



Recovery with Equity Taskforce

Pre-Reading for Taskforce Meeting
January 8, 2021



Taskforce Teams developed recommendations for four priority issue areas, finalizing their recommendations at the end of December 2020

Equity-Focused
Institutional Culture,
Teaching and Learning

Advising and Early
College Credit for
K12/Higher Ed
Alignment

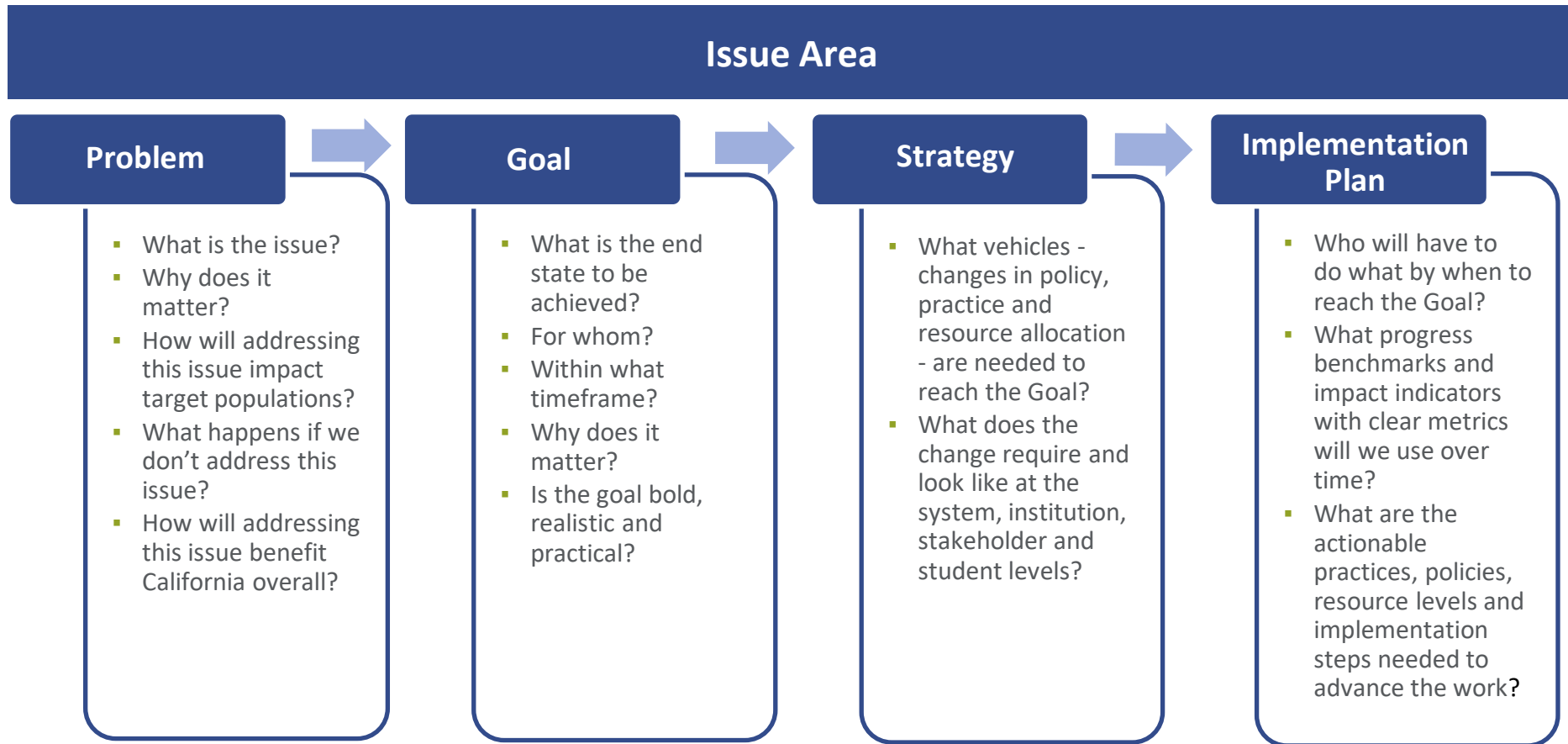
Basic Needs/Digital
Equity and College
Affordability

Statewide System for
Admissions, Transfer
and Articulation

In each issue area, teams considered how recommendations could specifically be designed for an equitable recovery from COVID-19, particularly for Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian/Pacific Islander and adult students.

Taskforce Teams used the Recommendation Framework to draft their recommendations

Recommendation Framework Overview



In the following slides, we have synthesized the Taskforce Teams' final recommendations. In our Taskforce meeting on January 8th, you will have the opportunity to provide feedback on what you read here.

We plan to further revise the recommendations for the Final Report to address additional feedback received and ensure consistency across recommendations.

