once a Semester	Once a School Year	I had not met w/a school counselor prior to applying for dual enrollment

13. How likely are you to you graduate from high school?

A.	B.	C.	D.	E.
Highly Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neither likely or unlikely	Somewhat likely	Highly likely

14. How likely are you to attend college once you have graduated from high school?

A.	B.	C.	D.	E.
Highly Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neither likely or unlikely	Somewhat likely	Highly likely

Appendix G - Participant Interview Protocol

Hello (*insert pseudonym name of participant*),

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study, *High school student experiences with dual enrollment participation*.

The purpose of this study is to explore how students describe their experiences with dual enrollment and services available within their high school.

To review some key points of the initial consent form previously completed, participants will encounter the common risks of simple every day, life activities and no psychological or physical harm is expected to result from participating in this virtual interview.

At any time, you are permitted to discontinue participation in this study and no punitive actions will take place as a result. To accurately capture your words and statements, this interview will be audio recorded via the researcher's UGA Zoom account. Upon completion of the interview, I (the researcher) will download the digital audio-recording to a personal laptop device that will only be accessible to the researcher. The interview will be transcribed using online data encrypted software and will be presented to you following the completion of all participant interviews to review for accuracy. Upon completion of this study, the researcher will destroy all audio-recordings.

Prior to beginning the interview, I will do a quick check to verify the recording is working properly. If you have any questions or need to take a break at any time please let me know.

Research Questions (RQ)	Interview Question (IQ)
<p><i>RQ1: How is dual enrollment implemented in a public high school setting?</i></p> <p><i>RQ2: How do underrepresented high school students describe their experience with dual enrollment?</i></p>	<p>IQ1: Tell me about yourself and your high school experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe yourself as a student before participating in dual enrollment. Describe your knowledge and expectations about college before participating in dual enrollment? <p>IQ2: Please describe college expectations in your family.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your earliest memories about college in your family? Did your parents or extended family members attend college? Do your parents/caregivers engage you in conversations about college. <p>IQ3: Describe your experience with applying to dual enrollment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you learn about program requirements? How did you complete the application process? Who could you seek assistance from if you were stuck or had questions? How were you notified about being accepted?

Describe any specific documents needed to complete your enrollment (i.e. financial aid form, school transcripts, test scores).

- Describe individuals or events that helped or hindered your ability to complete the application process.

IQ4: Please describe your experiences regarding dual enrollment.

- How did you learn about the program? Why did you decide to participate?

IQ5: Describe your knowledge of required dual enrollment processes for Wheeler students.

- Did you attend a DE information session?
- Did you complete a DE information session quiz?
- Did you apply to the college/university of your choice prior to the 10/7/22?
- What are the two required documents to participate in dual enrollment?
- How did you complete the Dual Enrollment funding application?

IQ6: Describe your experience with attending college classes?

- Describe your experience with selecting coursework. How did you learn to register for classes? Describe any individuals that assisted you with course selection (i.e. parent, teacher, counselor, college staff) and the role they played?
- How is your DE class different from a WHS course?
- How much time do you have to prepare for weekly on your DE class?
- How would you describe the level of rigor for your DE class vs WHS courses?
- Describe other processes you felt were important to know as a new dual enrollment student.

IQ7: In your own words, describe your experiences with orientation with regard to your DE program.

- How did you decide which course(s) to take? How many courses did you take?
- Describe your knowledge about course transferability. Were you advised on the transferability of courses you selected? If so, by whom and what did that process look like?

IQ8: Please describe any interactions with your school's dual enrollment coordinator.


- Do you know who the dual enrollment coordinator is? Was there any information you wish you had received during the advisement process that you were not aware of?

IQ9: Do you have any recommendations for individuals (i.e. teachers, counselors, principals) who work with students interested in dual enrollment.

	IQ10: Please feel free to offer any other thoughts or perspectives that may not have come up during our time together.
--	---

Appendix H – Participant Recruitment flyer

DO YOU HAVE EXPERIENCE
PARTICIPATING IN DUAL ENROLLMENT?
If so, I would love to speak with YOU!

