Supporting Student Success through Transfer and Transitions
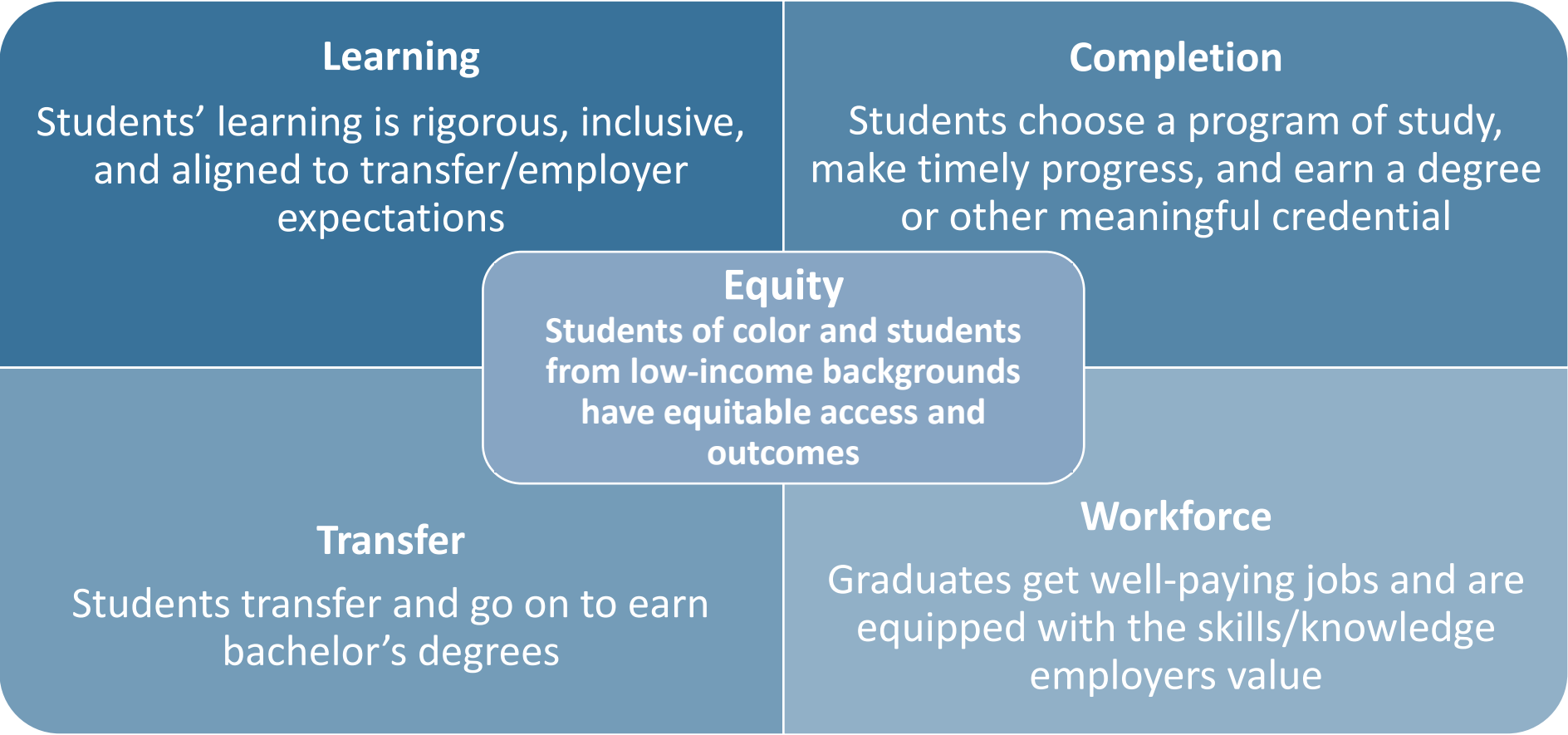
John Fink, Senior Research Associate, Community College Research Center

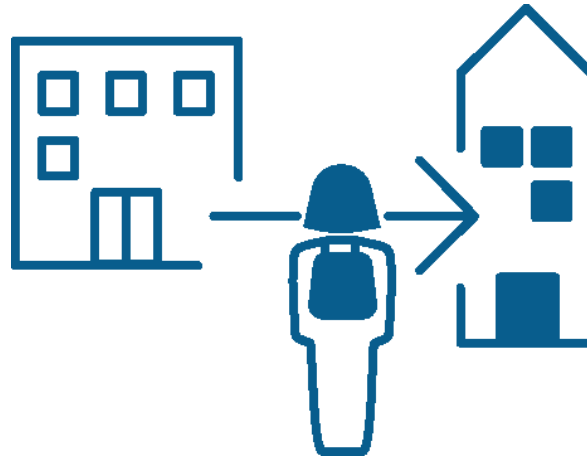**Josh Wyner, Founder and Executive Director, Aspen Institute College Excellence Program**

April 5, 2021

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Texas Pathways

CCRC COMMUNITY COLLEGE RESEARCH CENTER
TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

The Aspen Institute College Excellence Program aims to advance higher education practices, policies, and leadership strategies that help colleges significantly improve student outcomes in five areas:

Learning

Students' learning is rigorous, inclusive, and aligned to transfer/employer expectations

Completion

Students choose a program of study, make timely progress, and earn a degree or other meaningful credential

Equity
Students of color and students from low-income backgrounds have equitable access and outcomes

Transfer

Students transfer and go on to earn bachelor's degrees

Workforce

Graduates get well-paying jobs and are equipped with the skills/knowledge employers value

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Why focus on transfer and other student transitions?

Key Themes

Students come to community college for a better life and completion is an important but incomplete goal.