Equity-Focused Institutional Culture, Teaching and Learning

Problem

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed historic institutional practices that have not kept up with the reality of who California's students are and how **institutional culture impacts student persistence and success**. Nationwide this moment of racial unrest calls for systemic action against racism and presents us with an opportunity to address how the classroom experience can become more responsive to student needs.

An equity-focused institutional culture is needed to promote the success of under-represented students including Black, Latinx, indigenous and adult students. When an institutional culture is **inclusive, diverse and equity-centered** we know students are “better educated and better prepared for leadership, citizenship, and professional competitiveness” (Taylor et. al. 2010). In addition, an equity-centered institutional culture is key to successful implementation of the other recommendations in this report (supporting basic needs, facilitating intersegmental collaboration, etc.).

Goal

By 2030, California's postsecondary education institutions will promote success for historically underrepresented learners through equity-centered institutional culture.

Inclusive institutional cultures reflect an asset-based approach—recognizing students' unique backgrounds and experiences—and help students thrive through cultivating a sense of belonging. To implement such cultures, higher education leaders and institutions must design and advance systems that meet students where they are by providing relevant resources, culturally competent learning environments and equity-oriented curriculum and course pathways. Inclusive institutional cultures also recognize and value students as key partners and sources of expertise in equity work.

As outlined in the strategies, developing inclusive institutional cultures requires transforming professional development and hiring practices, improving classroom experiences and aligning student supports.

Strategy (1 of 3)

Strategy 1: Improve staff, faculty and administrator diversity

Policy

- Adopt and implement **innovative hiring practices**—including equity-centered outreach, equity-centered duty statements, inclusive minimum qualification and selection processes, cluster hiring, diversity in hiring committees, exit interviews and first year onboarding programs—to increase faculty, staff, and administrator diversity and leverage data analysis/progress through segmental Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) plans.

Practice

- Develop **supports for diverse faculty and staff**—such as mentorship opportunities and first-year faculty/staff communities—to improve their retention rates.
- Foster **collaboration between faculty preparation programs and campuses** to effectively support the next generation of California educators.
- Empower faculty and staff to **report instances of microaggression or discrimination**, including via safe, anonymous channels.
- Collect **comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data throughout all aspects of employment** and ensure that that data is tracked and acted upon to address DEI issues.

Resources

- **Allocate funding/staff time toward diversity-oriented hiring and retention practices.**
- **Allocate resources toward quantitative and qualitative data collection related to faculty and staff diversity** and dedicate professional development to workforce data analysis and action planning.

Strategy (2 of 3)

Strategy 2: Cultivate inclusive, equity-oriented learning environments

Policy

- Develop a **statewide plan for the mandatory upskilling all staff, faculty and administrators** with training and professional development in implicit bias and cultural competency/fluency.
- Introduce **legislation to require cultural competency as a minimum qualification/competency of all California educators** (this includes faculty, staff and administrators across all segments).
- Empower and incentivize faculty, staff and administrators to **diversify their curriculum** and incorporate progress into evaluations and the tenure review processes.
- Affirm the experiences of adult students, students with some college and students with some work through the **expansion of credit for prior learning, competency-based education and work-based learning**.

Practice

- Implement **culturally competent teaching practices** and routinely **assess instruction** from a diversity, equity and inclusion perspective.
- **Empower faculty with student supports information**, integrate the information into course syllabi and encourage appropriate referrals to campus programs and lead staff.
- **Re-envision curriculum across disciplines to be anti-racist and equity-centered** and foster a sense of belonging among historically underrepresented students.
- Create **safe channels for students to report microaggressions or discrimination** in the classroom and implement adequate follow-up practices to ensure that issues are addressed.

Resources

- **Repurpose professional development funding to prioritize equity-oriented upskilling/professional development** (with a unique focus on online education).
- Allocate funding/staff time toward **reworking curriculum and implementing CPL/CBE**.
- Allocate funding/staff time to **draft model evaluation and tenure review processes**.

Strategy (3 of 3)

Strategy 3: Support and retain students through inclusive supports

Policy

- **Expand programs that promote students' representation and sense of belonging** (e.g., identity-based resource centers, outreach programs, etc.).
- Develop a statewide approach for allowing California students to **access certain supports regardless of campus/system affiliation** (e.g., campus food pantries).
- **Review the role of policing in higher education** and critically evaluate its impact on institutional culture, particularly for BIPOC. Adopt community-based approaches for addressing campus safety issues (e.g., mental health counselors and crisis response teams) as appropriate.

Practice

- Cultivate a stronger sense of inclusion among students by **fostering opportunities for students of different backgrounds to build community with one another** and encouraging students to be better stewards of overall campus climate.
- Foster **collaboration and alignment between student support departments** (e.g., Basic Needs and Office for Students with Disabilities) and between student supports and academic affairs.
- **Empower students to engage in diversity, equity and inclusion work** by recognizing their expertise, providing them with mentorship and incorporating them into decision-making (including the review of EEO plans and hiring practices).
- **Create culturally responsive and easily accessible channels for students to report instances of hate, discrimination and migroaggressions**, and implement restorative justice-centered practices to address them.

