Extending Guided Pathways to Dual Enrollment to Broaden Access to High-opportunity Postsecondary Pathways

John Fink
Senior Research Associate and Program Lead
Community College Research Center

Maine Community College System
DIRIGO, June 14th 2023
CCRC has been a leader in the field of community college research and reform for over 20 years. Our work provides a foundation for innovations in policy and practice that help give every community college student the best chance of success.

Our areas of research include:

- College readiness and dual enrollment programs, and the transition from high school to college
- Developmental education and adult basic skills
- Non-academic support services, financial aid, and student engagement
- Online education and instructional technology
- Student persistence and completion, and transfer to four-year colleges
- Guided pathways, institutional reform, and performance funding
- Workforce education and training and the economic returns to higher education
Enrollment Challenges for Colleges are College Access Crises for Communities
Community College enrollments were plummeting even before the pandemic. According to IPEDS Data from 1996 to 2021, there was a significant decline in undergraduate enrollments across various sectors. A total of 850k fewer students enrolled at CCs during the pandemic, and transfer enrollment declines were in the double-digits nationally. For more detailed information, visit [this link](https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/john.fink/viz/UndergraduateEnrollmentTrendsbySector/Summary) and [this link](https://nscresearchcenter.org/transfer-and-progress/).
In Maine, Fewer Students are enrolling at Two and Four-Year Institutions

Maine Trends by Age:
1. Older adults down across the board
2. Steep loses of recent HS graduates at CCs
3. Steady upward trend of high school student enrollment at CCs
In Maine, Fewer Students are enrolling at Two and Four-Year Institutions

1. Older adults down across the board
2. Steep loses of recent HS graduates at CCs
3. Steady upward trend of high school student enrollment at CCs
4. Enrollment gains among Black and Hispanic students
Potential to Build Back Enrollment Among Recent High School Graduates
Nationally 1 in 3 Recent HS Graduates Do Not Immediately Enroll in College

Digest of Education Statistics, Table 302.20 Percentage of recent high school completers enrolled in college, by race/ethnicity and level of institution: 1960 through 2021
Immediate College Enrollment Down 7pp in Past 5 Years

Digest of Education Statistics, Table 302.20 Percentage of recent high school completers enrolled in college, by race/ethnicity and level of institution: 1960 through 2021
Less Maine HS Graduates are Enrolling in College since the Pandemic

54% of Class of 2021 Enrolled at Any College
Fewer Maine HS Graduates are Enrolling in College since the Pandemic

Immediate enrollment at in-state colleges hit hardest (~1,400 fewer students)

54% of Class of 2021 Enrolled at Any College
Fewer Maine HS Graduates are Enrolling in College since the Pandemic

Immediate enrollment at in-state colleges hit hardest (~1,400 fewer students)

Tracking 2-years post-HS bumps up college-going 5pp

54% of Class of 2021 Enrolled at Any College
High school graduates are questioning the value of college, many are *opting out*

EAB report surveyed 20,000+ high school students and how the pandemic has influenced their college-going behaviors.

- 22% of HS graduates are opting out of college due to not feeling 'mentally ready' for college
- 73% of HS counselors report the pandemic has moderately weakened their students academic preparation
- **Students top concerns:**
  1. Concerns of affordability (COA & student debt)
  2. Questioning the value of a college education
  3. Not feeling mentally or academically prepared

The expansion of dual enrollment creates an opportunity to build onramps to postsecondary programs leading to career-path jobs in high-demand fields, with students from underrepresented groups accounting for the biggest growth potential.
Key Takeaways

1. Conventional approach to dual enrollment has resulted in inequitable access and earned the monikers of “Programs of Privilege” and “Random Acts of DE”

2. Dual enrollment has great potential but is currently underutilized as strategy to expand access to high-opportunity postsecondary pathways

3. Exclusionary policies, practices, and mindsets have resulted in inequitable access to dual enrollment courses

4. Improvement at scale is possible – and essential to further expanding opportunity for students and building back enrollments for colleges
Dual Enrollment is Widespread and Growing in Significance for K-12 and Postsecondary Institutions
2017-18 High School Student Participation in Dual Enrollment by School District