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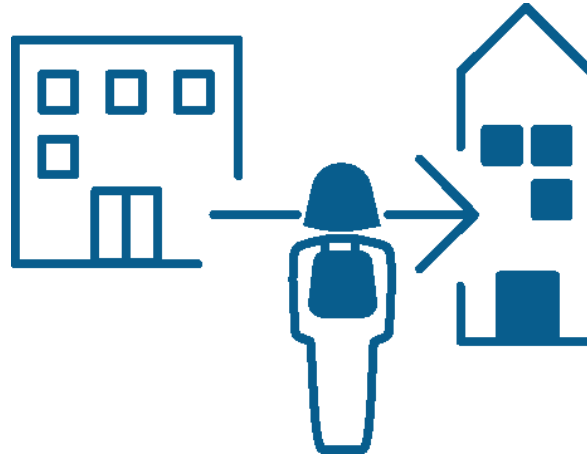
Guided pathways can be a solution *if...*
- Maps and advising are aligned to completing a credential of value – including bachelor's.
- Design extends back to students' first contact with the community college, including dual enrollment.
- Equitable outcomes are pursued – and data rigorously tracked – in program connection, choice, progression, and completion.
- Colleges own the equitable post graduation success of students.

Students do not experience community college in isolation
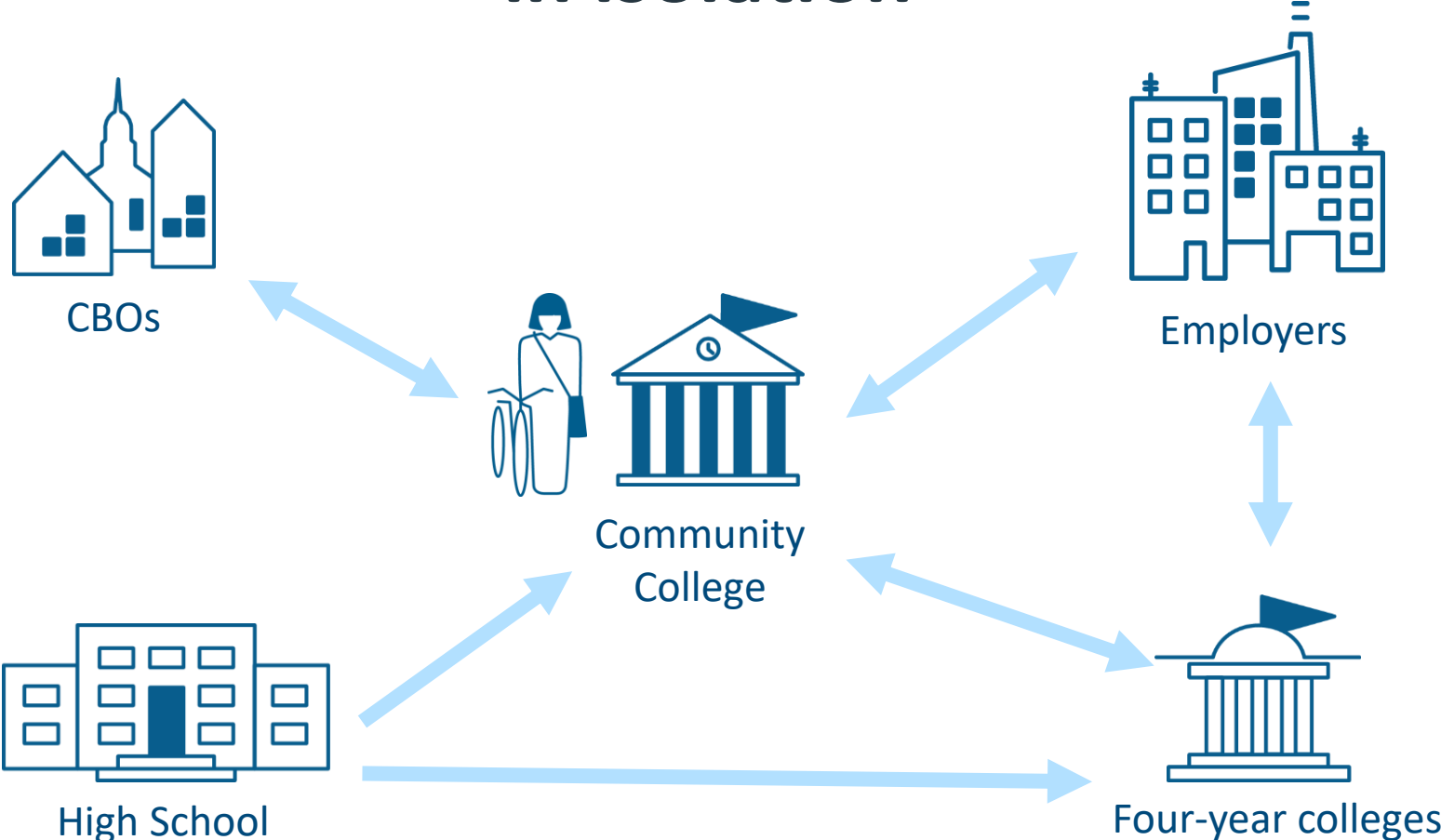
CBOs