Resources

- Provide **professional development for staff, faculty and administrators** related to diversity, equity and inclusion and how to create a caring campus ecosystem.
- Provide **resources to support collaboration among student support services and faculty** (e.g., funds for joint programming, percentages of staff time focused on establishing collaborative initiatives, etc.).
- **Dedicate resources to support research on the impact of campus climate on student success/retention** (e.g., time for existing research positions or the creation of new roles).

Implementation Plan

Strategy 1: Improve staff, faculty and administrator diversity

- **Rework Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) plans** to uplift equity-centered practices throughout all aspects of employment process and retention. These documents should be tools for reflection and innovation, not compliance.
- States and institutions provide **funding to expand data collection and evaluation capacity** in order to shift compliance mindsets to the transformation of a system. This should include the **collection of data during the pre-hiring, hiring and retention stages**. Necessary data includes: demographics by employee type, demographics of interim positions, tenure of administrators, courses taught by adjunct faculty by department, investments in equal employment opportunity practices, etc. Institutional leaders should also be responsible for developing plans outlining specific goals for these metrics, and strategies to reach each goal.
- Collect **qualitative and quantitative data on the demographics and experiences of faculty, staff, and administrators**, practice data transparency, conduct diversity reviews/audits to identify problems and identify staff to address problems as they arise.

Strategy 2: Cultivate inclusive, equity-oriented learning environments

- Introduce **legislation to require cultural competency as a minimum qualification/competency of all California educators** (this includes faculty, staff and administrators across all segments).
- By 2022, the state should **require implicit bias and cultural competency professional development** across all segments. This could be the prioritization of existing dollars towards this equity priority of one-time funds to upskill existing educators.
- **Faculty partner with institutional leaders to incorporate equity-centered practices** into teaching/learning, grading, annual evaluations, and review/tenure processes.
- Faculty work with institutions to **implement credit for prior learning and competency-based education**.
- Re-envision curriculum across disciplines to be more equity-centered. In partnership with faculty leaders, institutional leaders should develop **metrics to monitor efforts to re-envision curriculum**. For example, students' course evaluations could include a question pertaining to whether the course content aligned with principles of equity, diversity and inclusion.

Strategy 3: Support and retain students through inclusive supports

- Foster **alignment and collaboration between academic affairs and student supports**.
- Cultivate a sense of inclusion among students through **expanding affinity-based programs, addressing instances of microaggressions, discrimination, and hate**, reviewing the **role of policing** on BIPOC and **uplifting BIPOC students** engaged in DEI work.
- Institution leaders should **designate staff time toward developing research-based metrics** for evaluating campus climate and its impact on student success and retention. Examples of potential data to collect include: students' sense of belonging, experiences with discrimination and harassment and perceptions of the degree to which the campus promotes diversity across race, gender, sexual orientation and ability. Institutional leaders should also be responsible for developing plans outlining specific goals for these metrics and strategies to reach each goal. Such plans may leverage existing campus climate data as appropriate.

Advising and Early College Credit for K12/Higher Ed Alignment

Problem

Earning a college degree confers a host of lasting economic, health and social benefits to students, their families and the communities in which they live. College graduates earn more, are less likely to be unemployed, report higher levels of happiness (Lumina Foundation, 2015), increased civic participation and live an average of five years longer than non-college graduates (National Center for Health Statistics, 2012). Yet, **equity gaps in college completion are a major source of social and economic inequality.**

A big culprit for these gaps is weak advising and articulation between systems of education, particularly between K-12 and postsecondary schooling and among our public postsecondary segments (Holzer and Baum, 2017). Navigating the college enrollment process can be daunting. Although students receive guidance to seamlessly transition from middle school to high school, they are typically left on their own to navigate the complex pathways to and through college and in transferring from a community college to a BA/BS-granting university.

Once a student enrolls in college, the path to earning a degree is complicated and there are many **institutional obstacles to completion**: applying for financial aid, taking out loans, selecting classes, choosing a major, satisfying prerequisites, resolving administrative holds and for most students, transferring from one postsecondary institution to another. Any one of these challenges can lead to a student dropping out with debt and no degree. By not addressing these obstacles through **enhanced advising and improved articulation between systems of education**, our institutions are exacerbating equity gaps in degree attainment. If we do not address these institutional and informational barriers, thousands of racially minoritized, first-generation and low-income students across the state will be deprived the opportunity and support needed to earn a meaningful postsecondary credential. This is all the more important in the COVID-19 recovery as obstacles have been exacerbated and many students and their families face even greater financial insecurity.

