



Turning High School Partnerships into College Enrollments

- Cultivating College Navigation Skills
- Brokering Accelerated Career Pathways
- Developing a “School of Choice” Brand
- Early College High School Implementation Toolkit

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Beyond This Publication

This publication is only the beginning of our work to assist members in turning their high school partnership programs into college enrollment channels. Recognizing that ideas seldom speak for themselves, our ambition is to work actively with members of the Community College Executive Forum to decide which practices are most relevant for your organization, to accelerate consensus among key constituencies, and to save implementation time.

For additional information about any of the services below—or for an electronic version of this publication—please visit our website (eab.com/ccf), email your organization's dedicated advisor, or email research@eab.com with "Community College Executive Forum 'High School Partnerships' Request" in the subject line.



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Throughout the publication, this symbol will alert you to any corresponding tools and templates available in the "Implementation Toolkit" at the back of this book. These tools are also available on our website at eab.com.



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Members may contact the consultants who worked on any report to discuss the research, troubleshoot obstacles to implementation, or run deep on unique issues. Our staff conducts hundreds of telephone consultations every year.



Facilitated Onsite Presentations

Our experts regularly visit campuses to lead half-day to day-long sessions focused on highlighting key insights for senior leaders or helping internal project teams select the most relevant practices and determine next steps.

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Institutions Examined in Our Research

Aims Community College
Greeley, CO

Alamo Colleges
San Antonio, TX

Algonquin College of Applied Arts
and Technology
Ottawa, ON

Allegany College of Maryland
Cumberland, MD

American Honors College
Washington, DC

Anne Arundel Community College
Arnold, MD

Apprenticeship Carolina
Columbia, SC

Austin Community College
Austin, TX

Bergen Community College
Paramus, NJ

Bismarck State College
Bismarck, ND

Bossier Parish Community College
Bossier City, LA

Brookhaven College
Farmers Branch, TX

Broward College
Fort Lauderdale, FL

Bucks County Community College
Newtown, PA

Butler Community College
El Dorado, KS

Casper College
Casper, WY

Catawba Valley Community College
Hickory, NC

Cayuga Community College
Auburn, NY

Centennial College
Toronto, ON

Central Arizona College
Coolidge, AZ

Chesapeake College
Wye Mills, MD

Cisco
San Jose, CA

Clackamas Community College
Oregon City, OR

Clearfield Area High School
Clearfield, PA

Clemson University
Clemson, SC

Cleveland State Community
College
Cleveland, TN

Coastline Community College
Fountain Valley, CA

Collaborative for Educational
Services
Northampton, MA

College of Marin
Kentfield, CA

Colorado Mountain College
Glenwood Springs, CO

Columbia Basin College
Pasco, WA

Columbus State Community
College
Columbus, OH

Community College of Rhode Island
Warwick, RI

Community Colleges of Spokane
Spokane, WA

Community College System of New
Hampshire
Concord, NH

City University of New York
New York, NY

County College of Morris
Randolph, NJ

Cowley County Community College
Arkansas City, KS

Delaware State University
Dover, DE

Eastern Iowa Community College
District
Richmond, IA

El Paso Community College
El Paso, TX

Elgin Community College
Elgin, IL

Fayetteville Technical Community
College
Fayetteville, NC

Folsom Lake College
Folsom, CA

Forsyth Technical Community
College
Winston-Salem, NC

Fox Valley Technical College
Appleton, WI

Gavilan College
Gilroy, CA

George Brown College
Toronto, ON

Glendale Community College
Glendale, CA

Golden West College
Huntington Beach, CA

Grossmont College
El Cajon, CA

Guilford Technical
Community College
Jamestown, NC

Gulf Coast State College
Panama City, FL

**Harrisburg Area
Community College**
Harrisburg, PA

Hawkeye Community College
Waterloo, IA

**Houston Community
College District**
Houston, TX

Hudson County Community College
Jersey City, NJ

Humber College
Toronto, ON

Iowa Central Community College
Fort Dodge, IA

Iowa Lakes Community College
Estherville, IA

Iowa Western Community College
Council Bluffs, IA

Ivy Tech Community College
Indianapolis, IN

Jackson State Community College
Jackson, TN

**Kentucky Community and Technical
College System**
Versailles, KY

Kern Community College District
Bakersfield, CA

Kirkwood College
Cedar Rapids, IA

Klamath Community College
Klamath Falls, OR

Lakeshore Technical College
Cleveland, WI

Lake-Sumter State College
Leesburg, FL

Langara College
Vancouver, BC

Lansing Community College
Lansing, MI

Lehigh Carbon Community College
Schnecksville, PA

Lone Star College System
The Woodlands, TX

Madison Area Technical College
Madison, WI

Manchester Community College
Manchester, NH

McHenry County College
Crystal Lake, IL

Metropolitan Community College
Kansas City, MO

Middlesex Community College
Bedford, MA

Mohave Community College
Kingman, AZ

Mohawk College
Hamilton, ON

Montgomery College
Rockville, MD

Moraine Valley Community College
Palos Hills, IL

Morton College
Cicero, IL

Motlow State Community College
Tullahoma, TN

**Mount Wachusett
Community College**
Gardner, MA

Mt. San Jacinto College
San Jacinto, CA

Nashua Community College
Nashua, NH

**National Association of
Manufacturers**
Washington, DC

New Mexico Junior College
Hobbs, NM

**NHTI-Concord's Community
College**
Concord, NH

Norco College
Norco, CA

Northeast Iowa Community College
Calmar, IA

Northeast State Community College
Blountville, TN

Northern Essex Community College
Haverhill, MA

**Northern Virginia Community
College**
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Sheldon, IA

Northwest Vista College
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Oklahoma City, OK

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Bremerton, WA

**Ozarks Technical Community
College**
Springfield, MO

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College**
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Claremont, NH

Riverland Community College
Austin, MN

RoomSync
Gainesville, FL

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Carlsbad, FL

Santa Monica College
Santa Monica, CA

Schenectady County Community
College
Schenectady, NY

Siemens Energy
Charlotte, NC

Sinclair Community College
Dayton, OH

Snead State Community College
Boaz, AL

South Puget Sound
Community College
Olympia, WA

South Texas College
McAllen, TX

Southeastern Community College
West Burlington, IA

Southwest Tennessee
Development District
Jackson, TN

Southwest Wisconsin Technical
College
Fennimore, WI

Southwestern College
Chula Vista, CA

Southwestern Community College
Sylva, NC

St. Johns River State College
Palatka, FL

Tarrant County College District
Fort Worth, TX

Technical College System of
Georgia
Atlanta, GA

Tennessee Board of Regents
Nashville, TN

The Metro School
Columbus, OH

Thomas Nelson Community College
Hampton, VA

Three Rivers Community College
Poplar Bluff, MO

Tipton County Mayor's Office
Tipton, IN

tnAchieves
Knoxville, TN

Trident Technical College
Charleston, SC

Truckee Meadows Community
College
Reno, NV

Tulsa Community College
Tulsa, OK

University of Delaware
Newark, DE

University of Maryland—
University College
Adelphi, MD

University of New Mexico—
Gallup Campus
Gallup, NM

Valencia Community College
Orlando, FL

VisionPoint Marketing
Raleigh, NC

Wake Technical Community
College
Raleigh, NC

Walters State Community College
Morristown, TN

Washtenaw Community College
Ann Arbor, MI

Western Nebraska Community
College
Scottsbluff, NE

White Mountains Community
College
Berlin, NH

Wor-Wic Community College
Salisbury, MD

Year Up
Arlington, VA

High Schools Examined in Our Research

Albuquerque Public School System
Albuquerque, NM

Alma Public Schools
Alma, NE

Amesbury High School
Amesbury, MA

Anaheim High School
Anaheim, CA

Anthony Independent School
District
Anthony, TX

Applington-Parkersburg
School District
Parkersburg, IA

Austin Independent School District
Austin, TX

B.M.C. Durfee High School
Fall River, MA

Barbour County Schools
Clayton, AL

Batesville High School
Batesville, IN

Billerica Memorial High School
Billerica, MA

Birmingham City Schools
Birmingham, AL

Blanco Independent School District
Blanco, TX

Blue Ridge Virtual Early College
High School
Cashiers, NC

Boulder Valley School District
Boulder, CO

Brighton High School
Bessemer, AL

Butler Early College Health
Sciences Academy
El Dorado, KS

Caddo Public School District
Shreveport, LA

Caesar Rodney High School
Camden, DE

Cato-Meridian Central School
District
Cato, NY

Central School District 301
Burlington, IL

Clarksville Community
School District
Clarksville, IA

Clinton County Regional
Educational Service Agency
Saint Johns, MI

Community Unit District 300
Carpentersville, IL

CompuHigh
Morgantown, WV

Corona-Norco Unified School
District
Norco, CA

Covington High School
Andalusia, AL

Creekview High School
Carrollton, TX

Cumberland County Schools
Crossville, TN

Daggett School District
Manila, UT

Dallas County Schools
Selma, AL

Dallas Independent School District
Dallas, TX

Denver Community Schools
Denver, IA

Dickinson Public Schools
Dickinson, ND

Dike-New Hartford Community
School District
Dike, IA

Dothan City Schools
Dothan, AL

Dresden School District
Hanover, NH

Dripping Springs Independent
School District
Dripping Springs, TX

Dunkerton Community School
District
Dunkerton, IA

Duval County Public Schools
Jacksonville, FL

Early College High School at
Delaware State University
Dover, DE

East Buchanan Community Schools
Winthrop, IA

Edison Local School District
Hammondsville, OH

El Paso Independent School District
El Paso, TX

Elgin Area School District U-46
Elgin, IL

Elgin Independent School District
Elgin, TX

Enterprise City Schools
Enterprise, AL

Forest Lake Area Schools
Forest Lake, MN

Fork Union Military Academy
Fork Union, VA

Gaston School
Gadsden, AL

Geneva County Schools
Geneva County, AL

Georgetown Independent
School District
Georgetown, TX

Glendora Unified School District
Glendora, CA

Goshen County School District
Torrington, WY

Grundy Center Community Schools
Grundy Center, IA

Harper Independent School District
Harper, TX

Harrison Central School District
Harrison, NY

Henry County Schools
Abbeville, AL

Hidalgo Early College High School
Hidalgo, TX

Houston County Schools
Dothan, AL

Howard Health and Life Sciences
High School
Fayetteville, NC

Hudson Community School District
Hudson, IA

Huntsville City Schools
Huntsville, AL

Independence Community
School District
Independence, IA

iSchool High
Houston, TX

Janesville Consolidated
School District
Janesville, IA

Jarrell Independent School District
Jarrell, TX

Jefferson County Schools
Jefferson County, AL

Jefferson Parish Public School
System
Jefferson Parish, LA

Jersey City Public Schools
Jersey City, NJ

Jesup Community School District
Jesup, IA

Johnson City Independent
School District
Johnson City, TX

Klamath County School District
Klamath County, OR

Klamath Falls City Schools
Klamath Falls, OR

Knox County Schools
Knox County, TN

Lago Vista Independent School
District
Lago Vista, TX

Lake George Central School District
Lake George, NY

Lake Travis Independent School
District
Austin, TX

Laurel Valley High School
New Florence, PA

LAYC Career Academy
Washington, DC

Lee County Schools
Sanford, NC

Lehigh Career and
Technical Institute
Schnecksville, PA

Liberty Hill Independent
School District
Liberty Hill, TX

Lincoln High School
Lincoln, RI

Lockhart Independent
School District
Lockhart, TX

Los Angeles Unified School District
Los Angeles, CA

Lower Moreland High School
Huntingdon Valley, PA

Luling Independent School District
Luling, TX

Manchester School District
Manchester, NH

Manor Independent School District
Manor, TX

Mount Tom Academy
Holyoke, MA

N.P. Trist Middle School
Meraux, LA

Nashua-Plainfield Schools
Plainfield, IA

North Tama County Community
School District
Traer, IA

Northfield Public Schools
Northfield, MN

Northview High School
Dothan, AL

Oak Ridge High School
El Dorado Hills, CA

Pathways Early College
Innovation School
Gardner, MA

Pathways in Technology Early
College High School (P-TECH)
Brooklyn, NY

Pflugerville Independent
School District
Pflugerville, TX

Pinellas County Schools
Largo, FL

Plano Independent School District
Collin County, TX

Pointe Coupee Parish School
System
New Roads, LA

Polson High School
Polson, MT

Potomac High School
Dumfries, VA

Preble High School
Green Bay, WI

Robert E. Lee High School
Montgomery, AL

Robinson High School
Fairfax, VA

Robinswood Middle School
Orlando, FL

Round Rock Independent School
District
Round Rock, TX

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Sandy Creek Central School District
Lacona, NY

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School District
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District
Smithville, TX

Smyth Career & Technology Center
Marion, VA

Socorro Independent School District
El Paso, TX

Sodus Central School District
Sodus, NY

Southern Cayuga School District
Aurora, NY

Sullivan County Schools
Blountville, TN

Sumner and Fredericksburg School
Sumner, IA

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Sylacauga, AL

Thomas Jefferson High School
Dallas, TX

Tripoli Community Schools
Tripoli, IA

Two Rivers Public School District
Two Rivers, WI

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La Porte City, IA

Wake County Public School System
Raleigh, NC

Wake Early College of Health and
Sciences
Raleigh, NC

Warren County High School
McMinnville, TN

West Baton Rouge Parish Schools
Port Allen, LA

Wetumpka High School
Wetumpka, AL

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Wheeling, IL

Widefield School District 3
Colorado Springs, CO

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Yamhill-Carlton School District
Yamhill, OR

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Mohave Community College

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Iowa Central Community College

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Cayuga Community College

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Hawkeye Community College

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Iowa Western Community College

David Zoby
Honors Program Director
Casper College

Leo Zuniga
*Associate Vice Chancellor of
Communications*
Alamo Colleges

Top Lessons from the Study

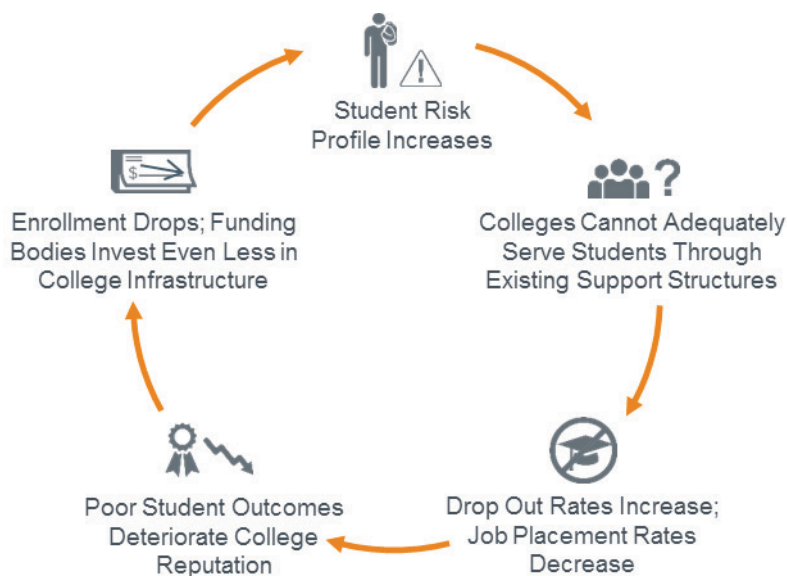
Turning High School Partnerships into College Enrollments

New Competitors Lure Prospective Students with Least Support Needs, Compounding Enrollment Volatility

For the first time in over two decades, community colleges are experiencing deep enrollment declines as new competitors go after their bread and butter populations. For-profit colleges, university continuing and online education units, massive open online courses (MOOCs), and even the rebounding job market have lured students away from community colleges by touting comparative advantages in cost and convenience. Adding to enrollment volatility, competitors are recruiting the most attractive prospective students with the fewest support needs, leaving community colleges with students exhibiting the highest risk profiles. On current course, it is estimated that in the next five years community colleges will be entirely composed of students who are working, first-generation college goers, commuters, or in need of developmental education.

Mission-Threatening Vicious Cycle Compels Members to Seek New Enrollment Playbook

The changing competitive landscape threatens to place community colleges in a mission-threatening vicious cycle—as colleges become inundated with students who possess diverse and acute support needs, colleges cannot adequately support those needs with current resources, leading to a drop in graduation and job placement rates. These poor student outcomes deteriorate the college reputation further, discouraging future enrollments and funding.

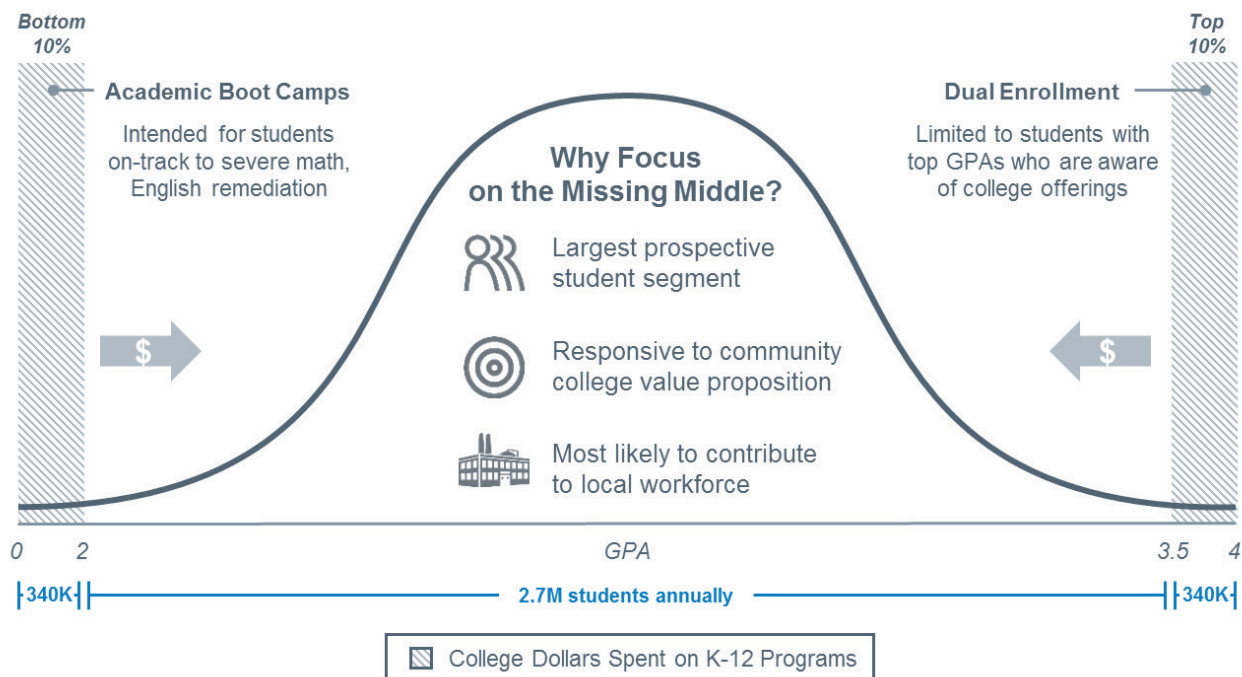


High School Partnerships Present Greatest (and Underleveraged) Opportunity for Enrollment Growth

Despite new competition for students, community colleges have retained their monopoly on partnerships. More so than any other institution type, two-year colleges have formed long-standing and deep collaborations with high schools, industry, government, and universities, placing two-year colleges in a unique position to forge new student pathways from cradle to career. In particular, colleges have invested heavily in high school partnership programs. Most colleges offer pre-college remediation workshops and dual enrollment courses, and a growing number are beginning to build early college high schools and honors programs. Unfortunately, these investments aren't showing up in colleges' enrollment numbers—from 2010 to 2013, community college market share of high school graduates has declined by 2%.

Current High School Interventions Serve Outlier Populations Least Likely to Enroll at and Graduate from Community College

Although community colleges' K-12 partnership programs far outpace those of for-profits and four-year competitors, current programs primarily attract outlier populations by nature of their design. Colleges invest in pre-college remediation workshops—widely known as academic boot camps—for high school students deeply struggling in traditional academic disciplines. Boot camps are often mandatory for low-performing high school students and optional for everyone else. As a result, they tend to be filled with students in the bottom 10% of the high school class, those least likely to succeed in college. In contrast, dual enrollment programs typically require students complete lofty prerequisite coursework to qualify. Once students have met the requirements, they may enroll in courses from traditional academic disciplines like math and English. These offerings primarily appeal to the top 10% of high school students who excel in traditional academics. By concentrating resources on outlier populations, colleges ignore a key prospective student group known as “the missing middle.”



Building a Pipeline of Community College Completers Requires Greater Attention to “Missing Middle” Students

Maximizing colleges' return on investments in K-12 requires shifting resources to programs that reach and prepare “missing middle” students for success. The 2.7 million students who make up the missing middle are the largest prospective high school student segment. These students are also highly responsive to the community college value proposition—they're searching for an intimate college setting with small class sizes, dedicated teachers, and accelerated learning opportunities. Missing middle students are also most likely to benefit from K-12 intervention programs and apply their community college credential to the local economy.

Three Guiding Principles for Optimizing K-12 Partnerships for the Missing Middle

Community colleges must shift resources to interventions optimized for students who make up the “missing middle.” Forum research uncovered three guiding principles for maximizing the impact of K-12 partnerships.

1. Cultivate college navigation skills by shifting resources from academic remediation to student transition support. Current high school interventions focus almost entirely on academic college readiness at the expense of noncognitive readiness. Students must be able to navigate complex college forms and processes during the intake process to set themselves up for future success.
2. Broker accelerated career pathways for technically minded high school students. Most dual credit course offerings are concentrated in traditional general education disciplines such as math and English, unappealing to hands-on learners interested in career and technical education. Progressive college leaders have expanded dual credit offerings to include accelerated CTE pathways from high school to stackable credential programs.
3. Develop a “school of choice” brand by advertising the high quality of a community college education. Most community college advertising campaigns focus entirely on the low cost of student tuition, especially in comparison to four-year and for-profit competitors. However, this strategy does not resonate with students seeking a high-quality academic experience—small class sizes, dedicated faculty, and opportunities for accelerated learning. Community colleges can elevate their brands by marketing these qualities of their institutions to prospective high school students.

Common Core Release Presents Limited Window of Opportunity to Reinvest K-12 Collaborations

Historically, a lack of adequate funding, insufficient data, and task force-phobic staff impeded community colleges’ efforts to improve on high school programming. However, the release of the Common Core has spurred new conversations on education reform. New grant money is available to build partnerships between K-12 and college, federal grants have incentivized states to track P-16 student data, and formerly intractable staff face a barrage of public attention and calls for heightened accountability that leave no other choice but to change, or be changed.

Cultivating College Navigation Skills

Ample Investment in Academic Remediation, but Lack of Attention to Noncognitive Barriers

Many states administer academic placement exams and follow-up remediation during high school to identify and support students testing below college ready. Statewide programs in California and Tennessee have proven that jointly, these interventions can significantly reduce students' need for developmental coursework in college. However, national conversations about college readiness have focused almost exclusively on remediating academic barriers while ignoring noncognitive barriers, such as an inability to finance education, the perception that coursework is disconnected from career goals, and a lack of a college support network.

Optimizing High School Interventions for Missing Middle Requires Shifting Resources to College Transition Support

The transition from high school to college is rife with opportunities to make damaging enrollment errors, particularly for students struggling to balance school, work, and family. In the complex web of enrollment, registration, and support services offices, students often miss out on available aid, place into developmental courses they don't need, or build a schedule that doesn't work with their lives outside of school.

Personalized Navigation Guidance Essential for Impact, but Tricky to Scale

Cultivating college navigation skills during high school helps students avoid these common pitfalls of navigating the college transition alone—but scaling skills development remains a challenge. Breaking the cost-impact compromise to deliver personalized college navigation at scale requires college leaders reach students when they are most attentive, concentrate K-12 interventions during students' greatest problem periods, and enlist free advisors when possible.

High School Students More Receptive to Success Skills Development Than College-Age Counterparts

Success skills are crucial for students to learn early and apply during their college careers, but administrators often struggle to engage college-age students in first-year success courses. Optional success courses are largely under-enrolled and college students consider required courses a burdensome hurdle to graduation. In contrast, high school students eagerly embrace opportunities to feel like “real” college students and earn advanced credit. Progressive colleges tap into this enthusiasm by offering success courses to high school students, supplementing traditional lessons on note-taking and study groups with early career and academic planning sessions that make a big difference in students' ability to navigate college once they arrive.

Summer Helpline Supplements Leanly Staffed Advising Office for Urgent Enrollment Questions

Students who graduate high school with college aspirations are still at risk of seeing their plans derailed. One-third of high school graduates succumb to this phenomenon known as “summer melt,” when plans to attend college dissolve once students are faced with mountains of course registration decisions and required paperwork. Seemingly small questions about deadlines, fees, and scheduling overwhelm students during the summer, at a time when advising offices are the most leanly staffed. On-demand summer helplines offer incoming students a central resource to answer one-off enrollment and registration questions, tackling small issues before they become insurmountable barriers to enrollment.

Enlist Parents and Local Professionals to Scale Personalized Transition Advising Sessions

Small pilot programs across the country have proven that a dedicated transition coach can significantly increase high school students' odds of college enrollment and success. However, the cost of this model makes it difficult to scale across institutions with limited resources to spend. Enlisting parents and local professionals as free mentors for students help minimize the cost of personalized transition guidance. Progressive colleges maximize the impact of volunteer mentors by getting initial set-up right—pairing mentors and mentees, providing multimedia tools, and opening access to ongoing support ensures a positive, productive mentoring relationship that boosts student success and mentor satisfaction.

Brokering Accelerated Career Pathways

Traditional Early College Programs Target Academic Superstars, Shutting Out Hands-On Learners

Most dual enrollment courses span traditional academic disciplines such as calculus, English, and physics, often requiring high school students to demonstrate aptitude through placement exams or high GPAs. Although well-meaning attempts to ensure student preparedness, lofty prerequisites shut out middle-performing students who might thrive in applied degree programs community colleges offer. However, hands-on learners are unlikely to appreciate the variety of college offerings without early access to advanced coursework. Colleges that shut students out from dual enrollment courses deter them from considering post-secondary education as a viable option, losing a potential enrollment stream for the college and setting students on path towards low-skill work with few opportunities for advancement.

New Federal Dollars Available for Early Workforce Training Programs

Workforce projections estimate that in five years, the United States will lack millions of technically trained workers needed in industries like healthcare and STEM to meet employment demand. Seeing this impending shortfall, the federal government has pledged hundreds of millions of dollars to build a robust workforce training model similar to apprenticeship programs in Europe. Renewed national attention on career and technical education presents a unique opportunity for community colleges to build accelerated pathways from college to career. Federal incentive programs favor partnerships across the P-16 divide, and offer even greater support for programs proposals that include employer partners.

CTE Dual Enrollment Courses Redefine “College Experience” for Technical Students

Students who fall short of traditional dual enrollment prerequisites find new opportunities for acceleration through open-access dual credit courses. Dual enrollment programs in career and technical education (CTE) disciplines such as welding or carpentry present a way to reach new student segments previously uninterested in college. Open-access CTE dual enrollment courses enable all high school students to appreciate the rigor of CTE coursework and its applications in the real world. Progressive colleges offering open-access CTE courses to high school students have seen interest in the college spike among technically minded high school students.

Career Academies Offer Accelerated Pathway to Industry-Recognized Credentials

To build on high school students' burgeoning interest in career and technical education, colleges have begun to adapt the career academy model to build credential pathways in applied disciplines. Unlike previous models of high school-led career academies, college-led academies offer high school students accelerated paths towards attaining industry-recognized certifications. Leading institutions offer incentives at critical points along the career academy pathway to boost initial enrollment and encourage retention throughout the program, increasing the likelihood of credential attainment five-fold.

STEM Early College High Schools Blend College Preparation and Hands-On Industry Exposure

While career academies present an opportunity to earn a cluster of college credits, early college high schools allow students to go even further and earn an associate's degree alongside their high school diploma. Most early college high schools, however, solely prepare students for general education degrees that are transferrable to four-year universities. Colleges engaging technically minded high school students have instead focused their early college high schools on STEM fields, and found higher rates of high school graduation and college enrollment among participants. While contextualized coursework keeps students engaged, leading colleges collaborate with industry sponsors to develop hands-on work experiences that teach students essential skills for success in the field.

Developing a “School of Choice” Brand

For-Profits Better Resourced, but Community Colleges Are Their Own Worst Marketing Enemy

For-profit educational providers spend hundreds of thousands of dollars each day on advertising alone, leaving some college administrators overwhelmed by their rivals’ resources. However, community colleges face larger problems than their competitors’ deep marketing budgets—colleges are also guilty of inadvertently diluting their own brand. Most community colleges spend valuable advertising dollars narrowly defining their value proposition as low-cost while ignoring all other attributes of the educational experience. Advertising campaigns that call attention to community colleges’ unique advantages as an educational institution—including instructional quality, accelerated offerings, return on degree, research opportunities, and college name recognition—appeal to larger swaths of the prospective student market, particularly “quality shoppers” seeking the best return on their investment in higher education.

Community College Faculty Trump Four-Year Counterparts in Instructional Expertise, Industry Contacts

High school students seeking a rigorous academic experience aren’t always aware of what community colleges have to offer—small class sizes and experienced faculty committed to teaching. To educate prospective students, few colleges have begun advertising campaigns focused on the strength of their faculty as both instructors and industry experts. Students seeking a quality educational experience are keen to interact with professional teachers, not teaching assistants, and are further impressed by the professional contacts faculty have access to for networking and job opportunities.

Existing Partnership Programs Offer Easy Avenue to Establish Brand at Locals High Schools

Despite the thousands of dollars and hours of time community colleges invest each year in dual credit courses at local high schools, colleges receive very little credit for their work—few dual enrollment participants can name the host college sponsoring their advanced studies. Tired of operating in anonymity, innovative colleges have begun to implement low-cost strategies branding themselves as a destination of choice among student populations already served through dual enrollment. Bold identification as the sponsor institution has increased name recognition and student interest in college programs.

Dedicated Transfer Support to Top Universities Attracts “Quality Shopper” Students

High school students seeking a top-notch academic experience may recognize the community college value proposition, but question how a two-year degree fits into their plans for a bachelor’s degree. Rather than set themselves in opposition to a four-year university, innovative community college leaders brand their institutions as a launching pad to more advanced education. Quality shoppers are most receptive to personalized support during the transfer process; preparing a competitive transfer application with help from an elite college application counselor allows students to reap all the benefits of a community college experience during their first two years and still find a place at the four-year college of their dreams.

Understanding Your Current Practice

The following questions are designed to guide members in evaluating their current activities. Members may use them to determine if the full range of best practices is being used on their campuses and to evaluate whether absences represent an opportunity for investment or action.