Community College

Employers

High School

Four-year colleges
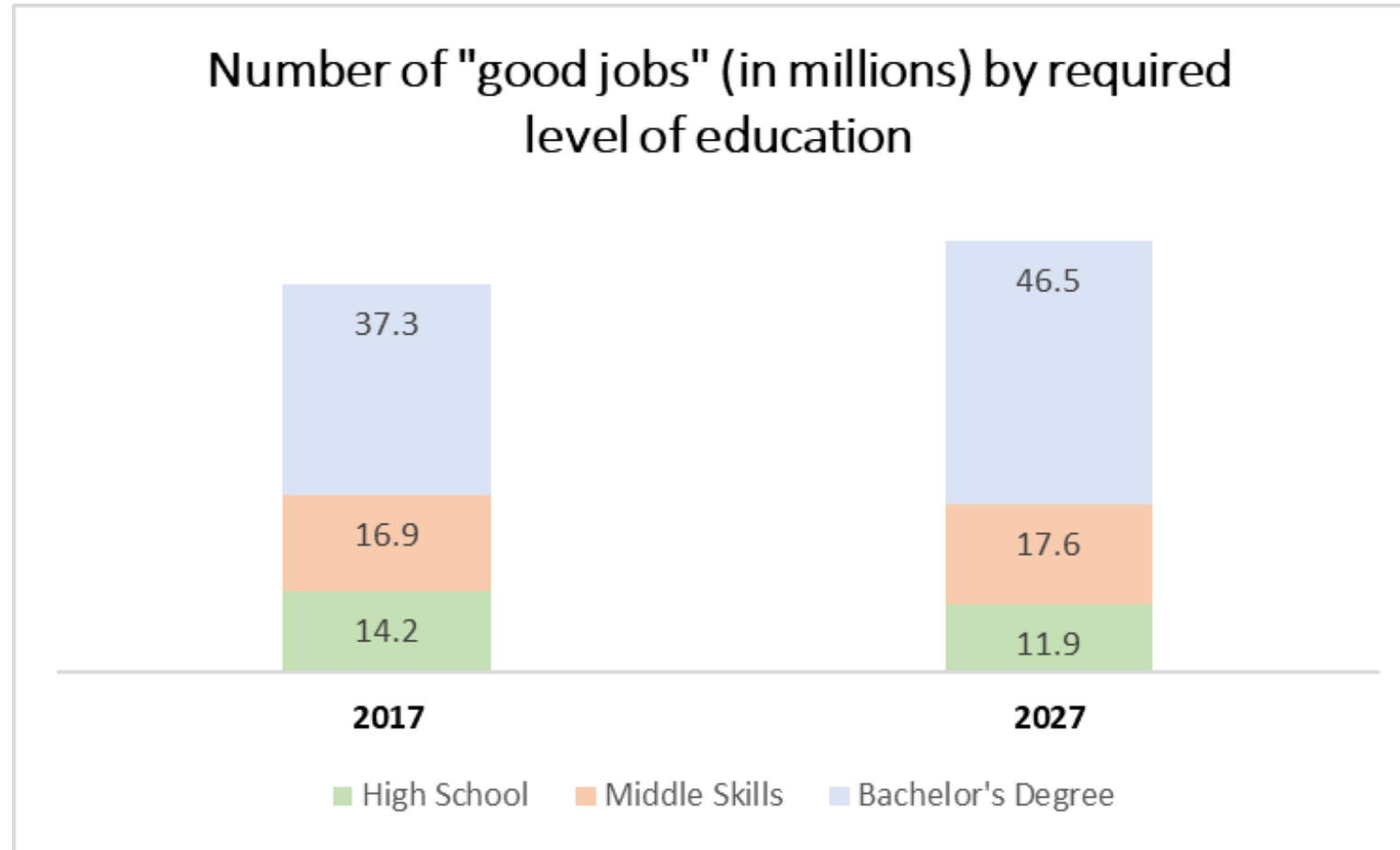
Research from Aspen and CCRC

Why focus on transfer and other student transitions?

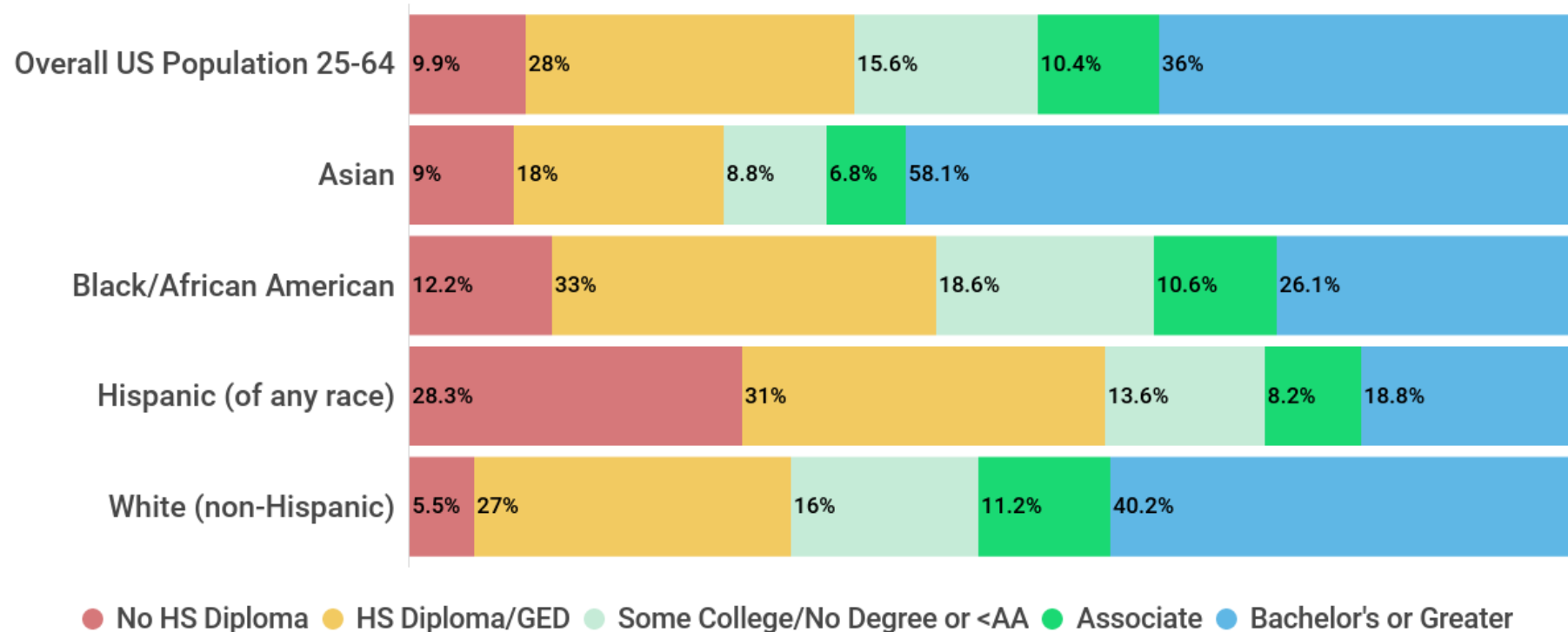Because strengthening transitions is essential to **achieving student success and addressing deep inequities**.

There are good jobs at multiple levels of education

Number of "good jobs" (in millions) by required level of education

	2017	2027
Bachelor's Degree	37.3	46.5
Middle Skills	16.9	17.6
High School	14.2	11.9

■ High School   ■ Middle Skills   ■ Bachelor's Degree

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Bachelor's Attainment by Race

Highest level of educational attainment (ages 25-64)

	No HS Diploma	HS Diploma/GED	Some College/No Degree or <AA	Associate	Bachelor's or Greater
Overall US Population 25-64	9.9%	28%	15.6%	10.4%	36%
Asian	9%	18%	8.8%	6.8%	58.1%
Black/African American	12.2%	33%	18.6%	10.6%	26.1%
Hispanic (of any race)	28.3%	31%	13.6%	8.2%	18.8%
White (non-Hispanic)	5.5%	27%	16%	11.2%	40.2%

● No HS Diploma ● HS Diploma/GED ● Some College/No Degree or <AA ● Associate ● Bachelor's or Greater

Source: US Census Bureau 2019

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Who is getting a bachelor's degree?