Students are eligible to participate if:	
 <p>The illustration shows a male student in a graduation cap and gown. He is holding a 'UNIVERSITY TRANSCRIPT' in his left hand and a 'HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA' in his right hand. In the background, there is a banner that says 'GRAD-ULATION of 2021'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently enrolled at <input type="text"/> HS this semester • 16 yrs of age or older • Current or previous participation in Dual Enrollment during the Spring or Fall 2022 Semester

Commitment to participate in this research study includes:

One semi structured interview + One demographic survey

Each interview is anticipated to last between 60 – 75 minutes. Interviews can occur in person or online at a time convenient for you! Parental consent is required to participate. 😊

If you are interested in participating in this study, please contact
Stephen Chung ~ Stephen.Chung@cobbk12.org ~ 770.578.3266 x 044
Dr. Deryl Bailey ~ dfbailey@uga.edu ~ Advisor, University of Georgia

Appendix H - Observation Guide

Date/Time	
Location/setting of observation	
Names/ positions of individuals being observed	
Specific activities /events related to the research questions	
Initial impressions and interpretations	
Additional notes	

Appendix J – Reflection Journal template

The template below will include the details of what the researcher did, thought, and felt while analyzing the data. Thereafter, the rationale behind those thoughts and percepts are recorded.

Reflection Journal entry date/time: _____

Summary of the observed event: _____

Description: What was occurring? Who was present?	
Emotion: What was I thinking? What was I feeling?	
Evaluation: What seemed to be positive and/or negative about the occurrence? What assumptions and/or biases came up for me?	
Analysis: What barriers or supports were presented in this event?	
Conclusion: What was learned through this event and what will I do with this new insight? What else could I have done to capture more evidence?	
Describe any presuppositions, experiences, as well as actions and rationales that came up during the research process.	
Action plan: How can I be critically reflective in future? How can I make improvements?	
Other: Do this event confirm or deny other collected evidence? How does this event tie back to the research questions?	

Appendix K - Dual Enrollment Local School Agreement



ACADEMIC DIVISION
INNOVATE. COLLABORATE. LEAD.

County School District School Dual Enrollment (DE) Local School Agreement (LSA)

Student Name _____ Student ID _____ Current Grade Level _____

9th Grade Entry Date: _____ Anticipated Dual Enrollment (DE) College(s): _____

The student is applying for DE to begin in the following school term(s) (circle): Summer 20____ Fall 20____ Spring 20____

Enrollment options (please select one):

- The student plans to attend college full time
 The student plans to attend part time college/part time high school
 The student plans to enroll for the summer term only

*****Student and Parent, please read and initial each section below.*****

_____/_____
 Student participation in any DE program as defined in CCSD Administrative Rule IDCH-R Dual Enrollment Programs is a student choice. Because this choice exists for students, it is the responsibility of the student and the parent/guardian to be knowledgeable about the program and its positive and/or negative effects upon high school graduation, grade point averages, HOPE eligibility, college admissions, and credit transferability, as well as any financial obligations outside the covered tuition and fees.

_____/_____
ELIGIBILITY:

A student shall be eligible to participate in the DE program if he/she:

1. Is enrolled in a Cobb County School District high school, and
2. Has not received a high school diploma, and
3. Meets admission requirements and has been accepted by an eligible DE college, and
4. Is an 11th or 12th grader OR an eligible 10th grader based on HB 444 exceptions.
5. Continued eligibility is contingent upon successful dual enrollment course completion.

_____/_____
STUDENT PARTICIPATION:

- DE colleges do NOT follow the Cobb County School District calendar
- DE students are NOT to loiter on the CCSD campuses when the college class is not in session (ie Media Center, Cafe, Gym, athletic fields, etc.)
- Part-time DE students must be flexible regarding their CCSD and college schedule. College courses should be scheduled around CCSD courses.