I. Cultivating College Navigation Skills	Yes	No
1. Do you assess students' college readiness in 11 th grade? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 39.</i>		
2. Do you offer opportunities for students to begin developmental coursework in 12 th grade? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 39.</i>		
3. Do high school intervention programs help students overcome non-academic barriers to college success, such as confusion over the application process, undecided major and career path, and last-minute questions about enrollment? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 40.</i>		
4. Do student services staff regularly visit area high schools to guide students through the college application and enrollment processes? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 43.</i>		
5. Are student service staff trained and assessed on their understanding of the entire college application and enrollment process, including outside of their department? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 45.</i>		
6. Are high school students eligible to enroll in your student success course? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 46.</i>		
7. Does your student success course incorporate early career exploration activities and academic planning discussions? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 48.</i>		
8. Does your college advising office maintain the same number of full-time staff during the summer as during the academic year? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 50.</i>		
9. Can incoming first-year students receive answers to transition questions on demand from a student mentor or professional counselor over the summer? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 51.</i>		
10. Is college transition information delivered to parents of prospective students in various modalities to accommodate different work schedules and learning styles? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 52.</i>		
11. Are volunteer mentors supported with frequent reminders of when and how to reach out to student mentees during the year? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 55.</i>		
12. Can students provide input on their assigned mentor? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 57.</i>		
13. Are mentors paired with mentees based on academic goals, interests, and personality? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 57.</i>		

II. Brokering Accelerated Career Pathways	Yes	No
14. Are members of the executive cabinet responsible for coordinating early career training programs between local high schools and employers? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 61.</i>		
15. Can high school students participate in open enrollment dual credit courses in career and technical education? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 66.</i>		
16. Do you educate high school faculty on the rigor of career and technical education with organized visits to local employer sites? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 68.</i>		
17. Do you host career academy programs for high school students to earn credits towards an applied credential at the college? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 70.</i>		
18. Are students incentivized to enroll in career academy programs and continue their studies at the college after high school graduation? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 72.</i>		
19. Do you partner with community members and local employers to raise money for technical equipment in accelerated career pathway programs? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 73.</i>		
20. Is there an early college high school program that gives area high school students an opportunity to complete a credential at your college? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 75.</i>		
21. Does your early college high school specialize in a technical discipline, such as science, technology, engineering, or math? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 75.</i>		
22. Does your workforce development staff employ an account management model to establish and maintain employer partnerships for accelerated career pathway programs? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 79.</i>		
23. Can workforce development staff at your college prove to employers that students are responsible enough for internships at their facilities? <i>If you answered "No" to this question, please turn to page 81.</i>		

III. Developing a “School of Choice” Brand	Yes	No
24. Do you advertise high instructional quality and applied faculty expertise in college marketing campaigns? <i>If you answered “No” to this question, please turn to page 87.</i>		
25. Do you leverage existing dual enrollment partnerships with area high schools to advertise community college programs to prospective students? <i>If you answered “No” to this question, please turn to page 88.</i>		
26. Is information about low student debt and high employment rates used to promote the value of a community college degree? <i>If you answered “No” to this question, please turn to page 89.</i>		
27. Are there opportunities for students to conduct independent research studies with oversight from a faculty advisor? <i>If you answered “No” to this question, please turn to page 90.</i>		
28. Do your students conduct pro bono research projects on behalf of community organizations or internal college departments? <i>If you answered “No” to this question, please turn to page 91.</i>		
29. Do community college counselors assist students in developing a competitive transfer application to elite four-year universities? <i>If you answered “No” to this question, please turn to page 92.</i>		



Turning High School Partnerships into College Enrollments

Caught in the Common Core Avalanche

In the wake of the Common Core, members identified K-12 collaboration as their top priority for 2014. College leaders asked for guidance in wading through the mountain of media articles released on the topic over the past year, asking: “What is Common Core practically going to mean for my college?”

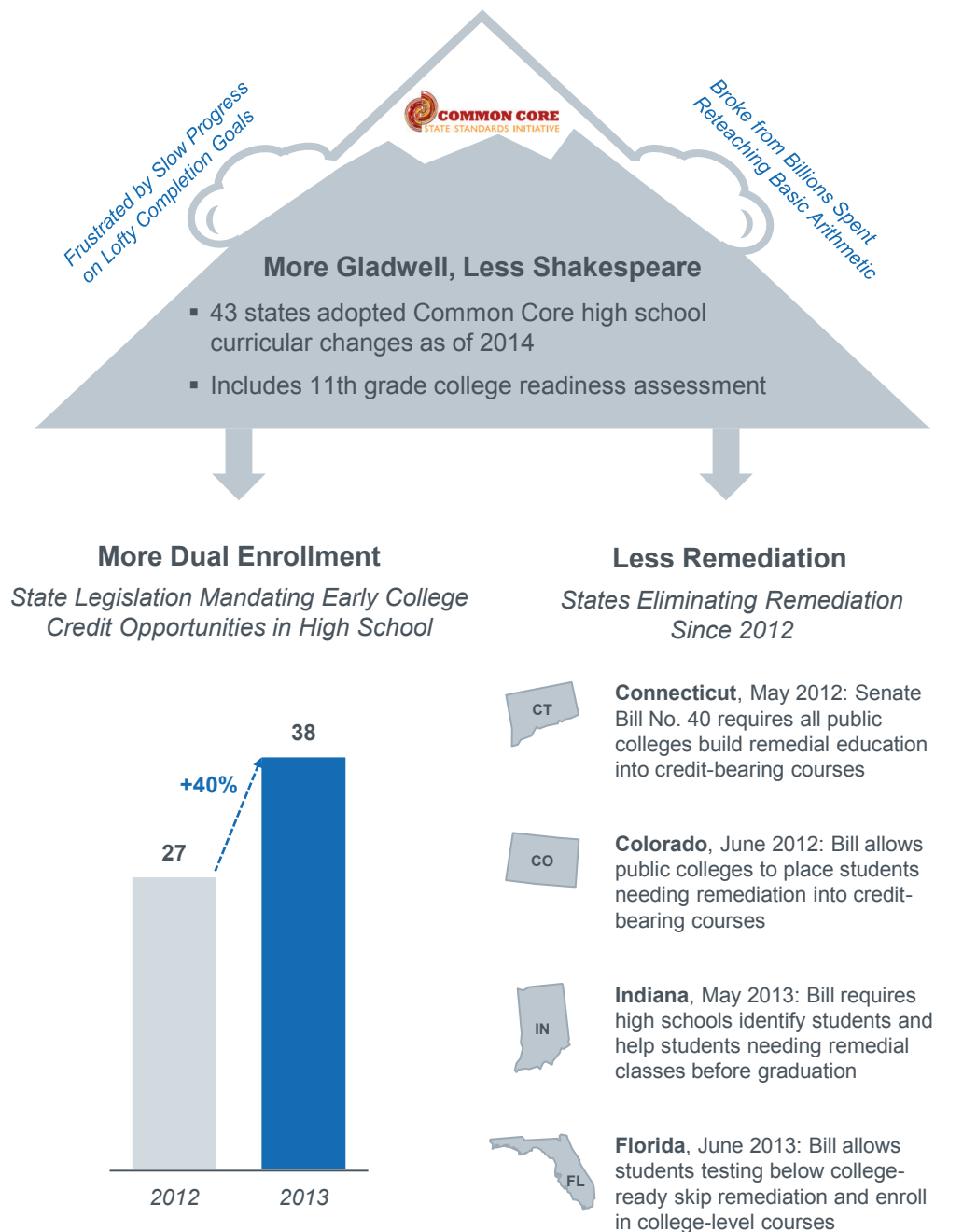
Our research found that the Common Core standards themselves are not going to revolutionize executives’ daily operations. Most colleges are well prepared for adjustments to high school curricula, the most notable being a greater inclusion of nonfiction reading—more Gladwell, less Shakespeare.

To accommodate for these changes, colleges modified teacher training programs and adjusted gatekeeper course learning outcomes. A few colleges even deployed early readiness assessments to preempt a requirement embedded in the Common Core to determine if 11th graders are on track to being college ready.

Instead of the standards themselves, Common Core’s impact will be most keenly felt in the sweeping mandates it has triggered across the country: an avalanche of college readiness legislation enacted by state lawmakers tiring of the cost of meeting completion goals.

In the last year, an explosion of legislative bills have called for more dual credit programs at no cost for students and a number of states eliminating mandatory remediation for college students.

High School Reform Triggers Sweeping State Mandates on College Offerings



Source: “State Policy Database,” Education Commission of the States; John O’Connor, “Why Remedial Classes Are No Longer Required At Florida Colleges,” NPR State Impact, October 2013; EAB interviews and analysis.

A Running Start on Reform

As legislators call for more dual enrollment and less remediation, the onus is on community colleges to perfect partnerships with K-12 and ensure that local high school graduates are college ready.

Fortunately, community colleges, more so than any other institution of higher education, have a running start ahead of the Common Core avalanche. Approximately 96% of two-year colleges have forged academic partnerships with local high schools, far outpacing four-year institutions and for-profits.

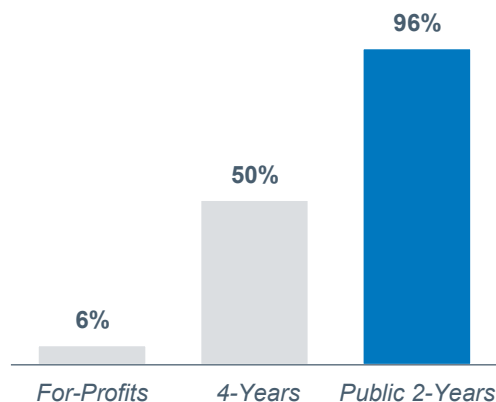
But the sheer number of partnership programs offered through community colleges does not equate to sustained enrollments—members have reported declining enrollments among recent high school graduates. While part of the decline can be attributed to natural demographic changes (there are fewer high school graduates in recent years than years prior), community colleges have also lost their share of the high school graduate market—a 2% decline from 2010 to 2013.

This enrollment challenge has prompted college leaders to revisit their assumptions about the efficacy of their partnerships and devote resources to improving upon existing K-12 intervention programs.

Two-Years Already Partner Extensively with K-12, but Without Enrollment Payoff

Community Colleges Out-Partner Peers

Share of Institutions Offering High School Programs



But Bridge-Building to What End?



Decline in community college market share of high school graduates, 2010-2013



“We have a rich history of partnering with local school districts, but I have a sense that the students we serve through our high school programs aren’t the ones showing up at our doors. With enrollment shortfalls, it’s time to revisit that K-12 strategy.”

*Sylvia Jenkins
President, Moraine Valley Community College*

Source: “Dual Enrollment Programs and Courses for High School Students at Postsecondary Institutions: 2010–11,” National Center for Education Statistics, February 2013; “National Postsecondary Enrollment Trends: Before, During, and After the Great Recession,” National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, July 2011; EAB interviews and analysis.

Our Window of Opportunity

The Common Core legislative avalanche serves less as an unwelcome intrusion on college autonomy and more as a unique window of opportunity for restructuring high school partnership programs.

Historically, lack of adequate funding, insufficient data, and task force-phobic staff impeded community colleges' efforts to improve on high school programming. But as Common Core spurs new conversations on education reform, these barriers are being overcome.

Thanks to the focus on high school reform, new grant money has been made available to build partnerships between K-12 and college. From 2008 to 2013, the amount of public dollars available from government and foundations specifically for college readiness nearly doubled to \$653 million.

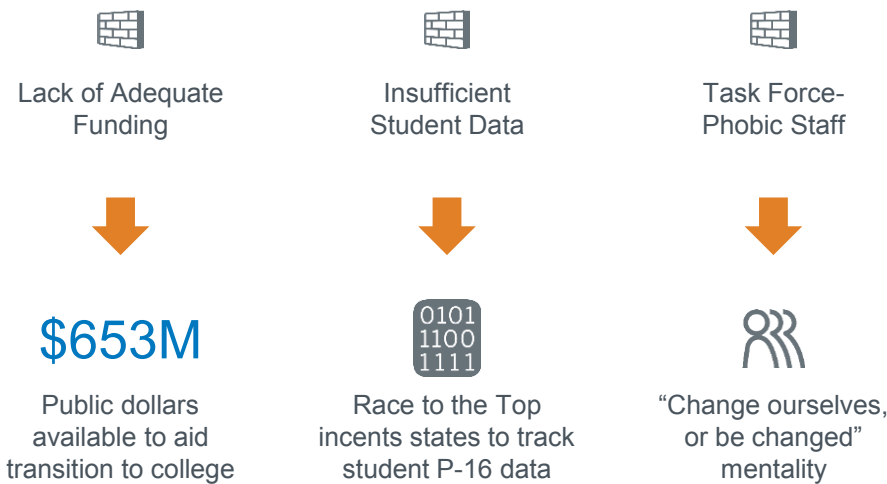
Competitive federal grants have also incentivized states to track student performance, data that could help prepare colleges to serve incoming students.

Lastly, intractable staff are now faced with the realities of intense public attention on college readiness. Left with no other choices, staff must agree to change, or be changed.

With this window of opportunity for reinvention, members approached the Forum in search of business guidance on their K-12 strategy. The result of our year of research is a set of practical recommendations for doing well as a college—while doing good for society.

Evolving Boundaries and Budgets Enable Favorable Restructure of K-12 Partnerships

Redesign Barriers Overcome by Common Core Avalanche



Open Questions for EAB

- ? "What types of students stand to benefit most from our involvement in high school programming?"
- ? "How do we structure these programs to serve as recruitment channels to our college?"
- ? "Which pre-college interventions maximize these students' odds of graduating with a college credential?"

Source: "What We Do: College Ready Education," Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; U.S. Department of Education Fiscal Year Budget Summaries; Will Estrada and Katie Tipton, "The Dawning Database: Does the Common Core Lead to National Data Collection?" September 2013; EAB interviews and analysis.

Feeding the Full

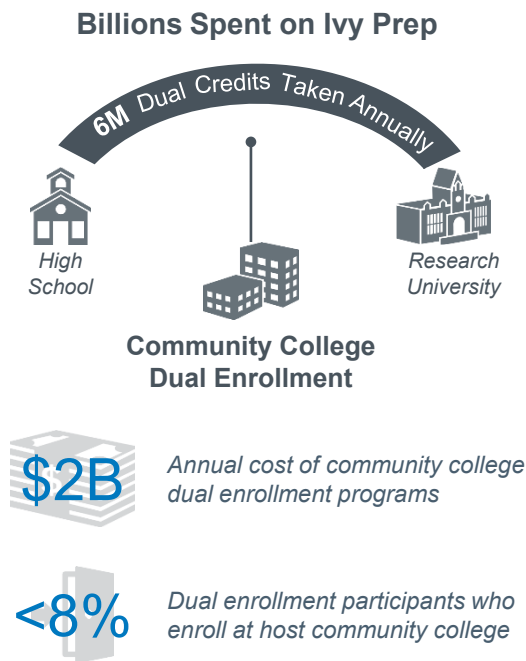
Without a doubt, two-year colleges have done a lot of good for their service areas through K-12 programs. Every year, community colleges confer over 6 million college credits to high school students through dual enrollment programs.

However, state data samples reveal a troubling trend. Despite the time and money community colleges spend to create early college experiences for high school students, less than 8% of dual enrollment participants enroll at the host community college.

Instead, the vast majority use advanced credits to differentiate their applications to four-year research universities. Moreover, students enrolled in community college readiness programs tend not to need the extra boost.

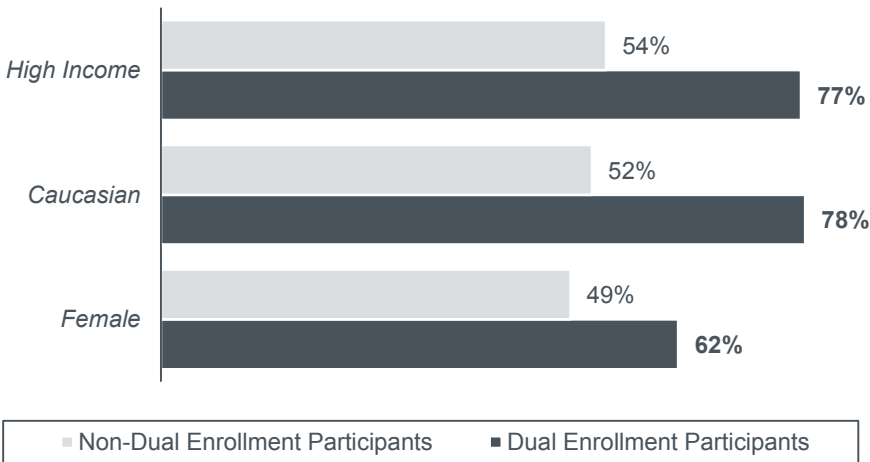
Descriptive characteristics from Florida reveal that dual enrollment participants are overwhelmingly high income, Caucasian, and female—groups with much higher likelihoods of college enrollment and success than their low-income, minority, and male peers.

Readiness Programs Primarily Serve University-Bound



Beneficiaries of Our Labor Already Advantaged

Characteristics of Florida Dual Enrollment Participants, 2001



Source: "National Cost of Aligning States and Localities to the Common Core Standards," Accountability Works, February 2012; "Completing College: A National View of Student Attainment Rates," National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, December 2013; "Community College Student Survey," Pearson Foundation, 2011; Cecilia Speroni, "High School Dual Enrollment Programs: Are We Fast-Tracking Students Too Fast?," National Center for Postsecondary Research, December 2011; EAB interviews and analysis.

...Not the Hungry

While academic superstars take advantage of community college dual enrollment programs to pad applications to elite schools, students on path towards community college often proceed through high school without opportunities for acceleration or extra engagement. Only once they reach the doors of the community college are they identified as college unready.

College leaders must consider the opportunity cost of their investments, particularly in the face of restrained budgets. Although current high school dual enrollment programs are laudable in their size, as structured they often do not serve students likely to attend community college or those with the greatest ability to benefit from early intervention.

Good Deeds Come at High Cost for Two-Year Prospects

Incoming Community College Students At-Risk of Failure

Remedial Needs



60%

Entering students placed into remedial coursework

Poor Planning



1 in 6

Students dropping out in first term due to scheduling issues

Missing Out on Aid



42%

Pell-eligible students who do not complete FAFSA application



Strangers Until It's Too Late

"We knew our dual enrollment programs were going after the wrong kind of students: courses were filled with these really bright, motivated students who went off to Harvard and Duke after high school graduation. But all **the kids down the hall, who would eventually enroll at our college...they were complete strangers to us.** By the time they reached us, there were issues we didn't know about and weren't prepared to help with."

Director of High School Programs

Maximizing Investments in K-12

Current K-12 programs tend to serve two distinct segments of the high school population.

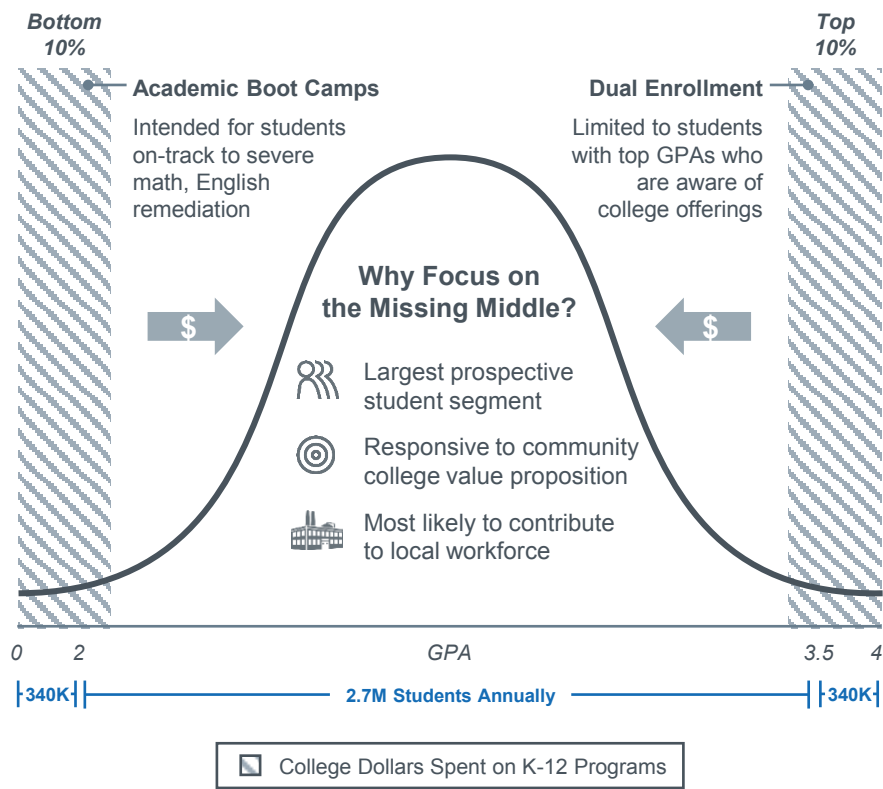
Dual enrollment courses are typically offered in traditional academic disciplines (e.g., math and English) and require students complete prerequisite coursework or demonstrate competency through high placement assessment scores. By nature of this design, dual enrollment programs serve the top 10% of high school students who can meet the lofty prerequisites and tend to be first informed about accelerated academic opportunities.

Colleges also invest heavily in academic boot camps (i.e., summer bridge programs) for high school students deeply struggling in traditional academic disciplines. They are often mandatory for low-performing high school students and optional for everyone else. As a result, boot camps tend to be filled with students from the bottom 10% of the high school class—the least likely to enroll or succeed in college.

By concentrating resources on these outlier groups, colleges ignore a key prospective student segment known as “the missing middle.”

Shift Spending to Interventions Serving Middle Performers

Current High School Programs Designed for Outlier Populations



Source: "High School Transcript Study NAEP Data Explorer," National Center for Education Statistics, 2009; "Projections of Education Statistics, to 2021," National Center for Education Statistics, January 2013; EAB interviews and analysis.

Who Makes Up the Missing Middle?

The 2.7 million students who make up the “missing middle” are most likely to benefit from and the most responsive to the community college value proposition. With small investments, middle-performing students are likely to earn a two-year credential and apply it to the local economy.




The student taxonomy shown here comes from conversations with staff across the P-16 spectrum. We identified three student types that make up the missing middle: students with a Broken GPS, the Future Steve Jobs, and Quality Shoppers.

Students with a Broken GPS struggle to balance school and life responsibilities. They are characterized as the students who turn in assignments late and forget to register for class. Without early intervention, these students enter college, but are likely to drop out in short order.

The Future Steve Jobs does not see the connection between higher education and career—these students excel in hands-on activities, but find lecture-drill courses too abstract. Without opportunities for early college credit, these students will forgo higher education altogether, and opt for entry-level work instead.

Quality Shoppers are undecided about where to attend college. They want an intimate academic setting and a job at graduation, and don’t realize community colleges offer both. Students tend to opt for unselective four-year schools, graduating indebted and underemployed.

A Taxonomy of Underserved High School Students

	 Broken GPS 2.0-2.5 GPA	 Future Steve Jobs? 2.5-3.0 GPA	 Quality Shopper 3.0-3.5 GPA
Student Roadblock	Don't know how to navigate school and life responsibilities	Don't see connection between higher education and career	Don't see value proposition of community college
Status Quo College Practice	Teaching quadratic formula, not how to apply for FAFSA	Early credit available in traditional academic disciplines, not CTE	Advertising low cost of college, not academic quality
Five-Year Outlook	College dropout	Entry-level worker forgoing higher education	Indebted and underemployed B.A.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Capturing the Missing Middle

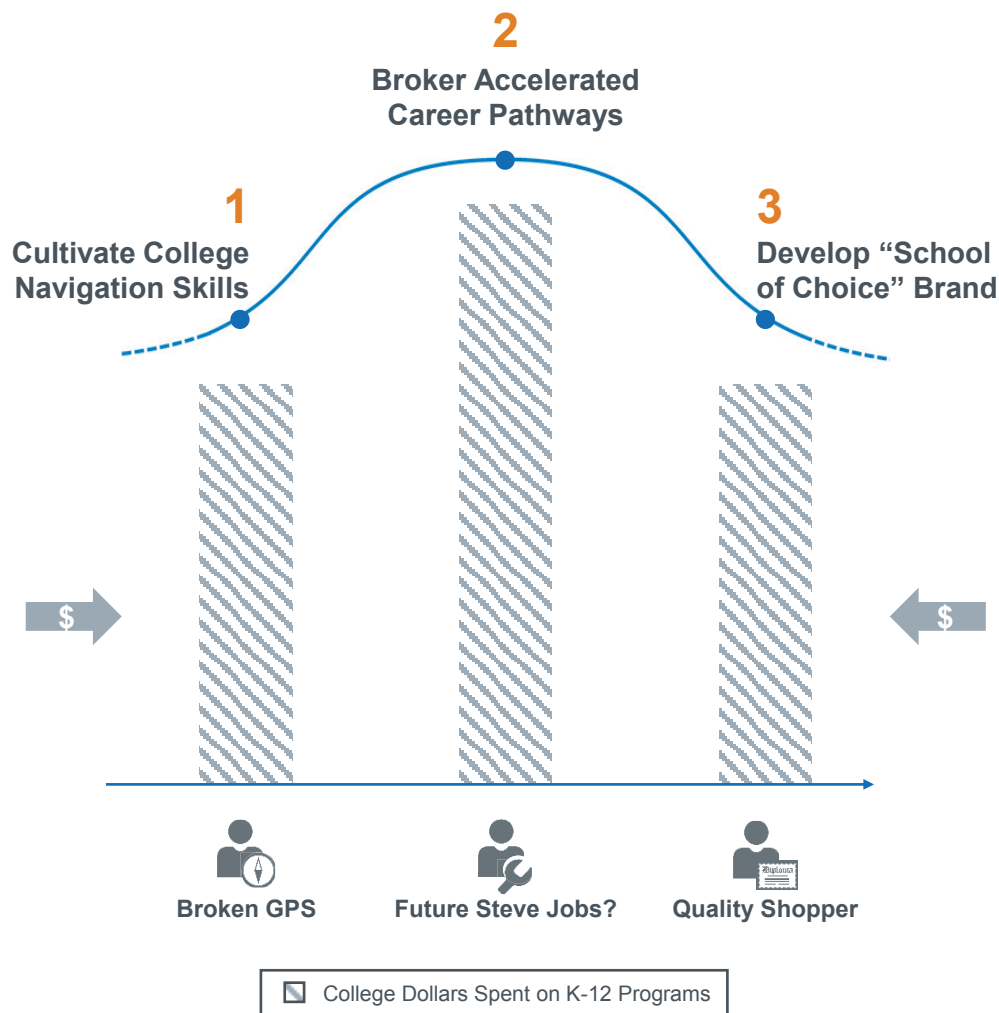
Thankfully, community colleges are well positioned to meet the needs of the “missing middle.” This doesn’t require much new investment, but rather a shift in resources to interventions serving middle performers.

Students struggling to balance school and life, Broken GPS Students, don’t need academic remediation boot camps, but rather more support on the noncognitive piece of college readiness. These students can be placed on a path toward credential attainment when college navigation skills are cultivated starting in high school.

As for technically minded high school students—the Future Steve Jobs—colleges need to replace lecture-drill calculus courses with early credit offerings that reward vocational and hands-on skills. The Future Steve Jobs opts into higher education when the connection between college and career is made clear. College leaders must invest in brokering accelerated career pathways.

Two-year colleges have successfully attracted Quality Shoppers—students searching for the greatest return on their higher education—by elevating their academic brand. Focusing advertising campaigns on small classes, high job placement rates, and committed faculty has helped colleges become a “school of choice” among high-quality students responsive to what the community college has to offer.

EAB’s Road Map to Building a Pipeline of College Completers



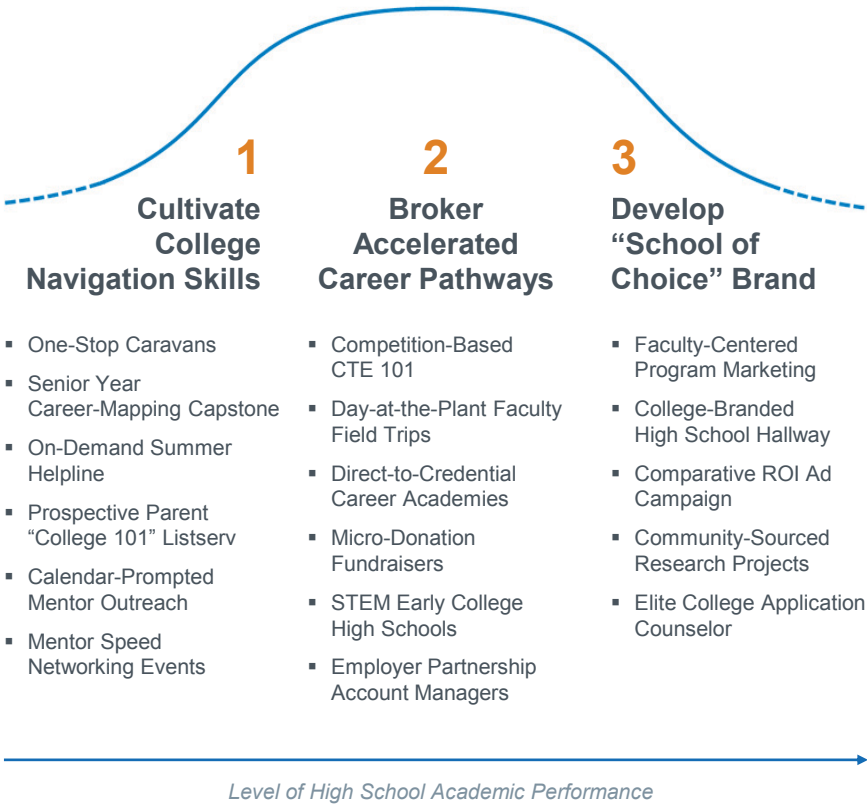
Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

High Return K-12 Partnerships

Our research demonstrates that high school partnerships optimized for the missing middle are the most beneficial place to concentrate limited resources. Each section of this study focuses on one of the three student segments introduced in the previous pages, addressing open questions from progressive college leaders: How do we cultivate college navigation skills to prepare high school students for the application and enrollment process? How do we broker accelerated career pathways that keep technically minded students engaged in college training programs? How do we develop a “school of choice” brand for Quality Shoppers seeking the greatest return on their investment in higher education?

Together these recommended interventions form a blueprint for college leadership to strengthen mission by building a pipeline of college completers.

Building a Pipeline of College Completers



Source: EAB interviews and analysis.



Section 1

Cultivating College Navigation Skills

Ample Investment in Academic Remediation

Much attention has been paid to academic remediation over the past few years. According to the Community College Research Center, high schools in the majority of states administer 11th grade placement exams to measure college readiness. Most states also offer 12th grade transitions curricula—courses to remediate college-unready students *before* entering college.

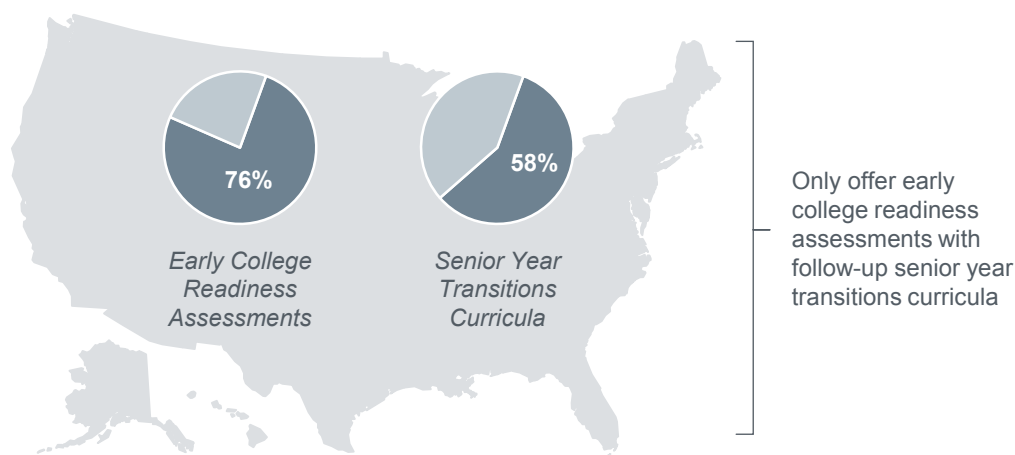
The California State University's Early Assessment Program (EAP) identifies college-unready high school students and offers senior year transitions curricula in follow-up. In its first years, the EAP reduced students' odds of developmental placement by six percentage points in English and four percentage points in math.

Chattanooga State Community College's SAILS program has achieved similar success. The program expands the modified math emporium model the college adopted for its remedial students into high schools, giving students a chance to work through math coursework at their own pace. As a result, SAILS students are three times more likely to place into college math than in the past.

Together, early readiness assessments and transitions curricula significantly reduce the need for college remediation. In fact, these best practices have made academic remediation a settled science. Moving forward, the challenge for college leaders is to balance investments in academic readiness with noncognitive student supports.

Pre-College Testing and Transition Courses a Settled Science

Early Testing and Transition Courses Abound
Percentage of States with High School Academic Interventions



Best-in-Class Models Go Statewide



Early Assessment Program

- Voluntary English exam added to 11th grade state test; students receive notice of performance before 12th grade
- 2008 senate bill expanded CSU-piloted program across all state community colleges



↓ 6%

Decreased likelihood of placement into remedial English among EAP participants



SAILS Transition Math Program

- Tennessee 12th grade students with low ACT scores complete self-paced MyMathLab curriculum in computer lab
- \$1.1 million Tennessee Higher Education Commission grant expands pilot statewide in 2013



3x

Increased likelihood of placement into college-level math among SAILS participants

Source: Kurlaender, M et al., "Postsecondary Preparation and Remediation: Examining the Effect of the Early Assessment Program at California State University," April 22, 2009; EAB interviews and analysis.

