



California Higher Education Recovery with Equity Taskforce Meeting Agenda & Summary Notes

Thursday, August 6, 2020 | 12:30–2:30pm PT/3:30-5:30pm ET



- MEETING OBJECTIVES**
- Review the process and expectations for the Taskforce, including roles, activities, and timeline
 - Define what “equity” means and what it represents as the central focus of the Taskforce process
 - Begin to frame the vision and priorities that will shape the Taskforce’s final recommendations

<p>12:30 PM Welcome and introductions</p>	<p>Attendees: Taskforce Members: Lande Ajose, Loren Blanchard, , Nathan Brostrom, Bridget Burns, Ben Cannon, Michelle Asha Cooper, Keith Curry, Bryan Daley, Mildred Garcia, Daisy Gonzales, Shaun Harper, Monica Lozano, Timothy Renick, Judy Sakaki, Deborah Santiago, Michele Siqueiros, Gabi Starr, Hayley Weddle, Michael Wiafe Education First and supporting staff: Colette Astorgue, Susan Bodary, Carl Christopher, Mario Jackson, Jaci King, Meg Ramey, Ria Sengupta Bhatt</p>
<p>12:40 PM Purpose and context of the Taskforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lande Ajose (Chair) shared the mission and vision for the Taskforce: to create a more integrated postsecondary education system that emphasizes equity and meets students’ and the state’s educational and workforce needs. ▪ Lande also touched on the approach the Taskforce will take in service of its mission and vision: on that is equity-driven, student-centered, and committed to intersegmental coherence in it how it serves students.
<p>12:45 PM Taskforce scope, timeline, and expectations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carl Christopher described the Taskforce process. There will be five meetings of the Taskforce, and these meetings will be deeply informed by stakeholder engagement efforts targeted on five regions of the state (Imperial Valley, LA, Inland Empire, Bay Area, San Joaquin Valley), research on California and best/emerging practices. The first meeting’s purpose is to define equity and set a vision. At the second meeting, the Taskforce will discuss stakeholder research findings on the California higher education system, identify root causes, and determine priority solution areas; Taskforce members will then split into working groups organized around these solution areas, and go deeper on solutions in their working groups. The last few meetings will focus on crafting initial recommendations with actionable milestones and timelines. ▪ Carl also reviewed a living list of norms for the Taskforce, which Taskforce members are welcome to add to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Equity-driven ○ Student-centered ○ Commitment to intersegmental coherence ○ Leave institutional hats at the door ○ Ongoing interrogation of our expertise and assumptions ○ Embrace a “coalition of the willing” spirit ▪ Shaun Harper and Loren Blanchard asked questions regarding the focus of the Taskforce’s work on equity not only for students, but also as it relates to postsecondary institutions’ faculty and staff. The group agreed that this is likely to be within potential solutions, but should be an explicit part of the work going forward.