Source: CCRC analysis of US Dept. of Education Office for Civil Rights data

View an interactive map: https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/easyblog/access-ap-dual-enrollment.html
2017-18 High School Student Participation in Advanced Placement by School District

AP-Participation Rate
- Less than 0.1%
- 0.1% to 4.0%
- 4.0% to 11.0%
- 11.0% to 20.3%
- 20.3% or more

View an interactive map: https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/easyblog/access-ap-dual-enrollment.html

Source: CCRC analysis of US Dept. of Education Office for Civil Rights data
Growth of Dual Enrollment 1999-2021
IPEDS Fall Enrollments

Expansion of Dual Enrollment Concentrated at Community Colleges

Fall Undergraduate Enrollments among Students Aged 17 or Younger

+11.6% in DE 2021-2023 (NSC)
Expansion of Dual Enrollment in Maine
Split Between MCCS and UMS

Maine Dual Enrollment 1999-2021
IPEDS Fall Enrollments

Fall Undergraduate Enrollments among Students Aged 17 or Younger

Expansion of Dual Enrollment in Maine Split Between MCCS and UMS
Dual Enrollment: 1 in 4 MCCS Students in Fall 2021

CCRC analysis of IPEDS Fall Enrollments among students age 17 and younger at community colleges, divided by total fall enrollments.
CCRC analysis of IPEDS Fall Enrollments among students age 17 and younger at community colleges, divided by total fall enrollments.

Dual Enrollment: 18% of 2021 Community College Fall Enrollment

CCRC analysis of IPEDS Fall Enrollments among students age 17 and younger at community colleges, divided by total fall enrollments.
### Maine Colleges with the Largest Enrollment from HS Students

#### Fall 2021, Under 18 Enrollment: Top Maine Colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Maine at Augusta</td>
<td>1005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Southern Maine</td>
<td>939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Maine Community College</td>
<td>862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Maine Community College</td>
<td>831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennebec Valley Community College</td>
<td>695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Maine</td>
<td>625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Maine Community College</td>
<td>546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Maine at Fort Kent</td>
<td>468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York County Community College</td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas College</td>
<td>415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Maine at Presque Isle</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Maine at Farmington</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husson University</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Maine Community College</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington County Community College</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Fall 2021, Under 18 as Percent of Enrollment: Top Maine Colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Maine at Augusta</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Southern Maine</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Maine Community College</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Maine Community College</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennebec Valley Community College</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Maine</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Maine Community College</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Maine at Fort Kent</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York County Community College</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas College</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Maine at Presque Isle</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Maine at Farmington</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husson University</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Maine Community College</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington County Community College</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CCRC analysis of IPEDS Fall Enrollments among students age 17 and younger at community colleges, divided by total fall enrollments.
Findings on the Effects of HS Dual Enrollment

- Accumulation of descriptive and quasi-experimental evidence for dual enrollment, stronger experimental evidence on effects of ECHS

- WWC Report: Positive effects of taking college courses in HS include stronger HS grades, more HS completion, more college enrollment, more credit accumulation, more degree completion.

- Substantial state and institutional variation in post-HS college outcomes among former DE students
What Happens to MCCS Dual Enrollment Students after HS?

Dual Enrollment Outcomes One Year after High School Graduation
Senior Year: 2020-2021

MCCS Overall

47% Unknown Status:
1,294 Former DE Students

53% Enrolled at any College

12.4% Returned to the Same College

12% Matriculated at a different MCCS college
5% Attending a non-MCCS Maine institution
21% Attending an out-of-state institution
15% Unknown

As of November 2021

Senior Year 2020-2021
What Happens to MCCS Dual Enrollment Students after HS?

47% Unknown Status: 1,294 Former DE Students
53% Enrolled at any College
12.4% Returned to the Same College

Dual Enrollment Outcomes One Year after High School Graduation
Senior Year: 2020-2021

CCRC
A Challenge and an Opportunity:

Expanding Dual Enrollment Access with a focus on Students Being Left Behind in the Transition from HS to College
Underrepresented in Dual Enrollment: Black and Hispanic students, English Learners, and Students with Disabilities

CCRC Analysis of 2017-18 CRDC Data, N=21,936 public secondary schools in 50 states + DC.