Participation in DE requires the student to:

1. Follow the rules and regulations of the college and Cobb County School District.
2. Maintain regular communication with the student's school counselor while in any DE program.
3. Complete Dual Enrollment Funding Application on www.gastates.com by the posted deadline.
(Must be completed prior to financial aid approval)
4. Provide to the high school a signed copy of the DE Local School Agreement
5. Meet with the high school counselor each semester to complete a High School DE Advisement Session
6. Provide to the high school a copy of the detailed college schedule upon class registration
7. Obtain DE high school counselor approval before any changes are made to the college schedule
8. Request and sign forms needed to authorize the college to notify the CCSD of the student's grade in each course
9. Provide own transportation
 - a. Students are expected to arrive on time for all High School courses. Please allow for appropriate travel time. Tardies and absences due to DE may not be excused.
 - b. Parking on the high school campus may not be guaranteed for DE students.
10. Ensure high school receives official college grades by stated deadline in order to participate in graduation activities.

_____/_____
STATE ASSESSMENT:

1. Students are required to take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Course (EOC) assessment if they do not already have HS credit for Biology and American Literature. EOC assessments count 20% of the final grade. Other DE Courses taken at a college are exempt from the EOC.
2. Courses taken by the student at the college may contain some but not all of the concepts and topics taught in high school and assessed on the EOC.
3. It is the student's responsibility to obtain study materials and prepare for the EOC.

_____/_____
COURSE CREDIT:

1. The student must be classified as a full time student for fall and spring semesters. Full time status can be established in multiple ways:
 - a) Part Time HS Block schedules: Student must take a minimum of four (4.0) high school credits per semester between the high school and the college
 - b) Part Time HS Traditional schedules: Student must take a minimum of three (3.0) high school credits per semester between the high school and college
 - Students who select option a) or b) and are classified as 12th graders may choose minimum day, which reduces the HS schedule by one class period, according to Board Policy IED-R. Students who opt into minimum day must take at least one high school credit-bearing course.
 - c) Full-time College enrollment: Student must be enrolled in at least 12 college credit hours. Most college courses receive 3 credit hours.
 - Minimum Day is **not** an option for students attending the college full-time based on the state regulations for full-time DE requirements.
2. **The maximum number of hours that are covered by DE funding per semester is 15 total college credit hours.**

ONE TEAM. ONE GOAL. STUDENT SUCCESS.

3. The total maximum "lifetime" number of hours that are covered by DE is 30 semester hours/45 quarter hours.
 - Students can choose to pay for approved DE courses beyond 30 hours
4. The semester/quarter hours awarded by the postsecondary institution will be converted to high school credits on the student's transcript as follows:

College Hours	High School Credit
1-2 Semester OR 1-3 Quarter Credit Hours	0.5 High School Credit
3-5 Semester Credit Hours OR 4-8 Quarter Hours	1.0 High School Credit

5. Most grades earned at the college will not receive additional quality points toward the high school GPA; however, additional quality points may be given for DE courses after the student has taken the highest instructional level in a specific subject area available at their high school (CCSD Admin Rule IDCH-R). The DE course must be a higher level than the HS course. This will potentially impact GPA. Students should consider course selection carefully.
6. A student may not repeat or retake a DE course, even if the postsecondary school makes this recommendation. Courses completed at the high school can be repeated at the college if an alternate DE course number exists.
7. Students must select from approved core and CTAE courses in the DE Course Directory, published on www.gafutures.org
 - a. Courses not listed in the Course Directory are not eligible for DE funding, will not count toward full time status, and will not be awarded high school credit
 - b. Any course taken beyond the 30 hour DE cap must be funded by the student/parent.