But Lack of Attention to Non-Academic Barriers

Currently, community college readiness programs tend to focus almost exclusively on minimizing students' academic barriers to success. However, this singular focus on academic barriers ignores students' greatest barriers to completion.

EAB surveyed community college administrators across the country about students' top reasons for dropping out or failing in their courses. The survey found that students' greatest barriers to completion are noncognitive: the inability to finance education, the perception that coursework is disconnected from career goals, and the lack of a college support network. Toward the bottom of the list were academic barriers like the difficulty of introductory coursework.

Over the course of a few months, Forum researchers conducted interviews with over 50 students on member campuses to gather the student perspective on transition obstacles. The excerpts from these conversations on this page show the difficulties students faced when trying to navigate the college enrollment process alone. Completing financial aid forms, crafting a realistic academic plan, and confronting basic logistical questions alone were all cited as major barriers to their success. Without a support network to guide them, students made mistakes in the short-term that derailed their long-term goals.

College Navigation—Not Coursework—Greatest Transition Obstacle



Excerpts from EAB Student Interviews *Fall 2013 Community College Registration*



Lost in FAFSA

"I had no idea how to complete FAFSA, and the college counselor didn't have time to help. I doubt I would have gotten aid anyway, so I just picked up another shift at Starbucks."



What's in a Major?

"I signed up for criminal justice because I thought it would be like the CSI/ TV shows—a lot of action! Turns out, you need chemistry and business math. I wish someone had told me what was involved from day one."



No One to Ask

"I had so many little questions about going to college: How do I pay my tuition? What does MWF mean? I asked my mom, but she didn't know—never went to college. I was on my own."

Missing Our Biggest Opportunity to Reduce Risk

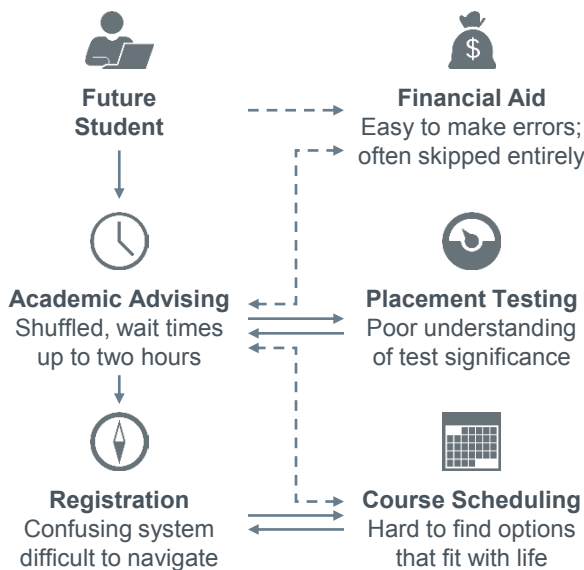
Students without a college GPS are prone to making the most damaging errors during their transition from high school into college. This can be explained in part by students' view of the college transition process. Unlike the linear process administrators imagine of enrollment, students entering community college for the first time are greeted with nothing but a confusing puzzle of steps to complete before starting class.

In our research interviews, students shared stories of skipping financial aid applications and spending hours waiting for an academic advisor. We also talked to many students who took the college placement test without any understanding of its significance.

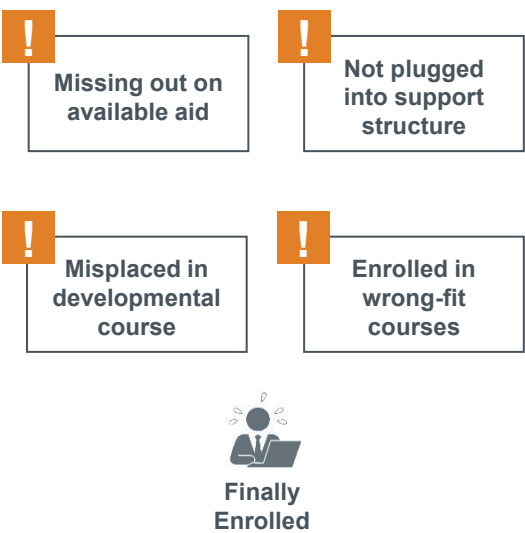
In this web of services, it's all too easy for students to miss out on available aid, place into developmental courses they don't need, or build a school schedule that doesn't work with their jobs or family responsibilities.

Students Navigate Complex Enrollment Process with Limited Guidance

A Student's View of the College Transition



Consequences of Going It Alone



Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

How Do We Cultivate College Navigation Skills at Scale?

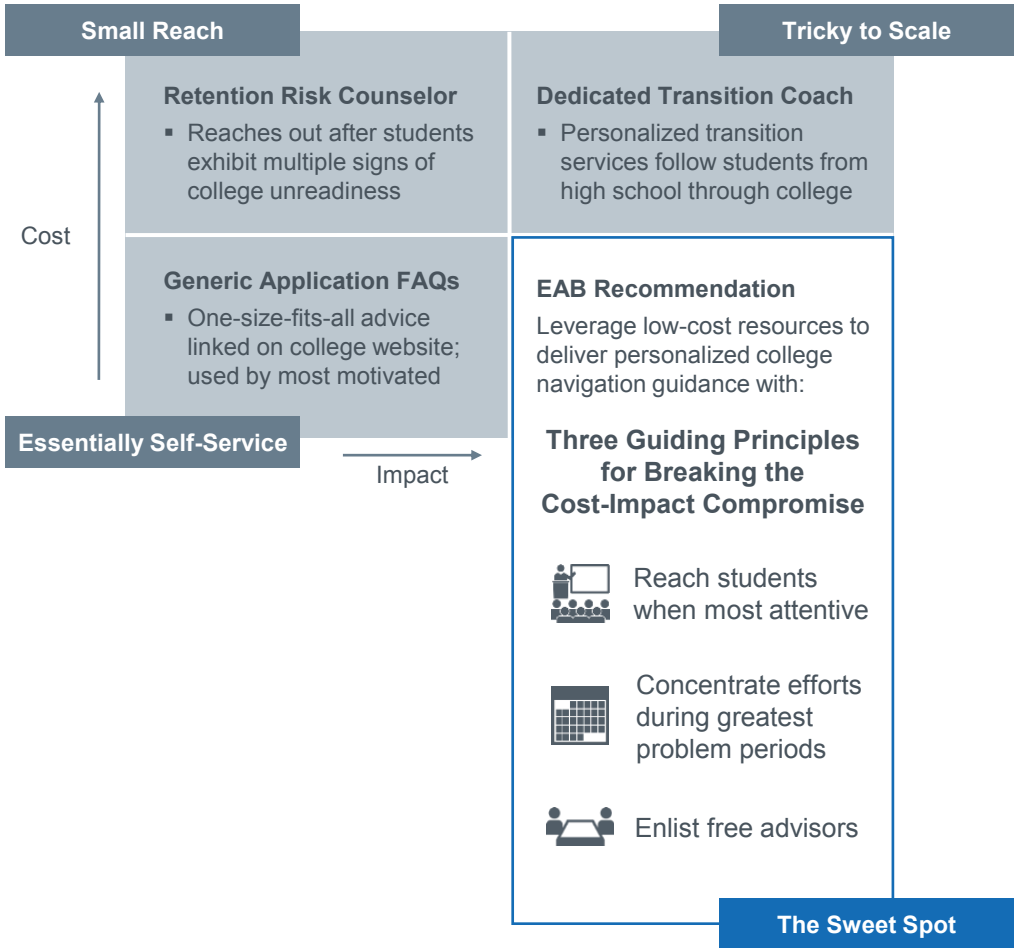
Most college staff understand the consequences of students navigating enrollment decisions without the right information. But they voiced a reasonable challenge in supporting these students on their campuses: “How do we cultivate college navigation skills at scale?” Academic readiness programs are relatively easier to scale than soft skills development.

This explains why existing efforts to scale the cultivation of college navigation skills are often small scale or low impact. Many colleges offer self-service enrollment guidance online with PDF worksheets and online portals, but students who take advantage of this generic application support often already have to know where to find these resources and have support.

Colleges that have recognized the limitations of their self-service support have hired dedicated transition counselors for small cohorts of at-risk high school students. Counselors work through every step of the college transition, acting as a personal GPS for each student. These programs certainly improve college enrollment and completion rates, but their cost makes them difficult to scale.

Breaking the cost-impact compromise to deliver personalized college navigation at scale requires college leaders reach students when they are most attentive, concentrate efforts during greatest problem periods, and enlist free advisors.

Existing Support Programs Suffer Low Impact or Limited Reach



Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

One-Stop Caravans Deliver 360° Support at Scale

While most community colleges rely on prospective students to visit their campuses and start the enrollment process, Austin Community College (ACC) has redefined the location and experience of enrollment for high school students in their service area through their College Connections program.

As part of their College Connections program, ACC sends teams of student services administrators to area high schools to talk seniors through the community college application and enrollment process. During these visits, college staff review everything from financial plans to career paths, functioning as a one-stop caravan of student services.

College staff are able to provide 360-degree support to students during the enrollment process because they come from all over the college—registration, financial aid, advising, and admissions—exactly the kind of diverse staff representation found in a physical one-stop shop on a college campus.

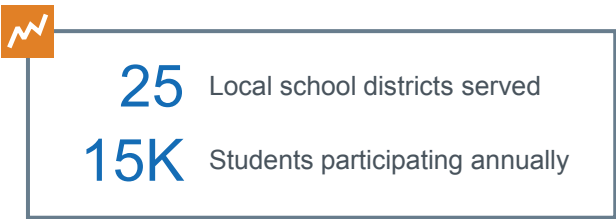
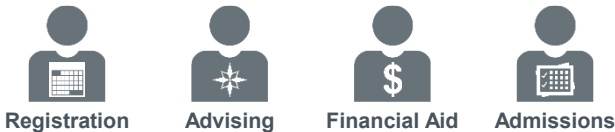
Over the course of a year, ACC's one-stop caravan visits 25 school districts and interacts with over 15,000 students. As a result of the program, ACC has seen a 56% increase in enrollments among recent high school graduates in their service area, and these students are more likely to be retained than the average ACC student.

\$16 per Student Produces Double-Digit Enrollment and Persistence Gains

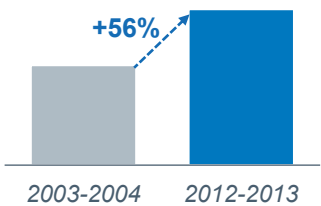
ACC's College Connection Program



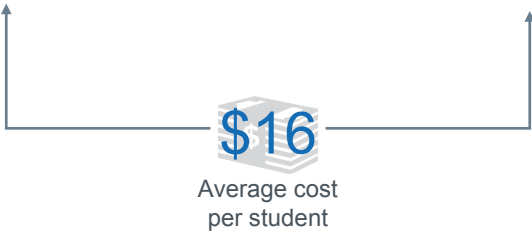
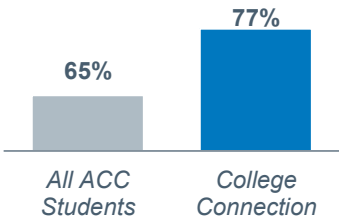
- Teams of four to eight college staff from advising, financial aid, and student support visit area high schools three times per year
- Staff walk students through ideal college enrollment steps, from financial planning to career pathing



ACC College Enrollments Among Recent High School Graduates



Semester-to-Semester Persistence



Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Access Made Easy

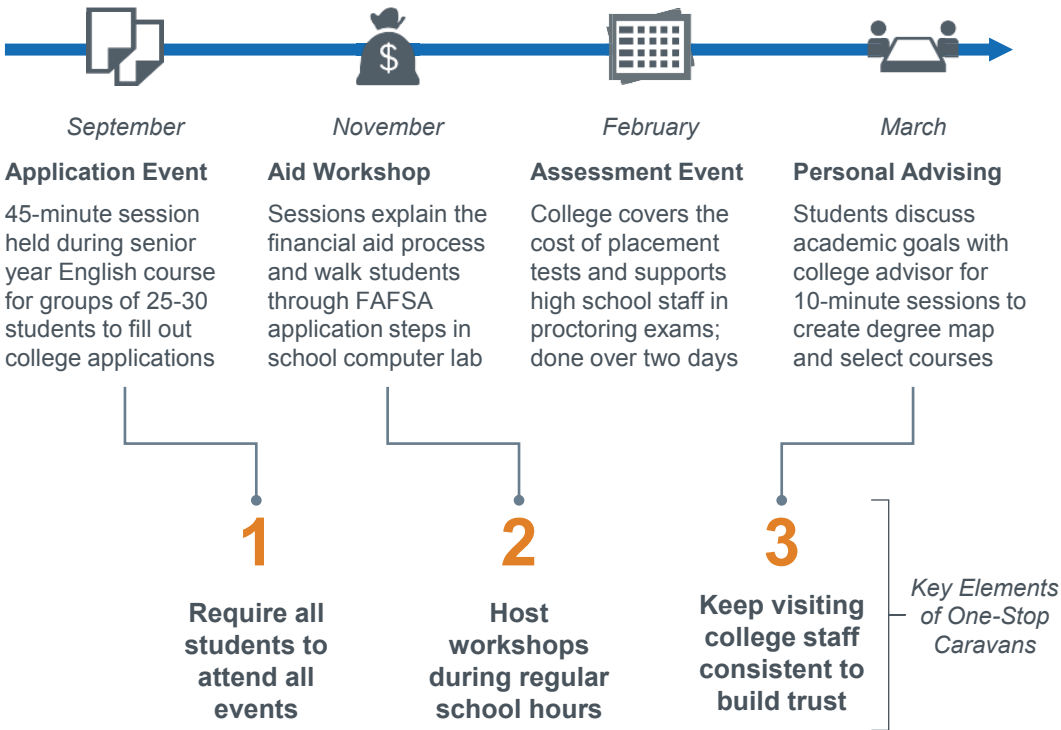
The success of one-stop caravans lies in its access-made-easy approach, which moves transition guidance off of the college campus and into a location where prospective students already are—high school hallways. In addition to choosing the right location, ACC staff also shared the importance of timing visits well. College staff visit high school campuses just ahead of important enrollment deadlines and during the school day, when students are most attentive.

Austin Community College’s one-stop caravan ensures student participation in critical enrollment steps by making events mandatory as much as possible. Hosting events during school hours also keeps students engaged, since they are happier to replace a regularly scheduled English class with a financial aid workshop rather than miss out on a soccer game to attend an evening information session.

It is also important to keep the visiting caravan team consistent as much as possible. ACC’s College Connections team found students were more receptive to their counseling after some time to build relationships during the first few visits. For first-generation college applicants especially, having access to a supportive adult familiar with the college enrollment process can be especially motivating.

Caravans Move Transition Guidance Off College Campuses and into High School Halls

One-Stop Caravan Visits High Schools Ahead of Major College Deadlines



No Computers, No Problem

ACC’s Mobile Advising Centers Bring Technology to Rural Schools



Upon visiting rural high schools in their service area, College Connections staff found too few computers to properly conduct application and advising workshops with students. To remedy this, Austin Community College used grant funds to purchase two Wi-Fi-enabled advising vans that house close to 20 laptops each. Program director Melissa Curtis notes that staff responsibilities aren’t just limited to laptops:

“Our drivers probably have the most unique job description ever—they must have their class-C driver’s license and also be trained as advisors!”

Cross-Functional Proficiency Quizzes

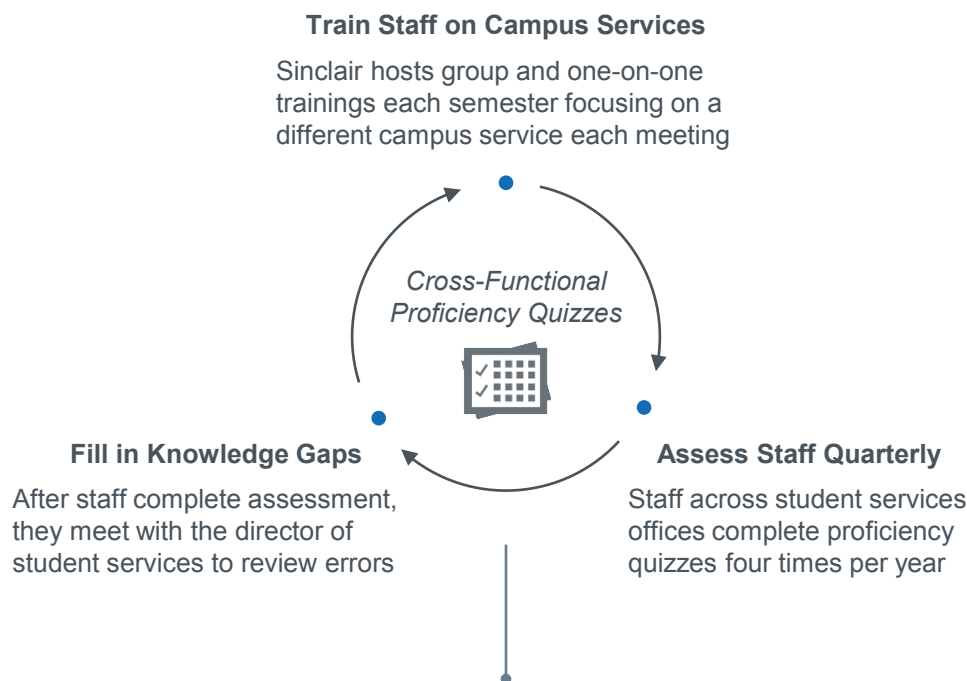
Students' questions often span multiple pieces of the college enrollment process, which makes it difficult for a single college staff person to help. But when students are passed around from department to department, they often become frustrated by the circuitous process and may stop out altogether. Sinclair Community College introduced cross-functional proficiency quizzes in 2011 to ensure full-time and part-time student services staff could navigate and interpret the student information system—including components outside of their area of expertise—enough to help students with enrollment and registration questions.

After an initial year of training, staff from registration, advising, financial aid, and admissions completed quizzes once per quarter. Quizzes asked staff to access a student account through the student information system and answer questions about the status of the student's application, financial aid, and placement testing.

Assessments were used to determine which staff members were proficient in all student services offered on campus and which needed additional training to navigate the student information system or understand the importance of different enrollment steps. In the first year, 98% of student services staff at Sinclair passed the cross-functional proficiency quizzes.

Assessments Ensure Student Services Staff Understand All Steps of Enrollment Process

Narrow Topic Experts Become Cross-Campus Guides



Student ID# _____



Use the Test Student account to answer the following questions:

- Does the student have an active application?
- What is the student's preferred email address?
- When did the student last complete the math placement test?
- When was the student's financial aid file completed?



See page 125 for a Cross-Functional Proficiency Quiz Template from Sinclair Community College.

Making the Most of What We Have

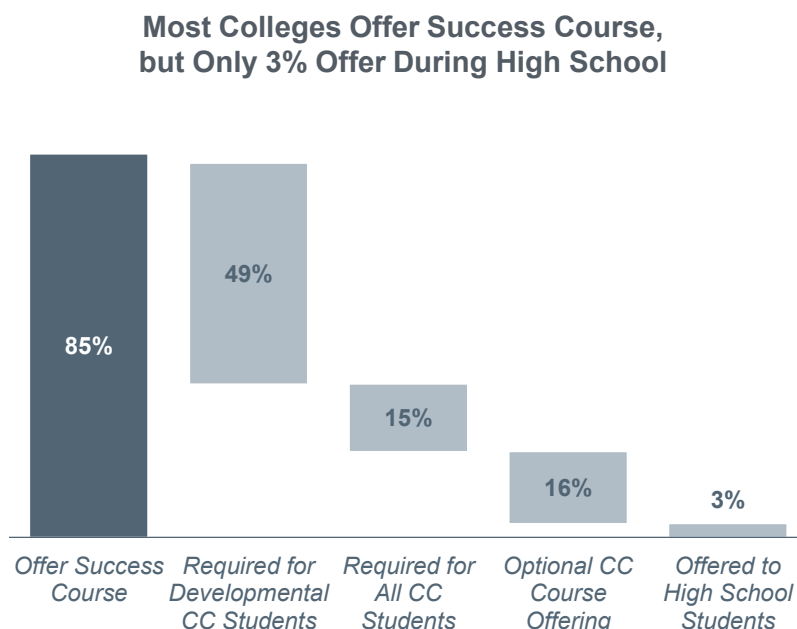
Most community colleges count success courses among their course offerings. In classrooms full of developmental and first-year students, instructors cover topics like studying and note-taking skills, testing strategies, time management, and review basic resources. But according to faculty who teach these success courses, college students remain mostly unenthused throughout the semester.

A small minority of community colleges have redesigned their success courses for a new audience: high school students.

Overall, high school students are far more receptive to college skill building than community college students. Their attentiveness comes from an excitement about “acting like a real college student.” The opportunity for acceleration is considered an honor rather than a burden.

In addition to changing the audience of their success courses, innovative colleges are also changing the curriculum. Rather than focus on standard topics like note-taking and time management, high school students begin career mapping and academic planning activities early, which makes a big difference in their ability to navigate college upon entry.

Community College Success Courses Ignore Attentive High School Student Market



“

Losing a Captive Audience

“High school kids love taking a college course for credit—it’s about feeling like a ‘real college student.’ By the time students hit college, the success course is just a burden.”

Community College Faculty Member

“

Career Pathing Comes Too Late

“Success courses focus on subjects like how to take notes or ‘where’s the library?’ They are actually the perfect venue for career mapping and course catalog navigation, but those conversations always get left to my office—which means they rarely happen.”

Career Services Specialist

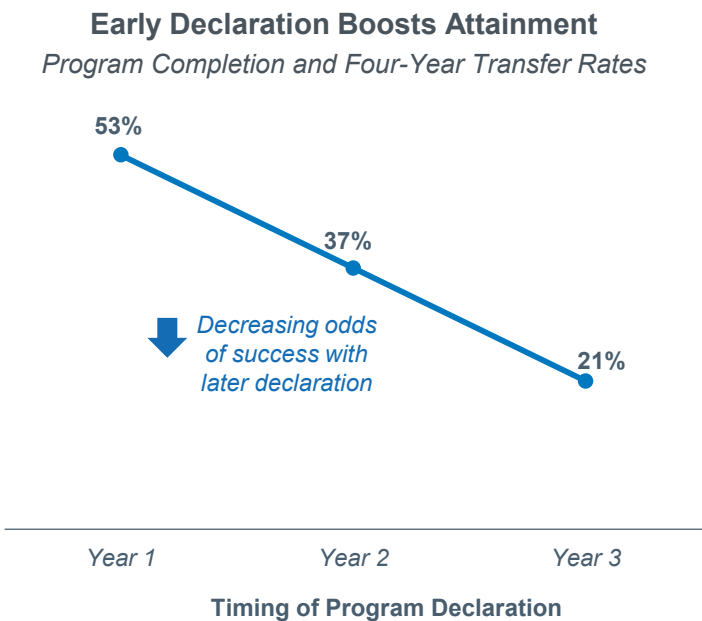
High Cost of Delayed Career Pathing

Career mapping and academic goal-setting are two of the most critical pieces of college navigation. The longer students wait to declare a program of study, the less likely they are to graduate.

However, most students enter college with only a vague sense of their career goals and little guidance in selecting a right-fit path. Forum researchers spoke with students who selected a career path solely because of the salary without knowing the skills required on the job or the courses requirements. Other students articulated an intention of transferring to a nearby four-year university without looking into the articulation agreements.

Students entering college for the first time, especially recent high school graduates, don't ask these important goal-setting questions because they don't understand the consequences on poor program declaration decisions until it's too late. Unfortunately, only a small percentage of entering community college students work with a counselor to build an academic and career plan. The majority of students do so without any guidance at all.

Students Need More Guidance Crafting Realistic Academic and Career Plan



Students Enter with Only Vague Goals



Future Career

What they say:

"I want to be a pharmacist because of the earnings potential!"

What they don't ask:

"Will I enjoy the day-to-day tasks of this job?"



Transfer to 4-Year

"I want to go to Salaman University because my cousin went there!"

"Which courses will transfer and what are the admission requirements?"



Not Getting a Lot of Help

~35% Students who create an academic and career plan with advisor support

Source: Melinda Mechur Karp, "Toward a New Understanding on Non-Academic Student Support: Four Mechanisms Encouraging Positive Student Outcomes in the Community College," CCRC Working Paper No. 28, February 2011; EAB interviews and analysis.

Senior Year Career-Mapping Capstone

While basic student success habits like studying and time management are important, progressive colleges have begun offering these lessons to high school students, and adding hands-on career exploration activities to the curriculum. These Senior Year Career-Mapping Capstones help students start academic and career planning before college.

The lesson plan on the right shares an example of how colleges can teach student success habits alongside career exploration activities. An initial introduction to the information technology (IT) industry is followed by basic information on the academic requirements and average salary for entry-level positions. Class discussions focus on daily responsibilities of a role and soft skills needed. This not only exposes students to careers they've never heard of before, but also helps them select attainable goals.

To ensure college success courses succeed for a new audience of high school students, Sinclair Community College employs student services staff to facilitate high school success courses. Additionally, Lehigh Carbon Community College grants college credit to high school students for completion.

Equip Students to Select Best-Fit Pathway Before College

A Model for Early Career Exploration

Student Success Habits

- Studying and Note-Taking Skills
- Time Management Techniques
- Test-Taking Strategies
- Use of Campus Resources



Career Exploration Activities

- Introductions to emerging industries
- Guest speakers and worksite tours
- Strengths and academic planning
- Self-motivation and self-awareness

Contextualized Lesson Plan

Introduction to IT Careers

Health Information Technician

Required Education: 30-credit Certificate or 60-credit Associate Degree

Average Salary: \$34,000/year

1. *What are the responsibilities of information technology staff in the health care industry?*
2. *What time-management skills do health information technicians need to do their jobs well?*
3. *What parts of information technology jobs do you like or dislike? Explain why.*

Tailoring College Success Courses to Younger Audiences

Institutional Strategies to Ensure Success



Employ college staff to facilitate courses: Staff can speak with high school students about college services and programs.



Grant college credit for student participation: Incentivize high school students to take the course content seriously.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Harnessing the Rise of Game-Based Learning

Senior year career capstones make the most of existing college success courses, but even so institutions with these courses in place cited three barriers to scale.

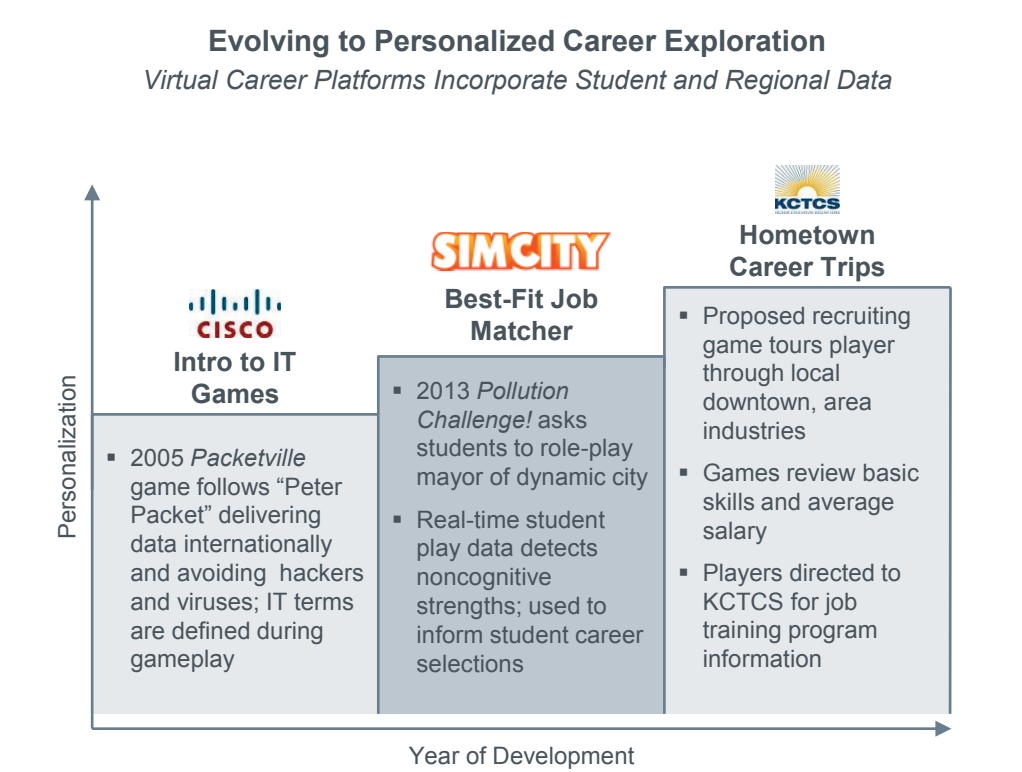
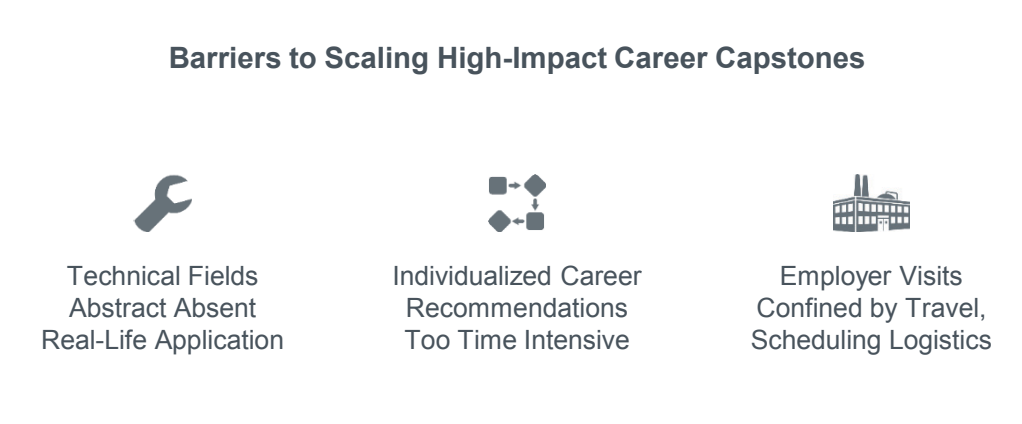
The first is that technical industries are difficult to explain through text and lecture alone. Without an opportunity to demonstrate its applicability to music, medicine, and aviation, information technology (IT) may sound boring to young students.

The second challenge in scaling career capstones is that face-to-face courses leave little time for individual career conversations. Lastly, most career exploration activities are confined to local industries. Guest speakers are often employers willing to make the trip, which may not represent all available local careers.

But the rise of game-based learning platforms brings new opportunities to scale senior year career capstones. Colleges can bring seemingly abstract industries to life with programs like Cisco's *Packetville* game. They can also use real-time data from games like SimCity's *Pollution Challenge!* to inform discussions about students' strengths and interest areas.

Soon, the Kentucky Technical and Community College System may offer a blueprint to let prospective students virtually explore local industries and click through to discover relevant job training programs at the college.

Technology Offers Opportunity for Low-Cost Career Pathing



Source: Anya Kamenetz, "SimCityEDU: A Video Game That Tests Kids While Killing the Bubble Test," *Fast Company*, November 2013; "The 2012-2017 Worldwide Game-Based Learning and Simulation-Based Markets," *Ambient Insight*, August 2013; "Digital Games for Learning: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis," SRI International, May 2013; EAB interviews and analysis.