Students Served under IDEA:
- 12.7% of secondary population
- 3.9% of DE Students
- **-8.8 DE representation gap**

English Language Learners
- 6.2% of secondary population
- 2% of DE Students
- **-4.1 DE representation gap**
Underrepresented in Maine Dual Enrollment: Students with Disabilities, English Learners, Black, and Hispanic Students

CCRC Analysis of 2017-18 CRDC Data, N=21,936 public secondary schools in 50 states + DC.
Recent Quasi-Experimental Studies Highlight Potential of Dual Enrollment for Increasing College Access and Success

- DE can benefit students who are falling behind in HS (Lee & Villarreal, 2022)
- DE increases college applications and acceptances, particularly among Black students (Liu et al., 2022)
- Dual Enrollment Math boosts Black & Hispanic student entrance and persistence in STEM (Minaya, 2021)
Substantial national variation in racial equity gaps in DE participation among US school districts...

...but one in five school districts across the country have closed racial equity gaps in access to dual enrollment courses

Source: CCRC analysis of US Dept. of Education Office for Civil Rights data
What can be learned from high schools and colleges that are more effective in serving students of color through dual enrollment?
Extending Guided Pathways to Dual Enrollment

Access for Whom?  
Access to What?
Guided pathways provides a research-based framework for redesigning colleges to meet the twin challenges of increasing equitable outcomes and building back enrollment.
Guided pathways has four major areas of reform focused on how colleges can change practice.

1. Clarify paths to student education and career goals.
2. Get students on a path.
3. Keep students on a path.
4. Ensure students are learning.
To build early momentum and expand opportunity for students, colleges are reimagining program onboarding.

### Why focus on Program Onboarding within MCCS?

Half of MCCS Students May Lack a Clear Pathway  
*(Dual Enrollment, General/Liberal Studies, Undeclared)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dual Enrollment</th>
<th>Transfer</th>
<th>Workforce-Medium</th>
<th>Workforce High</th>
<th>Workforce-Low</th>
<th>Unknown/Unclassified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Why focus on Program Onboarding within MCCS?</em></td>
<td><em>Half of MCCS Students May Lack a Clear Pathway (Dual Enrollment, General/Liberal Studies, Undeclared)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual Enrollment, 3,820</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies, 2,092</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What motivation do general transfer students have to continue and complete the AA?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Studies, 646</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce-Medium</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce High</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce-Low</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown/Unclassified, 912</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MCCS ENROLLMENT BY PROGRAM (2021-2022 AY)

- Dual Enrollment
- Transfer
- Unknown/Unclassified
- Workforce High
- Workforce-Low
- Workforce-Medium

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dual Enrollment</td>
<td>3,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer</td>
<td>2,092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce-Medium</td>
<td>646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce High</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce-Low</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown/Unclassified</td>
<td>912</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies
- General Studies
- Workforce-Medium
- Workforce High
- Workforce-Low
- Unknown/Unclassified

- What motivation do high school students have to return to the college after HS?
- What motivation do general transfer students have to continue and complete the AA?
- Who are these students and what are their goals?

1. What do we know about who is and isn’t being well served through dual enrollment, what are the barriers, and how can we broaden access?
   - Which schools do we have strong partnerships, and what’s the potential for further outreach to strengthen partnerships with other schools in our service area, particularly Title 1 schools and others serving primarily lower-income families?

2. What’s the potential for recruiting more dual enrollment students into our programs after high school?
   - What do we know about the goals and aspirations of our DE students? How familiar are they with our college’s programs?
   - How are we helping DE students explore, enter, and succeed in program foundation courses (in addition to math and English or other gen eds)?
   - What could Ask-Connect-Inspire-Plan onboarding look like in the HS context?
Extending Guided Pathways to High School: Dual Enrollment Equity Pathways (DEEP) Framework

1. Outreach to underserved students & schools
2. Alignment to college degrees & careers in fields of interest
3. Early career & academic exploration, advising, & planning
4. High-quality college instruction & academic support

Dual Enrollment

Grades 6-8
Grades 9-12

Entry into baccalaureate major at four-year (FY) institution

CC transfer program aligned to FY major

Workforce program aligned to high-wage/high-demand career
Scaling DEEP in Florida and Texas: Project Summary

1. Implementation Study
   ▪ What do DEEP practices look like across different institutional contexts?

2. Costs and Incentives Study
   ▪ What are the costs, incentives, and disincentives for K-12 and college leaders to invest in and adopt DEEP practices?