COURSE INCOMPLETION, WITHDRAWAL, OR FAILURE:

1. If a student withdraws from a DE course after the first ten days of the **CCSD High School term** regardless of the college drop/add and withdrawal policies, the withdrawing student will receive a grade of 10 in the course on the high school transcript according to CCSD Admin Rule IIA-R.
2. Students become ineligible to continue to receive DE funding for future terms after their 2nd course withdrawal.
3. A student's graduation may be delayed if:
 - A student withdraws from, is dropped from, or fails a course needed for graduation.
 - A course is audited rather than taken for credit.
 - A student withdraws from a college class or fails a college class needed for graduation and is unable to enroll in a district high school or college course that will allow on-time graduation. (Note: not every course is offered every semester.)
 - A student withdraws from a college class and enters a high school class, potentially missing course content.

COMPETITIVE ACTIVITIES:

To be eligible to participate, practice, and/or try out in interscholastic activities, a student must be academically eligible. A student is required to pass classes that carry at least 2.5 Units counting toward graduation the semester immediately preceding participation (Georgia High School Association Constitution and By-Laws). Other eligibility concerns may be confirmed with the athletic director. Students and parents will need to consider whether practices, games, etc. will interfere with the completion of postsecondary course requirements.

DUAL ENROLLMENT APPLICATION, FUNDING APPLICATION, AND FEES:

**Students are required to complete Dual Enrollment Funding Application annually at www.gafutures.org.

1. Student application deadlines (**Students must adhere to these CCSD deadlines unless the college admission and funding deadline is earlier.**)
 - Fall – College Application and Dual Enrollment Funding Application are due by **May 1**
 - Spring – College Application and Dual Enrollment Funding Application due by **November 1** (if enrolling for the first time).
 - Summer – College Application and Dual Enrollment Funding Application due by **May 1** (if enrolling for the first time).
2. DE funding is capped at 30 semester/45 quarter hours for all students.
3. An eligible student must be enrolled in an approved eligible core academic area course(s) in English, math, science, social sciences and world (foreign) languages, and Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) career pathway course(s) listed on the Dual Enrollment Course Directory.
4. Students who wish to pursue High School Option B, please see the LSA addendum for additional regulations and funding options.
5. DE students may be responsible for additional fees or supplies required for particular courses or optional fees charged by the postsecondary institution.
6. Students who wish to take more than the funded 30 DE courses must self-pay required tuition, fees, books, and any other related expenses. Courses must be chosen from the DE Course Directory.
7. The student is responsible for tuition and fees for any course taken that is not in the DE Course Directory or on the student's DE application. These courses will **NOT** be awarded high school credit nor will they count toward full time status.
8. DE courses in degree-level core academic subjects (found on the HOPE eligible list at www.gafutures.org) are included in determining a student's High School HOPE GPA. HOPE eligible courses are given an additional 0.5 weight in the High School HOPE GPA calculation up to a GPA maximum of 4.0. The HOPE GPA can be found at www.gafutures.org and is NOT on the high school transcript.
9. DE courses/grades are NOT included in a student's college HOPE/Zell Miller GPA checkpoint calculations, attempted hours, and/or paid hour limits.
10. Low and/or failing grades in DE classes will impact initial HOPE GPA calculation negatively and may impact ability to earn HOPE and federal funding in the future.

We have read and understand all the conditions and procedures outlined in the DE contract. We understand that we must abide by high school rules and requirements, which may differ from college rules and requirements.

Student Signature _____ Date _____
 Parent Signature _____ Date _____

ONE TEAM.ONE GOAL.STUDENT SUCCESS.

⇒ **OPTION B - High School Postsecondary Graduation Opportunity (formerly SB2)**

To be completed **ONLY** by students pursuing their high school diploma through these alternate requirements:

See Page 3 <https://bit.ly/DEOptionB>

i. **Check Below indicating which Post-Secondary credential will be earned:**

- Associate Degree
- Technical College Diploma
- Two (2) Technical College Certificates (TCCs) on Approved SB2 list <https://bit.ly/DEOptionBareas>

ii. **Program of Study Area in which credential will be completed**

_____ (ex: Welding or World Language, etc.)

Dual Enrollment funds up to 30 semester hours/45 quarter hours.