Losing Them Before You Have Them

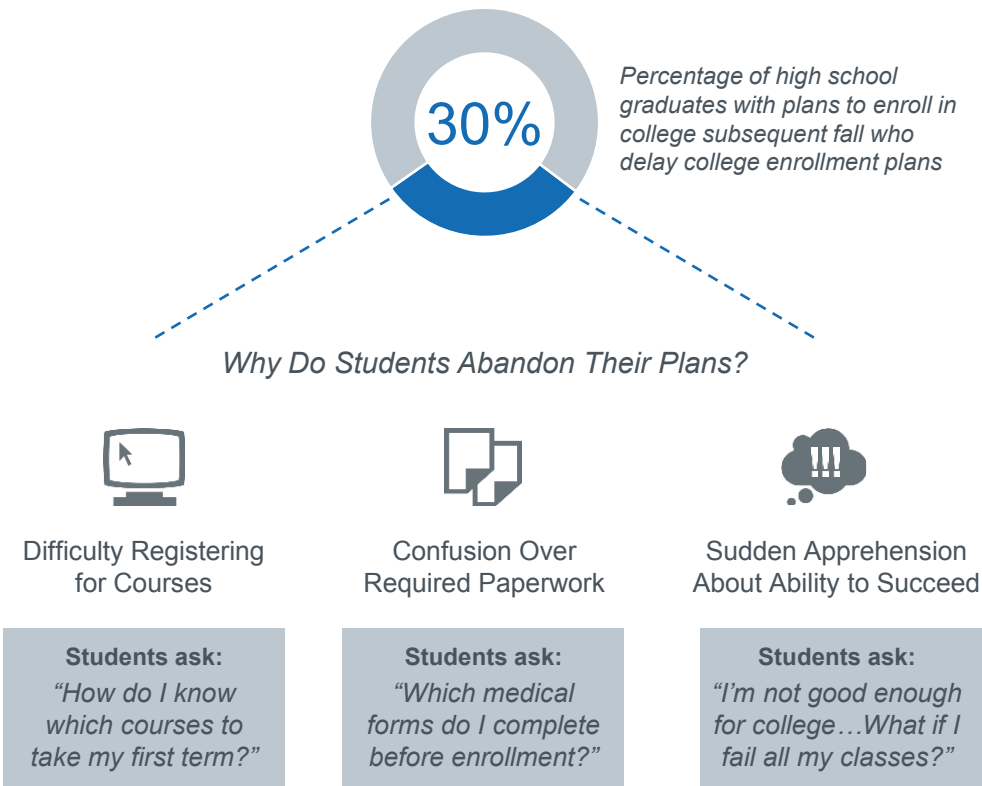
Opportunities to meet college staff through one-stop caravans and create academic plans through career-mapping capstone courses put students on an intentional path towards college; however, students' ability to navigate college can sometimes be derailed by smaller questions—questions that don't necessitate a full one-stop caravan or course, but do require answers in the moment.

In 2006, the Big Picture Longitudinal Study tracked 500 high school seniors from the Big Picture Learning charter school network, which spans 14 US states and five countries. The study found that among graduates who planned to attend college the next fall, 30% never enrolled. Their educational plans dissolved over the transition summer because of difficulties with course registration and paperwork. Across the higher education industry, this startling drop-off has come to be known as "summer melt."

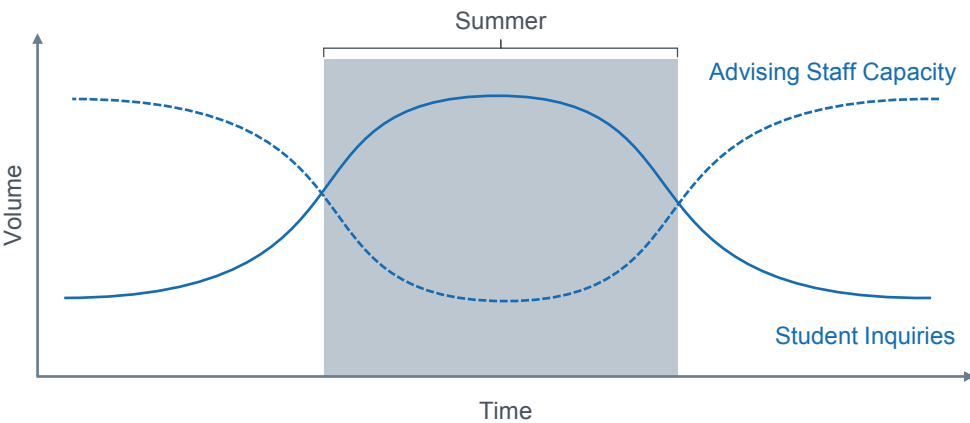
Unfortunately, at a time when student inquiries reach an all-time high, campus advising offices tend to be their most leanly staffed. Colleges aiming to maximize returns on investment in college navigation guidance concentrate their efforts during periods when students need the most help—the summer.

College Enrollment Plans Derailed by Summer Missteps

Big Picture Longitudinal Study Uncovers Causes of Student Drop-Off



But Advising Offices Emptiest at Height of Student Problem Period



Source: Kim Nauer and Paul Tainsh, "Creating College Ready Communities: Preparing NYC's Precarious New Generation of College Students," New School Center for New York City Affairs, September 2013; Karen Arnold, "The Summer Flood: The Invisible Gap Among Low-Income Students," NEA Higher Education Journal, Fall 2009; EAB interviews and analysis.

Combating Summer Melt with On-Demand Help

In an effort to combat summer melt with limited advising bandwidth, the City University of New York (CUNY) implemented an on-demand summer helpline for area high school graduates.

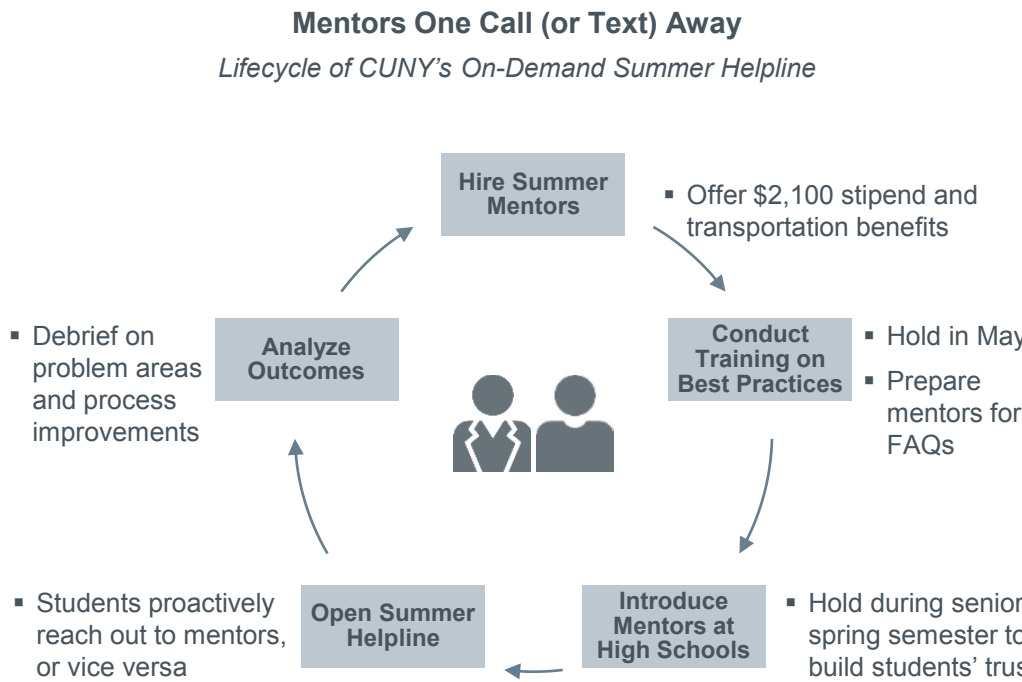
Unlike most summer bridge programs, CUNY's "Bridge to College" requires no time commitment from participants. Instead, the on-demand summer helpline is offered as a *service* for students with urgent or last-minute inquiries about health and immunization forms, financial aid packages, transportation routes, and more.

CUNY pairs one professional advisor and one student mentor with each of its 90 partner high schools. Professional advisors work across multiple schools while student mentors are assigned one high school each. The student mentor is an alumnus of the high school and a college student. Staff note that high school graduates tend to feel more comfortable calling on peers for support than adults.

Student mentors receive the majority of inquiries from recent high school graduates over the summer. When faced with a particularly tricky question the student mentor is instructed to coordinate with the professional advisor for guidance, at which point the advisor may intervene and communicate with the high school graduate directly.

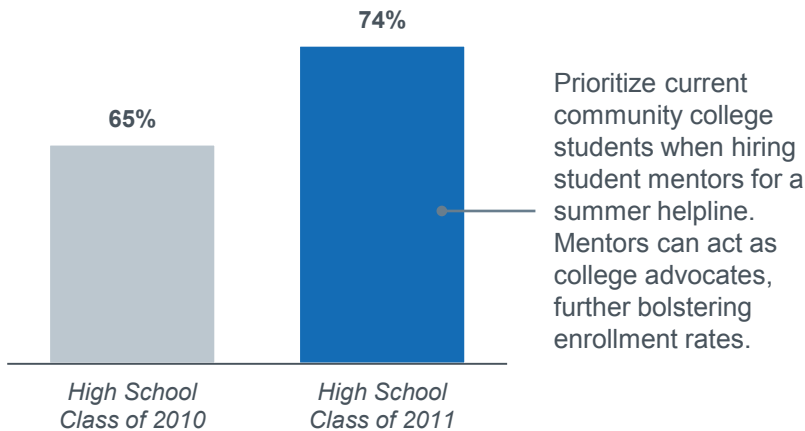
The summer helpline reduced summer melt and contributed to a nine percentage point enrollment increase among participating high schools.

Helpline Provides Just-in-Time Support for Transition Inquiries



Helpline Boosts College Enrollment

CUNY Summer Helpline Participants, 2010-2011



Source: Kim Nauer and Paul Tainsh, "Creating College Ready Communities: Preparing NYC's Precarious New Generation of College Students," New School Center for New York City Affairs, September 2013; Karen Arnold, "The Summer Flood: The Invisible Gap Among Low-Income Students," NEA Higher Education Journal, Fall 2009; EAB interviews and analysis.

Losing Our Biggest Ally

In addition to professional or semi-professional student advisors, colleges also rely on parents to help prospective students navigate the transition from high school to college. However, parents are often an underutilized resource. Most community colleges engage parents once a year through an evening “Parents’ Night,” which suffers from four primary flaws: low attendance, surface-level review of a complex process, no opportunity for follow-up or make-up sessions, and a short time frame that leaves little time for individual questions.


Through the current parental engagement strategy, community colleges lose their biggest ally in the college transition. Many parents can’t attend evening sessions, but they would like to support their child’s educational goals. Some parents are familiar with the basic elements of the college application process, but they may not be familiar with recent policy changes or technological improvements. Colleges located in demographically diverse locations may also underutilize parents with partial English language fluency. Although they may not be able to keep up with a quick hour-long review of the college enrollment process, they can become college navigation guides once they have time to review and understand complex forms on their own time.


Colleges Miss Opportunity to Enlist Parents as Transition Coaches


Many Flaws with Annual Parents’ Night




IMAGE CREDIT: THE RESURRECTION PROJECT

**Poorly Attended**
Onus on parents to attend College Night; mostly filled with most motivated parents


**No Follow-Up**
All information delivered in one-time session; those who miss initial session at a loss


**Surface Level**
Reviews most basic college information without guidance on more complex tasks


**Short Time Frame**
1 ½ hour session suits high-level format, but leaves no time for individual questions

Who We’re Missing

**Night-Shift Worker**
Busy work schedule prevents parents’ night attendance

**Ambivalent Onlooker**
Doesn’t understand importance of parental involvement in college application

**Pre-Internet Alumnus**
Outdated college knowledge, but doesn’t attend because believes unnecessary

**English Language Learner**
Partial language fluency makes presentations difficult to understand

Source: “Engage Parents for More Engaged Students: Three Engagement Building Blocks for Enrollment Managers,” Royall & Company, 2012; EAB interviews and analysis.

Prospective Parent ‘College 101’ Listserv

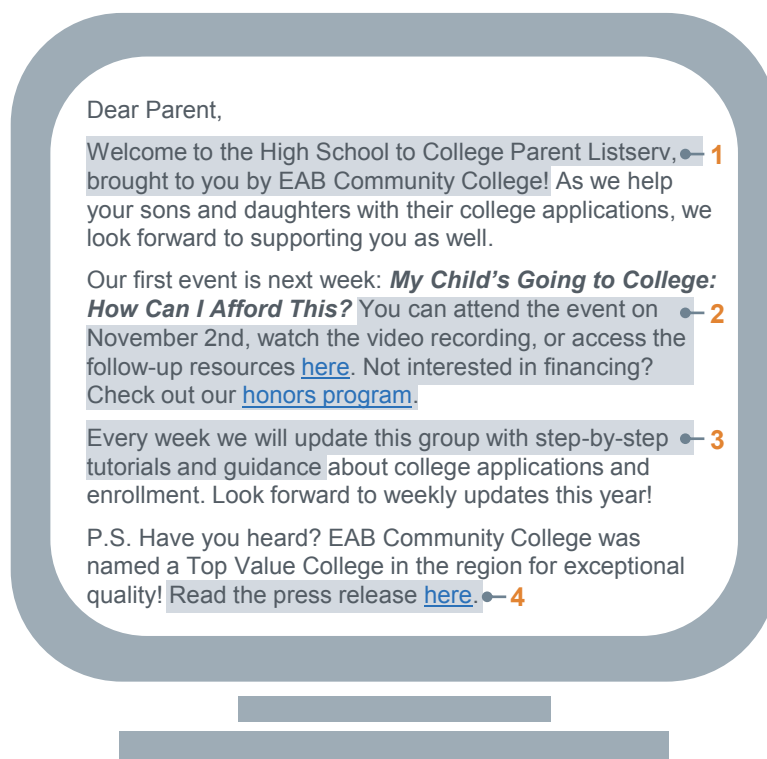
A Prospective Parent “College 101” Listserv enables colleges to meet the needs of parents with different schedule, knowledge gaps, and priorities. Rather than invest time and resources in one-size-fits-all Parents’ Nights, leading colleges employ a low-cost strategy to deliver college transition guidance to parents with options to suit their needs.

The listserv begins with an initial email to parents of 11th and 12th grade students in the college’s service area. The email on the right offers an example, which explains the purpose of the listserv and what parents can expect. It is best to provide parents with the option to opt-out of regular mailings to avoid frustration.

Over the course of several weeks, the Prospective Parent “College 101” Listserv provides reminders on upcoming deadlines and step-by-step guidelines for each stage of the college enrollment process. Each mailing offers parents a choice of modality and topics to select the most relevant content.

As an added value, include community college news stories in the body of email updates. Program launches, awards, and grants that may appear on a college news feed can all be featured in an email update. Given the large audience of the mailings, each email presents an opportunity to convince parents of the community college value proposition, and potentially boost enrollment.

Providing Resources When and Where Needed



- 1 **Force attendance through auto-subscription.** Coordinate with high school contacts to procure a mailing list for parents of 11th and 12th grade students. Send an initial email to this group as an introduction, providing an opt-out option for uninterested parties.
- 2 **Allow choice of modality and content.** Depending on parents’ schedules or familiarity with the college application process, some modalities may be preferable over others. To engage a large audience, offer different options.
- 3 **Spread content out over several weeks.** Time emails ahead of important deadlines and provide parents with the necessary information to meet that deadline. Messages are doubly valuable as reminders and sources of information.
- 4 **Advertise community college news in body of email updates.** Parent listservs reach parents of all high school students—not just those planning to attend community college. To educate parents of undecided students, use emails as marketing opportunities.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Sustaining Parental Engagement

Community college staff may use the Prospective Parent “College 101” Listserv to direct attention to the institutional documents and videos that explain enrollment processes in detail. Antelope Valley College works with Financial Aid TV, an organization that creates short videos to educate students and parents about the financial aid process. Since 2007, over 60,000 financial aid questions have been answered with the video library, and 95% of users consider the videos effective and enjoyable. Staff have also benefitted from a reduction in time spent answering basic questions.

In addition to financial aid guidelines, Folsom Lake College staff also provide parents with information about other processes or college programs of interest. Each fall, Folsom Lake staff send a survey that includes questions about basic demographic information and academic goals. Prospective students and their parents are asked to fill out the survey, which informs future topics featured in regular mailings.

To further engage parents of prospective students, Elgin Community College is piloting a Parent Ambassador program. Ambassadors serve as extensions of the Elgin Community College team, communicating with prospective parents and helping to identify topics of greatest interest.

Listserv Connects Families with Wide Range of “Pick and Choose” Supports

Increasing Parental Commitment Required



Financial Aid Video Tutorials



Videos last 30-45 seconds, 600+ available online



Available 24/7 on the institutional financial aid website



Embed links in parent emails to boost website traffic



Program Interest Online Surveys



Mix of 42 multiple-selection and short-answer questions



Emailed to parents of graduating seniors in service area



Include questions about students’ extracurricular interests



Parent Ambassadors



1-2 hour commitment each month for ambassadors



Introduced during first parents’ night, lead next meetings



Ask ambassadors to write emails or blog for parent listserv



Read about the essential components of a Program Interest Online Survey on page 106.

Source: “Case Studies: Antelope Valley College,” *Financial Aid TV*, www.financialaidtv.com/case-studies/antelope-valley-college; EAB interviews and analysis.

Untapped Pool of Community Volunteers

Community members are also an underutilized free resource for college navigation guidance. Forum research found that the majority of professionals are interested in mentoring students, but do not connect with volunteer opportunities because they doubt their own abilities to act as effective mentors.

Professionals cite three primary concerns about mentoring students through transition from high school to college. The first is an inability to keep up with enrollment deadlines at the same time as their own busy schedules. Professionals were concerned they may forget the FAFSA filing deadline in the midst of work meetings and family obligations.

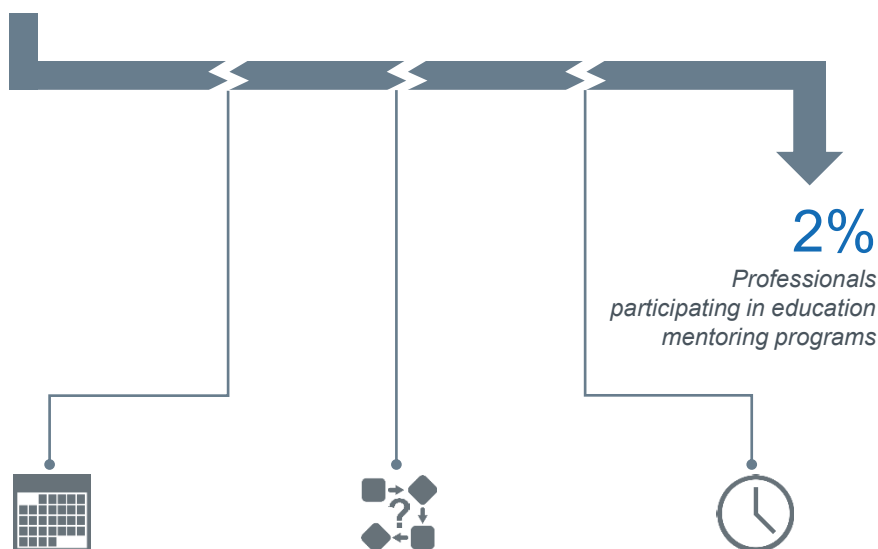
Much like parents of prospective students, working professionals who have been out of college for a number of years may be unfamiliar with college application steps, particularly those that have changed in the past few years. Although professionals were interested in mentoring students, they feared they were not knowledgeable enough to lead a student through an unfamiliar process.

Lastly, previous experiences with students who did not share their academic interests or personal goals deterred professionals from pursuing other mentoring opportunities.

Busy Professionals Eager to Mentor, but Skeptical of Ability Absent Guidance

80%

Professionals willing to volunteer 1-2 hours a week for education mentoring



2%

Professionals participating in education mentoring programs

Need Reminders on Crowded Calendar

"Depending on the time of year, I work up to 80 hours a week. I need reminders of when I should be meeting with my mentee and a program that fits around my other obligations."

Unfamiliar with College Process

"I was in college over 40 years ago, so clearly I'm not up to date on new terms and requirements. I would need a cheat sheet of college terms and guidelines to work with a student today."

Premium on Available Time

"I'm happy to volunteer if I can make an impact. But last mentor experience I had, I was assigned a mentee with academic goals that didn't fit with my background. It didn't work for either of us."

tnAchieves Makes Mentoring Easy

To recruit community members as mentors, the tnAchieves network stays committed to making mentoring easy for busy professionals. tnAchieves is a nonprofit organization that works with 15 community and technical colleges in Tennessee to match high school students with college transition mentors. The organization supports over 2,000 mentors every year, and has an impressive volunteer retention rate of 70%.

While most colleges provide mentors with a list of important deadlines for students to follow, tnAchieves goes further by reaching out proactively to their volunteers through a Calendar-Prompted Mentor Outreach strategy. A few days ahead of a major enrollment deadline, mentors receive a notification from a tnAchieves staff member. This keeps mentors aware of important responsibilities and ensures they communicate the deadline to their mentees.

In addition to reminders, tnAchieves staff also give mentors outreach templates to guide communication with their mentees, or students' parents. Despite all the training and preparation mentors go through, tnAchieves staff are also available to troubleshoot tricky questions. Mentors faced with a complicated situation or asked a question they don't know the answer to can communicate with tnAchieves staff directly for on-demand support.

Calendar-Prompted Mentor Outreach Boosts Volunteer Retention



Volunteers Notified When and How to Send Student Guidance



tnAchieves Staff Reminds Mentor of Approaching Student Deadlines

- Reminder of students' February 1st FAFSA application deadline
- Suggested deadline to complete placement testing by June 15th



Mentors Provided Outreach Examples and Templates

- Introductory email to student mentee and parents
- Text exchange to remind students of upcoming deadline



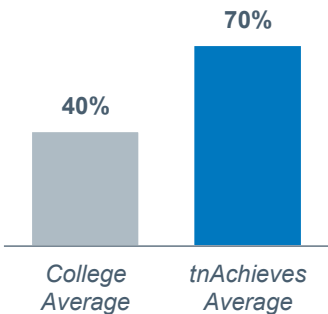
Back-Up Help for Tricky Questions

- When are students required to complete developmental courses?

Number of Mentors 2012


2,000+

Volunteer Retention Rate



Expanding Reach Through Volunteers

“Seven people cannot work effectively with 19,000 students at one time. But what we can do is communicate effectively with the mentors, who then pass on that information to the student.”

Krissy DeAlejandro
Executive Director of tnAchieves



Remind mentors of deadlines with the Mentor-Mentee Communication Timeline on page 107.

Intelligent Pairings Make Happy Mentors, Mentees

To ensure volunteers consider their mentorships valuable, some colleges have introduced intelligent pairing strategies that incorporate the individual preferences of mentors and mentees into the final match.

RoomSync, a Facebook-based housing application, has shown the power of including individual preferences in pairing decisions. Universities using RoomSync to pair first-year roommates have not only seen drops in housing transfer requests, but also small bumps in student retention.

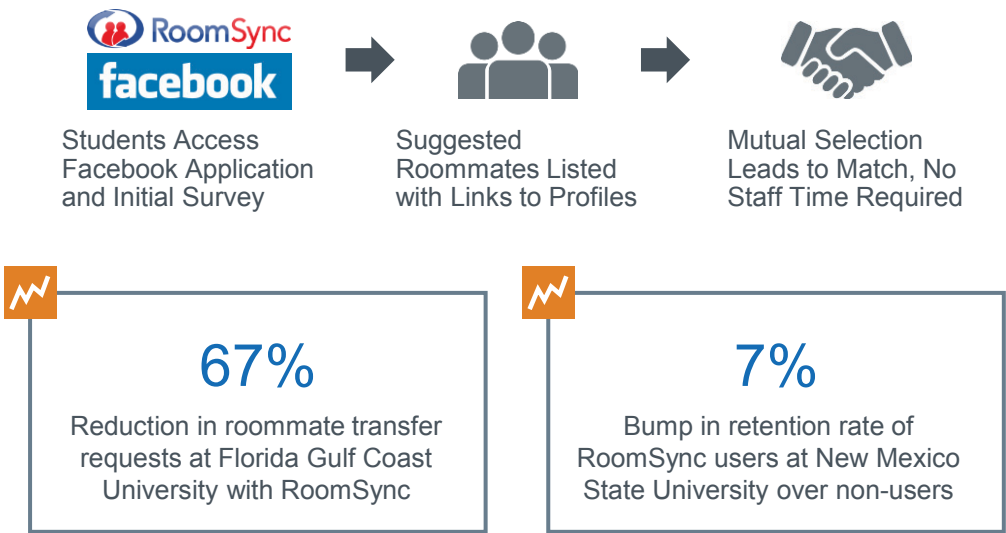
The success of applications like RoomSync has caused progressive members to wonder: How can intelligent pairings improve mentorship programs on our campuses?

Elgin Community College accomplished intelligent pairings through its speed networking events. Each year, recent high school graduates and volunteer mentors are invited to campus for a meet-and-greet. Food, the only event cost, is provided.


Once there, participants rotate among short, seven-minute conversations. Staff provide a list of prompts that cover topics like academic goals, interests, and personal habits. Students submit a form at the end with their top mentor choices, and staff set the final pairings.

Elgin staff credit the speed networking events with raising retention rates among student participants and high rates of mentor satisfaction overall.

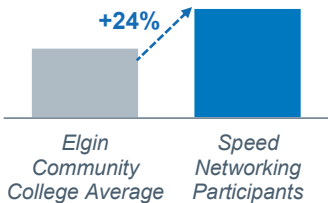
Power of Self-Selection Proven Through Virtual Matchmaking *Freshman Housing App Shows Return on Intelligent Pairing Strategy*



Facilitating Opportunities to Matchmake Live *ECC Speed Networking Events Increase Likelihood of “Match”*

- 
- 1 Meet-and-Greet Event:** College hosts a networking session once a year between recent high school graduates and volunteer mentors with food provided
- 2 Facilitated Conversations:** Each student-mentor pair is furnished with a list of prompts to guide their seven-minute speed networking conversations
- 3 Grading Scorecards:** Students submit scoring sheet at the end of the event with top choices of mentor; college staff ultimately decide mentor-mentee pair

Impact of Speed Networking on Retention Rates



Volunteer Mentors Retained



Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

MentorMatch.com?

While Elgin Community College has provided an example practice for live matchmaking, the Forum believes the future of intelligent pairings will be virtual. Following the leads of housing applications like RoomSync and dating websites like Match.com, the graphic on the right offers a sketch of what a virtual mentor-matching tool might look like in the future.


In this example, the user is a student named Amy. She is in the 11th grade and is currently enrolled in a dual enrollment course that requires students meet with a volunteer mentor once a month. Part of Amy's profile contains basic demographic information, like her name, gender, grade, and even current course load. She also has the opportunity to highlight the areas she needs the most help with (e.g., job preparation and organizational skills) and the best times of day for her to meet with a mentor.


Given that information, Amy is shown a list of a few potential mentors who have also submitted profiles on the site. Amy can view possible mentors willing to work with her, and a match is made, facilitated by this predictive analytics tool.

Although no such product exists for community colleges at the time of this publication, Forum interviews revealed a strong interest among student services staff in a technology product that would expedite and improve on the traditional system of random mentor-mentee pairings.

Future of Mentor Pairing Leverages Predictive Analytics to Improve Match

MentorMatch.com
Find the Right Mentor for You



User: Amy T.
Grade: 11th Grade (Dual Enrollment)
Status: Unmatched 

Your Preferences:


Area(s) of Emphasis

☒ Job Prep ☐ Study Skills ☒ Organization ☐ Motivation

Best Time(s) of Day


☒ Morning ☐ Early Evening ☐ Afternoon ☒ Late Evening

Based on your background and preferences, we found 3 mentors for you:




Mentor: Lonnie
Bio: I'm an English major with an internship at a local magazine. Let's talk about connecting school to your dream internship and job!

Choose Mentor



Mentor: Gretchen
Bio: I've lived in this community my whole life, so I know the issues young people face. Let's meet and find ways to help you succeed.

Choose Mentor



Mentor: Regina
Bio: I'm a former teacher and former athlete, so I know how to be motivated even when things are tough. I can help you do the same!

Choose Mentor

User Profile with Basic Demographic Info
Each student and mentor builds a unique profile with self-reported information. May also source data from student information system.

Personal Preferences Narrow Options
Students and mentors fill in logistical information to guide the match, including areas they would like to focus and best times of day to meet.

Data-Driven Matches Save Staff Time and Increase Chance of Success

Using mentors' and mentees' profile information, MentorMatch.com generates pairing recommendations. Top matches based on:

- Schedule
- Gender
- Hobbies
- Strengths
- Location
- Age
- Industry
- Personality



See page 108 for a list of Speed Networking Conversation Prompts to use online or in person.



Section 2

Brokering Accelerated Career Pathways

Losing Years of Talent

Community colleges' greatest challenge in restructuring their K-12 partnerships is increasing participation among "missing middle" students likely to benefit from early exposure to college. Current dual enrollment programs do serve students likely to enroll in college, but they're likely to succeed without the help of early intervention.

An example from a high school course catalog explains why dual enrollment courses tend to fill with top-performing students: high prerequisites. When dual enrollment courses are offered in traditional academic disciplines like sociology, calculus, and physics, students must show prior success in advanced coursework to participate. This excludes the "missing middle," particularly the Future Steve Jobs—students who do not see a connection between college and career, and are likely to opt out of higher education altogether.

Even American leaders like former President George W. Bush and Apple founder Steve Jobs did not maintain the average 3.5 high school GPA of dual enrollment students. Shutting out students with potential to thrive in applied technical courses means community college dual enrollment programs close the door to higher education for a large segment of the high school population. This is not only a disservice to students, but also an impediment to growing college enrollments.

Early College Programs Target Traditional Disciplines and Class Stars

Current Offerings Cater to Traditional Academic Superstars

Sample Dual Enrollment Courses at Virginia High School		
Course	Prerequisite	Eligible Students
Sociology	Prior honors coursework	Top 25%
Calculus	Precalculus	Top 15%
College Physics	Precalculus & College English	Top 5%

At the Expense of Hands-On Learners High School GPA of...

The average dual enrollment student



IMAGE CREDIT: COLOURBOX

3.5

- 16 years old
- Lives at home

George W. Bush



IMAGE CREDIT: THE NATION

2.8

- U.S. President
- Gifted painter

Steve Jobs

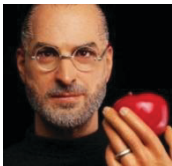


IMAGE CREDIT: ICONS

2.6

- Founder of Apple
- American tech icon

Source: Cecilia Speroni, "High School Dual Enrollment Programs: Are We Fast-Tracking Students Too Fast?" National Center for Postsecondary Research, December 2011; Connie Guglielmo, "The FBI's Steve Jobs File: Computing 'Genius,' Lousy GPA," Forbes.com, February 2012; EAB interviews and analysis.

Obama Throws \$300M+ Behind Workforce Training

National economic growth is also threatened when technically minded students are shut out of higher education. According to the Georgetown Center for Education and the Workforce, by 2018 the United States will need 22 million new degree holders to enter the labor market. On current course, the country is projected to fall short by three million people.

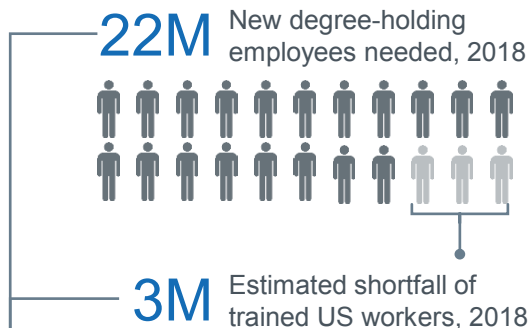
The vast majority of these three million workers will be needed in technical fields like health care and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

In light of this troubling economic forecast, President Barack Obama has championed greater investment in early technical education programs—and has pledged hundreds of millions of federal dollars for the effort.

Skills Gap Causes US to Explore German Apprenticeship Model

Troubling Forecast Ahead

Shortfall of 3 Million Workers in 2018



Fastest Growing Occupational Clusters

1. Professional Health Care
2. Technical Health Care
3. STEM
4. Community Services and Arts
5. Education

Looking Abroad

Obama Devotes Millions to Technical Education



“Countries like Germany graduate their high school students with the equivalent of a technical degree from a community college, so that they’re ready for a job...We need to give every American student opportunities like this.”

President Barack Obama

Introducing the *Duales Ausbildungssystem*

President Obama has turned to Europe for examples of early vocational training, with the most famous being the dual vocational system from Germany. The German apprenticeship model, *duales ausbildungssystem*, began in 1969 with the country's Vocational Training Act. Under this model, high school students may apply to work and attend school part time in preparation for one of over 300 recognized occupations.

Unlike in the United States, participation in technical training is not reserved for a niche subpopulation—over 60% of German high school students work as apprentices in fields like roofing and automobile electronics. After two to three years of part-time schooling and training, apprentices receive formal industry certification and their high school diploma, making them eligible to enter lucrative technical careers.