3. Metrics Study
   ▪ What metrics and data tools can best catalyze and inform DEEP reforms?

4. This project will generate a variate of practitioner facing workshops including practitioner guides and data tools.
**Key Takeaway:** Across the colleges, we saw promising practices that together have the potential to transform DE into an onramp to a postsecondary talent pathway

**Outreach**
- Prioritizing underserved schools and studies; educating students, parents, school leaders starting early on, removing eligibility barriers

**Alignment**
- Mapping HS academies to college AAS and pre-major transfer programs; clear and efficient transcripting of credit

**Early Career/College Exploration, Advising, and Planning**
- Cross-training counselors; shared advising; advising students and parents on nuances of major-specific transfer; education plans and checkpoint advising

**Instruction and Academic Support**
- Scaffolding of courses and instruction, structured support for online DE; intentional selection and professional development for training; consistent quality control
Key Takeaway: Title 1 schools have laid the groundwork for colleges to scale pathways approach to DE by embedding career-path program foundation courses and advising in high school career academies.

- Career academy strategy is scalable, avoids tracking, and can help motivate students to pursue postsecondary education.
- Title 1 schools motivated to take this approach by need to attract students in “open choice” policy environment.
- Students, families, communities, schools want “dual enrollment with a purpose”.
- Strong demand from rural schools to embed DE in CTE programs.
Key Takeaway: Leaders can shift the “programs of privilege” mindset and create a shared vision with K-12 partners of DE as a tool for talent development and expanding college access

- DE no longer seen as mainly for “high-performing” students who are already college-bound, but as means of motivating and preparing students without a college plan to pursue postsecondary education after HS
  - High school grades and other evidence of motivation are better measures of readiness for DE than standardized tests

- **Dual Enrollment with a Purpose**: Change in DE focus from à la carte course taking in AA in general/liberal degrees to head start on AAS or structured pre-major transfer programs in high-opportunity fields
  - Requiring students to choose a field of focus in high school can be designed to help them explore interests and develop a sense of purpose and plan for education after high school—not limit their options
## From ‘Random Acts’ and ‘Programs of Privilege’ to DEEP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs of Privilege, Random Acts</th>
<th>Dual Enrollment Equity Pathways (DEEP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DE courses <strong>made available</strong> to students who are already “college-bound”</td>
<td><strong>Active outreach and support</strong> for underrepresented students and families starting in middle school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus is mainly on strengthening students’ <strong>academic preparedness for college</strong></td>
<td>Focus also on building <strong>motivation for college</strong> by helping students explore interests and begin to develop a plan tied to college programs and careers in a field of interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleges and schools mainly emphasize <strong>general education courses</strong></td>
<td>Colleges and schools introduce students to high-opportunity postsecondary pathways through <strong>program foundation courses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on achievement of <strong>academic content standards</strong></td>
<td>Added focus on helping students become <strong>confident college learners</strong> through active teaching/learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school career technical education focused mainly on <strong>immediate post-HS employment</strong></td>
<td>High school career technical education students readily able to apply HS CTE credits toward college degree programs in high-opportunity fields</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Can Community Colleges Afford to Offer Dual Enrollment at a Discount?

Costs and Incentives for Redesigning DE as an Onramp to Postsecondary
## Potential Costs and Incentives for Colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Costs: Colleges</th>
<th>Potential Incentives: College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Direct investments in advising, instructor training, outreach/recruitment, program operations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Discounted tuition/fee revenue</td>
<td>1. Declining enrollments among older students, open seats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Organization costs: Personnel time for planning and management</td>
<td>2. Expanding the pool of potential college-going students after high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Downstream benefits to retention, completion, and statewide performance funding by increasing yield of former DE students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Reputational benefits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Enrollment Boom or Financial Bust? How Colleges Can Break Even on Dual Enrollment

1. **Economies of scale**: Enrolling DE students reduces average costs
   - Resources for DE implementation
   - College fixed costs (e.g., for buildings, infrastructure, and personnel contracts)
   - Excess capacity; flexible modalities (e.g. online)