Bachelor's degree attainment rate by age 24 by family income quartile, dependent family members (1970-2018)
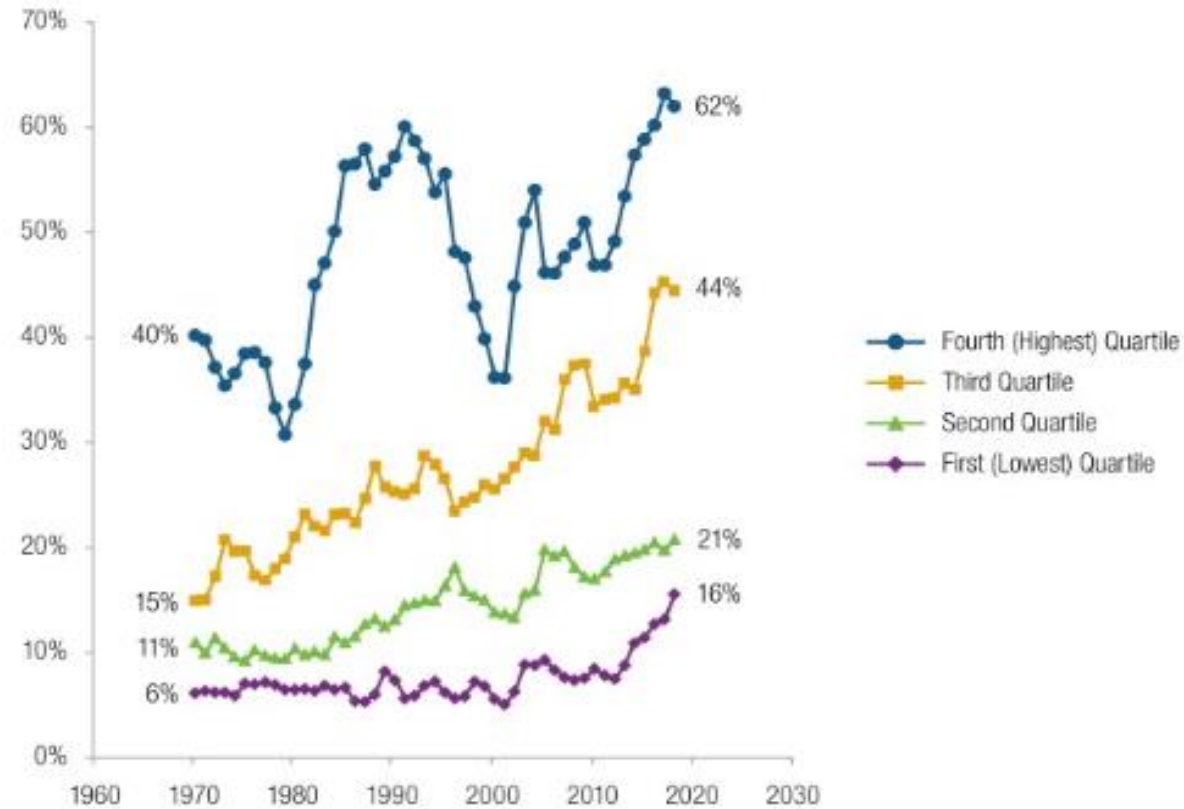
Cahalan, M., Perna, L. W., Yamashita, M., Wright-Kim, J. & Jiang, N. (2020). *2020 Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the United States: Historical Trend Report.* Washington, DC: The Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, Council for Opportunity in Education (COE), and Alliance for Higher Education and Democracy of the University of Pennsylvania (PennAHEAD).

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Expansion of Dual Enrollment Concentrated at Community Colleges

In 2019, 1 in 4 Texas CC students was dual credit

Growth of Dual Enrollment 1999-2019

IPEDS Fall Enrollments

Fall Undergraduate Enrollments among Students Aged 17 or Younger

- Community Colleges
- Public four-years
- Private nonprofit four-years
- Private for-profits

326k (2003)
460k (2007)
540k (2011)
76k (2011)
720k (2015)
1M (2019)
296k (2019)
108k (2019)