Goal

By 2030, eliminate equity gaps in college access and completion by creating a more seamless pathway that supports students from middle school and high school into and through higher education.

Beginning in middle school, match students with a professionally trained champion who will coach them on their academic, career and personal goals and pathways, and connect them with peer and professional mentors. Automate cross-system data transfer and leverage technologies such as chatbots to deliver personalized help and deploy predictive analytics to proactively target outreach and inform interventions. Support students along established pathways from institution to institution, using degree maps as a tool to facilitate planning and adjusting throughout a students' postsecondary career. Increase college credit opportunities for students while in high school, and institute default matriculation for all high school seniors into community college degree programs.

Strategy (1 of 3)

Strategy 1: High-touch advising and degree roadmaps to and through college

Policy

- Establish **policies to integrate middle school, high school, community college and four-year university ERP software into a cohesive platform** that ensures that relevant educational records are readily accessible to students, parents, teachers, counselors and advisors.
- **Statewide intersegmental degree program roadmaps** must be collaboratively developed to promote efficient course-taking behaviors across educational sectors.
- To facilitate more seamless and intuitive transfer pathways and reduce administrative burdens between higher education institutions, a **common course numbering system** must be developed for all UC, CSU, and community colleges courses.
- The development of the **Cradle-to-Career Data System** and data-sharing agreements.

Practice

- Embedded within the **statewide chatbot app**, the **high-touch advising platform** will ensure that students are provided with personalized “just in time” guidance for making critical decisions to successfully navigate their way to and through college.
- **Predictive analytics** will be employed to identify students most in need of support.
- **Beginning in middle school**, students in need of most support will be assigned a **professionally trained champion** who will provide encouragement and authoritative advice to facilitate their path to a high-quality postsecondary credential. The advising appointments will take place virtually within the chatbot app, and will uniformly connect with K-12, community college and four-year university technology platforms to foster a data-driven, collaborative and case management approach to advising California students.

Resources

- Technology Resources: Integration of the high-touch advising tools within the app and chatbot would require a significant **one-time investment along with ongoing financial support for system updates and maintenance**. Similarly, development of the longitudinal “cradle to career” data system would necessitate one-time purchases of software and hardware along with continued financial support for maintenance.
- People: A **core team of 10 full-time staff** will be needed to manage the high-touch advising service network. Additionally (assuming a 250/1 student to advisor ratio), a **diverse group of 2,000 advisors** will be needed to provide support to 500,000 California students deemed to be most in need of high-touch advising.
- Create **workgroups** across K12 and postsecondary segments to **develop degree roadmaps, course numbering and articulation**.

Strategy (2 of 3)

Strategy 2: College success app and chatbot, including automatic community college enrollment

Policy

- **State policy that would automatically admit students to community college** who were not already enrolled in a college, based on their high-school records could be facilitated through the app and chatbot.
- Development of **state-wide intersegmental program roadmaps which will be leveraged by the app and chat bot** to send encouragement to students on path, timely alerts to those who go off path, information on what courses to take next and nudges about professional opportunities such as internships. Advisors and champions have more time to dedicate to personalized interactions with students since hundreds of thousands of more rote questions are answered via the technology platforms.
- The **development of the Cradle-to-Career Data System**. The messaging on the platforms can be highly personalized based on the quality of data sets.

Practice

- The statewide app will **pull together critical information and resources for students and parents**, helping them navigate processes throughout the postsecondary lifecycle and providing **timely reminders** of deadlines, needed documents and opportunities. Stakeholders will be able to log-on to the app to **track their progress** via checklists which will, in turn, provide data for targeted messaging from the chatbot to encourage the timely completion of critical tasks and processes.
- While the chatbot will be available on the app, **users will also be able to receive and send messages directly from the texting platforms on their phones**. The chatbot helps walk users through the college application process, FAFSA completion, verification, registration issues and other critical progression markers. “Personalized” nudges to students can be sent in mass to targeted populations, with students having the ability to ask immediate follow-up questions and receive automated, clarifying answers.

Resources

- Technology Resources: The creation and maintenance of both the app and its integrated chatbot would require continuing **financial and staffing resources. Technology costs increase with the potency of the tool**. For instance, it is cheaper to deploy a chatbot that provides all students the same answer to the same question. It is more costly but also more impactful to deploy a chatbot that taps into data systems and provides customized answers to a question based on the questioners’ region, grades, major, campus, etc.
- People: A **core team of full-time staff will be needed to manage the app and the chatbot on a daily basis**. Professional experts in communication and social media approaches will supplement the technology team in the daily running of the platforms. Content experts from campuses, including faculty and students, will be deployed part-time to provide content and messaging and to maintain and update the chatbot’s knowledge base.