Total Previously Eamed and In Progress DE hours: _____ Total Proposed DE hours (as listed above): _____

Total Remaining DE hours (for future terms): _____

Notes:

Student Name Printed _____ **Date** _____

Student Signature _____

Student Phone Number _____

Student Email _____

Parent/Guardian Name Printed _____ **Date** _____

Parent/Guardian signature _____

Parent Phone Number _____

Parent Email _____

HS DE Advisor/Counselor Name Printed _____ **Date** _____

HS DE Advisor/Counselor Signature _____

Phone Number _____

Email _____

Appendix M - Dual Enrollment Checklist for 2022-23

Dual Enrollment Checklist for 2022-23

After determining that you want to participate in Dual Enrollment, it is your responsibility to research which college you want to enroll in and which courses you want to take. Participating colleges and course directory on www.gafutures.org

All the following steps **MUST** be completed by the dates indicated in order to participate in the Dual Enrollment (DE) program during the 2022-23 school year (including Summer 2022):

✓ when complete	Final Deadline	Required Steps
	April 1, 2022	<u>Attend [REDACTED] Dual Enrollment Summit or Make Up Recorded Information Session.</u> This may be completed by attending the CCSD DE Summit or watching the recording. Submit the attendance survey at the end, which is also your transcript request. (This is only needed if you are NEW to Dual Enrollment.)
	April 1, 2022	All new <i>and returning</i> students must watch and sign off on the Dual Enrollment Key Points Video in order to complete an advisement session with Mrs. T [REDACTED] or Ms. M [REDACTED].
	April 1, 2022 (or college deadline, whichever is earlier)	<u>Apply to the college/university of your choice.</u> (Hint: do a Google search for the college name and “dual enrollment” to get to the page needed.) You are responsible for following the college application procedures, submitting all required documents (such as transcript, test scores, and anything else required by the college) on time. <u>Deadline is no later than April 1, 2022 – or the college deadline, whichever is earlier.</u>
	April 1, 2022	<u>Submit two required documents to Counseling.</u> Complete CCSD Local School Agreement in full, with student/parent signatures. Complete <u>only</u> the top section (to the first solid line) of CCSD DE Student Advisement Plan and student/parent signatures. Electronic signatures are acceptable. Email the completed forms to [REDACTED]@[REDACTED].org and [REDACTED].12.org.
	April 1, 2022	<u>Complete the online Dual Enrollment funding application on Gafutures.org</u> 1. Go to www.gafutures.org and login or create an account 2. On the left side of the main page, click on “My Dual Enrollment Profile” 3. Click HERE for student directions to complete the funding application <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sure you enter your Social Security Number and birthdate correctly • Be sure that you select the correct college where you are participating in DE • Be sure that you select [REDACTED] Senior High School ([REDACTED]) as your school 4. Your parents will receive an email to complete the “Parent Acknowledgment” which is REQUIRED to process your tuition. Click HERE for parent directions.
	April 1, 2022	<u>Schedule Advisement appointment with [REDACTED] Counseling.</u> Students with last names A-M will meet with Ms. M [REDACTED] and students with last names N-Z will meet with Ms. [REDACTED]
	May 13, 2022	Meet with your college advisor to set your college schedule and register for your classes. <u>Provide Ms. M [REDACTED] and Ms. [REDACTED] a copy of your final schedule.</u>

April 1st is the deadline for summer and fall semester Dual Enrollment changes or new participants.

Failure to complete all steps by above deadlines will result in student not being eligible to participate in the Dual Enrollment program for the following school year.

