College acceleration opportunities can set students up for success. But before this can happen, states need to thoughtfully advance college acceleration opportunities that prioritize quality, value, equity and access for all students. *Accelerating Students from High School to College and Careers* presents the benefits of these opportunities, examines the challenges facing states and identifies the nine non-negotiables they need to embrace to guarantee high-quality college acceleration opportunities for their students.

Read the full playbook at ExcelinEd.org/CollegeAcceleration.

9 NON-NEGOTIABLES FOR HIGH-QUALITY COLLEGE ACCELERATION OPPORTUNITIES

States can address the challenges to college acceleration opportunities by delivering on student value, expanding access and addressing the needs of underrepresented students. ExcelinEd's list of non-negotiables can help.

Quality *and* Value

1. Data Collection and Analysis

States collect, analyze and publicly report student outcome data on college acceleration opportunities and use the data to strengthen access, quality and student success.

What Can States Do?	States can fund the data collection, analysis and research to help create better college acceleration opportunities for students. This data analysis, at the very least, should follow the student from high school, through postsecondary education and to the workforce. Armed with this data, states can better understand whether certain acceleration opportunities have improved students' likelihoods of completing high school, entering postsecondary education, completing a college credential program on schedule and entering the workforce in a mid- or high-wage job. This data will also enable states to examine where financial investments have led to future student success and identify which college acceleration opportunities yield better returns for students' and the state's investments.
What Can Postsecondary Institutions Do?	Postsecondary institutions can use student outcome data to evaluate the success of their programs. This will help institutions analyze the inputs of the college acceleration opportunities—such as instructors, curriculum or the mode of delivery—and make recommendations to the state regarding guidelines for the acceptance of college credit.
What Can Schools Do?	Schools can use student outcome data to see if an offering or instructor leads to better future student outcomes. For example, are there differences in future student success when a student takes a dual credit English composition course or an AP English composition at a school? And what is High School Educator X doing that High School Educator Y is not to help improve student success in X's classroom?

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Schools can also share the analysis with students and parents to allow the students to make informed choices about college acceleration opportunities that align with their wishes and career pathway.

2. Input Reviews

Postsecondary institutions, K-12 and providers regularly review the standards, instructional materials, educator qualifications, exams, student outcome data and vertical linkages of offerings to ensure quality.

States can require postsecondary institutions and K-12 schools to periodically review the standards, curriculum, instructional materials, educator qualifications, exams and vertical linkages to ensure the quality of college acceleration opportunities. States should consult with these postsecondary institutions and K-12 schools to determine the frequency of the reviews, as well as whether external evaluators should be used to assist in the quality review.

3. Consistent Guidelines

States adopt consistent credit acceptance and transfer guidelines across K-12 and postsecondary institutions to ensure quality opportunities that offer students valuable credit.

The state can enact guidelines to ensure consistent application of college credit among K-12, two-year and four-year institutions. These guidelines must be informed by student outcome data.

4. Defined and Articulated Pathways

States ensure opportunities are part of a clearly defined and articulated pathway to a postsecondary credential.

What Can States Do?	States can review their CTE pathways to incorporate college acceleration opportunities where appropriate. The state review will require the state agencies responsible for education, higher education and workforce to work with employers and industry to clearly define the pathways.
What Can Postsecondary Institutions and K-12 Schools Do?	Postsecondary and K-12 can work in concert with state, regional and local employers and industries. Together, they can identify employer demand, ensure pathways are rigorous and aligned to employer need, and confirm that college acceleration opportunities are embedded in career pathways along with industry-valued credentials. These pathways must be linked to middle- and high-wage jobs. These entities can then inform students and parents about these pathways.

Equity *and* Access

5. Plurality of Student Options

School districts offer a plurality of opportunities in all high schools to ensure students can select opportunities that align with their chosen career pathways.

States can require schools to offer a plurality of college acceleration options and in multiple subjects. To ensure equitable access, states could use a variety of incentives or competitive grants to expand these opportunities for students. And the state must audit and regularly review offerings to ensure these opportunities are being offered.

Indiana, for example, requires all high schools to provide at least two course offerings in dual credit and AP. (Or the high school can use at least two Cambridge AICE courses.) Florida requires each high school to offer IB, Cambridge AICE or a combination of at least four courses in dual credit or AP.

6. Student Cost

States ensure that opportunities are available for little or no cost to the student.

States can fund college acceleration opportunities to eliminate costs for students. The funding should cover all the costs of enrolling. Cost-savings would be realized by:

1. Ensuring the cost of dual enrollment courses are equal to or less than the cost of the postsecondary course outside of the dual credit program and
2. Requiring districts to share a student's funding while the student is enrolled in a dual enrollment course with the postsecondary institution in which the dual credit is attempted.

The cost-sharing arrangement would be affected by the instructor providing the dual enrollment instruction (college faculty versus high school educator).

7. Multiple Measures for Student Eligibility

Postsecondary institutions and schools use multiple measures of student eligibility to allow students to enroll in opportunities, especially low-income and traditionally underrepresented students.

States can take a holistic approach to student eligibility. They can use a standardized assessment score but specify other metrics that allow a student to demonstrate their ability to succeed in dual credit, such as school grades or a portfolio of work. Additionally, states can encourage postsecondary institutions to look beyond a single score, including the use of grants or incentives to these institutions to not only enroll more students but help them succeed.

Educators *and* Advisors

8. Educator Training

States and school districts ensure that educators in all schools receive appropriate training to teach college acceleration opportunities.

What Can States Do?   States can partner with organizations like the College Board and others to expand college acceleration opportunities for more students by training future educators. States can also incentivize postsecondary institutions to train educators and encourage educators to earn the credentials needed to teach dual credit. These incentives could

also target school districts, prompting them to encourage educators to participate in the training and become qualified college acceleration opportunity instructors.

What Can Schools Do?   Schools can create incentives to encourage classroom teachers to become qualified college acceleration opportunity educators.

9. Student Advisement

Schools notify students in all schools of available opportunities and use state indicators to identify low-income and traditionally underrepresented students with the potential to succeed in college acceleration opportunities. Schools notify students and their parents of the credit transferability for each college acceleration option before students enroll.

What Can States Do?   States can require schools to notify students of available college acceleration options, along with the thresholds for earning college credit and the applicability of the college credit to the student's credential program of interest. States can also help with the initial identification of students capable of succeeding in college acceleration opportunities—especially low-income and underrepresented students—by using assessment scores or other required metrics.

What Can Postsecondary Institutions Do?   Postsecondary institutions can help students by clearly posting on their websites, applications and other materials the criteria for the award of college credit and how it can apply to credential programs. These institutions can work with schools to clearly identify the criteria for college credit acceptance that students would need to know before enrolling in the college acceleration opportunities.

What Can Schools, Educators and Advisors Do?   Schools and their educators and advisors can ensure all students are aware of college acceleration opportunities, the alignment of these opportunities with student interest and chosen pathway, as well as the criteria for acceptance of college credit before students enroll in these opportunities.