Employers assume the bulk of costs to train and pay apprentices because of the value skilled employees bring to the company. In fact, BMW and Rolls-Royce Power Systems (formerly Tognum AG) have become such great advocates of the German model they have begun apprenticeship programs in their American headquarters.

German Apprentices Benefit from Early Training and Schooling

Anatomy of the German Apprenticeship Model



Broad Participation

More than 60% of German high school students apprentice in fields like roofing and automobile electronics



Contextualized Learning

Students study theory and hands-on training for three years to receive certification alongside high school diploma



Employer Sponsorship

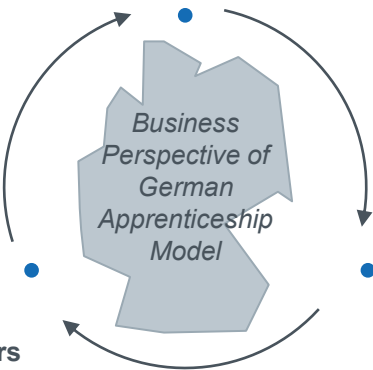
Sponsor employers pay 75% of the costs associated with student apprenticeships

Employers Benefit from Steady Stream of Competent Workers

1

Take on Apprentices

Employers across over 300 fields offer apprenticeships for 3-4 days of on-the-job training and the rest of the week for theoretical studies



3

Extend Full-Time Offers

Nearly 70% of apprentices are hired as full-time employees after finishing their training and formal certification

2

Pay Student Workers

Apprentices are considered company staff members from the first day, paid on average one-third the salary of fully trained employees

Source: "VET Data Report Germany 2013: Facts and Analyses Accompanying the Federal Report on Vocational Education and Training," German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, 2014; Nelson D. Schwartz, "Where Factory Apprenticeship Is Latest Model From Germany," The New York Times, November 30, 2013; EAB interviews and analysis.

In Need of a Bilingual Interpreter

The success of transferring the German apprenticeship model to the United States relies on strong relationships between high schools and employers or an intermediary fluent in both education and industry that can bridge both worlds.

Forum research reveals that community colleges are uniquely positioned to fill this intermediary role. Community colleges have experience in traditional education and hands-on training and partnerships across the public and private divide. These advantages enable college leaders to broker accelerated career pathways for technically minded students, the future Steve Jobs of the world.

Community Colleges Uniquely Fluent in Both Education and Industry

High Schools

“Community colleges are integral to exposing kids to career options as an accessible middle ground between employers and academia.”

District Superintendent

Four-Year Institutions

“As we design vocational credentials with many entry and exit points, we look to community colleges to provide the platform for that new education model.”

University Provost



Employers and Industry

“It’s important to get young people interested in careers early, but we want students who are worthy of investment. Community colleges vet students for us, saving lots of time and money.”

Corporate Recruiter

Government and Military

“The community college is, without a doubt, the best place for industry training—they can do it to a higher standard and at a lower cost than we can in-house, period.”

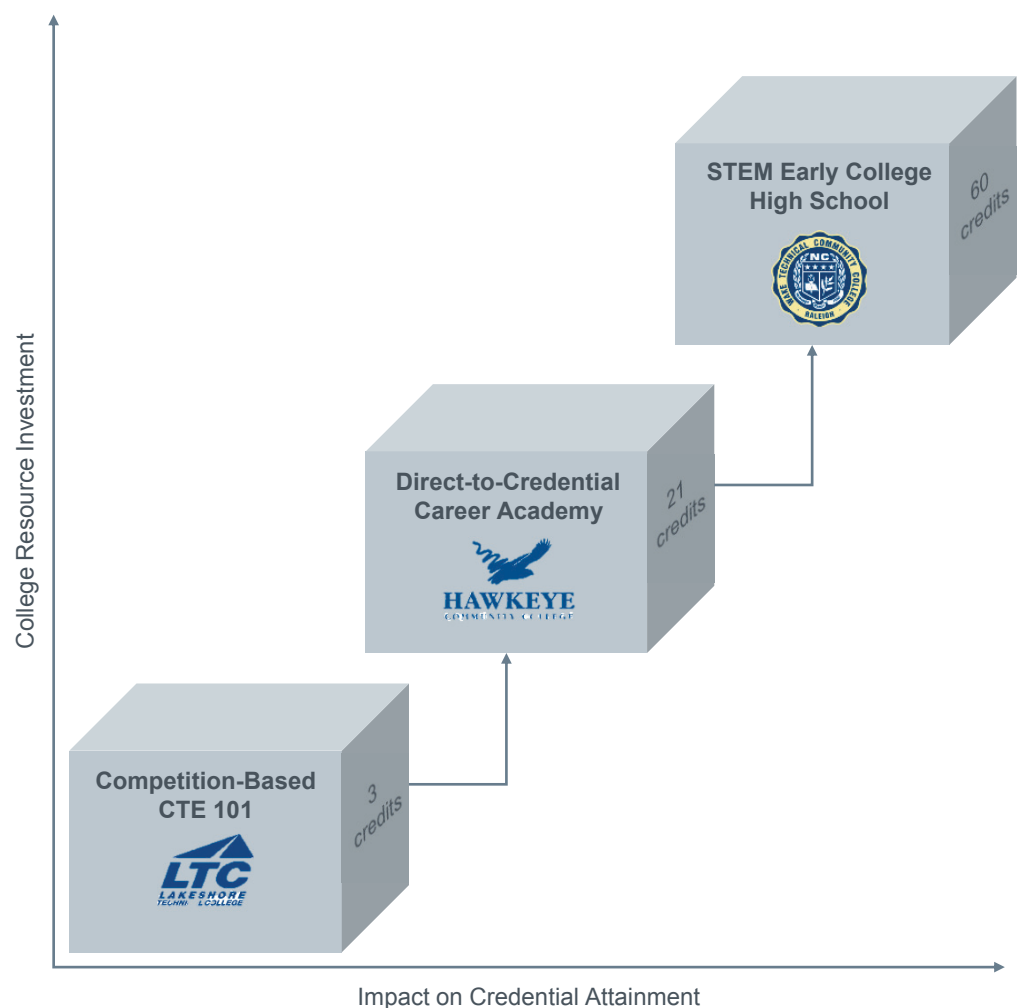
Federal HR Specialist

Brokering Accelerated Career Pathways

Community colleges have vast experience with accelerated workforce training for traditional-age and adult students, but the majority of two-year colleges have not yet introduced large-scale vocational programs to local high school populations.

This section offers guidance for college leaders to incrementally build a vocational pipeline for high school students through college and onto careers.

An Incremental Approach to Building Our Vocational Pipeline



See the Implementation Toolkit on page 95 to maximize impact of accelerated career pathways.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Expanding Access to Early College Credit


In 2007, Lakeshore Technical College leaders evaluated early college credit opportunities at local high schools and found that the college's dual enrollment course offerings were confined to traditional disciplines with significant prerequisites.

Lakeshore Tech launched a dual enrollment course intended as an overview of career and technical education (CTE) programs at the college. The course was unique among other dual enrollment offerings for several reasons, most notably a lack of prerequisites for entry.

To attract students into this unconventional dual enrollment offering, college leaders put hands-on competition into the center of the program design. In Project Mini-Chopper, teams of 10 high school students build a motorcycle from scratch over the course of a semester, learning technical skills like welding and machining as well as soft skills like project management and budgeting.

Project Mini-Chopper students finish the course with new skills and a new appreciation for the community college. Participants are two times more likely than non-participating peers to enroll at Lakeshore Tech after graduating from high school, making the program an effective recruitment channel for the college.


Lakeshore Tech Creates Inviting Path to Welding Career



High School Dual Enrollment Options


<u>College Credit Course</u>	<u>High School Prerequisite</u>
Honors English	3.4 GPA and teacher recommendation
Accounting 2	Accounting I
Photography 2	Photography 1 or instructor permission
Project Mini-Chopper	Open enrollment

Competition-Based CTE 101 Lures “Future Steve Jobs” *Anatomy of Lakeshore Tech’s Project Mini-Chopper*




Credit-Bearing Course

Three-credit dual enrollment course available to all students at local high schools



Building Competition

Student teams build motorcycles and develop community presentations



Scholarship Prize

Winners earn \$500 tuition scholarship to Lakeshore Technical College



Project Mini-Chopper students matriculate to Lakeshore Tech at twice the standard rate of local graduates

Source: “Course Selections for 2013-2014 School Year,” Two Rivers High School; EAB interviews and analysis.

Harley or Newton's Laws?

Lakeshore Tech's Project Mini-Chopper effectively recruits technically minded high school students to the college by demonstrating the link between college and career. Participants may prefer building a motorcycle in class to hearing a lecture on Newton's Laws, but they understand that success in the real-world competition requires aptitude in geometry, chemistry, and reading comprehension. Students learn these skills during Lakeshore's one-week CTE boot camp at the start of the program.

In addition, each team of 10 students is assigned an employer sponsor from the local community. Sponsors contribute \$2,500 to cover event fees and parts for their assigned student group, and they meet with teams regularly to approve the final motorcycle design and monitor production throughout the building process.

At the end of the course, students present their finished products at a community-wide event. Students must explain their design process and help educate community members about the diversity of the manufacturing industry. The final presentation is crucial for the success of Project Mini-Chopper for two reasons. First, the community unveiling helps recruit for the next semester. Second, student presentations dispel commonly held misconceptions of CTE as a dead-end career path for students.

Hands-On Competition Connects College and Career



One-Week CTE Boot Camp

- Lakeshore Tech hosts series of training modules to review basic welding, cutting, machining, and safety
- Boot camp sessions led by college's CTE faculty



Local Employer Mentorship

- Company sponsors meet monthly with students to approve bike design and monitor production
- Sponsors train and supervise students as they learn to use new welding equipment



Community-Wide Unveiling

- Students present finished bikes and explain building process during annual expo of local motorcycle club
- Educates community members on the rigor and diversity of manufacturing



Tuition Assistance Prize

- Four winners win \$500 Lakeshore Tech scholarships
- Scholarships often applied toward Lakeshore Tech's industrial welding and mechanical design programs



Educate Students, and the Community

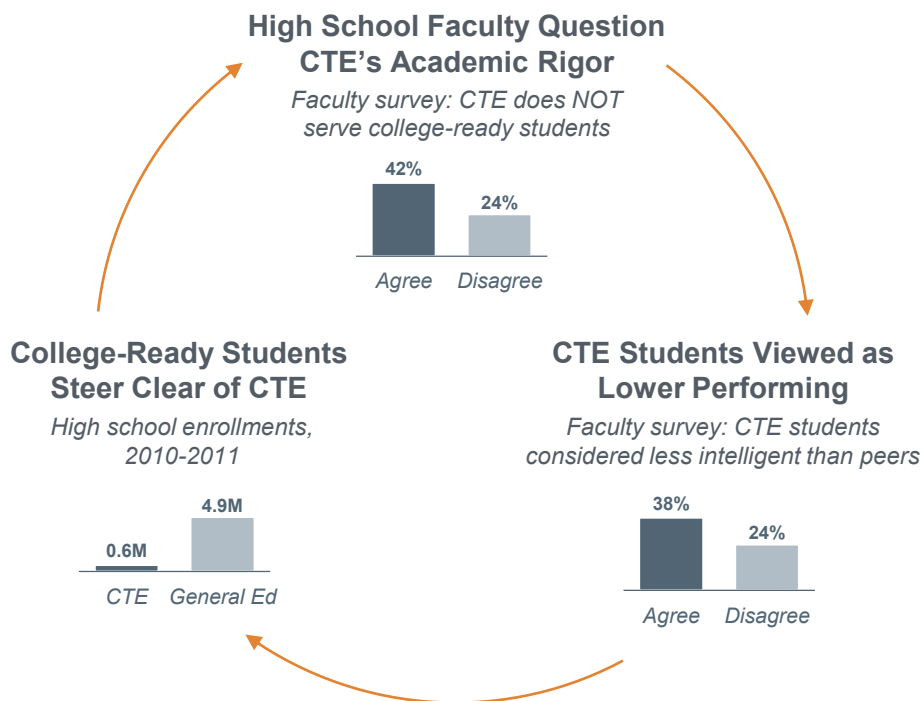
"Promoting manufacturing careers goes well beyond the student...we have to reach the parents, high school teachers, and the broader community. The final presentations have to overcome the perception that manufacturing is dark, dirty, and dangerous."

Director of High School Programs

High School Faculty Drive Down CTE Enrollments

Misconceptions about the rigor of CTE can also be propagated by high school faculty, who often hold negative perceptions of career and technical education. Without much exposure to industry, it's easy for a high school instructor to associate advanced manufacturing with low-skill assembly line work. As a result, high school teachers often intentionally drive down CTE dual enrollments. With a perception of technical education as less rigorous than traditional academia, most high school faculty discourage all but their lowest-performing students from pursuing technical education.

Weak Academic Reputation Among Teachers Feeds Student Disinterest



“

A Dream Deferred

“I was going to sign up for Intro to Welding in high school, but then I spoke with my math teacher. She told me technical education was a dead end.”

High School Student

“

A Tale of Two Mechatronics Programs

“Dual enrollment programs live and die based on high school messaging. At one high school, any and all students were recruited into our mechatronics course, and it was always at full capacity. At another high school, the mechatronics course was chronically under-enrolled because high school faculty only recruited the bottom 20% of students.”

Director of Career Readiness

Source: “Dual Enrollment Programs and Courses for High School Students at Postsecondary Institutions: 2010–11,” National Center for Education Statistics, February 2013; Mitchel N. Herian, “Examining Perceptions of Career and Technical Education in Nebraska,” University of Nebraska Policy Center, February 2010; EAB interviews and analysis.

Combating Faculty Misperceptions

To combat misperceptions of CTE, Kirkwood Community College began Day-at-the-Plant faculty field trips. The college organizes these site visits to nearby manufacturing facilities or technical workplaces to show the diversity and intellect required for success in these occupations.

High school faculty are the best audience to focus scarce resources for Day-at-the-Plant field trips. Compared to high school counselors, faculty have more regular interactions and closer relationships with students. Faculty influence over students' perceptions makes it incredibly important for college leaders to turn high school instructors into ambassadors for the community college and its CTE programs.

Day-at-the-Plant field trips proved an effective educational tool for high school instructors in Kirkwood Community College's service area. Once instructors discovered that General Mills employees held interesting jobs and earned high salaries, they had a much more positive view of the industry.

Administrators at Lehigh Career and Technical Institute, a vocational high school in Pennsylvania, also give high school faculty worksheets to complete during their tours. As they tour through classroom workspaces, faculty write notes about equipment used and the level of student engagement, reveal the sophistication and rigor of CTE coursework.

Day-at-the-Plant Field Trips Win CTE Advocates

Not Just Cheerios

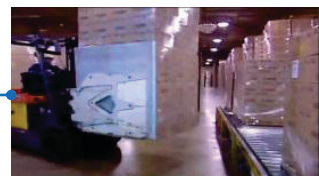


- Three-hour evening tour of local General Mills plant for teachers from seven school districts
- Tour begins with promotional video highlighting opportunities for intellectually engaging work:

☒ Developing new technologies and equipment

☒ Identifying more efficient processes

☒ Overseeing supply chain and distribution



Lehigh Career and Technical Institute's CTE Observation Worksheets

Help Faculty Compare CTE Preconceptions with Classroom Realities



Lehigh Career and Technical Institute (LCTI) hosts field trips touring high school faculty through CTE classes on their campus. Before each class visit, high school faculty complete a worksheet about their expectations—What type of technology will be used? Do you expect students to be engaged? After each visit, faculty write their observations and how they compare to expectations before the visit. LCTI staff consider these worksheets crucial to educating high school faculty about the true rigor of CTE coursework.



See a sample Faculty CTE Observation Worksheet on page 122 of the Implementation Toolkit.

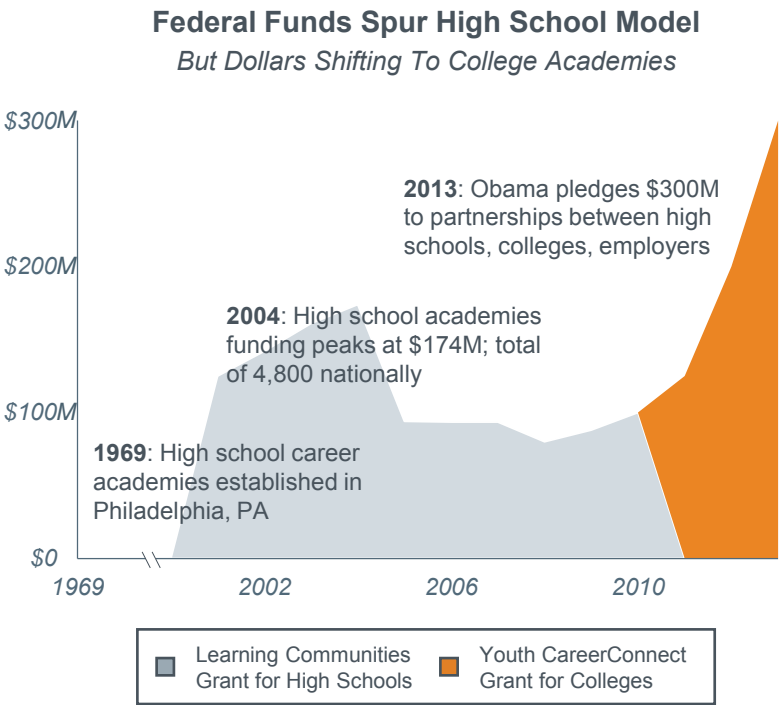
Career Academies in Need of New Home

To build upon single CTE dual enrollment courses, some high school students participate in career academies, a series of courses that prepare students for vocational fields.

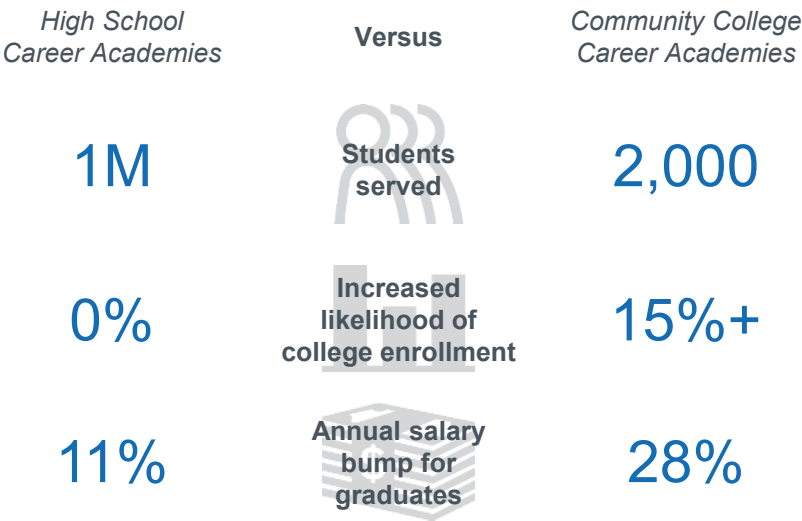
Career academies were first established in Philadelphia, PA, in 1969 and quickly spread across New York and California in the mid-1980s. The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act under *No Child Left Behind* allowed high schools to use federal funding to build learning communities, spurring rapid growth in high school career academies in the mid-2000s, without much involvement from higher education. After 2004, federal funding for high school learning communities declined, and was eventually cut altogether in 2011.

However, cuts to high school learning community funding have been mitigated by greater investment in college-lead career academies. Outcomes data from both show that college-led programs are more effective in increasing post-secondary enrollment and producing a more significant salary bump for academy participants.

No Boost in College Participation Absent Post-Secondary Partner



Community College Academies Students More Likely to Continue Education



Source: Betsy Brand, "High School Career Academies: A 40-Year Proven Model for Improving College and Career Readiness," American Youth Policy Forum, November 2009; James Kemple and Cynthia Willner, "Career Academies: Long-Term Impacts on Labor Market Outcomes, Educational Attainment, and Transitions to Adulthood," MDRC, June 2008; Kathryn Baron, "Career tech at community colleges should not be undervalued," EdSource, November 2013; EAB interviews and analysis.

Cap, Gown, and Manual Lathes

Hawkeye Community College assessed local economic needs to build several career academies that train students for entry-level positions across industries like criminal justice, automotive technology, and advanced manufacturing. Unlike high school career academies, students enrolled in Hawkeye career academies start accumulating college credit while in high school and earn a certificate by the end of the program.

Hawkeye's CNC machining career academy, the EMC² program, has had notable success in recruiting local high school students to matriculate to the college. EMC² participants are five times more likely than traditional dual enrollment participants to enroll at Hawkeye after graduation.

The program presents students with a clear path from introductory CTE coursework to college credential attainment and ultimately, to a career. This accelerated pathway is ideal for technically minded high school students who are interested in hands-on trades but unsure if college is the right avenue to pursue their interests and advance their careers.

Hawkeye's Direct-to-Credential Career Academy Accelerates Attainment

Anatomy of Hawkeye's EMC² Program



Meets Local Demand

Developed in response to demand from local manufacturers, including John Deere, for trained CNC machinists



Increases students' odds of post-graduate employment



Held Over Summer

11th and 12th grade students take machining courses and participate in soft skills-building activities over summers



Greater availability of classrooms, labs, and machines over summer



Leads to Credential

EMC² Program culminates in a CNC Machine Operator certificate and 18 to 21 college credits



Easy method of proving program's value to employers



5X

Increased likelihood EMC² students earn Hawkeye credential compared to traditional dual enrollment participants

A Clear Path to a Technical Career



“Career academies guide students from introductory CTE coursework all the way through advanced technical offerings. We wouldn't want students to take an introductory course in high school, love the field, but lose interest because the path dead-ends.”

Linda Allen
President, Hawkeye Community College

From Print Reading to 3D Modeling

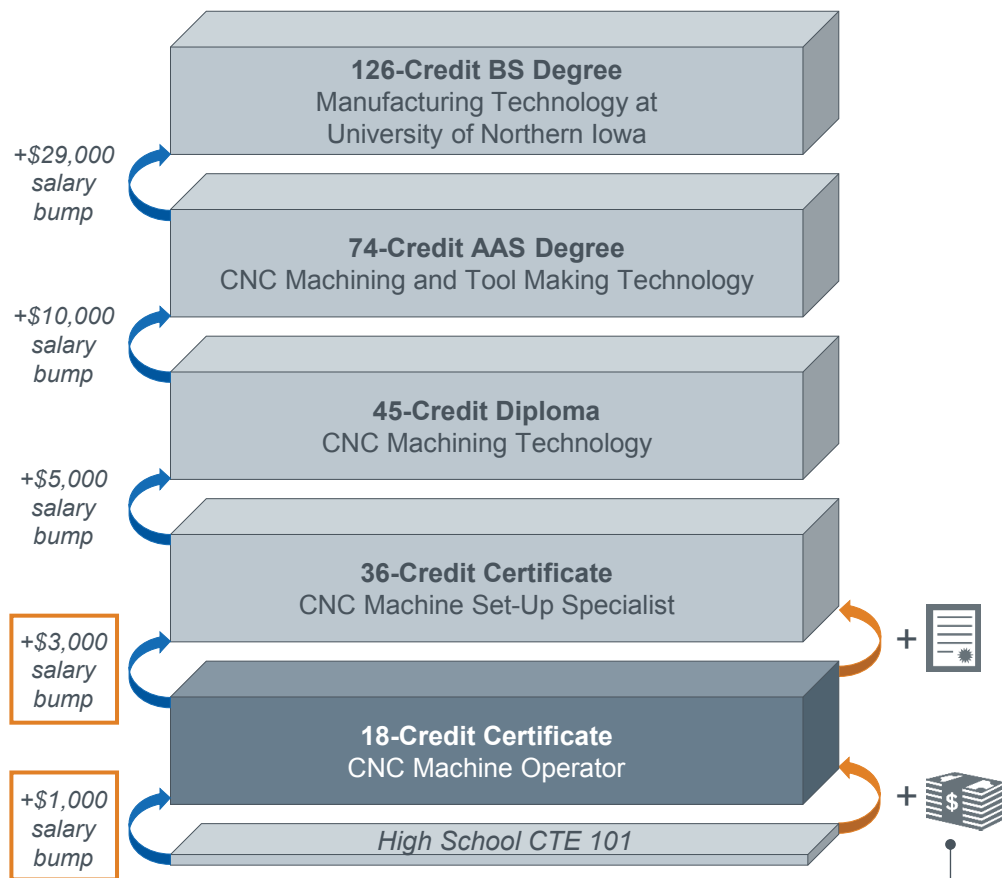
The college credits students earn through the EMC² program are the first steps to earn a full Hawkeye degree. The diagram on the right shows that upon completing an 18-credit certificate, students have the option to advance through subsequent stackable credentials and eventually earn an AAS in CNC Machining and Tool-Making Technology from Hawkeye or a BS in Manufacturing Technology from the University of Northern Iowa.

Each credential in the stackable degree program comes with an expected salary bump should a student enter the workforce. For example, a student with a 45-credit diploma working in industry who goes on to earn a 74-credit AAS degree can expect \$10,000 more in salary when returning to the workforce.

However, the first few certificates in Hawkeye's CNC Machining program do not bring as significant increases in salary. High school students who are interested in CTE may not want to enroll in an 18-credit certificate program that only brings a \$1,000 salary increase in industry. Hawkeye incentivizes this initial enrollment by offering each student \$600 in personal spending money for participation and completion. Later, graduates of the EMC² program are awarded tuition credits to apply toward Hawkeye's full degree program.

Hawkeye Incentivizes Students to Stack Machining Credentials with Supplemental Rewards to Salary Bumps

Hawkeye's CNC Machining and Tool-Making Technology Program



EMC² Program's Supplemental Rewards



Offer personal spending money to incentivize enrollment in 18-credit summer program. High school students enrolled in Hawkeye's EMC² program earn \$300 cash after each summer of coursework, amounting to \$600 total.



Award Hawkeye tuition credits to incentivize progression from 18-credit to 36-credit CNC machining certificate. High school students who enroll in EMC² program earn \$600 towards tuition after completing an 18-credit certificate, encouraging progression to the next 36-credit certificate.

Sticker Shock

Increasing federal support for career academy models over the past five years has opened new opportunities for some community colleges to develop early career training programs for area high school students. But without federal grants or philanthropic support from local employers, colleges are left to purchase costly equipment for high school programs that train students for technical fields.

The cost of equipment can be prohibitive—the average mechatronics and welding labs require thousands of dollars worth of machinery and safety gear to teach students at even the most introductory level.

High Cost of Equipment Impeding Development of Career Academies

Mechatronics Career Academy

Sample Course Listing

- Automation
- Motors and Controls
- Circuit Analysis
- PLC



Tabletop Milling Machine

\$4,000 each

IMAGE CREDIT: SHERLINE PRODUCTS / ROBOTSHOP.COM



10 Programmable Logic Controllers (PLCs)

\$3,000-\$11,000

IMAGE CREDIT: ALLEN BRADLEY / HEAVYDUTYSTORE.COM

Welding Career Academy

Sample Course Listing


- MIG Welding
- Cutting Processes
- Welding Blueprints
- Applied Math



Multi-process Welding Machines

\$5,600 each

IMAGE CREDIT: NORTHERN INDUSTRIAL WELDERS HYBRID MIG



Welding Hoods, Clothing, Goggles, Pliers

\$170 Per Student

IMAGE CREDIT: AMAZON.COM

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Micro-Donation Fundraisers

But the expense to outfit local high schools with college-level CTE equipment can be offset with donations from community and employer sponsors.

Local government agencies in Tennessee have proven effective in raising funds for partnerships between high schools and community colleges. For instance, diverting tax revenue from local employers to a central fund for educational programs has raised half a million dollars in Tipton County, TN. Utilities round-up campaigns, in which the accumulated change on the dollar for each bill is invested in CTE equipment purchases, have also succeeded in raising \$50,000 for the area high school.

To court employers directly for financial support, Butler County Community College offers local companies the opportunity to have a CTE course named in their honor—in exchange for a \$20,000 financial contribution. The money helps the college purchase expensive technical equipment, and the honorary naming benefits employers interested in branding themselves to the community.

As an alternative to purchasing equipment, high schools and employers may agree to off-peak tool access. In this plan, students access employers' equipment in the evening when it's not in use by the company's employees. This gives students access to equipment without the costs associated with purchase.

Four Quick-Wins to Finance CTE Equipment at High Schools

Community Donors



Corporate Tax Diversions

- Local government accepts funding for educational programs from employers in lieu of property taxes
- Tipton County, TN government raises \$500,000 annually through Unilever partnership

Employer Sponsors

Dedicated Course Naming



- College names course in honor of employer in exchange for financial support
- Butler Community College charges employers \$20,000 for exclusive course-naming rights



Utilities Bill Round-Ups

- Community members opt to round utilities bills up to the nearest dollar
- Madison County, TN government raised \$50,000 through 2013 utilities bill round-ups

Off-Peak Tool Access



- Employers allow student access of onsite equipment during low-traffic times
- Wheeling High School (IL) students email digital parts designs to local Intel site, 3D-printed models shipped back overnight



Tap into Local Allegiances

"All politics is local and therefore all money is local, even corporate money. We found great success approaching companies with plans to improve educational training locally—employers saw a clear return on investment."

*Program Coordinator,
Regional Economic Development District*

ECHS Elevate At-Risk Student Completion Rates

Early college high schools (ECHS) build on the career academy model by creating an opportunity for students to earn an associate's degree alongside their high school diploma. The model was first established as an accelerated college credit program for traditionally underserved student groups. Since 2002, the number of early college high schools has grown from three to over 240, most led by community colleges.

Much of the model's growth comes from its success in supporting at-risk students to graduate from high school and enroll in post-secondary education at significantly higher rates than the national average.

However, early college high school graduates tend to select traditional academic paths. Only 10% pursue career and technical education in college, instead opting for majors in the arts and humanities. Moreover, though community colleges host nearly 75% of early college high schools, fewer than one-third of their graduates enroll at a two-year college.

With enrollment challenges looming, it is time for college leaders to reexamine the traditional early college high school. Community colleges must leverage their vocational expertise to create an early college high school that paths students towards in-demand, technical careers.

Graduates Directed to Academia, Not In-Demand Vocations

A Brief Introduction to Early Colleges



Acceleration for Traditionally Underserved Students

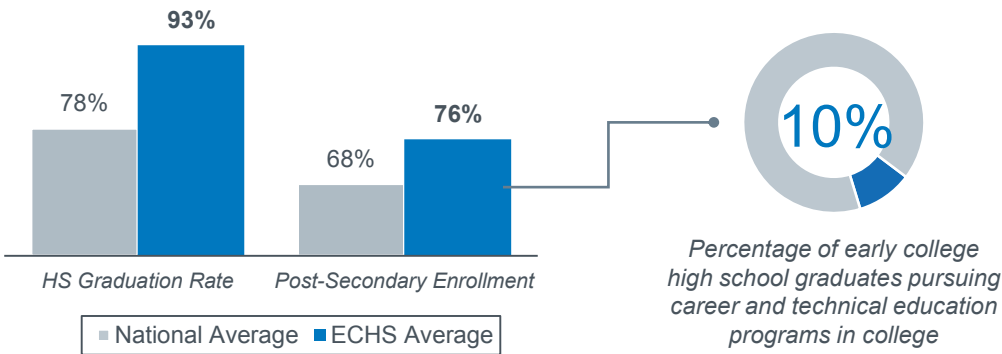
Early college high schools lead 9th through 12th grade students through accelerated program to earn an associate degree and high school diploma at the same time

240+

Rapidly Adopted Model Since Establishment in 2002

Three of the first early college high schools were developed in 2002; by 2013 there were over 240 early colleges in the U.S., most run by community colleges

Great Success, But Few ECHS Graduates Pursue Vocational Track



"Generic early college high schools prepare students well academically, but a school specializing in IT, for example, prepares students to become both independent learners *and* employable workers."

Claire Riccardi
Project Manager, City University of New York (CUNY)

A School on a Hill

News about the rise of early college high schools typically includes mention of CUNY's Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH). CUNY developed the school in 2011 in collaboration with the New York City Department of Education, the city's College of Technology, and IBM.