Appendix N - School Counseling Duties

MI-Q	G-J	A-Ce	Ch-F	R-S	K-Me	T-Z
General	General	General	General	General	General	General
Graduation status monitor	Graduation status monitor	Graduation status monitor	Graduation status monitor	Graduation status monitor	Graduation status monitor	Graduation status monitor
12 th Grade Scheduling	12 th Grade Scheduling	12 th Grade Scheduling	12 th Grade Scheduling	12 th Grade Scheduling	12 th Grade Scheduling	12 th Grade Scheduling
11 th Individual Advisement	11 th Individual Advisement	11 th Individual Advisement	11 th Individual Advisement	11 th Individual Advisement	11 th Individual Advisement	11 th Individual Advisement
Parent/Team Meetings	Parent/Team Meetings	Parent/Team Meetings	Parent/Team Meetings	Parent/Team Meetings	Parent/Team Meetings	Parent/Team Meetings
Individual/Group Counsel	Individual/Group Counsel	Individual/Group Counsel	Individual/Group Counsel	Individual/Group Counsel	Individual/Group Counsel	Individual/Group Counsel
Core Curriculum Delivery	Core Curriculum Delivery	Core Curriculum Delivery	Core Curriculum Delivery	Core Curriculum Delivery	Core Curriculum Delivery	Core Curriculum Delivery
Student Crisis Response	Student Crisis Response	Student Crisis Response	Student Crisis Response	Student Crisis Response	Student Crisis Response	Student Crisis Response
New Enrollment	New Enrollment	New Enrollment	New Enrollment	New Enrollment	New Enrollment	New Enrollment
Letters of Rec/Transcripts	Letters of Rec/Transcripts	Letters of Rec/Transcripts	Letters of Rec/Transcripts	Letters of Rec/Transcripts	Letters of Rec/Transcripts	Letters of Rec/Transcripts
Transcript Eval/Transcribe	Transcript Eval/Transcribe	Transcript Eval/Transcribe	Transcript Eval/Transcribe	Transcript Eval/Transcribe	Transcript Eval/Transcribe	Transcript Eval/Transcribe
Academic Status Notification	Academic Status Notification	Academic Status Notification	Academic Status Notification	Academic Status Notification	Academic Status Notification	Academic Status Notification
Course Advisement	Course Advisement	Course Advisement	Course Advisement	Course Advisement	Course Advisement	Course Advisement
Career Center OOH	Career Center OOH	Career Center OOH	Career Center OOH	Career Center OOH	Career Center OOH	Career Center OOH
Lunch Workshops	Lunch Workshops	Lunch Workshops	Lunch Workshops	Lunch Workshops	Lunch Workshops	Lunch Workshops
Duties	Duties	Duties	Duties	Duties	Duties	Duties
Dual Enrollment	HHB	504 Coordinator	504 Coordinator	RTI Meeting Facilitator	504 Coordinator	Dual Enrollment
Naviance Contact	GAVS/CVA Contact	College Visit Contact	Ombudsman Contact	Cobb Horizon Contact	GAVS/CVA Contact	NCAA/NAIA Contact
National Merit	STAR Student	New Student Group	National Merit	GA Scholars	AJC/Ray Kroc	HOPE
Area	Area	Area	Area	Area	Area	Area
Magnet	Off Track	Magnet	Ombudsman	STEAM	ESL/IEL	AVID
Programming	Programming	Programming	Programming	Programming	Programming	Programming
Junior Advisement Lead	FAFSA Completion Event	Sophomore Advisement Lead	Academic Signing Day	8th Grade Articulation	2 Year/Trade Apply to	Apply to College Day
11th Grade Night	12th Grade Night	10th Grade Night	Financial Aid Night	Signs of Suicide	9th Grade Night	Senior Seminar
11th Grade Lessons	Senior Seminar	10th Grade Lessons	10th Grade Lessons	11th Grade Lessons	9th Grade Lessons	9th Grade Lessons

Appendix O – Internal Department Memo for Dual Enrollment Deadline Extension

██████████ Dual Enrollment

Priority Deadline for Spring Participation has passed

We will accept documents until the

██████████ Late Submission Deadline

of Monday, October 31st

Please scan the QR codes below to complete the process:

<p>Wheeler Dual Enrollment Website</p> 	<p>Wheeler Dual Enrollment Checklist</p> 
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