Strategy (3 of 3)

Strategy 3: Smooth the high school to college transition using data sharing, college and career readiness indicators and early college credit

Policy

- **Expansion of early college credit opportunities** builds on **California’s AB 288 (2015)** allowing college classes to be taught on high school campuses exclusively for high school students. Create **College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) partnerships** between community college districts and high schools to enter joint partnerships and offer dual enrollment courses that count for both a high school diploma and an Associate’s degree.
- Additional **policy to strengthen K12 accountability through the College and Career Indicator (CCI)**. Specifically, equity metrics of college preparation through the CCI, including A-G default scheduling, Advanced Placement course taking and college credit opportunities while in high school.
- The **development of the Cradle-to-Career Data System**. This is necessary to ensure that college credit opportunities in high school are directly transferred to postsecondary segments, and that they are consistent with statewide academic program maps for seamless enrollment and placement.

Practice

- Strengthening intersegmental communication and providing robust intersegmental professional development opportunities for middle school, high school, community college and university stakeholders to **improve advising and use of data**.
- To **improve actual data-use and alignment of course types** and categories as part of a statewide academic program map, we can build on the work of the **California College Guidance Initiative (CCGI)** on CaliforniaColleges.edu, eTranscript California, as well as UC’s Transcript Evaluation Service—all named in the Cradle-to-Career Data System 2020 report.

Resources

- Resources are needed for **professional development around data use, advising, and program maps**.
- **Staff and funding for the expansion of early college credit**.
- **Resources needed to strengthen accountability through the CCI**.

Implementation Plan

Strategy 1:
High-touch
advising and
degree roadmaps
to and through
college

- Development of the statewide **chatbot advising app**.
- Development of **predictive models** to determine students likely to benefit the most from **high-touch advising**.
- The collaborative development of **cross-sector degree program roadmaps**.
- **Recruitment and training of a diverse team of advisors/champions/mentors** to provide high-touch advising as part of the statewide chatbot app.
- **Metrics** to indicate the success of the strategy would include:
 - Increased academic readiness for college overall, with reductions in equity gaps.
 - Improvement in completion rates for applications completed, students admitted and postsecondary enrollment with reductions in equity gaps for each metric.
 - Increased FAFSA completion rates overall, with reductions in equity gaps.
 - Increased college persistence and annual credit-hour accumulation for matriculated students overall, with reductions in equity gaps.
 - Increased college completion rates overall, with reductions in equity gaps.
 - Increased usage of high-touch advising sessions disaggregated by race, gender and ethnicity.

Strategy 2:
College success
app and chatbot,
including
automatic
community
college
enrollment

- **Creation and maintenance of the app and chatbot.**
- Development of **a team of content experts** to populate and update information on the app.
- Acquisition of a **chatbot technological platform** (from a third-party vendor or building one in-house).
- Development and maintenance of a **knowledge base** of vetted answers to commonly-asked questions.
- Development of a **statewide working group** of admissions, financial aid, advising and other practitioners along with faculty and students to build the content for the app and knowledge base for the chatbot. The group would be responsible for tracking metrics in use, impact and effectiveness.
- **Metrics** to indicate the success of the strategy would include:
 - Increased academic readiness for college overall, with reductions in equity gaps.
 - Improvement in completion rates for applications completed, students admitted and postsecondary enrollment with reductions in equity gaps for each metric.
 - Increased FAFSA completion rates overall, with reductions in equity gaps.
 - Increased college persistence and annual credit-hour accumulation for matriculated students overall, with reductions in equity gaps.
 - Increased college completion rates overall, with reductions in equity gaps.
 - Metrics to track usage of the app and chatbot—all collected by demographic groups.

Strategy 3:
Smooth the high
school to college
transition using
data sharing, CCI,
and early college
credit

- The establishment of **statewide educational data sharing agreements**.
- **Expansion of early college credit opportunities** building on California's AB 288 (2015). Create College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) partnerships between community college districts and high schools to enter joint partnerships and offer dual enrollment courses that count for both a high school diploma and an Associate's degree.
- Additional policy developments should be considered to **strengthen K12 accountability through the College and Career Indicator (CCI)**.
- **Metrics** to indicate the success of the strategy would include:
 - Increased academic readiness for college overall, with reductions in equity gaps.
 - Improvement in UC/CSU eligibility, with reductions in equity gaps.
 - Increased college matriculation among high school students, with reductions in equity gaps.
 - Increased college credit accumulation in high school, with reductions in equity gaps.
 - Increased college persistence and annual credit accumulation for matriculated students overall, with reductions in equity gaps.
 - Increased community college transfer rates, with reductions in equity gaps.
 - Increased degree completion rates overall, with reductions in equity gaps.