Starting in the 9th grade, P-TECH students follow a personalized academic pathway of high school and college-level coursework. All dual enrollment courses lead to an A.S. degree in Computer Programming or Electromagnetic Engineering. A combination of after-school tutoring, one-on-one advising, and summer courses helps students earn an associate degree alongside their high school diplomas.

The program boasts promising early success data. Over half of P-TECH sophomores are ready for college courses, and students outperform peers on local and national standardized tests.

P-TECH undoubtedly benefits from corporate support from their sponsor, IBM. In addition to financial support, IBM grants students access to worksites, staff mentors, and internships.

P-TECH's success is laudable, but it also presents a daunting example for college leaders to replicate. In the absence of an investor like IBM, how can colleges create an early college high school that accelerates college credit accumulation and industry-relevant skill building?

CUNY P-TECH a Perfect Marriage of Education and Industry

Making National Headlines

Collaborative Model Attracts Federal Attention



Obama Touts P-TECH as Example of Innovation in State of the Union Address

"At schools like P-Tech in Brooklyn... students will graduate with a high school diploma and an associate degree in computers or engineering. We need to give every American student opportunities like this."

- Opened 2011 with public school funding and \$500,000 IBM donation
- Students can earn an A.S. in Computer Programming or Electromagnetic Engineering alongside high school diploma
- 50%+ sophomores meeting college-readiness standards

A Tall Order to Scale

Sample of P-TECH Industry Supports from IBM



Source: Al Baker, "At Technology High School, Goal Isn't to Finish in Four Years," The New York Times, October 2012; Greg Lindsay, "IBM's Department of Education," August 2013; IBM, "STEM Pathways to College and Careers Schools," February 2012; EAB interviews and analysis.

Wake Tech an Early Exemplar

Wake Technical Community College offers a transferrable model of a vocationally focused early college high school. The Wake Early College of Health Sciences (WECHS) was established in 2006 in partnership with the local public school system and nearby WakeMed Hospital. The hospital's contributions to the program have been largely in-kind donations of staff time and expertise, rather than the hefty financial support IBM invested in P-TECH.

In their first two years, WECHS students complete high school requirements with opportunities for introductory health sciences courses. In the 11th grade, students begin dual enrollment courses across several different health sciences fields, including nursing and radiography.

WECHS students are not only beating national averages for high school graduation and college enrollment—they also outperform peers enrolled in traditional early college high schools focused on general education.

STEM Early College High School Outperforms Traditional Model

Anatomy of Wake Tech's Early College of Health Sciences



Local Partnership

Established in 2006 in partnership with WakeMed Hospital and public school system



Employer helps set industry-relevant curriculum and offers hands-on trainings



Early Lessons in STEM

First two years of program covers high school content through health sciences context



9th and 10th grade students use introduction to industry to decide academic major later



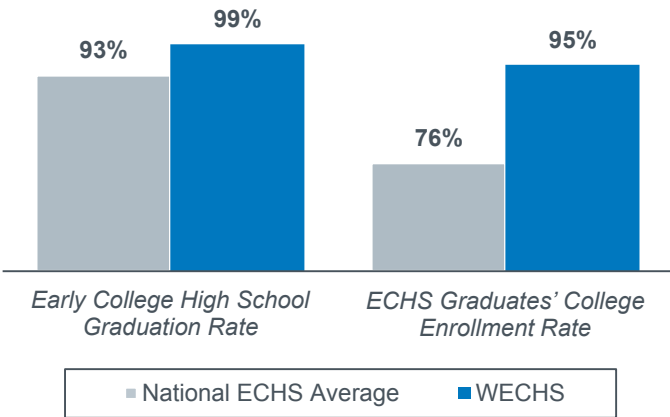
College Credit Accrual

11th graders earn dual credit in health sciences courses across nursing, radiography, EMT, etc.



Early college credit motivates students to continue studies after high school graduation

Bucking National Trends



Source: "Early College High School: A Portrait in Numbers," Early College High School Initiative, 2008; EAB interviews and analysis.

Industry Exposure from Freshman to Senior

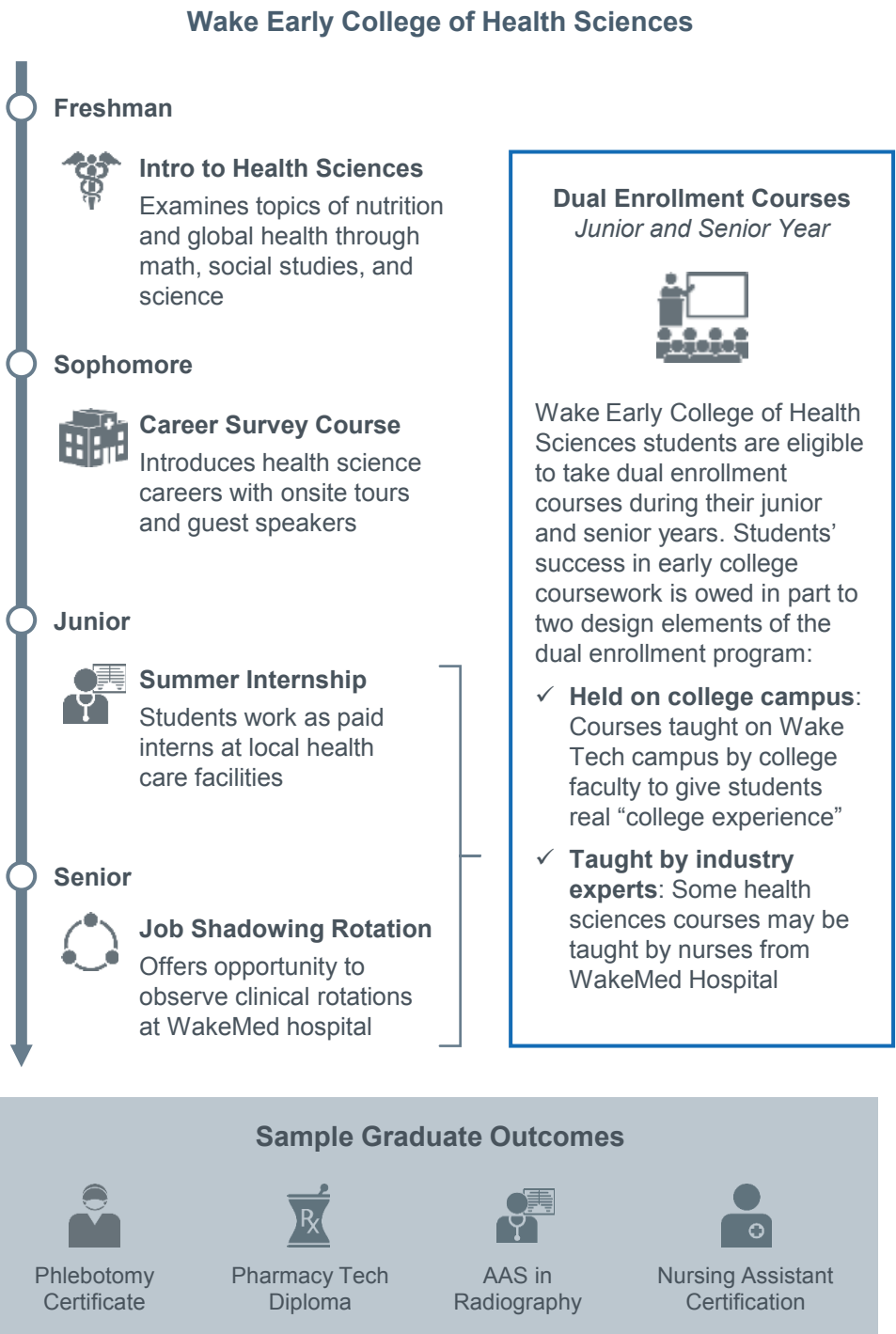
WECHS students stay engaged in the program because of its combination of traditional classroom learning with hands-on industry exposure from freshman to senior year.

During the freshman and sophomore years, students complete their high school requirements. They also enroll in two courses introducing them to the health sciences discipline and the variety of careers available in the industry. This early exposure helps students identify their academic majors and build strong career plans.

The junior and senior years of the program are reserved for dual enrollment coursework. After the 11th grade school year, students also participate in internships across local health care facilities. In the 12th grade, students observe clinical rotations at WakeMed Hospital for further insight into the day-to-day responsibilities of health care professionals.

Upon completing the program's academic and experiential requirements, students may graduate with one of many different college credentials. This puts them on an accelerated path towards further education at Wake Tech or direct entry into the workforce.

Career Exploration Comes Early, Enabling Hands-On Training by Graduation



Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

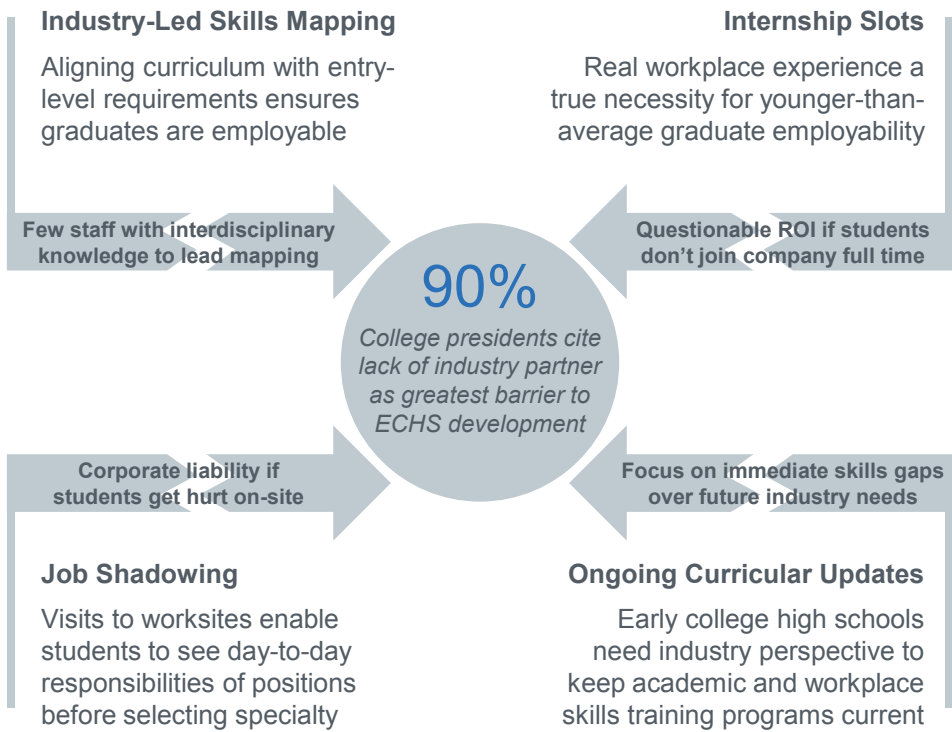
In Need of Industry Partners

Wake Tech owes the success of its early college of health sciences in large part to its industry partners. Even without large-scale financial investment, employer partnerships are critical to creating a STEM early college high school that blends academic preparation and industry-relevant skill building. Skills mapping exercises, internships, job shadowing rotations, and ongoing curricular updates all are critical for an early college high school, but require industry buy-in.

However, identifying the right partner is challenging for college leaders. Approximately 90% of community college presidents cite a lack of industry partner as the single greatest barrier to developing an early college high school.

Colleges boasting successful industry partnerships typically attribute their success to a single individual on campus. These workforce development staff members leverage their personal and professional relationships in order to secure one-time donations from nearby companies. While effective for a single campus, this strategy is limited in scope and scalability.

STEM Early College Program Growth Impeded by Lack of Employer Participation



An Unsustainable Cult of Personality

“Our college had a few great relationships with local employers the first few years I was president—but then our director of workforce development left. After that, we had so much trouble maintaining the partnerships we had and developing new ones. It became immediately clear that we didn’t have a sustainable plan to build employer partnerships, it was more a cult of personality.”

Community College President

Emerging Organizations Fill Interpreter Gap

Outside of higher education, there is an emerging group of organizations positioning themselves as intermediaries between employers and educational institutions. These nonprofit organizations employ strategies from the private sector to secure student internship slots from employers.

Year Up is a nonprofit that trains and designs internships for at-risk young adults all over the country. The first six months of the program include classroom learning and soft skill building, and students earn credits from a local community college partner. For the next six months, students are placed into internships. Since 2001, Year Up has increased the number of partner employers willing to take on interns to just over 250 nationally.

Similarly, Apprenticeship Carolina is an organization based in South Carolina that has worked with employers to expand the number of apprenticeships in the state. Since 2007, South Carolina has seen a 625% increase in available apprenticeships.

Both organizations credit the growth in available employer-sponsored internships to their account management model. Much like private consulting firms, Apprenticeship Carolina and Year Up hire dedicated employer partnership managers to speak the language of business—communicating the benefit of internship offerings for companies’ bottom lines.

Intermediaries Use Private Sector Model to Secure Student Internships



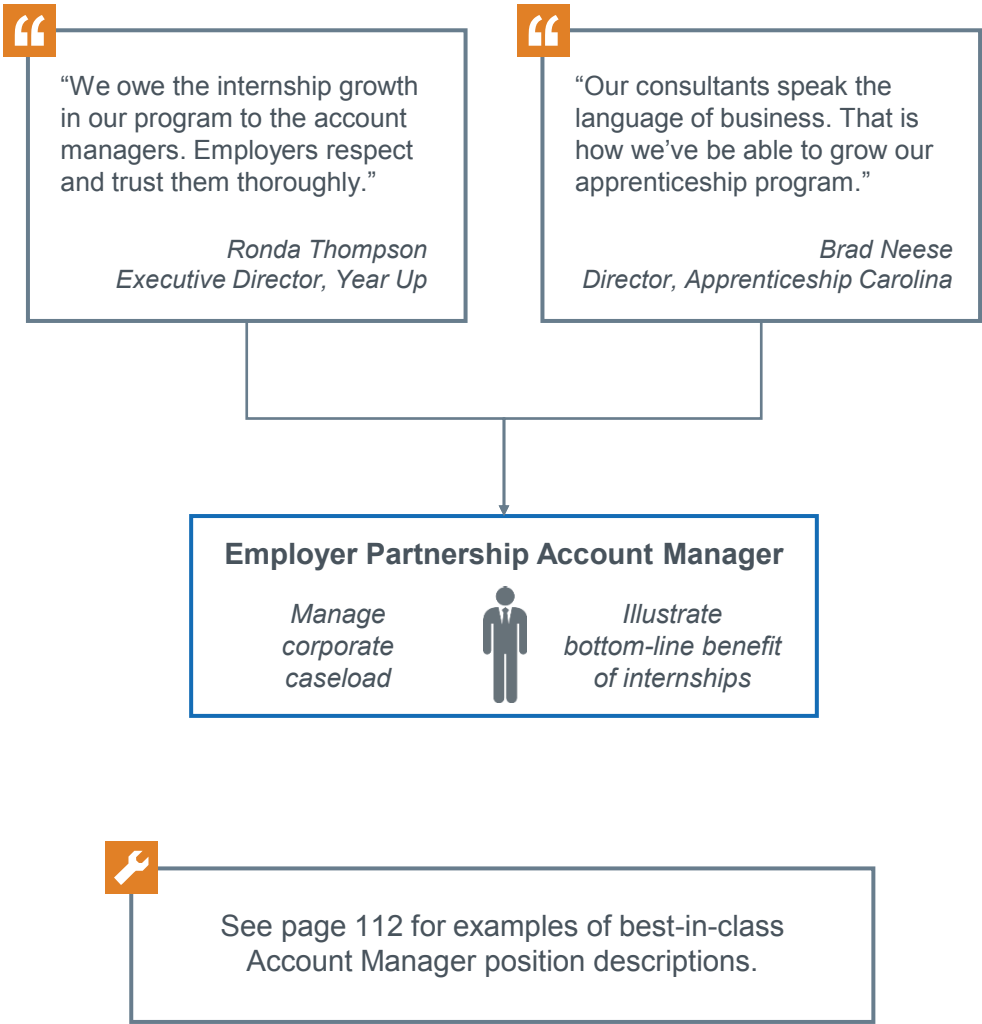
National nonprofit organization helps employers design internships for at-risk students that translate into full-time positions with the company



State program encourages employers to offer apprenticeships to students in technical fields by painting picture of future return on investment

25x Growth in corporate partners since 2001

625% Apprenticeship growth since 2007

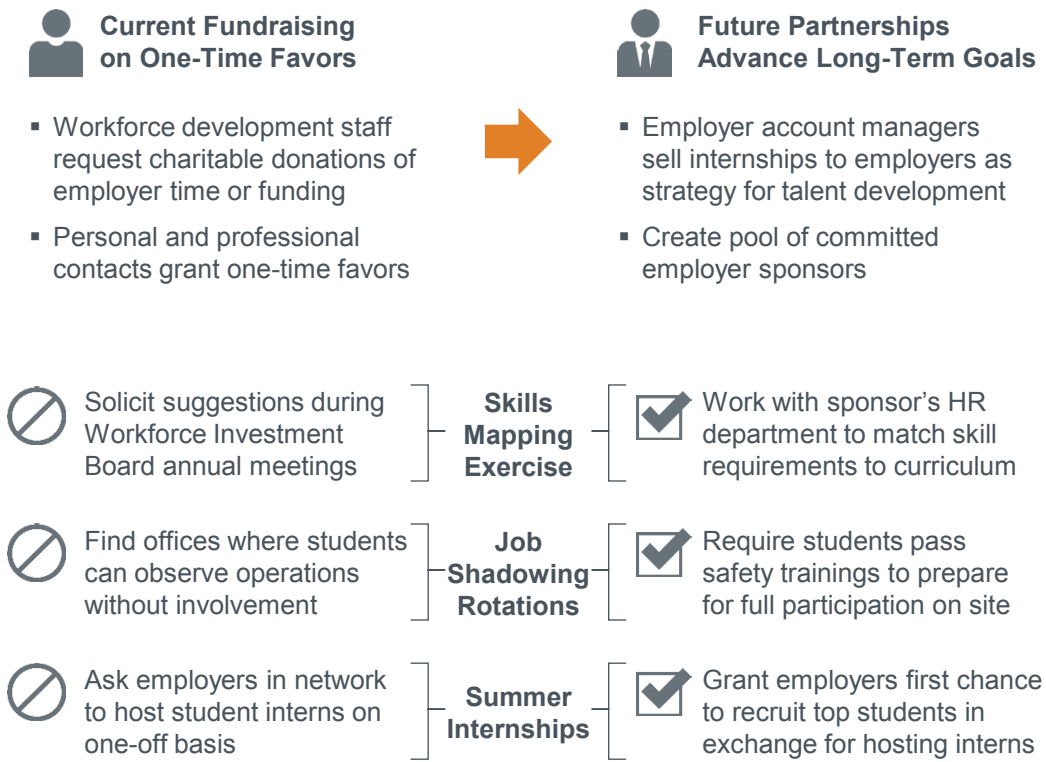


Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Framing Our College Wish List in Bottom-Line Terms

Year Up and Apprenticeship Carolina offer a model for securing industry partners that community colleges can learn from. This requires a shift in focus—moving away from traditional fundraising and personal networking towards a model of long-term account management. Colleges must frame the items on their “wish list” (e.g., skills mapping, job shadowing rotations) so that employers will understand the benefits of internships to their bottom lines. College staff must cease fundraising and start selling internships to employers as low-cost strategies for talent development. They must invest in a pool of committed employer sponsors by drawing on business management strategy rather than personal rolodexes. For employers hesitant to take on high school age students in their workplaces, Year Up also offers a strategy for quality assurance through its behavioral point system. A model that keeps students accountable for their behavior and frames internships as a privilege helps assure employers that incoming student interns are top-quality additions to their teams.

DIY Employer Partnership Account Management Model



Tracking Demerits and Good Deeds for Internship Eligibility

Year Up's Behavioral Point System Offers Added Layer of Quality Assurance



Each participant starts the Year Up program with 200 behavioral points. Students earn points for work-ready behaviors and lose points for behavioral infractions such as unprofessional dress and tardiness. With every point lost, a dollar is deducted from participants' weekly stipends. Those who lose all 200 points are no longer eligible to participate in an internship. Immediate ramifications for unprofessional behavior teaches participants the value of soft skills and ensures employers that student interns are workplace ready.



Section 3

Developing a “School of Choice” Brand

Selling Ourselves Short

Quality Shoppers undecided on which college to attend are evaluating their options based on five primary characteristics: instructional quality, accelerated programs, proven return on degree, research opportunities, and broad name recognition.

Community colleges outperform competitors on the first three items. They are home to small classes and faculty fully dedicated to teaching. Two-year colleges also offer more accelerated programs than any other institution type, and their graduates boast high job placement rates with low debt.

The last two traits on Quality Shoppers' list are weak spots, but there is room for potential. While two-year colleges do not offer undergraduate research positions or lab space, they have ties to local businesses that would benefit greatly from student research and expertise.

Finally, community colleges don't have widespread brand recognition, but they can offer students a clear, supportive path to a well-known university.

Community colleges boast many of the traits that Quality Shopper high school students seek in a post-secondary school, but these characteristics are not well integrated with their brands. To become a "school of choice" destination for missing middle students, colleges must identify their competitive advantages and put these at the front of their marketing campaigns.

Community Colleges Silently Check the Box on Quality Measures

"Quality Shopper" Checklist

Community College Traits

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Instructional Quality	→	Small classes led by faculty 100% focused on teaching	Undermarketed Strengths
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accelerated Programs	→	More fast-track credentials than any other institution type	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Return on Degree	→	Graduates boast highest job placement rates and lowest debt	
<input type="checkbox"/> Research Opportunities	→	No labs, but strong ties with local businesses in need of expertise	Weak Spots with Potential
<input type="checkbox"/> College Name Recognition	→	Open access, but with guided transfer pathways to elite colleges	



Our Own Worst Enemy

"We have some of the best faculty in the state and programs that path students to \$100,000 jobs in two years, but based on how administrators talk about our college, you'd think we were a school of absolute last resort. That message gets passed to the market."

Marketing Director
Midwest Community College

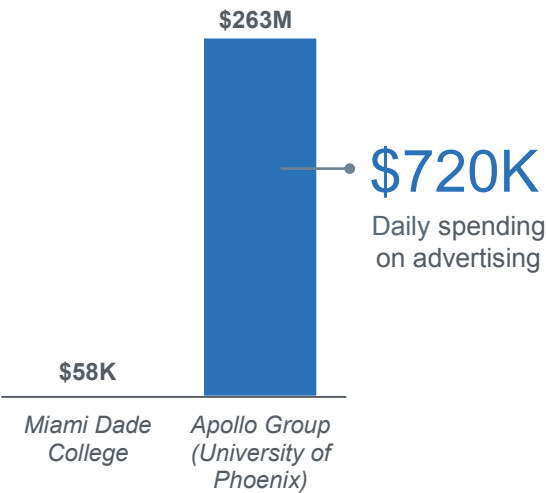
Deck Stacked Against Us...

In the absence of a “school of choice” brand, community colleges risk losing Quality Shoppers to major competitors with much larger advertising budgets, including for-profit universities. For example, the Apollo Group (which includes the University of Phoenix) spent \$263 million in 2010 alone.

This amounts to about \$720,000 spent each day to advertise the company's for-profit programs. Recently, these advertisements have also included direct attacks on the community college value proposition.

Major Competitors Bring Vast Advertising Resources

Annual Advertising Budgets, 2010



Not Playing Nice

The advertisement features the University of Phoenix logo at the top left. Below it is a photograph of three students (two women and one man) sitting at a desk, looking at computer monitors. The text 'An alternative to community college' is overlaid on the right side of the photo. Below the photo, there are two columns of text. The left column is titled 'Giving you more options than community college.' and describes online and on-campus programs. The right column is titled 'We offer more degree levels than community college.' and lists various degree levels from associate to doctoral. A vertical credit line on the far right reads 'IMAGE CREDIT: AMERICAN INDEPENDENT NEWS NETWORK'.

University of Phoenix®

An alternative to community college

Giving you more options than community college.
Enroll in a degree program online or at one of our more than 200 locations after your workday is done. You'll get individual support and a rigorous education.

We offer more degree levels than community college.
From associate, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees to certificates and single courses, we offer the programs that fit your lifestyle and career interests.

IMAGE CREDIT: AMERICAN INDEPENDENT NEWS NETWORK

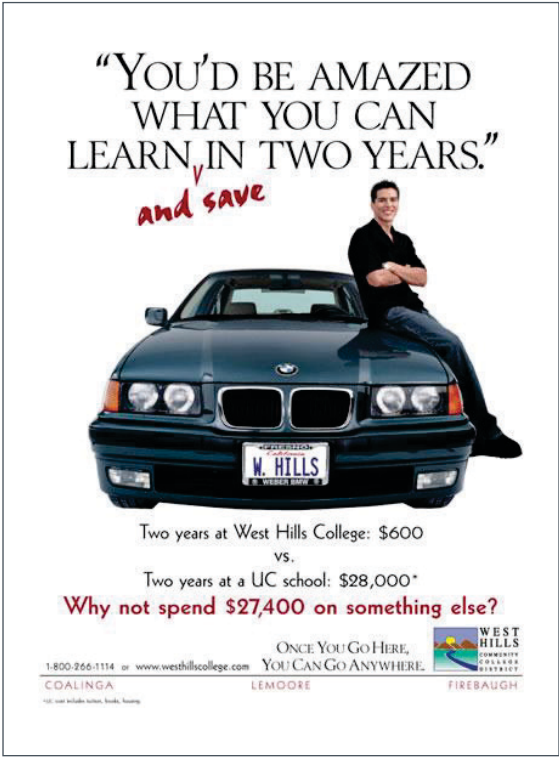
Source: David Moltz, "Knife to a Gun Fight," *Inside Higher Ed*, July 2010; A. Ananthakshmi, "U.S. For-Profit Colleges Spend Big on Marketing While Slashing Other Costs," *Reuters*, November 2012; Sarah Pavlus, "University of Phoenix Fought Against Community College Expansion," *The American Independent*, December 2012; EAB interviews and analysis.

But We're Playing the Wrong Cards





For-profit competitors boast enviable advertising budgets, but many two-year colleges are also hampered by their own advertising messages. A Forum survey of community college advertisements found that most campaigns focused on a single attribute of the institution—low tuition cost.

The advertisement shown here is one example of hundreds of advertisements. Like most community college campaigns, there is no mention of the college experience. Prospective students are not informed of instructional quality, accelerated offerings, return on degree, research opportunities, or college name recognition. The main feature of the community college experience here is its low cost, presumably leaving money for students to purchase something more flashy than a post-secondary degree—a car.

Status Quo Advertising Disregards Priorities of Quality Shoppers



Priorities Addressed by Sample Ad

-  ~~Instructional Quality~~
-  ~~Accelerated Programs~~
-  ~~Return on Degree~~
-  ~~Research Opportunities~~
-  ~~College Name Recognition~~
-  Low Cost

Source: "Marketing," West Hills Community College District, http://www.westhillscollge.com/district/news_&_events/print_marketing/index.asp; EAB Interviews and analysis.

Developing a “School of Choice” Brand

Community colleges should not present themselves as a commodity, but rather a quality educational experience. The following recommendations for rebranding two-year colleges as “schools of choice” are based directly on the needs of Quality Shoppers—strategies to boost enrollment among missing middle high school students.

Colleges may begin developing a “school of choice” brand by advertising attributes they already have: teaching-focused faculty, early credit opportunities, and a proven record of high job placement and low student debt.

Further structural investments may be required to make up for the qualities students seek but colleges don’t have. Progressive colleges have leveraged their strengths to build unique programs for their students that build on partnerships with community-based organizations to provide students with real-life research opportunities and that overcome a lack of college name recognition with a streamlined transfer pathway into top-name universities.

Five Tactics to Draw Quality Shoppers



Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Spotlighting Instructional Quality

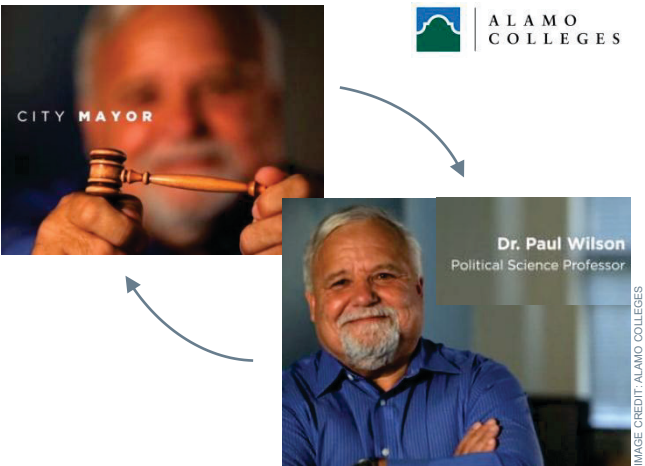
Alamo Colleges implemented an easily replicable marketing strategy to promote high-quality faculty instruction at the institution. The system's newest marketing campaign highlights the real-world experiences of faculty from across various disciplines.

Faculty spotlights give prospective students a glimpse into the industry expertise that defines a community college education—a political science professor with experience as a city mayor, a vocational nursing professor who works as a registered nurse, and even a mortuary science professor who directs a nearby funeral home.

The marketing campaign educates students about two primary components of the community college experience. First and most obvious is the depth of faculty knowledge and real-world experience. Compared to academics in the “ivory tower” who tend to teach at four-year institutions, faculty at two-year colleges have a better pulse on industry.

Faculty-centered marketing campaigns also educate students about the types of programs offered at the college. Students unfamiliar with Alamo Colleges may not know it offers an accounting technology degree until they see an advertisement featuring a professor who works as a certified public accountant.

Alamo’s Faculty-Centered Marketing Highlights Instructors’ Real-World Experience



“

“Since you want real skills for real world careers, the big advantage of the Alamo Colleges are professors who have actually been in the kind of jobs you’re after.”

Alamo Radio Commercial

A Multi-Channel Campaign



Number of 30-second TV commercials (one per college)



Number of 60-second radio commercials



Number of faculty profiles available at alamofaculty.org

Source: “We Have a Faculty for Reshaping Futures,” Alamo Colleges, <http://www.alamofaculty.org>; EAB interviews and analysis.

Getting Credit for Dual Enrollment

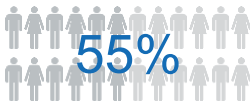
In addition to an experienced instructional staff, community colleges also offer students a wealth of accelerated programs. However, most colleges do little to advertise some of their largest programs, such as dual enrollment. Approximately 55% of high school dual enrollment participants are unable to name the host college granting credits. College leaders suggest this may stem from their organizational structure—without coordination between the marketing department and the office of high school relations, many marketing and recruitment opportunities are missed.

Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) took a creative approach to branding their dual enrollment program at nearby William Penn Senior High School. In 2013, HACC redecorated a hallway and adjoining classrooms at William Penn to resemble college spaces. Walls are now covered in the college's school colors and sports banners, classrooms are filled with spare college furniture, and there are no high school bells.

William Penn students are now more familiar with and have greater interest in HACC. As an added benefit, dual enrollment students reportedly take their classes more seriously in the rebranded hallway. The differentiated decorations and furniture make them feel like real college students.

HACC's College-Branded High School Hallway Feeds Pipeline

High School Students Largely Unaware Where College Credits Come From



Estimated share of high school dual enrollment participants unable to name host college

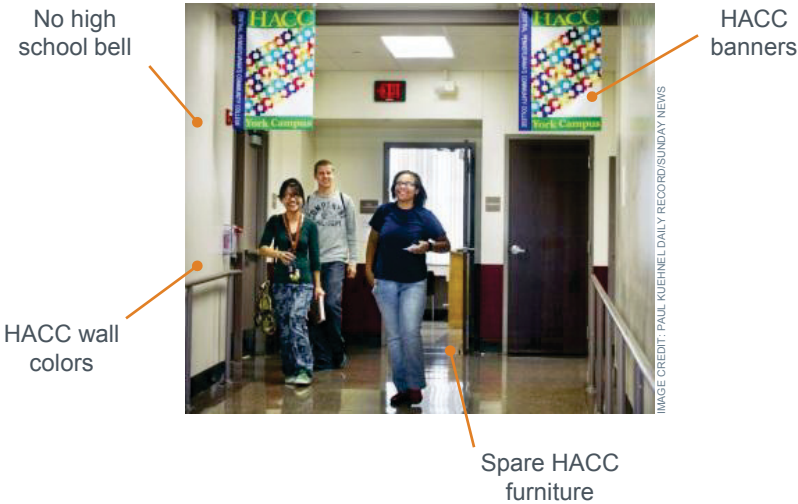


“Our marketing department is kept separate from our high school programs. We offer a ton of dual enrollment courses, but nowhere in that course do students learn that we’re conferring the credits. It’s a wasted recruitment opportunity.”