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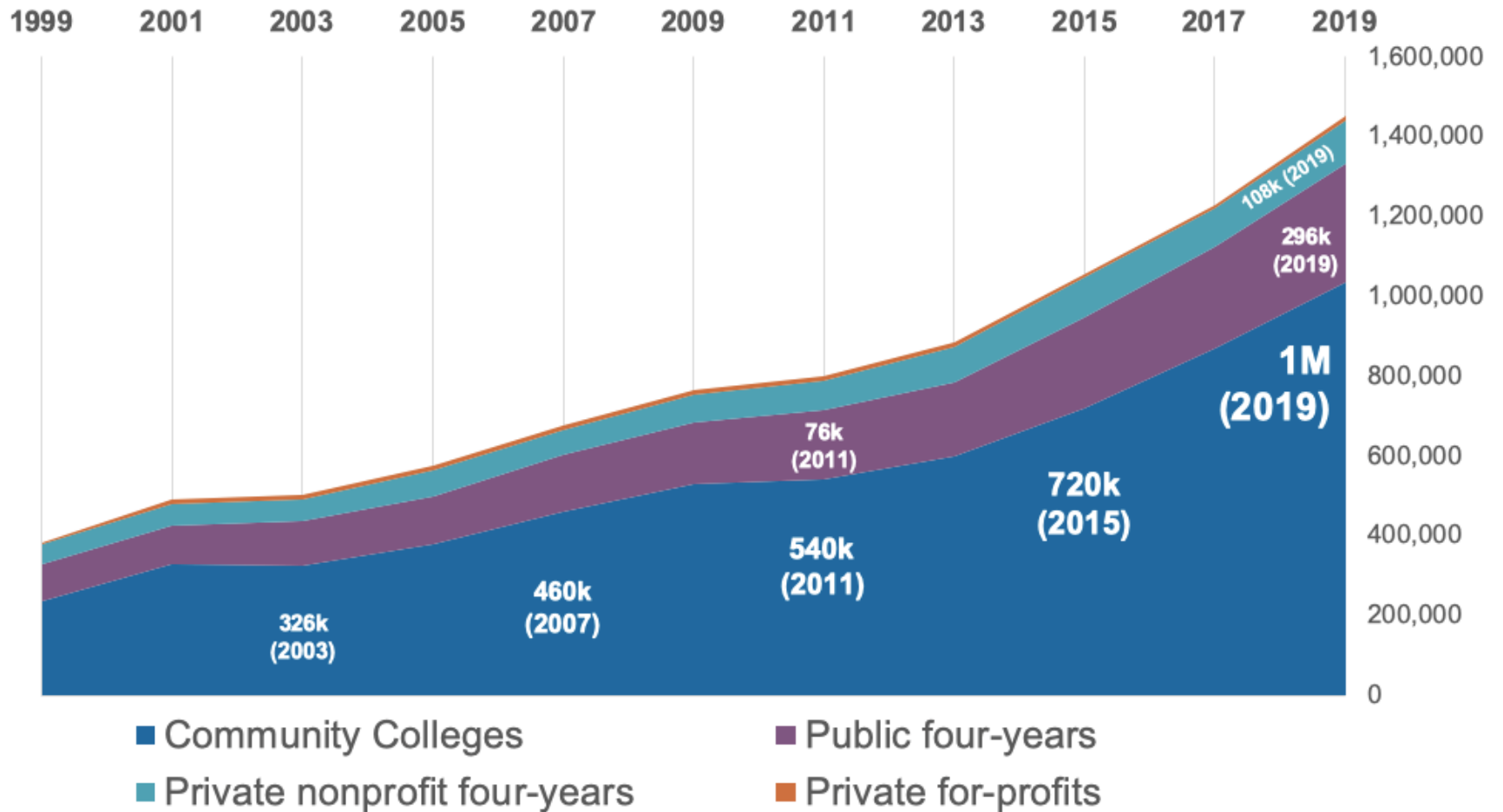
Blockages in the Transfer Supply Chain

1. Lost transfer credits increase cost *and* decrease odds of completion

2. Gen ed core misleading, advising under-resourced

3. Post-transfer experience stymied by unreceptive cultures

4. Dual credit underutilized in broadening access to bachelor's

5. Early Momentum matters
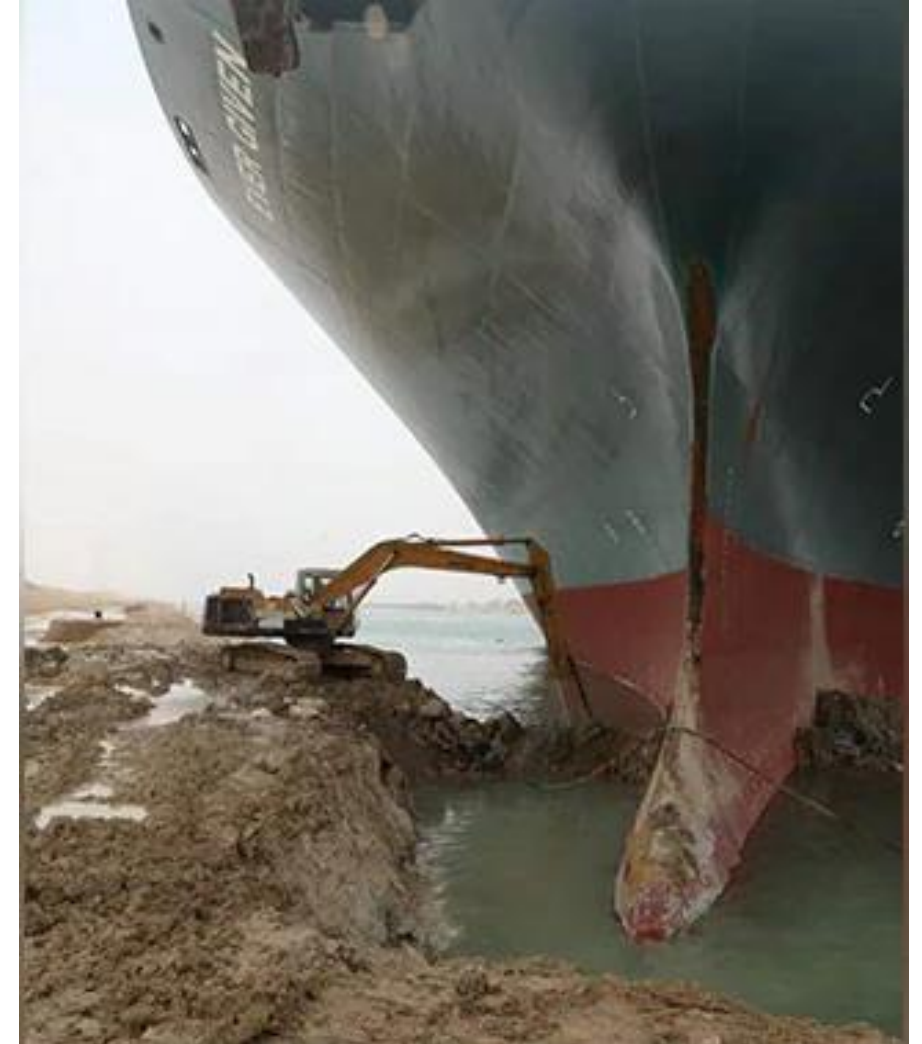
Blockages in the Transfer Supply Chain

Credits Attempted* by BA Earners Matched Sample of Texas 2- and 4-Year Entrants	Matched Samples	
	TX 2-Year Entrants	TX 4-Year Entrants
Number of college-level credits attempted	150	142

* Degree-credits only, does not include developmental credits

Source: Cullinane, 2014.

