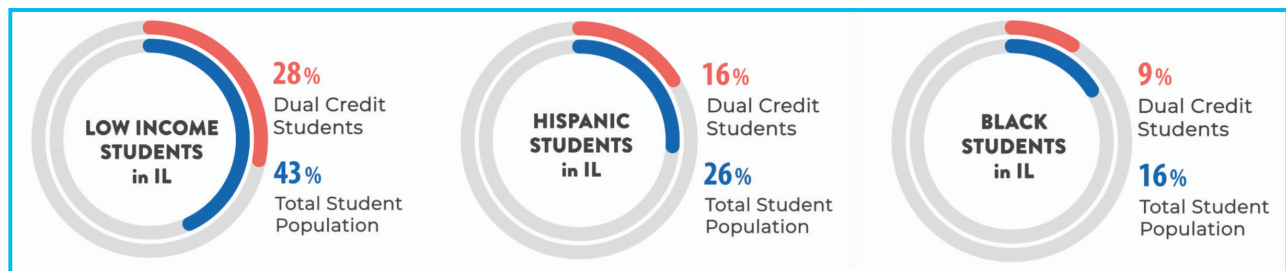


# ADVANCE EQUITY WITH ACADEMIC ACCELERATION

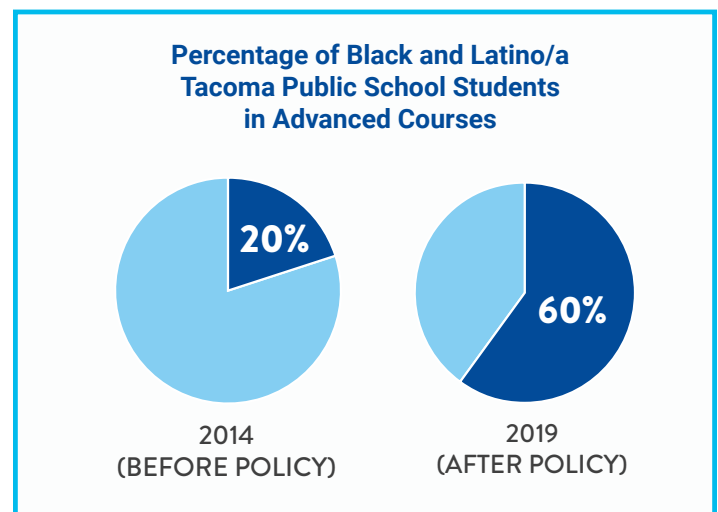
A new state law requires school districts to put in place automatic enrollment policies by the 2023-2024 school year. These policies would automatically enroll Illinois high school students into the next level of advanced coursework if the student meets or exceeds state standards on the state assessment in the corresponding subject area. This eliminates identification barriers and potential bias in enrollment practices. Now, students will have an additional pathway into advanced courses, which they previously might not have known about or known they were qualified to take. **The law would not restrict access to other students who a school chooses to enroll; it would simply add another avenue to increase equitable access.** Parents and students would still have option to instead have the student enroll in alternative coursework that better aligns with the student's postsecondary education or career goals. For high school seniors, the accelerated course into which they are enrolled must give them the opportunity to earn early college credit, such as a Dual Credit or AP course.

**Illinois has deep disparities in enrollment in advanced coursework.** Currently, only 10% of Illinois students take Dual Credit courses, but nearly 40% of 8th graders demonstrated English Language Arts proficiency on the Illinois Assessment of Readiness. Though Black students make up 16% of Illinois' student enrollment, Black students represent just 9% of the enrollment in Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Credit courses. This has far-reaching implications: **high school students enrolled in college courses are more than twice as likely to earn a college degree.** Unfortunately, missed opportunities to take enrichment or higher-tracked courses early in a student's educational career often define their ability to eventually access college-level courses in high school. Whether they were excluded due to implicit bias, unawareness, lack of confidence, or other reasons, **academic acceleration policies change the odds for students.**



**This Policy Made a Huge Difference in the State of Washington.** The Illinois law is modeled on a Washington state law that was recently enacted after pilot programs resulted in dramatic increases in enrollment in advanced courses among underrepresented students:

- In the first district to pilot, **80% of students met proficiency on state reading and writing exams, but only 30%** – disproportionately white and Asian – took advanced coursework.
- Since the district's academic acceleration initiative 2010, it has improved enrollment in advanced classes, with **enrollment now reflecting the racial diversity** of the district.
- **Ninety-two percent of students pass their advanced courses**, and every racial cohort there has pass rates of at least 87%.
- In another district, Tacoma Public Schools **doubled its enrollment in advanced courses** overall and tripled enrollment among historically underserved racial cohorts.



For more information, visit [dualcreditequity.org](https://dualcreditequity.org) or contact Government Affairs Director Jessica Handy at [jhandy@stand.org](mailto:jhandy@stand.org) or 312-404-0223