2. **Student success**: DE students yield more performance funding
   - DE students do well academically; less remediation; less pressure on advising
   - Increased performance funding revenue

3. **Yield surplus**: DE students are future community college students
   - Extra revenue + economies of scale + performance funding
Takeaways for College Leaders

Colleges can make DE more sustainable by:

1. Expanding DE enrollment (e.g., from 5-10% of enrollment to 20%+)
   Gains in public subsidy, economies of scale, student success, performance funding

And for colleges with large share of DE:

2. Increasing post-HS enrollment by strengthening career advising and supports (DEEP Practices)
   Gains in yield surplus (including post-HS student success & performance funding)
Steps for Expanding DE as an Onramp to Postsecondary

- Backward map college programs to high school career academies/CTE programs and embed DE on-ramp courses in HS academy/CTE curriculum.

- Involve academic programs and advising and student services with DE staff to ensure that all DE students helped to explore interests, connect with people/programs in a field of interest and develop a post-high school education plan.

- Provide consistent quality control for DE instruction across modalities and locations to ensure a “light the fire” learning experience for DE students.

- Collaborate with K-12 schools to market career pathways-focused DE on-ramps in high-opportunity fields to students, families and communities starting in elementary and middle school.

- Partner with K-12 schools to explore new ways to recruit, certify and train of academic and CTE DC instructors to teach courses as ‘onramps’.
Thank you!

John.Fink@tc.edu
Further Resources: **Dual Enrollment Equity Pathways**

**Expanding Access to Dual Enrollment**
- Chapter 2 of the *Dual Enrollment Playbook* (pages 20–29)
- Pages 4–5 of the accompanying *institutional self-assessment rubric* from the *Dual Enrollment Playbook*
- A **Tableau tool** and accompanying **blog post** to help you examine access to dual enrollment by race/ethnicity and gender among your local school districts and high schools
- We recommend that college leaders meet with their local K-12 district and school leaders to find common ground and make joint commitments to expanding access. As a part of the *Dual Enrollment Playbook* research, we developed a “**getting started guide**” that presents ideas for engaging your K-12 partners (e.g., who to invite, materials to prepare, questions to discuss).

**Recruiting DE Students Into Your College’s Programs After HS**
- Chapter 3 of the *Dual Enrollment Playbook* (specifically Strategy 1, pages 32–35)
- Examples of how colleges are aligning dual enrollment course offerings to community college programs:
  - Northeast Iowa Community College’s **guided career pathways**
  - Lorain County Community College’s **dual enrollment pathways** aligned to their top transfer partners
  - Indian River State College’s **Career Pathways Initiative** aligning the college’s meta-majors with local high schools’ career-technical education academies
Using Guided Pathways to Build Cross-Sector Pathways Partnerships

October 2021
To improve college and career outcomes for their students, particularly those from underserved groups, and build back enrollments in the face of increased competition, hundreds of community colleges are now redesigning their institutions following the guided pathways model.

Redesigning Colleges through Guided Pathways

- Organize all programs by field and backward-map to good jobs and transfer (with no excess credits) in fields of importance to the local community.
- Redesign new student onboarding to help all students to explore interests and options, connect with an academic and career community, and develop an individualized educational plan aligned with their career and transfer goals.
- Reorganize advising to support case management by field and the use of students’ individualized plans to schedule classes and monitor academic progress.
- Integrate active and experiential learning throughout programs, both in and out the classroom, to build students’ confidence as critical thinkers and learners.

More than 400 colleges are involved in formal national or state guided pathways reform initiatives.
Cross-Sector Pathways

Employers, Universities, and K-12 Schools

Facilitated by internal changes, community colleges build stronger connections with employers, universities, and K-12 schools to break down barriers students face.

Innovations in K-12 partnerships help students, especially the underserved, explore academic and career interests, take college courses in high school through dual enrollment, and develop a provisional college and career plan.

Innovations in university partnerships improve transfer by aligning associate degree programs to bachelor’s programs in fields of importance to the region.

Innovations in employer partnerships improve programs of study that lead to family-supporting jobs that are in demand in the region, and they create opportunities for experiential learning.

Community Colleges

Universities

K-12 Schools

Employers & Workforce Intermediaries
The cross-sector pathways approach aims to affect the entirety of the student's journey.