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Blockages in the Transfer Supply Chain

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

147	**151**	**156**	**155**	**148**	**145**	**155**	**153**	**146**
All Graduates	Asian	Black	Native	Hispanic	White	Pell Recipient	Completed Associates	Transfer w/o Associates

Course-taking patterns among successful CC transfers	Number of bachelor's graduates	Average Credits Attempted
All Community College Entrants who Completed a Bachelor's	9,500	**147**
Coursework before junior standing: **More** 100-level courses (>40%)	4,750	**154**
… And more than 15% of CC courses taken were not in statewide list of transferrable courses	2,750	**160**
… And took a 100-level math course after junior standing	900	**169**

Fink, Jenkins, Kopko, & Ran, (2018). Using Data Mining to Explore Why Community College Transfer Students Earn Bachelor's Degrees With Excess Credits. CCRC Working Paper No 100.

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Blockages in the Transfer Supply Chain

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

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

Monaghan & Attewell, 2015; Analysis of nationally representative Beginning Postsecondary Student survey

Blockages in the Transfer Supply Chain

Many students enter general programs, Too few gain early momentum

58% enter into general, undeclared, unknown, or uncategorized programs

47% Not enrolled, No completion at start of the 2nd year

Legend:
- Not enrolled, No completion
- Completed
- Transferred
- Other programs
- General Transfer
- Unknown/Undeclared

X-axis: Term 1, Term 2, Term 3, Term 4, Term 5, Term 6, Term 7, Term 8

Term-by-term program enrollments among degree-seeking CC entrants in one state system

Transfer Programs: Pathways or Placeholders?

College A: Treemap of Program Enrollments

- Assoc in Arts/Science 4,404
- Running Start (dual enrollment) 2,689
- Missing program title 1,812
- Pending 654
- Prereqs 371
- Nursing 509
- Assoc in Science 371
- Business Admin 447
- Transfer 326

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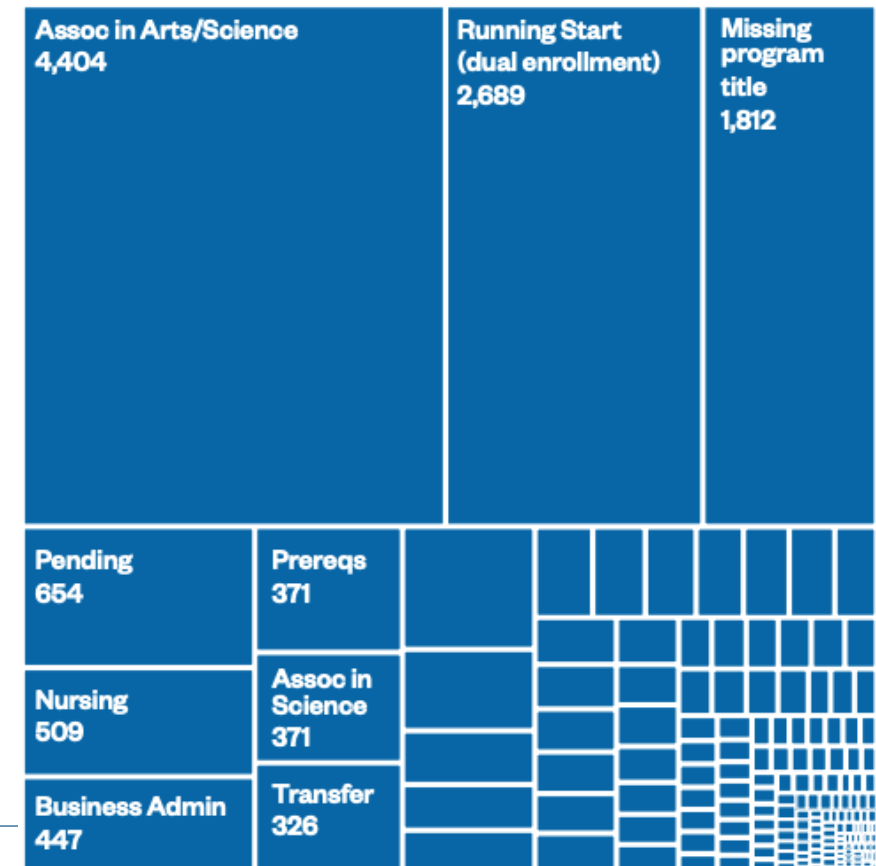
Blockages in the Transfer Supply Chain

Benefits of Momentum for Transfer Outcomes

	Benefit of Milestone (Baseline Group: White)	Effects Even Larger for...		
Transfer to a four-year institution		**Black** Students	**Hispanic** Students	**Low-income** Students
Credit Momentum (6+, 12+, or 24+ college credits)	3-5x	3-6x	6-11x	7-8x
Gateway English/Math (College-level)	3-4x	3-4x	6-8x	4-6x
Completed Transfer Degree	7-8x	9-11x	11-18x	11-13x
Transfer & bachelor's completion				
Credit Momentum (6+, 12+, or 24+ college credits)	1.7-2x	2-3x	4-5x	7-9x
Gateway English/Math (College-level)	1.6-3x	2-4x	4-5x	4-5x
Completed Transfer Degree	3-4x	5-6x	5-9x	6-7x

Yuxin Lin, Maggie Fay, & John Fink. (2020). "Stratified Trajectories: Charting Equity Gaps in Program Pathways Among Community College Students." CCRC Working Paper no. 126: https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/stratified-trajectories-program-pathways.html

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The Transfer Playbook

Prioritize transfer through communication, shared data, and resource allocation.

Create & regularly update clear programmatic pathways with aligned high-quality instruction.

Provide tailored transfer student advising with committed personnel, frequent feedback, and quick intervention.