**12:55 PM
Full Group
Discussion:
Defining
equity**

- Carl Christopher reviewed the equity commitments the Taskforce will make in each phase of the work and invited Taskforce members to add feedback in a Google discussion tool as well as out loud in a group discussion.
- Notes from the Google discussion tool and group discussion include:
 - Phase 1: Vision-Setting
 - Ground the vision for equity within organizational culture (policy, structure, processes, and practices).
 - Define: Equity for who? Students? Staff and faculty?
 - Explicitly name the courage it will take to re-envision equity in higher education, including spending resources differently and differentially.
 - Maintain an asset-based perspective of students.
 - Take into account the opportunities and challenges of the current moment as well as existing inequities pre-COVID.
 - Phase 2: Research Collection and Data
 - Consider the different scales of institutions and different sizes of populations when trying to understand impact.
 - Consider what financial resources may be needed (and what the financial limitations are) to better understand what is possible, but don't get too limited in vision by financial constraints. Equity should not be additive; but embedded in the foundation of *how* we conduct daily work.
 - Use data that is current as well as predictive of what might happen in the future. As a potential recommendation, consider the development of a common data system for higher education in the state.
 - Consider post-COVID digital/knowledge economy transitions and the current and potential economic impacts of COVID when designing equitable solutions.
 - Take into account not only current data during COVID but also data on and experiences with long-standing past inequities.
 - Highlight not only data that illustrate challenges that need intervention, but also data that illustrate opportunities for accelerated growth and advancement.
 - Include data on staff/faculty in the three public higher education segments, including interim positions.
 - Include data on students who have "some college" and rural students.
 - Consider academic equity and social equity – are they different?
 - Phase 3: Stakeholder Engagement
 - Specifically, focus attention on stakeholders most vulnerable in California, and focus attention on race at the center; avoid boiling the ocean and/or diluting the focus on equity.
 - Expand from "parents" to "families."
 - Use empathy-based interview approaches to listen deeply to what happened before COVID and what is happening now.
 - Consider access to technology, time zones, and language when engaging stakeholders.
 - Consider stakeholders who traditionally do not engage. How will we engage them?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ask segment leaders what policy decisions would lead to a more sustainable and equitable economy. ▪ Consider creating virtual journey maps for a few target student groups to understand the policy levers we need to focus on first. ▪ Ensure higher education faculty are represented in the workgroup process. It is important to have faculty inclusion early on, so that recommendations reflect their perspectives and faculty are partners in implementation. ○ Phase 4: Coherence Framework and Scenario Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider transfer policies, financial aid policies, college preparation policies, and course alignment policies. ▪ Engage K12 in this stage of the process. ▪ Align services and support networks to serve students. ▪ Prioritize actionable cross-collaboration opportunities across higher education segments and K12. ▪ Create a set of student avatars/personas that represents the experiences of the most vulnerable students and redesign the ecosystem around these. ▪ Include higher education faculty perspectives during this phase to ensure recommendations are inclusive of their perspectives. ○ Phase 5: Recommendation and Dissemination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider tailoring recommendations to the local and regional level. ▪ Consider what flexibility in policy implementation could look like as things change. ▪ Make sure we don't constrain our equity mission due to availability of resources (think outside financial constraints). ▪ Provide implementation support for the recommendations.
<p>1:30 PM Breakout Group Discussion: Establishing a guiding vision</p>	<p>Group #1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants: Bridget Burns, Nathan Brostrom, Ben Cannon, Bryan Daley, Daisy Gonzales, Michele Siqueiros, Carl Christopher (facilitator), Mario Jackson (notes) • Key take-aways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Center the work on the most vulnerable groups, including low-income students, Black students, and first-generation college students. ○ Redesign the education system around students, instead of around faculty. ○ Integrate the higher education segments with each other and with K12. ○ Provide students clear and flexible pathways, so they spend less time trying to figure out how to navigate the complex higher education system. Center this design on the most vulnerable students. ○ Focus on persistence, completion, and attainment. ○ Attend to students' needs for access to technology/Internet/virtual learning. ○ Expand mental health support in higher education and K12. ○ Provide clear college to career pathways and support. ○ Leverage the wisdom of faculty about how to close gaps and redesign programs. ○ Consider promising strategies like credit for prior learning, dual enrollment, and competency-based education.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Don't constrain big thinking with costs. Think big. <p>Group #2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participants: Lande Ajose, Loren Blanchard, Michelle Asha Cooper, Keith Curry, Mildred Garcia, Shaun Harper, Hayley Weddle, Susan Bodary (facilitator), Ria Sengupta Bhatt (notes) ● Key take-aways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Postsecondary demographics across segments should reflect the state demographics. ○ The goal should be four years for a college degree instead of six. ○ Train faculty to serve students equitably—particularly students of color—in culturally responsive ways, and build curriculum that reflects this. ○ Change in higher education requires changes in attitudes, behaviors, and the whole business model (how things are funded, the fiscal rather than equity-focused motivations behind decisions made). The system is designed to get the results it is getting and needs fundamental change. ○ Emphasize not just access to, but access through higher education. ○ The system needs to be entirely re-built to make it equitable and focused on the highest need student groups, embedding equitable expectations/policies/practice throughout. ○ Consider how virtual learning will impact student learning, particularly for students of color. <p>Group #3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monica Lozano, Tim Renick, Judy Sakaki, Deborah Santiago, Gabi Starr, Michael Wiafe, Jaci King (facilitator), Meg Ramey (notes) ● Key take-aways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There may be limitations to what each segment and each institution can provide students to meet their non-academic needs, so partnerships with other agencies and organizations to provide social services on and off campus can be critical. Student needs include housing insecurity, food insecurity, mental health, DACA and other immigration issues, and others. ○ When reframing the higher education system, consider the connection between postsecondary education and employment to create coherence within the higher education system and with the workforce. ○ Center the redesign on Black and Brown students. Focus on race/ethnicity as the top issue. ○ Disaggregate data to ensure smaller racial/ethnic student populations are not masked in the data.
<p>2:20 PM Wrap-up and next steps</p>	<p>Next steps include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Taskforce members will receive a short feedback survey at the end of each meeting in an effort to continually improve the meeting experience and gather input. Members are encouraged to take five minutes to complete it. ● Education First will share with the Taskforce summary notes after the call. ● Taskforce members are encouraged to provide feedback on the Equity Framework and share resources they think are relevant to the research.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taskforce members are encouraged to share the names of stakeholders who a) would be critical to include in the regional interviews/focus groups or b) they believe could be helpful in the upcoming working groups (more information on work groups will be provided in September).• Calendar invitations for upcoming Taskforce meetings will be sent out.
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