In the following, we consider how Jada's experiences are shaped by two different educational approaches—the conventional "silod" approach and the regional cross-sector pathways approach.

Meet Jada

Jada is 18 years old and will be the first person in her family to attend college. She has some different career interests, but she's not sure what direction she should go in. She thinks going to college will help her build a good future for herself, but she's also uncertain about what to expect.
The Conventional “Siloed” Approach

Jada’s “silied” experience is characterized by a lack of support to help her understand, plan, and succeed in college and career. There is little guidance as she transitions from one sector to the next.

- Does not learn about careers or college options in courses, either through high school or local colleges
- Takes dual enrollment courses that are college prerequisites and neither connected to a college program nor aligned to her interests
- Has limited opportunities to speak with faculty outside of her dual enrollment courses.

- Participates in onboarding that focuses on an introduction to college and registration for first-term courses
- Participates in advising that focuses on semester-to-semester course registration
- Learns little about careers or options for transfer, either through community college or regional transfer institutions

- Receives inaccurate information about the transferability of her courses and enters her transfer institution with excess credits
- Is uncertain whether there are supports available for transfer students and has difficulty figuring out how to navigate her new campus

- Is uncertain about where to look for a job or what job she should pursue. She is also uncertain about available career paths
- Does not have connections, either with faculty or employers, that might help her find a job
The Cross-Sector Pathways Approach

Jada’s cross-sector pathways experience is characterized by greater support to help her understand, plan, and succeed in college and career. There is greater guidance as she transitions from one sector to the next.

- **High School**
  - Learns about careers and colleges in high school courses and through outreach events by community colleges
  - Takes dual enrollment courses that align with her interests and provide an on-ramp to a program of study
  - Has opportunities to speak with faculty and staff in a field of interest at the community college

- **Community College**
  - Participates in onboarding that focuses on exploring options and choosing a program aligned to her interests and goals
  - Participates in advising that is field-specific and focused on developing and updating a full-program educational plan
  - Learns about careers and options for transfer
  - Gets hands-on experience in her field through experiential learning embedded in her program
  - Creates a clear plan to transfer

- **University**
  - Transfers with junior standing in her major and is on track to graduate in a timely fashion
  - Knows departments and services that are available to support transfer students
  - Uses college and employer connections to secure experiential learning opportunities (service learning, internships, apprenticeships, cooperative education) that increase her employment prospects after graduation

- **Career**
  - Feels prepared to begin her career due to her coursework and experiential learning opportunities
  - Has connections with faculty and employers that can help inform her future plans for career or education
The Challenge and Opportunity of Community College Transfer
Few Transfer, Even Fewer Complete

- 675,000 degree-seeking Community College entrants
- 80% intend to earn a Bachelor’s Degree
- 31% transferred to a 4-year in 6 years
- 41% of transfers earn award before transfer
- 16.7% earn BA within 6 years

Completed Bachelor's

Disproportionate impact on Black & Hispanic community college students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/ethnicity</th>
<th>Bachelor’s Completion Rates by Student Race/ethnicity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NSC data on the fall 2014 entering community college cohort, most recent transfer outcomes from Shapiro et al. (2017); Jenkins & Fink (2016)
Despite strong returns to bachelor’s, few CC starters end up earning bachelor’s degrees

Six-Year Highest Outcomes for First-Time College Students Who Started at a Public 2-Year College in Fall 2014

- Overall: 41% Not Enrolled, 28% Completed any degree, 17% Completed at CC
- Asian: 25% Not Enrolled, 22% Completed any degree, 23% Completed at CC
- Black: 50% Not Enrolled, 18% Completed any degree, 18% Completed at CC
- Hispanic: 39% Not Enrolled, 23% Completed any degree, 21% Completed at CC
- White: 35% Not Enrolled, 25% Completed any degree, 27% Completed at CC
- Two or More Races: 39% Not Enrolled, 22% Completed any degree, 23% Completed at CC

Aspiring transfer students encounter many college-created barriers

- Students not helped to explore career/college options, and develop a plan—and their progress isn’t monitored
- Transfer paths unclear, gen ed core misleads students
- Too many entering students weeded out through abstract, rote instruction in uninspiring subjects; too few experience high-quality active learning
- Unreceptive transfer cultures upon arrival at the four-year, exclusionary practices limit access to HIPs
- Dual enrollment offerings not designed to help students actively explore interests and develop goals for college and careers
Student Experience of Transfer

Problems
• Confusion about programs, requirements
• Little help to explore interests, make a plan
• Transfer credits count as electives
• Students take excess credits, lose time and money

Recurring Themes
• Information inaccurate, inaccessible
• Well-meaning but overwhelmed advisors
• Dysfunctional communication within/ among 2- and 4-years
• Students blame themselves
Are Transfers a ‘Good Bet’ for 4-year admissions?