*Vice President for Marketing,
Community College*

Redecorated High School Hallway Increases Visibility of Host College

William Penn Senior High School



Source: Angie Mason, “William Penn Brings College Feel to Hallways,” *York Daily Record*, October 2013; EAB interviews and analysis.

Differentiating on Outcomes

Quality Shoppers value the educational experience, but they also want a job after graduation and little to no student debt. These prospective students are seeking a return on their investment in higher education.

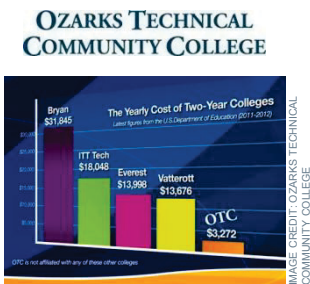
To appeal to this student segment, community colleges must position their low-cost and high job placement rates as inseparable parts of their value proposition—a two-year college experience is not just low cost, it leaves graduates in a preferred position to pursue their careers with little to no debt burden.

In fall 2012, Ozarks Technical Community College released a television commercial broadcast comparing their tuition to that of local for-profit competitors. A subsequent student focus group confirmed ROI advertisements resonate more than generic commercials that implore students to apply to the college without financial information.

Progressive colleges like Ozarks and Spartanburg Community College include low tuition as an important part of their value propositions, but improve upon traditional examples of community college marketing campaigns by including mention of graduates' high job placement rates—spotlighting a large return on investment.

ROI Ad Campaigns Enhance Cost Comparison

Combining a Competitive Cost...

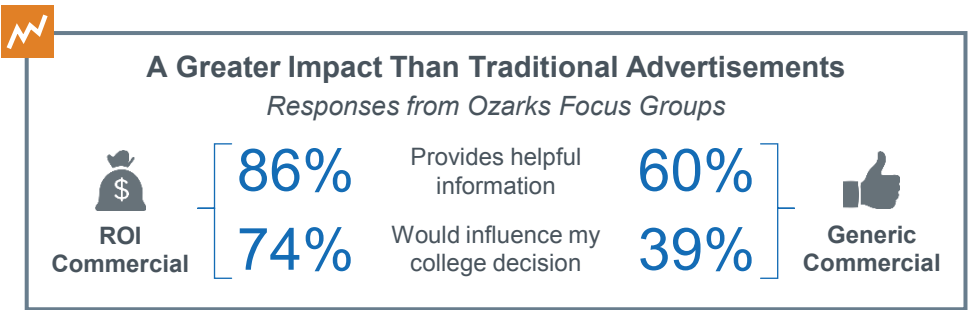


30-second TV commercial broadcast for two weeks during registration period shows that for-profit competitors cost up to 10 times more

With Envable Job Outcomes



Three-spot TV commercial series produced by external marketing firm links college programs to well-paid job openings in regional labor market



Safeguards When Challenging For-Profit Competitors

- ☒ **Highlight self-reported, publicly available data:** Use self-reported IPEDS data in advertisements so that competitors cannot dispute the accuracy of the information included in campaign materials.
- ☒ **Phrase challenge in layman's terms:** It is difficult for the general public to understand industry terminology. For example, a campaign focused on accreditation is likely to fail—most people can not differentiate between regional and program accreditation.

Source: Paul Fain, "No More Mr. Nice Guy," *Inside Higher Ed*, November 2012; "Spartanburg Community College Television Campaign," *Whipp Blog*, March 2013; EAB interviews and analysis.

Breaking Out of the Lab

To attract students searching for quality instruction, accelerated learning opportunities, and measurable return on their investment in higher education, community colleges need to advertise existing qualities more than in the past. However, meeting students' demand for research opportunities requires investment in new instructional infrastructures.

Quality Shoppers primarily want to conduct research in college to apply their classroom learning to the real world and interact formally with faculty experts. Currently, few community colleges meet that demand. They offer much fewer undergraduate research positions on their campuses, in part because faculty spend much more time teaching than researching compared to their university counterparts.

However, community colleges can still offer students unique research opportunities by breaking from the traditional model and offering community-sourced research projects. Students conduct research on behalf of nearby community organizations with faculty support throughout the semester. The projects are beneficial for students—who receive hands-on professional experience—as well as the community partners, who receive free strategic guidance.

Community Colleges Turn Local Businesses into Applied Research Sites

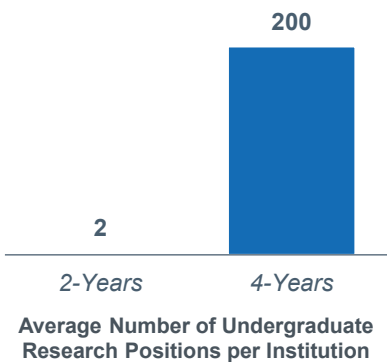
Students Care About Undergraduate Research...



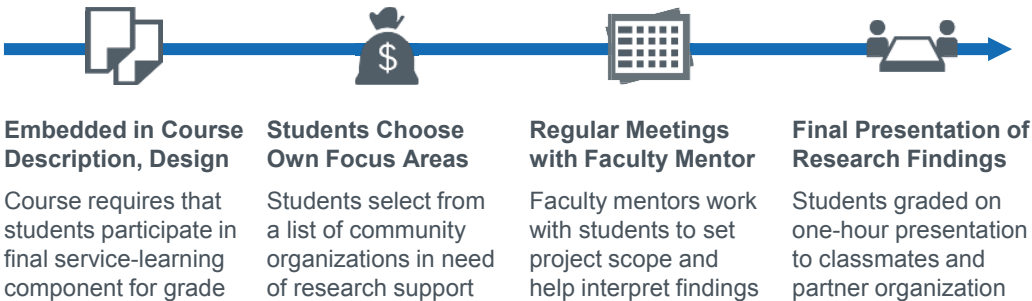
“Some of my friends at four-year schools are research assistants, and it sounds great! They get to see how their majors apply to the real world, and they connect with faculty on campus.”

Student

...But Few Community Colleges Meet Demand



Community-Sourced Research Projects



Win-Win for Students and Businesses



Students: Research experience and professional references for resume



Community Partner: Free strategic planning and organizational insight

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System; EAB interviews and analysis.

Community-Sourced Research Projects

When service learning projects are embedded in courses as final assessments, students have the opportunity to draw upon earlier lessons and apply them to the real-life problem identified at the community organization. This model of turning student research into pro bono consulting engagements helps resource-strapped non-profits in the area and can be applied across a variety of disciplines. At Northampton Community College, students have worked with a nearby assisted living facility to study emergency preparedness among residents and helped state park officials assess the efficacy of current methods of removing invasive plant species.

Georgia Piedmont Technical College (GPTC) includes hands-on student research projects in their Building Automation Systems AAS degree. However, rather than work with a community partner, students research and improve processes at the community college. After in-depth studies of campus building performance, students enrolled in the program complete energy efficiency projects on the GPTC campus. Past campus projects include the installation of high-efficiency lighting fixtures, an HVAC monitoring system, and a new building automation system.

Identifying Opportunities from Diverse Academic Disciplines

Research-Turned-Pro Bono Consulting Across the Curriculum *Service Learning Projects at Northampton Community College*

20+

Hours spent on each research project with local community group



Biology: *Evaluation of Emergency Preparedness Among Senior Citizens*

Partner: Assisted living facility



Ecology: *Assessing Efficacy of Invasive Species Removal Methods*

Partner: State park

Opportunities Right Under Your Nose (or Above Your Head)

Students Improve HVAC Systems at Georgia Piedmont Technical College



IMAGE CREDIT: AACC SEED INITIATIVE - NEWS

In-Depth Performance Studies

- Interior lighting assessments
- Heat gain and loss calculations
- Mechanical systems inventories



Energy-Efficient Projects

- Lighting controls and fixtures
- HVAC monitoring system
- Automated control processes



Sample Projects Across the Curriculum



History: *Major Renewable Energy Sources Before the Industrial Revolution*



Accounting: *Capitalization of Installation Equipment Needed with Cost Analysis and ROI*

Source: "Service Learning," Northampton Community College, <http://www.northampton.edu/academics/service-learning.htm>; "Georgia Piedmont Technical College: Leveraging Employer Partnerships," The SEED Center, <http://www.theseedcenter.org/Collages-in-Action/Success-Stories/Georgia-Piedmont-Technical-College-Leveraging-Emp>; Todd Cohen, "Community Colleges as Living Laboratories," AACC Presentation, September 2013; EAB interviews and analysis.

Here, Then Harvard

Students with dreams of attending an elite four-year university do not typically think of community college as the first step for their post-secondary education, even when life factors prevent them from enrolling directly in their dream school. However, a new organization called American Honors has partnered with five community colleges across the country to create a new transfer bridge from two-year to four-year colleges.

The organization was founded in 2012 by Quad Learning, a technology company based in Washington, D.C. The American Honors program is a competitive 2+2 honors pathway that leverages two years of an intensive honors program at a community college for student transfer into elite four-year institutions all across the country. Four-year transfer partners currently include Auburn University, Georgetown University, Smith College, and the University of Rochester.

If admitted, students are charged a \$2,000 premium above the regular community college tuition to cover the costs of additional services provided.

American Honors' value comes from their support for students who are "diamonds in the rough"—students who could be successful at elite colleges, but need a small amount of support to gain entry and succeed. American Honors gives these kinds of students a supportive path to a big name school.

American Honors Program Offers Big Name School Without Big Price Tag

American Honors 2+2 Adds Polish through Low-Cost Pathway to Dream College

AmericanHonors



+\$2,000

New Organization

Founded in 2012 by Quad Learning with the Community Colleges of Spokane and Ivy Tech Community College

Attracts Most Motivated

Program serves 3.25+ GPA high school graduates with robust extracurricular and leadership experience

Tuition Premium

American Honors students pay an average of \$2,000 per year to cover the additional services offered

Program Services



Honors Course Sections



Online Learning and Social Platform



Dedicated Study Lounge

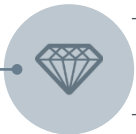


Elite College Application Counselor

More Diamonds in the Rough Than You Would Think

Intelligent

SAT scores in 90th percentile nationwide

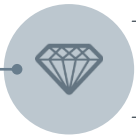


Homeschooled

Nervous about navigating large college campus

Motivated

Overcame early illiteracy to become book club leader

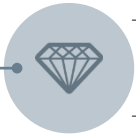


Low Income

Unable to afford standard university tuition for four years

Passionate

Budding scientist who began high school robotic team



First-Generation

Doesn't know how to write compelling resume

Source: American Honors, "FAQs," <https://americanhonors.org/about-us/faq>; Paul Bradley, "Aiming High," Community College Week, August 5, 2013; EAB interviews and analysis.

Navigating Competitive Transfer Admissions

Ivy Tech Community College and the Community Colleges of Spokane were the first two institutions to partner with American Honors, and early outcomes data from those pilots is overwhelmingly positive. Of students in the first American Honors cohort at the Community Colleges of Spokane, 83% were accepted into their top-choice school. The remaining 17% of graduates were also successful university transfers.

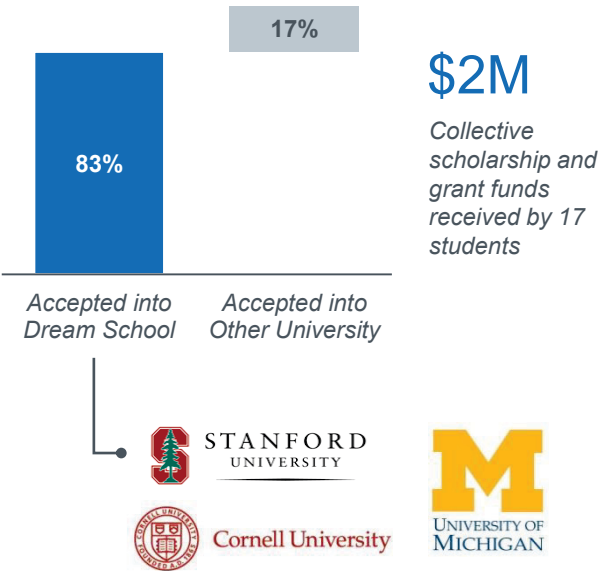
Participants benefit from many of the added services American Honors offers, but the most valuable is the support of an elite college application counselor, a staff member at the college who is knowledgeable about entry requirements for selective universities and available to help students develop a competitive transfer application.

The elite college application counselor also helps students develop the soft skills they need to succeed at a four-year university. Participants learn skills like drafting professional emails and building contacts through networking—skills that many first-generation college students would not obtain otherwise.

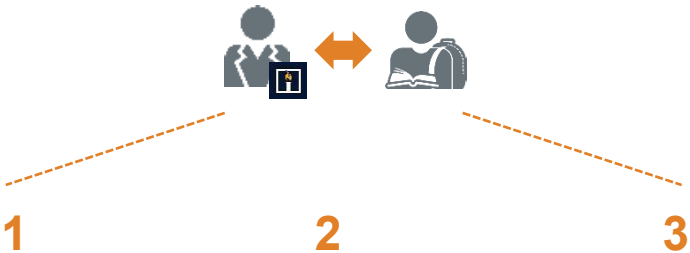
Since 2012, Mercer County Community College and Union County Community College have joined the American Honors network, with Pierce College following suit as well.

American Honors’ Application Counselor Paths Students to Elite Colleges

Impressive Transfer Outcomes of First Cohort *Community Colleges of Spokane, August 2013*



Elite College Application Counselors *Assisting in Each Stage of Transfer Process*



1 Identifying the Best 4-Year Destination

- Search for financial aid and scholarships
- Compare programs across campuses

2 Submitting Competitive Application Materials

- Complete transfer applications
- Write a compelling personal statement

3 Making the Most of College for Career

- Drafting emails to faculty and employers
- Build contacts through networking

Source: American Honors, "FAQs," <https://americanhonors.org/about-us/faq>; Paul Bradley, "Aiming High," Community College Week, August 5, 2013; EAB interviews and analysis.



Early College High School Implementation Toolkit

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Early College High School Business Case Template

Purpose of the Tool

Developing a sound business case for an early college high school is the first step towards robust implementation; it is critical for determining whether an early college high school is an attractive solution for an institution. Without a business case as a guideline, administrators may underestimate costs, downplay risks, or overlook barriers to success. A business case also helps garner buy-in from campus constituents.

This early college high school business case template guides users through the key factors that should influence the decision to implement (or not implement) an early college high school.

Anatomy of a Business Case

The diagram below depicts the components of a business case that guide the decision of whether to move forward with an early college high school.



Developing a Business Case

Fill out the following tables to collect the information needed to develop a sound business case for an early college high school. In each table, the first consideration has been filled in with a hypothetical example response. Each table also includes customizable cells for considerations that are not already listed.

1. What are the Business Drivers?

Consideration	Inputs That Impact the Driver
Increased enrollments among recent high school graduate population	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Greater college brand awareness and reputation among high school students enrolled in early college high school who experience rigorous academic scheduleTargeting middle-performing high school student segment likely to enroll in community college or enter local workforce after completing credential
Opportunity to brand college as top destination for early STEM training among local and national employers	
Custom:	

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

2. What are the Projected Benefits?

Consideration	Current Pain Points	Early College High School Objectives
Students explore and enjoy CTE coursework at community college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Students unfamiliar with technical fields</i> ▪ <i>Community members hold negative perception of CTE coursework and jobs</i> ▪ <i>Students do not appreciate the types of credentials the community college offers</i> 	<i>Create academic experience that introduces students to the rigor and fun of technical disciplines. Students will be more likely to pursue these fields professionally and can apply credential towards further education</i>
Shared cost of college preparation with local school district		
Increase college access to traditionally underserved students		
Custom:		
Custom:		
Custom:		

3. What are the Associated Costs?

Consideration	Estimated Cost
Personnel Costs (e.g., principal, faculty, counselors, custodial, etc.)	
Operating Costs (e.g., recruitment, travel, supplies, books, etc.)	
Capital Costs (e.g., lease, furniture, computers, lab equipment, etc.)	
College Costs (e.g., courses and fees)	
Custom:	
Custom:	

Source: Michael Webb, "What Is the Cost of Planning and Implementing Early College High School?" Jobs for the Future and the Early College High School Initiative, November 2004; EAB interviews and analysis.

4. What are the Potential Risks?

Consideration	Risk Drivers	Ways to Avoid Risk
Flooded with applications from top-performing students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Opportunity for accelerated college credit accumulation only appealing to top students looking to pad resumes for elite colleges</i> ▪ <i>Middle-performing students not confident in ability to do well in accelerated environment</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Advertise early college high school as opportunity for students with <u>potential</u> to succeed, not necessarily A+ grades</i> ▪ <i>Send recruitment letters to middle-performing students and their parents</i>
Low interest in STEM or technical education in community at large		
ECHS graduates don't earn respect or jobs with local employers		
Custom:		
Custom:		
Custom:		

Early College High School Site Decision Guide

Purpose of the Tool

Early college high schools vary in several elements of their design, including site location. While some schools are located on high school campuses, others are located on college campuses, and still others have dedicated sites apart from both the high school and college partners. Site selection can be a contentious part of developing an early college high school for the first time, particularly because the decision must take budgeting and academic quality into account, and ultimately has an impact on student access and the ability to provide students with an authentic college experience.

This early college high school site decision guide outlines the key considerations college leaders should think through when selecting the location for an early college high school. Across the top row of each page, write the options considered for the early college high school site (e.g., “High School Location,” “College Location,” etc.). For each question, write down a response for the appropriate school site in the space provided.

1. Which location are we best budgeted for?

Potential Locations: (Write across the top)				Scoring (See below)
Do we currently have a ready-to-use space for an early college high school at this site?				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4 pts. for YES ▪ 0 pts. for NO
Is there a budget to update a currently available space for an early college high school at this site?				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3 pts. for YES ▪ 0 pts. for NO
Is there a budget to remodel a currently available space for an early college high school at this site?				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2 pts. for YES ▪ 0 pts. for NO
Is there a budget to build a space for an early college high school at this site?				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 pt. for YES ▪ 0 pts. for NO
Final Scores:	_____	_____	_____	

Circle the potential site that received the highest score. This is the site with the greatest potential from a budgeting standpoint—it requires the least amount of financial investment to host the proposed early college.

2. Have we planned the academic experience for early college students?

Potential Locations: (Write across the top)			
When will students complete high school requirements (non-dual enrollment courses, only for high school credit)?			
When will students complete dual enrollment coursework?			
Who will teach dual enrollment courses?			
If high school instructors teach courses, how will we ensure academic standards are upheld? <i>For inspiration, see Tool #3, Dual Enrollment Faculty Mentoring Tip Sheet</i>			
If college instructors teach courses, how will we ensure faculty are attuned and sensitive to the needs of teenage students?			

There are no point values attached to answers in this section of the decision guide. Rather, staff should use the chart above to see which questions need greater consideration and discussion with colleagues. For each early college site under consideration, staff should know how courses will be taught and the logistics associated with each decision.

3. Which location is most accessible to early college students?

Potential Locations: (Write across the top)				Scoring (See below)
Is the site in a central location to most parts of our service area?				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 pts. for YES 0 pts. for NO
How will the majority of students travel to and from the early college high school site?				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 pts. for WALK 3 pts. for DRIVE 2 pts. for BUS 0 pts. for Blank
Is the site accessible for all staff and faculty at the early college high school?				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 pts. for YES 0 pts. for NO
Final Scores:				

Circle the potential site that received the highest score. This is the site with the greatest potential from an accessibility standpoint—it ensures students, faculty, and staff all have reliable access to the early college high school site.

4. Can we create an authentic college experience for early college students?

Potential Locations: (Write across the top)				Scoring (See below)
How will students feel connected to the college at their early college high school?				1 pt. for every idea to connect students to campus, faculty, or other students
Will students participate in first-year orientation at the college?				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 pts. for YES 0 pts. for NO
How will we ensure early college students are integrated into college life in an age-appropriate manner?				1 pt. for every idea to safely integrate students into college life
Final Scores:				

Circle the potential site that received the highest score. This is the site with the greatest potential to provide students with an authentic college experience—students will participate in academic and non-academic parts of typical college life.

Source: Michael Webb, "What Is the Cost of Planning and Implementing Early College High School?" Jobs for the Future and the Early College High School Initiative, November 2004; EAB interviews and analysis.

Dual Enrollment Faculty Mentoring Tip Sheet

Purpose of the Tool

Dual enrollment courses are typically offered on high school campuses and taught by high school faculty. Colleges that opt for this instructional arrangement realize significant cost savings compared to hosting the courses on their campuses, but must ensure that dual enrollment courses meet colleges' academic standards. High school faculty are required to have the same qualifications as college instructors to teach dual enrollment and must also maintain a "college environment" in their classrooms. Dual enrollment students must be taught to work independently, take responsibility for their actions, and seek help when needed.

Faculty mentoring programs pair a high school instructor with a college instructor who helps ensure dual enrollment classrooms have consistent academic standards and environments as college classes. The tip sheet below helps leaders interested in developing a dual enrollment faculty mentoring program familiarize themselves with the responsibilities of the high school and college faculty members involved.

High School Faculty "Mentee" Responsibilities

- ☒ Read college faculty handbook for overview of college's academic and behavioral policies
- ☒ Attend summer meeting at college to review institutional policies
- ☒ Meet with chair of relevant academic department for meet-and-greet and Q&A session
- ☒ Observe college courses held during summer term at community college
- ☒ Stay in touch with college faculty mentor via email, phone, or in-person meetings twice per month





College Faculty "Mentor" Responsibilities

- ☒ Share examples of homework assignments, quizzes, and tests that demonstrate college-level work
- ☒ Observe high school faculty mentee teaching at the beginning of the semester and provide feedback
- ☒ Remain available to high school faculty mentee to answer questions, and share best practices
- ☒ Stay in touch with high school faculty mentee via email, phone, or in-person meetings twice per month

Program Interest Online Survey Guideline

Purpose of the Tool

This survey guide reflects best practices in gathering information about high school students, their parents, and their primary college interests. It draws from Folsom Lake College's program interest online survey distributed to parents of high school students, as described on page 55 of this publication. The guide below supports directors of secondary school partnerships and other college staff responsible for recruiting high school students to campus. Staff may distribute this survey to parents to collect demographic information, communication preferences, and students' plans for college. This allows staff to cater subsequent communications to parents' needs.

 Demographic Information	 Academic Intentions	 Communication Preferences	 Primary Interests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mailing Address ▪ Student Name ▪ Student Contact Info ▪ Parent Name ▪ Parent Contact Info ▪ Current High School ▪ Gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Semester of Enrollment ▪ Campus or Campuses of Enrollment ▪ Intended Academic Degree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mode of Communication ▪ Location for College Events ▪ Available Days and Times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academic Programs ▪ Student Services ▪ Student Contact Info ▪ Learning Resources ▪ Leadership Activities ▪ Sports/Clubs ▪ On-Campus Jobs

College Readiness Survey¹

Which academic programs interest you most at Folsom Lake College? (Mark all that apply)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Human Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administration of Justice | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Humanities | <input type="checkbox"/> Physics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allied Health | <input type="checkbox"/> English | <input type="checkbox"/> Interdisciplinary Studies | <input type="checkbox"/> Political Science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Studies | <input type="checkbox"/> English as a Second Language | <input type="checkbox"/> Journalism | <input type="checkbox"/> Project Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anthropology | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Kinesiology and Athletics | <input type="checkbox"/> Psychology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Family and Consumer Science | <input type="checkbox"/> Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Astronomy | <input type="checkbox"/> Film and Media Studies | <input type="checkbox"/> Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biology | | <input type="checkbox"/> Management Information Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Sign Language Studies |

Which student services are you interested in knowing more about? (Mark all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Admissions | <input type="checkbox"/> Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Aid |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bookstore | <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Wellness Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cafeteria | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Campus Safety | |

What sports would you like to play at Folsom Lake College? (Mark all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baseball | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cross country | <input type="checkbox"/> Track and Field |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Football | <input type="checkbox"/> Volleyball |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Golf | <input type="checkbox"/> Water Polo |

1) Folsom Lake College, "College Readiness Survey, 2013-2014," http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FOLSOM_LAKE_COLLEGE.

Mentor-Mentee Communication Timeline

Purpose of the Tool

This mentor-mentee communication timeline is derived from the tnAchieves calendar-prompted mentor outreach system, as described on page 57 of this publication. This reminds mentors about upcoming deadlines students must meet to complete college applications and enrollments. Staff responsible for training mentors may use the timeline below to ensure mentor communication with mentees about twice a month during the transition from high school to college.

Mentor Communication Timeline²

Date	Sample Communication
December	Introduce yourself to students and their parents/guardians.
January 1	Remind students of their team meeting date, time, and location—reassure them that you will be there, and if not, set up a time to review at a later date.
January 15	Remind students of the important February 1 FAFSA deadline; remind them often. They can file based on an estimation from last year's tax returns.
February 1	"Did you file your FAFSA? If not you have until midnight tonight!"
February 15	"Where did you apply to college? Today is the deadline."
March 1	Remind students of the March 7 th ACT registration deadline.
March 15	"Have you thought about going on a campus visit?"
April 1	"Have you called about your placement test? Call the college to schedule one now!"
April 15	"Have you asked your counselor about sending your official transcript to your chosen college?"
May 1	"Have you heard from your post-secondary institution about being accepted? Does the institution need additional information from you?"
May 15	"Do you remember your assigned New Student Orientation date?"
June 1	"Happy Graduation! Schedule an advising appointment at your college to get in great classes!"
June 15	"Do you know if you need to turn in verification documents? Call the financial aid office if you are unsure. It is due June 30 th !"
July 1	"Did you complete your New Student Orientation? If not, are you ready to attend?"
July 15	"Are you sure that your college file is complete?"
August 15	"Good luck with all your classes! Do not forget to introduce yourself to all your professors!"
September 15	"Have you used free resources available at your college, like the tutoring or writing center?"
October 15	"How are you doing in your classes?"
November 15	"Good luck on your finals!"
December 15	"Do not forget to file FAFSA again in January! The deadline is February 1 st !"

²) tnAchieves, "Suggested Mentor Communication," 2013-2014 Mentor and Counselor Handbook.

Speed Networking Conversation Prompts

Purpose of the Tool

Progressive colleges seeking to pair volunteer mentors and student mentees based on their personalities, academic backgrounds, and extracurricular interests are implementing speed networking events, as described on page 58 of this publication. Staff may furnish each mentor-mentee pair with the following conversation prompts to facilitate these seven-minute networking conversations and help guide successful matches.

Personality Fit

Engage networking participants in open-ended questions that reveal personal attitudes and priorities.

1. You're stuck on a desert island for one year with everything you need for basic survival: bread, water, shelter, and no dangerous animals in sight. What are the five most important people or things you would bring with you during your desert island adventure?
2. Where do you see yourself in 10 years? Think about what your typical day would consist of, the food you would eat, and the people you would interact with. Explain why this is important to you.
3. What are the top three attributes you look for in a college? Why are these important to you or to your college success?
4. What is your favorite quote or song lyric? Why is this statement interesting, important, or funny to you?
5. Tell your partner one thing about yourself that they don't already know.

Academic Backgrounds

Offer networking participants an opportunity to speak about academic strengths, weaknesses, and goals.

1. Student, what is your favorite topic in school? Explain why. Mentor, what was your favorite topic in school? How did it change or remain the same during your transition from high school into college?
2. What do you do when you are faced with an academic challenge? Think back to the last difficult test you took, homework assignment you were given, or question asked during class. How would you like to improve your response to these challenges?
3. Student, what is your planned academic concentration in college? If you have decided, why did you pick that concentration. If you have not decided, what options are you considering?
4. Mentor, explain your current position as a student or professional in the workplace. What skills do you use today that you learned as a student? What do you wish you learned as a student that would be useful to you today?

Extracurricular Interests

Allow networking participants to describe their lives outside of school and work.

1. What is your typical weekend like? Do you enjoy these kinds of weekends, or do you wish they were different in some way? If you were to change your weekend schedule, what would you do instead?
2. If you could go to any country in the world, where would you travel to? What kinds of things would you want to do there?
3. Have you ever had a job you love? What about a job you hate? Why did you love or hate these jobs?
4. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses. What are your top three strengths? What are your top three weaknesses? How could you improve them?
5. Student, what is your family like? Tell your partner if your family supports your college dreams, and how they do that. What extra support are you looking for?

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Employer Engagement Opportunity Matrix Builder

Purpose of the Tool

Most community colleges attempt to solicit employer support with general appeals for financial donations or in-person involvement. However, employers are unwilling to fulfill these appeals because they do not understand the time commitment, resources required, or potential return on investment.

This tool is most applicable to colleges pursuing an Employer Partnership Account Management Model, as described on page 81 of this publication. Staff in the workforce development or corporate relations office may use the tool to articulate the benefits and expectations associated with different components of an employer partnership. Staff may present the matrix to a single employer or various employers to identify partners for an accelerated career pathway.

EAB Community College Cybersecurity Academy <i>Training Future Cybersecurity Specialists for Local Jobs</i>		
	Job Shadowing Rotations	Annual Curriculum Update Meetings
Name of Program Component	<i>"Cybersecurity Specialist for a Day"</i>	
Description	<i>Academy students spend one week shadowing different employees each day.</i>	
Benefit to Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand responsibilities of 5 cybersecurity roles ▪ Learn diversity of industry ▪ Interact with professionals 	
Benefit to Employer	<i>Chance to promote cybersecurity industry and company to students—your future employees</i>	
Number of Individuals	<i>10-15 employees</i>	
Location	<i>Employer Site</i>	
Time Commitment	<i>40 hours over 1 week</i>	
Financial Cost	<i>Lunch for 50 students over one week; college will provide all student transportation</i>	

Note: Some components of our Career Academy can be tailored to meet employer needs—as long as it doesn't affect the quality of education our students receive! Please be in touch with any suggestions for improvement.

Immediate Appeal to Industry
 Subtitle of document shows that college leaders understand and cater to employer hiring needs.

Highlight the Bottom-Line Benefit
 To capture both philanthropic and profit-driven employers, detail the projected benefit of each program component to students and to the employer partner.

Give Realistic Cost Estimates
 Outline the expected amount of time, money, or in-kind resources the employer should expect to invest in the program by choosing to sponsor a particular program component. If no precise estimate is available, include a range or offer to discuss.

Allow for Employer Input
 Remain open to suggestions for program improvements that do not alter learning outcomes or quality. Employers are more likely to partner if they are consulted in program creation.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

How to Select Program Components for Inclusion in the Matrix

The following worksheet should be used to foster discussion on the specific program components featured in an employer engagement opportunity matrix. Staff should work individually or in small groups to complete the worksheet below.

- Which component of the accelerated career pathway program (e.g., CTE dual enrollment course, direct-to-credential career academy, STEM early college high school) needs corporate support?

- | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curricular Skills Mapping | <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing Curricular Updates | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job Shadowing Rotations | <input type="checkbox"/> Employer Site Visits | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internship Placements | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Mentors | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

- Is the success of this program component dependent on employer participation? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered "No" to the question above, refrain from including the program component in the matrix. Employers are unlikely to sponsor a program component that does not necessitate their involvement.

- Does the program component have a direct impact on student learning outcomes? ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Are there any benefits to the employer for sponsoring this program component? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered "No" to Questions 3-4 above, speak with colleagues about the program component under review. Create new language to underscore the value to students and employers. If this proves challenging, consider restructuring the component.

- Can you estimate the number of individuals needed to support this component? ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Can you identify the right location or locations to host this program component? ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Can you estimate the time commitment for employers to sponsor this component? ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Can you estimate the financial cost to employers for sponsoring this component? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered "No" to any of the questions above, speak with colleagues about the program component under review. If no precise estimates are available, brainstorm a range to include in the matrix, and discuss item directly with employers.

Where to Present the Matrix to Area Employers

An employer engagement opportunity matrix can be distributed to employers through various methods; see below for some recommendations. Note that face-to-face meetings give staff the opportunity to add details and immediately address employer concerns. Mass distribution offers scale, but there are fewer opportunities to provide context on requests.