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The Transfer Playbook: Strategy 1

Prioritize Transfer

Communicate importance of transfer mission

Share data on outcomes and the student experience

Dedicate significant resources to transfer

Collaborate to foster strong institutional partnerships

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The Transfer Playbook: Strategy 1

Tracking transfer: Five Measures

Community College

1. Transfer-out rate
2. Transfer-with-award rate
3. Transfer-out bachelor's completion rate

5. Community college cohort bachelor's completion rate

4. Transfer-in bachelor's completion rate
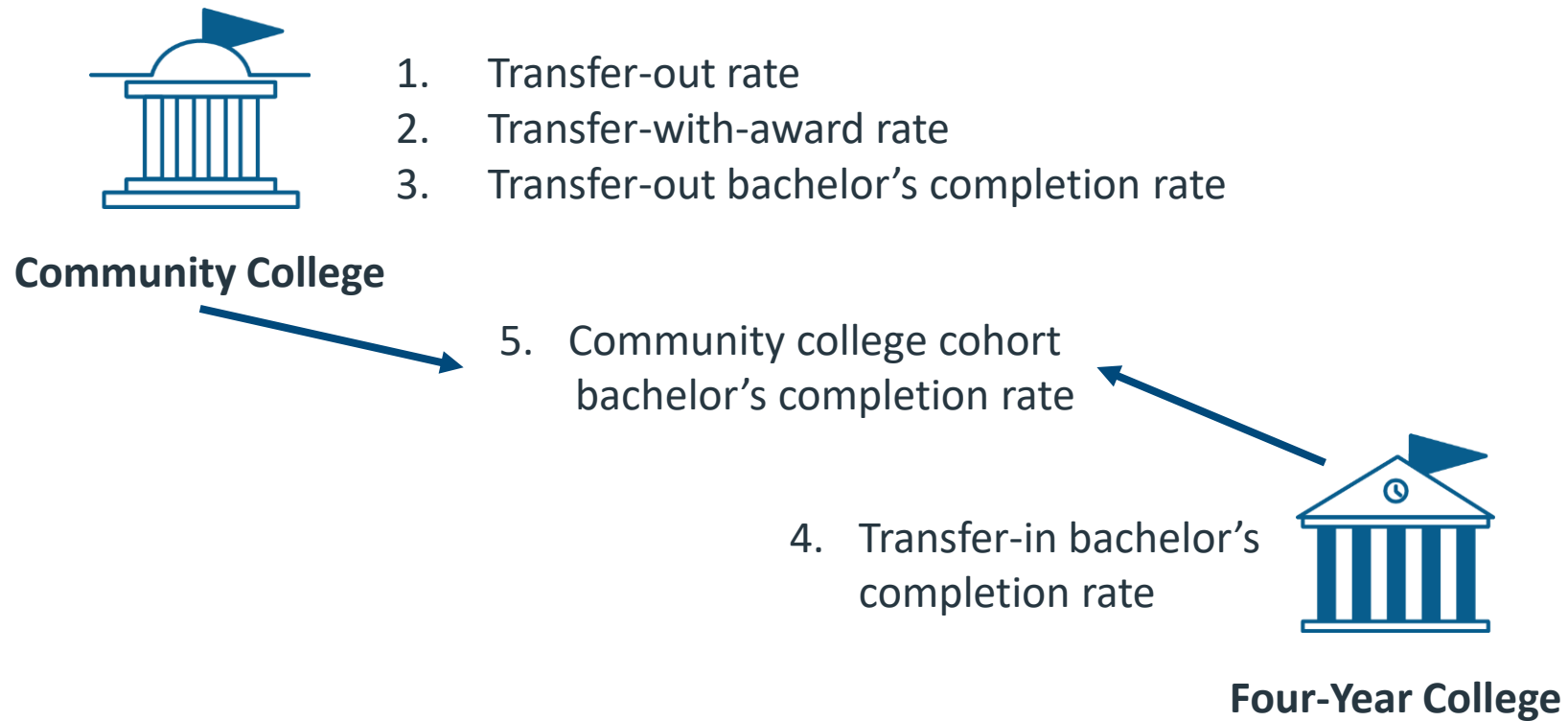
Four-Year College

Texas Transfer Alliance: Five Goals

1. Increase transfer-out rate from 21% to 33%,
2. Increase four-year bachelor's completion rate from 58 to 67
3. Decrease attempted credits from 143 to 135
4. Decrease time to bachelor's from 7.6 to 6.5
5. Increase college-level math and English to 45% (from 19 and 33%)

** *Eliminate equity gaps by race, ethnicity, and Pell in all five goals*

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The Transfer Playbook: Strategy 2
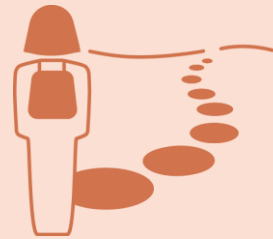
Create Clear Pathways

Create major-specific **program maps**

Provide **rigorous instruction** and extracurriculars

Design unconventional pathways

Establish a reliable process to **update and improve maps**

The Transfer Playbook: Strategy 3

Tailored Advising

Community College

- Clearly articulate transfer options
- Continuously monitor student progress
- Help students access financial resources
- Collaboration with four-year partners

Four-Year College

- Commit dedicated resources to transfer students
- Assign advisors
- Encourage major choice
- Replicate first-year experience