Yes!

Transfer Shock.. Compared to whom?

Term-by-Term Fluctuations in GPA Among Transfers and Matched Native Students

Transfer student community college GPAs pre-transfer much higher than matched sample of 4-Year Entrants

“Transfer Shock” initial drop in GPA; still higher than matched sample of 4-Year Entrants

Transfer Student GPA consistently higher than matched sample of 4-Year Entrants

Are Community College Transfer Students “A Good Bet” for 4-Year Admissions? Comparing Academic and Labor-Market Outcomes Between Transfer and Native 4-Year College Students

By Di Xu, Shanna Smith Jaggars, Jeffrey Fletcher & John Fink
What does it mean to expand high opportunity transfer?
More Credit Applicability Leads to Greater Transfer Opportunity

Inefficient for Colleges, Ridiculous for Students: Successful Transfers Take 25% More Credits than Required

Total Credits Attempted among CC Transfers who Completed a Bachelor’s, Large Mid-Atlantic State CC System

147
All Graduates

151
Asian

156
Black

155
Native

148
Hispanic

145
White

155
Pell Recipient

153
Completed Associates

146
Transfer w/o Associates

More Credit Applicability Leads to Greater Transfer Opportunity

Just 58% of students successfully transferred 90% of their credits.

And 15% can’t transfer any credits at all.

Students who can transfer 90% of their credits were 2.5x more likely to get their bachelor's degree, compared to those who transfer half or less.

The value of the Transfer AA depends on if students can apply credits toward a BA in their major field of interest...

Nearly half of associate degrees awarded in 2018-19 were general AAs for transfer →

Are these programs designed to ensure credits both transfer and apply to students’ bachelor’s degree program?

How well-aligned are these general transfer AAs to bachelor’s degree programs?
Early momentum matters for transfer and bachelor’s completion
Half of CC students completely gone from higher ed after year 1

Term-by-term program enrollments among first-time-ever Ohio community college entrants

- 42% enter into general, undeclared, unknown, or uncategorized programs

- Not enrolled, No completion
- Completed or Transferred
- Social & Behavioral Sciences
- Other CTE
- Human Services & Public Safety
- Education & Child Care
- Business
- Health
- Industrial & Applied Technologies
- Computer & Information Sciences
- STEM
- Arts, Humanities, Communication, & Design
- Unknown program

Half of CC students completely gone from higher ed after year 1

Year 1
- Term 1: 42%
- Term 2: 38%
- Term 3: 57%

Year 2
- Term 4: 48%
- Term 5: 56%
- Term 6: 64%

Not enrolled, No completion at start of the 2nd year
Benefits of Momentum for Transfer: Especially Large for Black, Latinx, & Low-income Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transfer to a four-year institution</th>
<th>Benefit of Milestone (factor increase)</th>
<th>Effects Even Larger for...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Momentum (6+, 12+, 24+ credits)</td>
<td>3-5x</td>
<td>3-6x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateway English/Math (College-level)</td>
<td>3-4x</td>
<td>6-11x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed Transfer Degree</td>
<td>7-8x</td>
<td>7-8x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transfer &amp; bachelor’s completion</th>
<th>Benefit of Milestone (factor increase)</th>
<th>Black Students</th>
<th>Hispanic Students</th>
<th>Low-income Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credit Momentum (6+, 12+, 24+ credits)</td>
<td>1.7-2x</td>
<td>2-3x</td>
<td>4-5x</td>
<td>7-9x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateway English/Math (College-level)</td>
<td>1.6-3x</td>
<td>2-4x</td>
<td>4-5x</td>
<td>4-5x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed Transfer Degree</td>
<td>3-4x</td>
<td>5-6x</td>
<td>5-9x</td>
<td>6-7x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yuxin Lin, Maggie Fay, & John Fink. (2021). CCRC analysis using statewide administrative data on 573,806 community college entrants between 2009-2018, tracked up to 10 years. Estimated odds ratios from hazard models controlling for students characteristics, college fixed effects and cohort fixed effects.
Reflection