Basic Needs/Digital Equity and Financial Aid

Problem

Individuals, whether coming directly from high school or returning later in life, face significant barriers to starting and completing college degrees. One major barrier is that **students cannot adequately focus on college because their basic needs are not met**. This includes food and housing insecurity, as well as limited access to technology, transportation, dependent care and other foundational services. This challenge reduces the odds of college entry and college completion for underserved students, particularly for students who studies show stand to benefit the most from college attainment. **Basic needs insecurity limits the potential of Californians to achieve economic stability, contributes to the state’s widespread income inequality and hinders our ability to recover from the COVID-induced recession.**

Basic needs security requires “an ecosystem that supports financial stability by ensuring equitable access to nutritious and sufficient food; safe, secure, and adequate housing (to sleep, study, cook, and shower); healthcare to promote sustained mental and physical well-being; affordable transportation; resources for personal hygiene care; and emergency needs for students with dependents.”

The definition above from the University of California System should be adapted to add the requirements of digital equity, particularly in light of COVID’s implications for education. **The lack of access to technology disrupts educational progress.** As the COVID-19 pandemic took hold in California, colleges and universities were forced to rethink how they educate students. Given limitations on traditional face-to-face interactions, institutions were driven to provide instruction via online platforms. In the past, being able to secure reliable transportation to campus was a barrier for many the highest need students: the inability to consistently attend classes in person due to transportation issues led to students dropping out, failing to complete their coursework and/or struggling to maintain good attendance. Today, in the COVID-19 era, simply substitute “sufficient and reliable internet access” in place of “transportation.” The effects of being unable to access the class/course/instruction are the same.

Finally, State and Federal student **financial aid amounts have not kept pace with the increased costs of student basic needs**, especially in high-cost areas of the state. Additionally, California need-based aid **Cal Grant is primarily designed to support tuition costs**, leaving basic need costs to be covered from other funds (e.g., federal Pell Grants; student work/employment; student loans; etc.). We seek to increase the amount of student financial aid grant dollars to acknowledge the severe basic needs challenges faced by the highest need students.

Goal

By 2030, support the basic needs of the highest-need California college students by creating a seamless single-mechanism system for qualified college students to access California's social services system, gain access to subsidized internet/technology and receive increased financial aid.

Support the basic needs of the highest-need California college students in order to allow students to focus on their education first.

Create a seamless system for qualified college students to access California's already robust social services system (e.g., CalFresh; housing programs; health care (including mental health); direct aid; subsidized child care; transportation; etc.). Support internet/technology access for the highest need and traditionally underrepresented students to ensure access to online and hybrid instruction; legally and culturally, treat access to fast, reliable and low-cost internet as a student basic need, in the same way that transportation to/from campus has been supported. Finally, create a pathway whereby a California student can complete postsecondary education without taking on additional debt by increasing student financial aid.

Strategy (1 of 3)

Strategy 1: Build a single mechanism for college admissions, financial aid and basic needs supports

Policy

- Create a multi-agency taskforce to **identify any existing legal barriers (California or federal) to allowing college students the ability to access myriad support services.**
- Enable students to have a **single sign-on to access basic needs services alongside financial aid.** This will require data integration and data sharing.
- Build a **single application mechanism** for college admissions, financial aid, subsidized internet/technology and social services so that students may apply for college, financial aid, and subsidized supports through a single route.
- **Automate eligibility for services by pre-populating applications** based on student FAFSA data and the Cradle-to-Career Data System.

Practice

- Multi-agency taskforce (noted above) will **consider the extent to which student/family data submitted via the FAFSA is sufficient to apply for and receive other state, local and federal services.** Group shall identify any deficiencies in the FAFSA to serve this added purpose and recommend solutions that provide the greatest ease for students and families.
- **Students and families will be able to access admissions, financial aid and basic needs services all in one place,** pre-populated with their information.

Resources

- Multi-agency **taskforce members' time.**
- **Funds and people for integrating data** across cradle-to-career data system and FAFSA.
- **Funds and people for building single-mechanism platform** for admissions, financial aid and basic needs.

Strategy (2 of 3)

Strategy 2: Provide students with subsidized internet through aligning eligibility, increasing the Cal Grant B stipend and forming partnerships

Policy

- Governor and Legislature consider **any statutory changes necessary to reduce barriers to student participation in existing programs** and/or create new state programs to address internet and technology access by college students.
- **Increase the stipend portion of Cal Grant B to accommodate technology-related costs.**

Practice

- Explore **partnerships with California's technology firms** to offer low-to-no-cost technology to college students with demonstrable need.
- Explore **partnerships with local and county agencies** and providers (e.g. libraries) to expand wifi and technology access.

Resources

- **Time and people** to consider needed statutory changes.
- **Time and people** to explore and develop partnerships with technology firms and government agencies.
- **Funds** to make basic technology available at a little to no cost for California's highest need college students.

