

eTranscript California Task Force Report Out

Overview

The Office of Cradle-to-Career Data convened the eTranscript California & Career Passport Task Force for the purpose of: 1) providing concrete, actionable recommendations for how to leverage eTranscript California to reduce administrative burden for students; 2) clarifying complementary systems and processes that are necessary to attain the concept of a Career Passport that would support skills-based hiring; and 3) documenting specific steps that various entities are ready to take in the next three years to advance this vision.

The taskforce is made up of representatives from the Association for Independent California Colleges & Universities (AICCU), The Wonderful Company (representing California Chamber of Commerce), California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO), California Department of Education (CDE), California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), California Federation of Teachers (CTA), California Labor & Workforce Development Agency (LWDA), California State Board of Education (SBE), California State University Chancellor's Office (CSU), California Volunteers, Governor's Office of Business & Economic Development (GO-Biz), University of California Office of the President (UC), and a student.

February 15, 2024 Meeting

After learning about the difficulties that dual enrollment students experience getting credit for early college course taking, the task force considered two potential solutions: integrating transcript requests into college applications and creating a California postsecondary transcript standard.

Application Integration

The task force considered three foundational issues:

- Colleges require an official transcript from the community college(s) where dual enrollment coursework was taken, but students lack streamlined ways to report dual enrollment
- Inconsistent transcription processes may impact admissions decisions
- Current data structures make it difficult to track dual enrollment coursetaking

Based on the successful model already in place, whereby the California College Guidance Initiative (CCGI) passes high school transcripts to CSU and UC as part of the

application process, the task force considered the following potential solutions:

- Send CCC coursework data from eTranscript California to CCGI to create a unified high school transcript that includes dual enrollment information
- Populate the CCC, CSU, and UC admissions applications with CCC coursework data to reduce manual entry
- Automate transcript requests within admissions applications so that final transcripts can be sent to the colleges where students are admitted, without cost

Task force members were supportive of having an option in the CCC, CSU, and UC applications to send transcript data via eTranscript California, with several task force members underscoring that the proposal would address equity gaps.

When implementing this solution, task force members stressed the importance of eTranscript California providing information on coursetaking across CCCs, such as when community college students take online courses offered by other institutions through California Virtual Campus, in addition to sharing information back to high schools on dual enrollment.

One task force member noted that when dual enrollment information is shared back with high schools, it will be important to have clarity about how those courses are noted in high school transcripts. The new California High School Transcript and Student Record Portability Standard (described below) will help to address this issue.

Some task force members noted that students might not want to share information on prior college coursework, so they should be able to proactively choose whether they want to send a comprehensive college transcript. Students should be made aware that for financial aid purposes, they must provide all college course records, even if they did poorly in a course. They also need to understand that dual enrollment courses will count toward their overall postsecondary units and be part of their college record. One task force member suggested creating toolkits for sharing this information to different audiences, such as students, parents, and counselors.

Some task force members expressed concern about whether the technical infrastructure would be able to deliver the high volume of transcripts during application season, and flagged the importance of having a robust and secure solution with clear

data governance. One member expressed concern that the cost might be significant for this type of solution, including technical, personnel, and professional development expenses. Clear roles and responsibilities would help to ensure smooth operations.

Another concern was providing adequate support to students related to using eTranscript California data to populate their prior coursetaking in the application form. Given that many students submit their applications close to the deadline, support would need to be in place to handle a large volume of support needs, at all hours of the day and night.

In addition to using eTranscript California to share dual enrollment course information back to high schools, some task force members felt it would be valuable to provide a definitive flag for whether specific dual enrollment courses meet a-g requirements (the sequence of courses high school students must take to be eligible for CSU and UC). Currently, there is no statewide "source of truth" for the a-g status of dual enrollment courses. If course crosswalks are created, there will need to be a mechanism for keeping this information up-to-date, with clearly defined roles and appropriate resources.

One task force member noted that while eTranscript California will help to share information on dual enrollment courses at community colleges, it will also be important to establish mechanisms for sharing information on dual enrollment courses taken at CSU, and identifying the a-g status of those courses.

Another task force member indicated that when communicating about the integration of eTranscript California into the college application forms, it would be important to address whether this change would impact the number of people employed by college admissions and records offices. The CSU representative clarified that the integration of CCGI's transcripts into CSU Apply had not changed the number of staff, but rather allowed those staff to focus more on personalized advising to students.

Finally, task force members flagged that any solution should be fully accessible for people with disabilities. The CCC representative verified that this would be part of the minimum specifications.

Transcript Standards

CCGI shared a process that was used to develop the California High School Transcript and Student Record Portability Standard, which will be used to streamline and align information exchanges between CDE, CCC, CSU, and UC. The task force then considered the possibility of developing a postsecondary transcript standard that can be used to share transcript information among CCC, CSU, UC, and independent colleges. eTranscript California currently uses a California-specific transcript standard for community college courses, but this standard is not applied to four-year institutions.

Creating a more comprehensive postsecondary standard would provide an opportunity to address updates needed to the existing eTranscript California Transcript Standard such as new Cal-GETC standards for general education requirements and documenting credit for prior learning. The standards would support further integration of data sets, including providing dual enrollment data (for both CCC and CSU) to populate CCGI's eligibility tools and with ASSIST to certify whether specific courses meet general education requirements.

One task force member flagged that the transcript standards will require a data element dictionary and detailed specifications for colleges to implement. Another noted that it would be important to identify how data from ASSIST would be included, given that it is the source of truth for whether course credits may be transferred to a CSU or UC, and if they count as electives or toward a specific major.

Task force members noted that it would be important to determine what the minimum transcriptable unit should be, such as potentially establishing a standard for documenting skills or competencies. This determination could help to clarify what information should be exchanged through eTranscript California (for academic purposes) and what should be integrated into the Career Passport (for employment purposes). One task force member suggested looking at ways that UC San Diego is currently documenting skills. Another noted that the adoption of competency-based education might further complicate the distinctions between academic and employment domains.

One task force member suggested creating potential use cases for sharing transcript data to inform the content of the standards. For example, in addition to Cal-GETC,

implications for associate degrees for transfers (ADT) should be considered. Another suggested that it would be important to understand whether the standards might affect curriculum either directly or indirectly. One task force member wondered how AP, IB, and CLEP scores might be integrated into the standard.

Several task force members wondered how information on credit-for-prior-learning would appear in the transcript, particularly related to how different types of credit should be noted (including as for course credit, as an elective that can be transferred to a CSU or UC, or as a course that will count toward a specific CSU or UC major). A clear policy is needed for how those credits are recognized.

The task force agreed that a subcommittee should develop a draft standard, which builds upon the existing eTranscript California standard, for review by the task force. This subcommittee should solicit input from the existing eTranscript California steering committee. CCC, CSU, UC, and AICCU representatives (particularly admissions staff, registrars, and articulation officers) should also be consulted, as well as students.