Community Colleges:

- Do we ask and monitor students’ transfer aspirations (e.g., STEM-intending, interest in a FY destination)?
- Do we help students build a personalized plan for transfer? Who is / is not getting that support?
- What courses are new students taking in their first term(s), and do these courses inspire and boost their transfer momentum?

Four-Years:

- Instead of waiting for students to be ‘transfer-ready’ what would it look like for us to take joint responsibility for students’ early momentum at CCs?
Potential to Build on our Transfer Pathway

Analysis of National Student Clearinghouse data, replicating NSC Tracking Transfer, September 2017 methodology

For every transfer to your University, there could be as many as 7 other CC students who wanted to transfer but did not.
How Can Community College and Four-Year Partners Achieve Strong Transfer Outcomes?
## The Transfer Playbook: Essential Practices for Two- and Four-Year Colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Community College</th>
<th>Universities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>Front Range CC</td>
<td>Colorado State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>Manchester CC</td>
<td>Eastern Connecticut State U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>Broward College</td>
<td>Florida International U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Florida Atlantic U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>LSU-Eunice</td>
<td>U of Louisiana - Lafayette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass.</td>
<td>Holyoke CC</td>
<td>U Mass Amherst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>Everett CC</td>
<td>University of Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Western Washington U</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wyner, Deane, Jenkins & Fink, May 2016.
Essential 2- and 4-Year College Transfer Practices

1) Prioritize transfer student success
2) Create clear program pathways with aligned high quality instruction
3) Provide tailored transfer student advising and support
Strengthening transfer pathways requires a change in mindset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are students ready to transfer?</th>
<th>Are we ready for transfers?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Four-years only take responsibility for transfer student success post-transfer</td>
<td>FYs build transfer supply chains at the program-level, including pre-transfer advising and proactive outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Static inter-institutional articulation agreements to answer the Q: ‘will my credits transfer?’</td>
<td>Individualized transfer plans based on regularly updated institution- and major-specific transfer guides to answer the Q: ‘will my credits apply to my degree?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer program information made available to students</td>
<td>Support for all students to explore career and academic options, connect with people/programs in fields of interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help students demonstrate academic readiness through “weed-out” math tests and coursework</td>
<td>Help students become confident college learners through active, inclusive teaching and academic support in program foundation coursework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual enrollment for “baccalaureate-bound” students</td>
<td>Dual enrollment as on-ramp to high-opportunity bachelor’s pathways for underserved students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Getting Started: Partnering together to build high-opportunity transfer pathways

- Backward map paths to transfer in majors and career opportunities in fields of regional importance
- Help all new students explore career/academic options and develop a full-program plan by end of term 1
- Monitor student progress on plan and share data on prospective students
- Track transfer outcomes disaggregated by race/ethnicity, income, sending/receiving institution, and student major
- Strengthen teaching and supports in students’ early CC coursework, embed active/experiential learning into every program
- Build pathways into high schools with a focus on increasing college access, starting with dual enrollment
Activity: Reimagining the program onboarding experience

How can we enrich the onboarding experience for all students while tailoring it for specific underserved groups?
## Advancing Equitable Transfer: Reimagining the program onboarding experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Ask</strong> every student about their interests, strengths, and aspirations</th>
<th><strong>Connect</strong> them with faculty, students, alumni, and others with similar interests</th>
<th><strong>Inspire</strong> learning in term 1 through “light-the-fire” college-level courses on issues of interest</th>
<th>Help every student develop an individualized education plan aligned to transfer in their field of interest by the end of term 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What experience should we provide, and what do most students experience? (Where, when, with whom, how consistently?)</td>
<td>How might this differ for Black, Latinx, lower-income, and older adult students? What additional barriers exist as a result of college practices/policies?</td>
<td>How can we tailor processes and personalize the experience to better serve Black, Latinx, lower-income, and older adult students?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>