Strategy (3 of 3)

Strategy 3: Increase financial aid for California college students

Policy

- Governor, State Legislature, California Congressional Delegation and higher education systems to **actively advocate for doubling the maximum federal Pell Grant**.
- Governor, State Legislature and higher education systems work with the Administration and Student Aid Commission to **design a new Cal Grant policy** that provides equity for the highest-need students through **award levels commensurate with the real cost of attendance**. Design the policy to grow automatically over time to keep pace with the real cost of attendance.
- Governor **expands paid internships and experiential education pilot program**.

Practice

- Provide the Governor and State Legislature a **robust set of talking points** around advocacy for increasing financial aid.
- Higher education institutions look to **expand campus-based employment and create a campus “minimum wage”** which will enable students to meet a large percentage of their “self-help requirement” while maintaining a reasonable workload and not straining their academic progress.

Resources

- **Time and people** to advocate for doubling the maximum federal Pell Grant award.
- **Time, people and funds** to design and fund a new Cal Grant policy.
- **Time, people and funds** to expand internships and experiential education pilot program; funds may be available through a combination of federal, state and private philanthropy support.

Implementation Plan

Strategy 1:

Build a single mechanism for college admissions, financial aid and basic needs supports

- Immediately, California **commits to expanding assistance** to underserved communities.
- Immediately, California colleges and universities **include social services eligibility in their financial aid award letters**.
- In 2022, the **Governor creates a multi-agency task force to identify any existing legal barriers** (California or federal) to allowing college students the ability to access myriad support services. The group should also consider the extent to which student/family data submitted via the FAFSA is sufficient to apply for and receive other state, local and federal services.
- In 2022, California creates a **design and implementation strategy for data integration** across information systems.
- In 2025, through the proposed Cradle-to-Career Data System, require or incentivize higher education institutions and health and social service agencies to **identify and provide additional support services for incoming college students who have previously been eligible** for state and federal services and supports.
- By 2030, automate eligibility for services by **prepopulating applications** based on students' FAFSA data and the Cradle-to-Career Data System. Implement a **single application mechanism** for admissions, financial aid and social services.

Strategy 2:

Provide students with subsidized internet through aligning eligibility, increasing the Cal Grant B stipend and forming partnerships

- Immediately, the Governor convenes DSS, the California Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) and postsecondary education representatives to determine **an immediate strategy for ensuring eligible students are accessing supports** they qualify for. Additionally, as required under Welfare and Institutions Code Section 18901.11(d)(2), colleges and universities should **revisit the form and letter created by the SB 173 workgroup** to ensure its use.
- In 2022, direct the California Public Utilities Commission to work with multiple agencies to **determine whether existing telephone subsidy programs are able to serve the internet needs of students**.
- In 2022, the Governor and Legislature consider any **statutory changes** needed to remove barriers to student participation in programs.
- In 2022, consider **increasing the stipend portion of the Cal Grant B** award to accommodate technology-related costs.
- In 2025, **explore partnerships** with tech firms and government agencies to expand wifi and technology access.

Strategy 3:

Increase financial aid for California college students

- Immediately, the Governor and the Legislature request that the **California Student Aid Commission provides a robust set of talking points** for meetings with both California Congressional Delegation and Congress more broadly.
- Immediately, the Governor considers **requesting a federal Pell Grant increase** as part of federal government COVID-19 relief and stimulus, and/or requesting a continuation of the federal CARES Act dollars.
- In 2022, the Governor and Legislature **invest additional state dollars into financial aid** for the highest-need students.
- In 2025, the Governor **expands the pilot program** created under his Chief Service Officer to enable paid internships and experiential education for the highest-need students.
- In 2025, California **higher education institutions look to expand campus-based employment** and also create a **campus minimum wage** which will enable students to meet a large percentage of their self-help requirements.

Statewide System for Admissions, Transfer and Articulation

Problem

For many first-generation and underrepresented students, the process of applying to college is challenging. The well-documented problem of **undermatching** highlights one persistent challenge for Black, Latinx and other underrepresented groups in higher education: they tend not to apply to or attend colleges for which they are qualified. A related challenge for another segment of underrepresented students is that they are **qualified for UC or CSU admission, but may be missing one or two courses to complete their eligibility**. Taken together, these groups are often discouraged or dissuaded from college attendance due to confidence, finances, family considerations or merely the numerous barriers of applying.

To reduce these challenges and **address the issue of persistence and completion**, we propose a three-pronged approach to reforming college access and transfer.

COVID-19 has had a disproportionate impact on the enrollment of students of color, especially in the state's community college system. First, recognizing that most students of color attend more than one college in order to earn a degree, California public institutions should adopt a dual admission process which could help keep these students in college and on track. With the assurance that they have been accepted to a four-year college, community college students would be incentivized to enroll full-time and continuously. To help streamline the overwhelming and byzantine application and transfer process, a single unified platform for applying to and transferring between California's public colleges and universities could be developed. Designed well, such a system would also help colleges and universities better manage enrollment, plan for course delivery and address capacity constraints. Finally, to simplify transfer across the segments, California's community colleges should adopt a common course numbering system.