The following worksheet should be used to foster discussion on where and when an employer engagement opportunity matrix may be presented to area employers. Staff should work in small groups to brainstorm different methods of distribution and discuss the feasibility of each for their institution.

Face-to-Face Meetings

- ☐ Scheduled meeting with local employer
- ☐ Workforce Investment Board meeting
- ☐ Local Chamber of Commerce meeting
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Mass Distribution Channels

- ☐ Direct emails to current employer contacts
- ☐ Mass email to all companies in service area
- ☐ Dedicated page on institutional website
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Sample Account Manager Position Descriptions

Purpose of the Tool

These sample job descriptions are derived from job postings listed on publically available websites. The highlighted positions are most applicable to colleges pursuing an Employer Partnership Account Management Model, as described on page 81 of this publication. Vice presidents of workforce development may reference these position descriptions during staff training modules or post the descriptions directly to hire new staff members.

Corporate Engagement Manager³

Position Description

The Corporate Engagement Manager will facilitate day-to-day interactions between [the college], interns, and corporate partners and will assist interns in their career growth through training, ongoing support, counseling, and mentoring during and after the internship phase of the program.

The Corporate Engagement Manager will co-develop and deliver weekly Internship Management Classes, designed to assist interns in developing professional behaviors and transitioning into the workforce and higher education. S/he will also work closely with the Corporate Engagement team to effectively manage and grow partner relationships and raise the awareness of [the college's] internship program.

The ideal candidate is a strong communicator across a variety of audiences and has experience working with internship programs, on the program, college/university or corporate side. We are looking for a proactive self-starter who can build relationships with multiple varied constituents.

Account Management

- Act as primary point of contact, account manager, and representative of [the college]
- Provide responsive and high-quality customer service to key stakeholders in each account
- Drive internal sales within corporate accounts to expand number of internship seats and alumni hires
- Maintain Salesforce.com database on intern placements ensuring complete and accurate data
- Develop corporate partner account maps that accurately represent current corporate partnerships

Intern Support

- Ensure intern success by tracking intern absences and performance issues; managing and tracking intern check-ins, and coordinating communication to managers
- Troubleshoot and escalate issues and opportunities in internship performance as appropriate
- Implement and manage intern support resources by working closely with Site Leaders and Advisors
- Develop, implement, manage, and serve as primary contact for intern time sheet and status reports

3) Year Up, "Corporate Engagement Manager," *LinkedIn*.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Corporate Engagement Manager (Cont.)³

Qualifications

Desired Background

- Bachelor's degree required; Master's degree preferred
- 2-3 years' experience in successful job-placement, workforce-development or internship programs and an interest in experiential education
- Demonstrated experience building relationships, growing partnerships, and communicating with a variety of business leaders from different sectors

Professional Character

- Good judgment and the ability to prioritize workflow and manage multiple projects simultaneously
- Ability to build strong professional relationships with others across the organization and with external partners
- Ability to lead, willingness to be led, and comfortable with situational leadership.
- Ability to model the highest level of professionalism
- Commitment to diversity and inclusion

Professional Skills

- Proficiency with Microsoft Office applications especially Word, Excel, Outlook, and PowerPoint
- Excellent communication skills

Apprenticeship Consultant⁴

Position Description

The Apprenticeship Consultant will serve as the lead outreach and technical expert for representing [the college] in the assigned geographic area.

Apprenticeship Identification

- Proactively generates new opportunities for the promotion and development of registered apprenticeship programs as a workforce development tool in the assigned region of geographical responsibility
- Manages an extensive network of stakeholders across the public and private sector within the region of responsibility in order to identify opportunities for program expansion and promotion
- Consults with company executives and conducts worksite visits to assess the viability of registered apprenticeship as an appropriate tool to meet individual or group employer training needs

3) Year Up, "Corporate Engagement Manager," *LinkedIn*.

4) Apprenticeship Carolina™, "Apprenticeship Consultant," *Diverse Jobs*.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Apprenticeship Consultant (Cont.)⁴

Apprenticeship Coordination and Development

- Manages technical assistance process for employers interested in establishing registered apprenticeship programs and guides program development from origin to completion
- Identifies informational and financial resources that are available to employer sponsors to assist with the development and sustainability of registered apprenticeship programs in conjunction with stakeholders, and develops proposals for employer consideration that demonstrate the viability and complexity of possible implementation

Internal and Operational Responsibilities

- Provides regular recommendations to internal team concerning strategic and procedural barriers to regional success and proposes strategies for enhancing overall Initiative success
- Represents [the college] at local, regional, and state-level meetings pertaining to apprenticeships, workforce development, and economic development to promote awareness of apprenticeship offerings

Qualifications

Desired Background

- Master's degree in relevant area preferred
- Experience with economic development or industry association organizations
- Demonstrated success with rural development and with employers in SC rural areas a plus.
- Experience in sales of complex products or services

Professional Skills

- Demonstrated success in meeting goals and creative problem solving
- Experience delivering presentations to diverse audiences, particularly business and industry leaders
- Clear communication skills with internal colleagues

4) Apprenticeship Carolina™, "Apprenticeship Consultant," *Diverse Jobs*.







Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Recruitment Letter Templates

Purpose of the Tool

Early college high schools can positively impact middle-performing high school students' odds of college enrollment and success; however, these students often hesitate to apply for early college programs because of reasons ranging from low self-confidence to a perception that programs are too expensive. As such, college leaders must actively recruit middle-performing students into early college high school programs and address common barriers to enrollment in the initial communication.

This tool highlights the key elements of an early college recruitment letter for prospective students and their parents. Staff may work individually or in small groups to brainstorm each section of the exercise, write ideas in the space provided, and ensure initial communication is both comprehensive and approachable.

Primary Element	Purpose and Considerations	Brainstorming Workspace
 Greeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal greeting to student and their parents E.g. "Dear," "To," etc. 	<i>Ex. Dear Richa and Drs. Bishnoi, Greetings from EAB Community College!</i>
 Explanation and Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain what an early college program is Detail benefits of participation 	<i>Ex. Early college is a unique opportunity for high school students like your daughter to earn a college credential at the same time as they earn their high school diploma.</i>
 Commitment and Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline length of program Include costs for tuition, books, course fees, etc. Link to grant resources 	<i>Ex. Through our partnership with your local school district and Acme Inc., there is zero cost to join our program.</i>
 Reassurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build student's confidence in their intelligence Include list of frequently asked questions 	<i>Ex. This early college isn't reserved for A+ star students; we're more excited to work with students with all kinds of grades who are bright, curious, and willing to work hard.</i>
 Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind students of application deadlines Promote upcoming informational workshops 	<i>Ex. If you'd like more information about the program, there are a few things you can do—see our application on the website, or come to our information meeting on June 2nd.</i>
 Sign Off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure signature includes preferred name of early college director and full contact information 	<i>Ex. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to get in touch. My phone number is included below. Best, Amanda</i>

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Anatomy of an Early College Acceptance Package






Purpose of the Tool

This tool is most applicable to colleges preparing students for entry into an early college high school, as described on page 76 of this publication. Directors of high school partnerships and any staff involved in the development of an early college high school may use the tool to build an acceptance package for incoming students. The Forum recommends that acceptance packages include three key elements for success:

1. **Student Letter:** Communication that reassures students of their decision to participate in an early college program and communicates academic and behavioral expectations for a “real college student”
2. **Parent Letter:** Communication that underscores the importance of parental involvement, and educates parents on their role and responsibilities in the early college program
3. **College Merchandise:** Items that encourage students to identify with the college culture

The Student Letter

The worksheet below should be used to write a letter to students accepted into an early college program. Staff may work individually or in small groups to brainstorm each section and write ideas in the space provided.

Primary Element	Purpose and Considerations	Brainstorming Workspace
 Greeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Casual, excited greeting for high-school age audience E.g., “Hi,” “Hello,” “Welcome!” 	<i>Ex. Hello, Marisol! Welcome to the program!</i>
 Reassurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build student's confidence in their intelligence Review early college benefits 	<i>Ex. You were specially selected for our early college program—get ready to learn about advanced health care career paths.</i>
 Reminders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind students of important deadlines and due dates Promote upcoming events 	<i>Ex. Don't forget our mandatory orientation for all new students on August 28th. We'll need your immunization form at that time.</i>
 Success Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline rigor of college work and behavioral expectations Provide guide for success 	<i>Ex. We want you to be prepared for college-level work—see the brochure in your package for tips to succeed!</i>
 Sign Off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure signature includes preferred name of early college director and full contact information 	<i>Ex. If you or your parents have any questions, don't hesitate to get in touch. My phone number is included below. Best, Emilia</i>

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

A High School Student’s Guide to College Success⁵

Middlesex Community College sends the following brochure to high school students beginning dual enrollment and early college programs through the college. Parts of the brochure were adopted with permission from the Minnesota Association for Developmental Education.

Outside Cover

LOOKING AHEAD to COLLEGE

Attending college and earning a college degree opens doors. On average, people with a college education earn almost twice as much as those with only a high school diploma.

College can be challenging, but also personally – and financially – rewarding. You can prepare now for the many opportunities it offers.

Middlesex Community College and your high school will work with you to help guide you in a direction that will be both fulfilling and rewarding.

Look inside to see what you can do in high school to make that next step a successful one, as well as the important differences between high school expectations and college expectations.



MCC is one of the largest, most comprehensive community colleges in the state. We offer more than 75 degree and certificate programs, plus hundreds of noncredit courses, during the day, evening and weekend, on our Bedford and Lowell campuses, and online.

Middlesex – a great place to begin your future!



Bedford Campus



Lowell Campus

Contact Middlesex:

Call: 1-800-818-2434

Visit: www.middlesex.mass.edu

Email: middlesex@middlesex.mass.edu

Portions of this brochure were adopted with permission from the Minnesota Association for Developmental Education College Readiness Brochure found at www.mnade.org



MIDDLESEX
Community College
A great place to begin your future

Getting Ready for College



A High School Student's Guide to College Success



"You miss 100 percent of the shots you don't take!"
– Wayne Gretzky

 **Reassurance** of the value of early college programs

 **College Brand** clearly displayed in program literature with attractive colors, layout, and pictures

5) Middlesex Community College, "Getting Ready for College: A High School Student's Guide to College Success".

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

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A High School Student's Guide to College Success (Cont.)⁵

Inside Content

Getting Ready for College



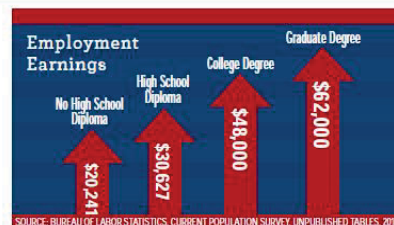
PREPARING for COLLEGE

High school is designed to prepare you for college. As a high school student, there are actions you can take now to make sure you're ready for college.

WHILE in HIGH SCHOOL

- ▶ Take four years of math.
- ▶ Take college preparatory, enrichment or honors courses.
- ▶ Take elective courses that develop background knowledge, such as sociology, psychology, geography, anthropology, biology, chemistry and physics.
- ▶ Develop strong communications skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- ▶ Take critical-reading and study-skills courses to prepare you for college-level work.
- ▶ Forget about "senior slide" – colleges want to see that you have challenged yourself all four years of high school.
- ▶ Prepare for college placement testing.
- ▶ Explore your college options – investigate and visit a variety of different programs and campuses.
- ▶ Reach out to people who know – talk to friends or relatives in college, admissions representatives and counselors.

See your guidance counselor about college and career readiness strategies that will help you achieve your goals.



WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE between HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE?

① ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENTS

HIGH SCHOOL

- ▶ Most classes meet daily
- ▶ Teachers cover all content in class
- ▶ Teachers give structured assignments
- ▶ Final grades reflect student effort and motivation

COLLEGE

- ▶ Most classes meet 2 to 3 times per week
- ▶ Successful students take responsibility for all content, whether covered in class or not
- ▶ Successful students evaluate assignments; discuss with peers; ask for clarification when in doubt
- ▶ Final grades reflect quality of your work & adherence to college-level standards

② STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

HIGH SCHOOL

- ▶ Teachers require attendance
- ▶ Teachers remind students of assignments, test dates, etc.
- ▶ Teachers review content, formulate study guides and create questions for you
- ▶ Teachers direct research projects, provide source lists and library time
- ▶ Teachers may contact parents about a student's performance

COLLEGE

- ▶ Successful students attend all classes, even if attendance is not required
- ▶ Successful students follow their course syllabi, complete assignments, prepare for tests without reminders
- ▶ Successful students take notes, create study guides, come up with their own questions
- ▶ Successful students know how to independently conduct research, use the library and Internet effectively
- ▶ College faculty and staff contact students, not parents (unless students give permission)

③ STUDENT SUPPORTS

HIGH SCHOOL

- ▶ Students frequently have daily contact with teachers
- ▶ Students receive regular guidance and feedback from teachers, counselors
- ▶ Teachers and parents identify students who need extra help or special accommodations

COLLEGE

- ▶ Student contact with instructors can be limited – and is often by email
- ▶ Successful students seek feedback and guidance from peers, tutors and instructors
- ▶ Successful students ask for help; are proactive about seeking access to free tutoring and academic assistance



Success Tips fill the majority of pages in this brochure. Readers are given both academic and behavioral tips to succeed as a college student:






- Maintaining academic rigor through high school coursework
- Best practices and to-do's for a smooth transition into college
- Identifying the differences between high school and college


5) Middlesex Community College, "Getting Ready for College: A High School Student's Guide to College Success".

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.


The Parent Letter

The worksheet below should be used to write a letter to parents of students accepted into an early college program. Staff may work individually or in small groups to brainstorm each section of the exercise and write ideas in the space provided.

Primary Element	Purpose and Considerations	Brainstorming Workspace
 Greeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal greeting for older, parent audience E.g., "Dear," "To," etc. 	<i>Ex. Dear Mrs. Siegel, Greetings from EAB Community College!</i>
 Value of Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review benefits of early college program Highlight when students may need guidance 	<i>Ex. Our early college is a unique opportunity for your child—but they'll need your help to stay motivated and succeed.</i>
 Reminders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind parents of important deadlines and due dates Promote upcoming events 	<i>Ex. Our mandatory orientation for all new students is on August 28th. We'll also kick off our Parent Ambassador program there.</i>
 Parent Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer resources for parents to learn college terms, procedures, and rules so they can help their child 	<i>Ex. If you're new to the college process, or it's been a while, we have you covered. Our Parent Listserv will keep you informed!</i>
 Sign Off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure signature includes preferred name of early college director and full contact information 	<i>Ex. If you or your child has any questions, don't hesitate to get in touch. My phone number is included below. Best, Emilia</i>

Optional Element	Purpose and Considerations	Brainstorming Workspace
 Formal Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Underscores the importance of parental involvement while students participate in early college 	<i>Ex. Please review the terms in our parental commitment form below, sign, and return to our office by August 28th.</i>

Elgin Community College hosts high school students on their campus for three weeks during the summer for academic remediation and professional skills development workshops. As part of students' participation in this "Transition Academy," their parents must agree to remain involved in their academic and social development. The commitment form below is derived from the college's direct communication with parents.



Elgin
Community
College

Transition Academy Parent Commitment Form

The involvement of parents or other significant adults clearly has a dynamic effect on student achievement. This is a fact that is known by educators, and parents alike. This program has taken into account the positive role you are capable of playing in the success of students.

Each student must be supported by a parent who will co-sign the statement of commitment to follow through with the requirements of the Academy.

The Academy has outlined ways to encourage your involvement. We will provide many channels of communication including training to assist you.


- Parents will participate in face to face meetings when requested.
- Parents will review test information with their student.
- Parents will participate in the Speakers' Bureau which will be an integral part of the Academy.
- Parents adults will participate in training in Internet-based communications including web and email in order to assist student and to fully understand the expectations of the Academy.
- Parents adults will provide (on time) transportation to and from the Transition Academy classes/sessions.
- Parents adults will participate in the collection of data for the Transition Academy

Student Name: _____ Student Grade: _____


Parent Name: _____ Student's High School: _____

I understand the requirements of the Transition Academy and I am committed to providing the necessary support for the success of my student in the program.

Parent Signature: _____



Value of
Involvement



Formal
Commitment

Regular Mail or Email?

Most colleges communicate with accepted students via paper-based mail—they claim this adds a personal touch to an acceptance package and is sure to stand out in a full inbox. However, for institutions with limited funds for mailing fees, email may be a low-cost alternative to send out early college acceptance packages. Before committing to this route, however, staff should use the diagnostic below to determine if email is the right format to send acceptance materials.

Student Letter and Materials

1. Do most students in your service area have reliable Internet access and actively use their emails?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Does your staff currently (or potentially) have access to students' email addresses?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. Are components in the acceptance package formatted for mobile viewing on a phone or tablet?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered "No" to any of the questions above, consider a paper mail strategy to reach students.





Parent Letter and Materials

1. Do most adults in your service area have reliable Internet access and actively use their emails?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Does your staff currently (or potentially) have access to parents' email addresses?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. Are components in the acceptance package formatted for mobile viewing on a phone or tablet?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No

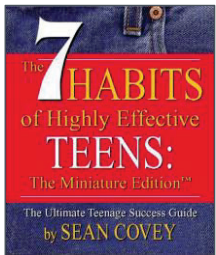
If you answered "No" to any of the questions above, consider a regular mail strategy to reach parents.

College Merchandise

Successful early college programs help participants to feel like “real college students” by integrating them into campus life, starting with the acceptance package. The list below is a sample of such college-branded items.

-  **Apparel:** T-shirts, sweatshirts, jerseys, socks, etc.
-  **Gift shop fare:** Key chains, snow globes, mouse pads, mugs, etc.
-  **Books:** Motivational how-to, college historical non-fiction, etc.
-  **Campus news:** Student newspaper, literary magazines, etc.

Example from Middlesex Community College



Middlesex Community College sends each student in their early college high school program a copy of the book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*, by Sean Covey. This helps them develop independence and other college-ready skills.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.


Faculty CTE Observation Worksheet

Purpose of the Tool

An essential part of recruiting students into early college high schools is turning skeptical high school faculty into allies of community college technical programs. Forum research found that high school faculty often deter students from enrolling in career and technical education (CTE) courses because of misconceptions about low rigor and limited career opportunities in technical industries. Lehigh Career and Technical Institute (LCTI) hosts field trips on their campus for high school instructors to learn about the benefits of technical education, as described on page 70.

This tool is derived from the faculty observation worksheet developed by LCTI. Staff responsible for increasing enrollment in accelerated career pathway programs may distribute this to high school faculty observing CTE classrooms for the first time.

Learning Walk Data Collection Tool⁷



Faculty Career and Technical Education Observation Worksheet

<i>Level of Student Engagement</i>	<i>Evidence of Academic Integration</i>
<div><i>Name of Instructor:</i></div>	
<i>Rigor of the CTE Curriculum</i>	<i>Evidence of High Expectations</i>

Sample Associate Degree Checklists

Purpose of the Tool

Accelerated career pathways provide high school students a streamlined path into applied degree programs at the community college. Regardless of whether students are enrolled in a single CTE 101 course, a career academy, or an early college high school, students should understand how early credits may be applied to a community college credential.

These sample associate degree checklists are derived from the Wake Early College of Health Sciences at Wake Technical Community College. Staff may distribute the checklists to students and their parents during orientation to an accelerated career pathway program and use the checklist during check-ins with students throughout the semester.

Associate in Arts Degree Graduation Checklist⁸

EAB Community College
AA Degree Graduation Checklist

Student Name: _____ ID# _____

Core Requirements

I. Composition (Choose 2 courses – 6 credit hours)

☒ English 111 ☒ English 112

II. Humanities/Fine Arts (Choose 4 courses – 12 credit hours)

☒ English 232 ☐ Comm 110 ☐ Comm 120 ☐ Comm 231 ☐ Humanities 115

☐ Phil 240 ☐ Religion 110 ☐ Span 111, 181 ☐ Span 112, 281 ☐ Spanish 212, 282

III. Social and Behavioral Sciences (Choose 4 courses – 12 credit hours)

☐ History 111 ☐ History 112 ☐ History 131 ☐ History 132 ☐ Political Sci 110

☐ Political Sci 120 ☐ Psy 150 ☐ Soc 210 ☐ Soc 213 ☐ Anthro 210

☐ Anthro 220 ☐ Econ 251 ☐ Econ 252

IV. Natural Sciences (Choose 2 courses – 8 credit hours)

☐ Bio 110 ☐ Bio 111 ☐ Bio 112 ☐ Bio 120 ☐ Bio 130

☐ Bio 140, 140A ☐ Chem 151 ☐ Chem 152 ☐ Geo 120 ☐ Geo 130

☐ Phys 151 ☐ Phys 152 ☐ Phys 251 ☐ Phys 252

⁸ Wake Technical Community College, "Associate in Arts (AA) Degree Graduation Check Sheet: WECHS Version".

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Associate in Science Degree Graduation Checklist⁹

EAB Community College AS Degree Graduation Checklist

Student Name: _____

ID# _____

Core Requirements

I. Composition (Choose 2 courses – 6 credit hours)

☒ English 111 ☒ English 112

II. Humanities/Fine Arts (Choose 3 courses – 9 credit hours)

☒ English 232 ☐ Comm 110 ☐ Comm 120 ☐ Comm 231 ☐ Humanities 115
☐ Phil 240 ☐ Religion 110 ☐ Span 111, 181 ☐ Span 112, 281 ☐ Spanish 212, 282

III. Social and Behavioral Sciences (Choose 3 courses – 9 credit hours; must select one History course)

☐ History 111 ☐ History 112 ☐ History 131 ☐ History 132 ☐ Political Sci 110
☐ Political Sci 120 ☐ Psy 150 ☐ Soc 210 ☐ Soc 213 ☐ Anthro 210
☐ Anthro 220 ☐ Econ 251 ☐ Econ 252

IV. Natural Sciences (Choose 2 courses – 8 credit hours)

☐ Bio 110 ☐ Bio 111 ☐ Bio 112 ☐ Bio 120 ☐ Bio 130
☐ Bio 140, 140A ☐ Chem 151 ☐ Chem 152 ☐ Geo 120 ☐ Geo 130
☐ Phys 151 ☐ Phys 152 ☐ Phys 251 ☐ Phys 252

V. Mathematics (Choose 2 courses – 8 credit hours)

☒ Math 171 (and lab, Math 171A) ☒ Math 172 (and lab, Math 172A)

VI. Additional Natural Sciences/Mathematics Required (Choose 2 courses – 8 credit hours)

☐ Bio 110 ☐ Bio 111 ☐ Bio 112 ☐ Chem 151 ☐ Chem 152
☐ Geo 120 ☐ Math 271 ☐ Math 272

9) Wake Technical Community College,
"Associate in Science (AS) Degree".


Cross-Functional Staff Proficiency Quiz Template

Purpose of the Tool

Community college staff are often available to answer questions and provide one-off support to students navigating the intake process for the first time. This guidance is incredibly valuable to students overwhelmed with questions about forms, deadlines, or finances. As such, staff must be knowledgeable about *all* aspects of the application and enrollment process—not just within their own department.

The cross-functional staff proficiency quiz below is derived from an assessment used at Sinclair Community College, as described on page 46 of this publication. College leaders may use this template to build a similar quiz on their campuses to ensure student services staff can navigate a student information system with ease and help students with frequently asked questions.

Cross Training Faculty Datatel Quiz¹⁰



Staff Name: _____

1. Does the student have an active application?

2. What is the student's residency status?

3. What is the student's assigned my.sinclair username?


4. What is the student's preferred email address?

5. For what term did the student last register at Sinclair?


6. What courses did the student take during his or her first term at Sinclair?

7. What grades did they receive for each of them?


Ask Staff to Answer Questions About:




Basic Demographic and Contact Information




Course Registration and Academic Standing



Standardized Test Scores and Placement Exams



Financial Aid Status



Enrollment Issues or Challenges

¹⁰) Sinclair Community College, "Cross-Training Faculty Datatel Quiz".

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Workplace Soft Skills Observation Form

Purpose of the Tool

The most effective accelerated career pathway programs offer students both the academic training and soft skills development to succeed in a professional workplace. The latter is especially important for students from traditionally underserved backgrounds, who often lack the communication and personal skills sought at the entry level. College leaders must be well attuned to the needs and expectations of the workplaces their students will enter after graduation from the institution: What will graduates need to know to secure a job? What will graduates need to demonstrate to be successful in their role and move up through the ranks?

College staff responsible for the development of an early college high school or career academy may use the following Workplace Soft Skills Observation Form to identify the types of soft skills students should learn to be successful in a particular workplace or industry. Colleges with early college high schools or career academies already in place may also use this tool for continuous improvement.

When to Use a Workplace Soft Skills Observation Form

The timeline below shows how a workplace soft skills observation form may be used to develop hands-on activities for students in accelerated career pathways. The following pages provide staff with guidelines to coordinate observations with an employer and record their observations of top-performing employees over an established period of time. Note the recommended timelines listed below depend on a variety of factors including college staff availability, number and size of employer sites visited, number of entry-level roles available, and rapidity of change in selected industry.



Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Step One: How to Schedule a Workplace Observation

The list of questions below provides college staff a starting point to schedule workplace observations with a plant or office manager. These questions help determine the number of individuals to be shadowed, the number of days observations will be held, and the manner employees will be informed about the upcoming workplace observation.

6 Questions for a Workplace Manager

1. We prepare students to graduate our program with _____ (*college credential*). Which entry-level positions are they qualified for?
2. Within each of the positions you described, can you recommend a top-performing person(s) in the role?
3. For each of the positions described, do you consider the role cyclical, or similar throughout the year?
4. In addition to silent, non-interfering observations, may we conduct short interviews with employees?
5. Would observations or interviews lower productivity, or put the worker (or observer) in danger?
6. What is the best way to communicate the workplace observations to your employees?

If more than one person is identified as a “top-performer” for a single role, determine if they are valued for different skill sets. If not, there is no need to observe several individuals within a single role—this may drain limited college staff time.

If a role is considered cyclical, college staff must observe several individuals in the role who are at different stages of a cycle. This ensures full understanding of responsibilities in a cycle.

If observations are considered dangerous or a hindrance to employee productivity, college staff may not be allowed to conduct workplace observations over a series of days. Work with managers to determine if off-site interviews are an acceptable substitute for on-site observations.

Managers should send out the initial communication to employees about workplace observations to garner buy-in and provide context about the request. When managers send this communication out (via email or through an in-person meeting), employees are more likely to agree to the observation. If managers are initially hesitant about communicating with employees, college staff should offer to draft a short description of the observation and its goals.

Step Two: How to Record Observations of Top-Performing Employees

College staff tasked with conducting workplace soft skills observations should use the form below to record their observations during the workday. Note that for each employee observed, the college staff member should record the types of tasks completed that fit each skill category and the level of importance that skill has in the day-to-day tasks. Categories are derived from the Pearson *Workplace Personality Inventory* assessment.

Employee Name: _____ Job Title _____		
Manager's Description of Employee: _____		
Category	Considerations	Observations
Social Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to lead others ▪ Ability to set goals ▪ Ability to take on new responsibilities 	<i>Is this essential to the role? What tasks does the employee complete to make you think this is important to the role?</i>
Interpersonal Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cooperation ▪ Ability to empathize ▪ Amount of time spent working in groups 	<i>Is this essential to the role? What tasks does the employee complete to make you think this is important to the role?</i>
Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to stay on task without oversight ▪ Amount of time spent working alone 	<i>Is this essential to the role? What tasks does the employee complete to make you think this is important to the role?</i>
Self-Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to handle stress ▪ Ability to regulate emotions, reactions ▪ Ability to adapt to changes 	<i>Is this essential to the role? What tasks does the employee complete to make you think this is important to the role?</i>
Conscientiousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attentive to details ▪ Adherence to rules 	<i>Is this essential to the role? What tasks does the employee complete to make you think this is important to the role?</i>

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Student Business Challenge Strategy Guide

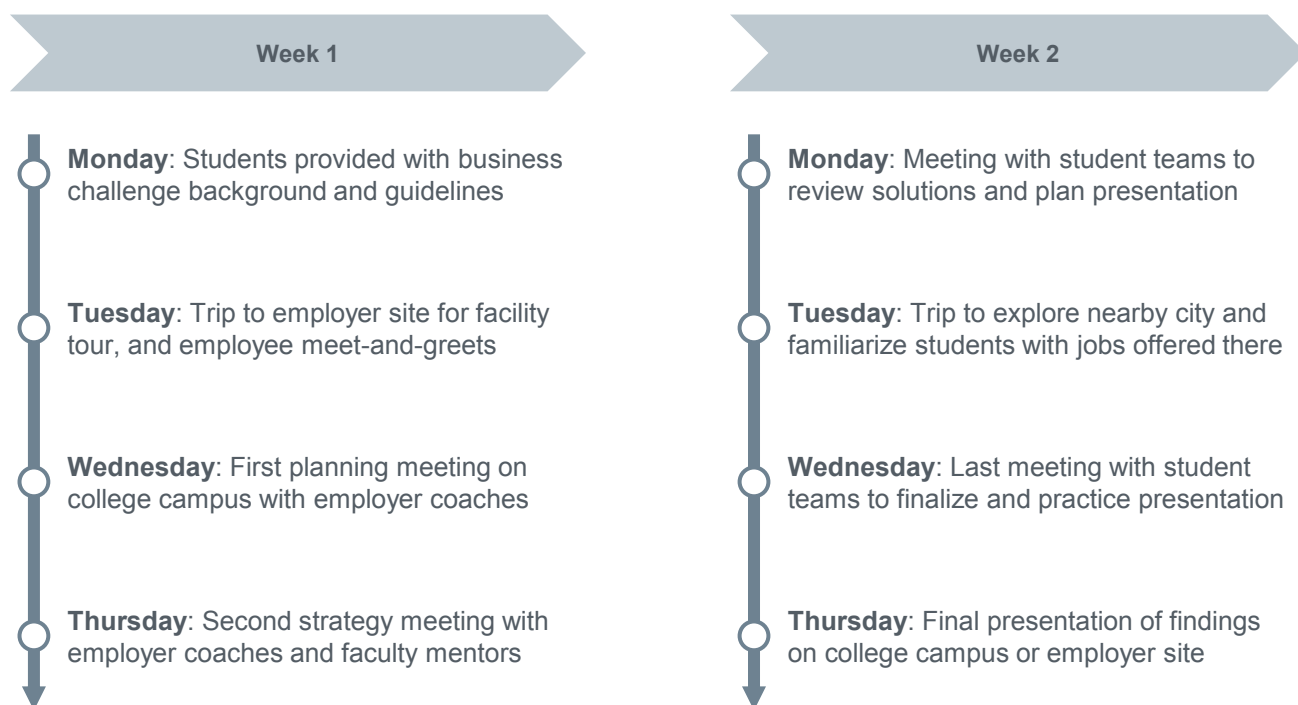
Purpose of the Tool

Case studies offer students an opportunity to step into the professional world and understand how classroom lessons are applied to real-world business challenges. Students may work in groups to brainstorm recommendations to the challenge presented, which can range widely depending on the industry of focus. For example, a local bank may ask students to develop a new financial product that appeals to teenagers, or an area call center may need assistance to build a social media communication strategy. Business challenges strengthen students' math and literacy competencies and also develop professional skills such as critical thinking and public speaking.

College staff may use the following strategy guide to build business challenges for students enrolled in an accelerated career pathway program. The first part is a sample timeline derived from Elgin Community College. The second part of the tool is meant to help student participants organize group work during the business challenge.

Student Business Challenge Timeline

Students participating in Elgin Community College's business challenge develop recommendations over the course of two weeks. The timeline below is a sample of the activities that take place during this time period.



Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Student Group Work Organization Templates

Students participating in Elgin Community College's business challenge develop recommendations over the course of two weeks. The timeline below is a sample of the activities that take place during this time period.

Project Timeline Tracker

Milestone	Team Member Responsible	Deadline
<i>Divide up responsibilities among each team member in the group—who will be the secretary? Who will be the treasurer?</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>October 28th</i>
<i>Talk through team's understanding of the business challenge with employer coach—ensure proper articulation of problem.</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>October 30th</i>

Project Log

Action or Event	Team Member Responsible	Start Date	End Date
<i>Write notes from field trip to employer worksite</i>	<i>Phillip</i>	<i>October 29th</i>	<i>October 30th</i>

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