Goal

By 2030, California will have a streamlined, clear, transparent pathway for students from secondary to postsecondary including common course numbering, dual admission and a single online application platform.

This pathway will guarantee seamless integration of early college credit, dual admission, transfer and reverse-transfer to support the timely completion of each student's desired postsecondary goals. A single statewide common platform will be developed to support students along this pathway in expectation of multi-institutional college journeys to credentials and degrees, assuming that students will experience taking classes from at least two postsecondary systems.

The system would:

- Provide a single unified platform for admission, irrespective of the higher education segment.
- Allow for dual admission.
- Provide a discount for applying to more than one four-year institution and/or higher education segment.
- Be scaffolded upon CCGI to enable students to prepopulate parts of the application.
- Simplify transfer and facilitate reverse transfer.
- Allow for more effective planning for prospective students, applicants, guidance counselors, outreach programs and admissions professionals.
- Foster admissions collaboration between segments through adoption of a common goal.

Strategy (1 of 3)

Strategy 1: Creation of dual admission process

Policy

- Discern if **enabling legislation** is required to mandate dual admission.
- Institutions create **two-tiered, guaranteed dual admission process** to a campus and major of choice for otherwise qualified high school seniors who are: Tier I: missing between one and three courses in their A-G sequence in math or language; or Tier II: UC/CSU eligible but did not apply.
- The dual admission program would allow students to complete their first two years at a community college but **take advantage of resources of nearest UC/CSU** (i.e. library, gym, etc.) while already having been guaranteed admission to a specific UC or CSU prior to beginning their community college courses.
- Students would be required to complete community college in two years (four semesters).
- Student **financial aid for a four-year degree would be guaranteed in advance of beginning community college coursework.**

Practice

- **Align state financial aid policies** to provide financial aid predictability.
- Identify appropriate students through **high school counselors and outreach programs.**
- Outreach programs granted **access to CCGI.**
- **Priority registration** for participants.
- Implementation of **college knowledge support** for high school students and their families.

Resources

- Short-term resources for a **pilot** in locations where CCGI is already built out.
- Longer-term resources to **scale CCGI across the state** so they can run the data for Tier I and Tier II students.

Strategy (2 of 3)

Strategy 2: Develop a single online statewide platform to ease the transition between institutions

Policy

- Develop a single statewide platform that provides a **common application for admission and transfer** to California public institutions of higher education.
- Possible **legislation mandating a singular system**.
- Ensure that the common platform captures **dual enrollment**.
- Development **segment-level policy changes to align to a singular system**, with student and stakeholder adaptation, including admission deadline, application requirements, etc.

Practice

- **Scaffold the system upon CCGI to align with the Cradle-to-Career Data System**, statewide longitudinal data system's operational tools. System should allow for an application/enrollment process to all public institutions in which **high school transcript data prepopulates** the application.
- Create a **single repository for student transcripts** across all segments, especially K12 and CCC.
- **Synchronization of admissions timelines**.
- Enhance **data-driven decision making** and allow students to plan more in advance for admissions through a seamless process.
- Enable **systemwide "application/admissions dashboard"** within CCGI to allow all K-12 schools to pre-populate applications with transcript data.
- Develop and integrate **seamless reporting of financial aid packages** from institutions.

Resources

- **Allocation of state dollars** to build a system.
- **Technical staff** to operate the system in collaboration with the segments (explore potential to leverage A.I. and machine learning).
- Develop a **bundled application fee structure** that does not discourage students from applying.
- Discern the **funding formula for splitting application revenues** across parties.

Strategy (3 of 3)

Strategy 3: Create a community college common course numbering system

Policy

- **Mandate systems to work together** to develop a common course numbering system.
- By 2023, all community colleges in California will have **aligned their lower division general education courses** around common course numbering.
- By 2025, all community colleges will have **aligned their upper division general education courses** around common course numbering.
- Create a **standard for transferring between semester and quarter units**.

Practice

- **Institutional collaboration** to create standards for common courses, as well as a "**rubric**" for more specialized courses to count at other campuses with the best fit unit match.
- **Faculty in each segment agree** on course equivalencies.
- **Align institutional offices** to create seamless processes for students moving throughout regional systems and keep systems working in sync.

Resources

- By 2025, **tie funding to courses in the community colleges that are a part of the common course numbering system** with clear pathways across segments.
- **Time to agree on course equivalencies**, and possible alignment of curriculum changes to allow for smooth transitions between institutions.
- **Time to train counseling and admissions staff to leverage the numbering system** in order to make the course equivalence and degree/certificate awarding processes automatic (e.g., improving on the IVC model).

Implementation Plan

Implementation activities embedded in strategy details in previous slides.

Thank you!
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