Dual Credit Students as Future Transfers
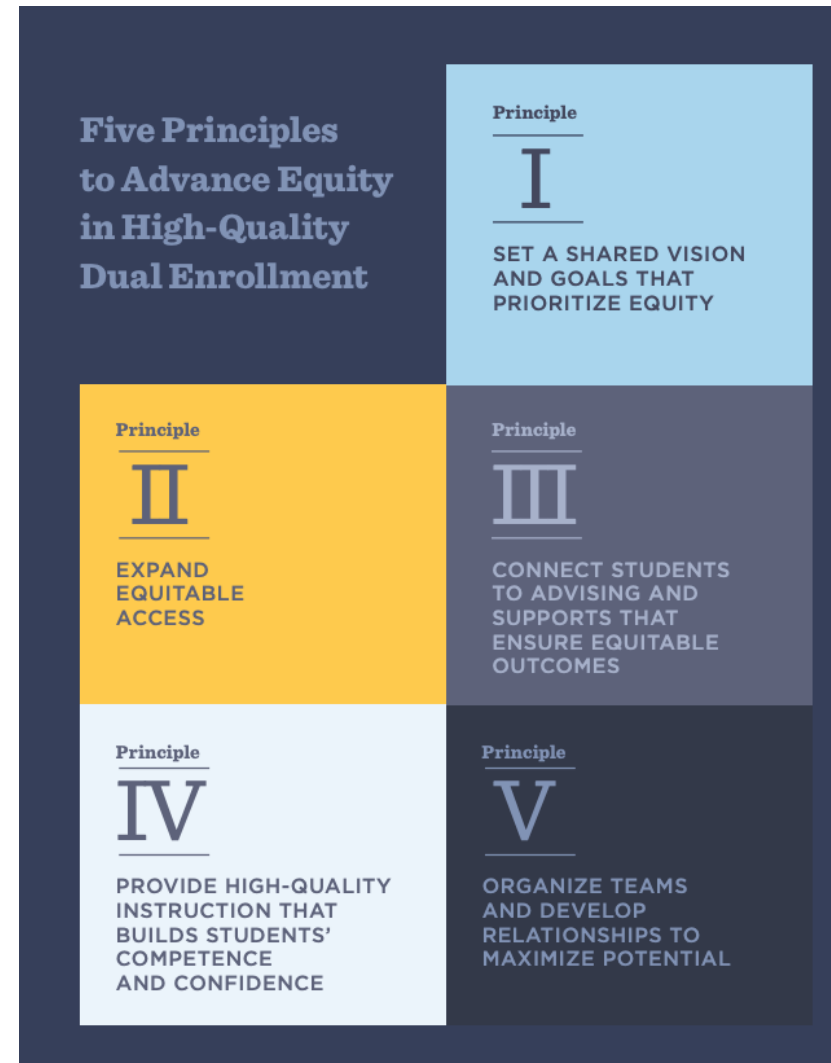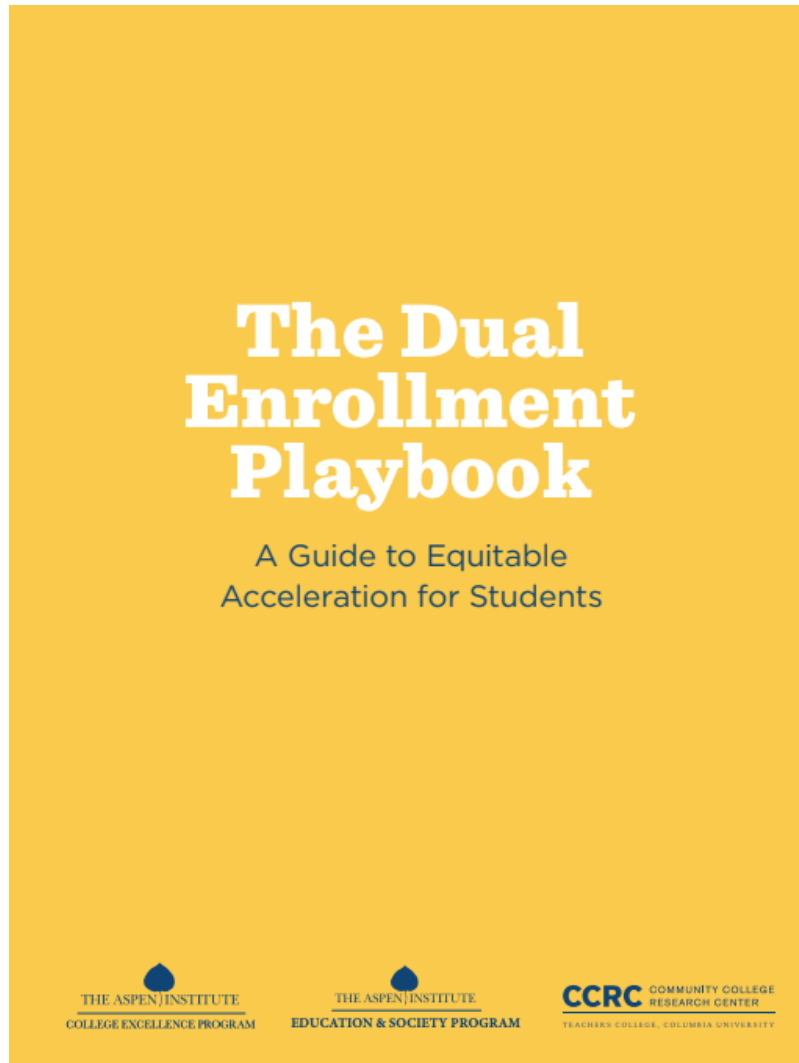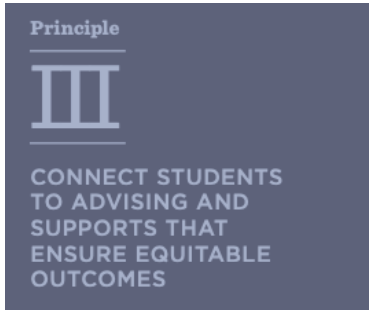
Mapping transfer pathways for DE students at Lorain County Community College

Principle III — CONNECT STUDENTS TO ADVISING AND SUPPORTS THAT ENSURE EQUITABLE OUTCOMES

10th Grade

HS Periods	HS Credit	HS Course	LCCC Course	College Credit
1	1	English II		
2	1	Geometry or Alg. II		
	1	Biology	BIOG 151: General Biology	4
	1	Chemistry	CHMY 161: General, Organic & Biochemistry I	4
4	1	United States History	HSTR 162: US History	3
	1		HUMS 151: Introduction to Humanities *	3

12th Grade

HS Periods	HS Credit	HS Course	LCCC Course	College Credit
1	1	Humanities/Cultural Diversity	ENGL 266: African American Literature *	3
	1	Humanities Elective	HUMS 281: Introduction to American Cinema *	3
2	1	College Level Math	MTHM 181: Calculus I	5

Year 14

Fall Semester	Credit Hours	Spring Semester	Credit Hours
BIOG 252: Microbiology	5	BGSU required course: BIOL 3510: Evolution	3
red course must be	3	BGSU required course: BIOL 4400: Molecular Neurobiology	3
BGSU 3000/4000 elective course	3	BGSU 3000/4000 elective course	3
BGSU 3000/4000 elective course	3	BGSU 3000/4000 elective course	3
Semester Total	14		12
Cumulative Total	38		50
Grand Total			122

Source: 25+ Pathways Completed!
www.lorainccc.edu/MyUniversity

Aligning high school career clusters with meta-majors to create on-ramps into advanced workforce credentials for CTE dual credit students at Indian River State College

Sharing dual enrollment data internally and with K-12 partners at Valencia College and Lorain County Community College
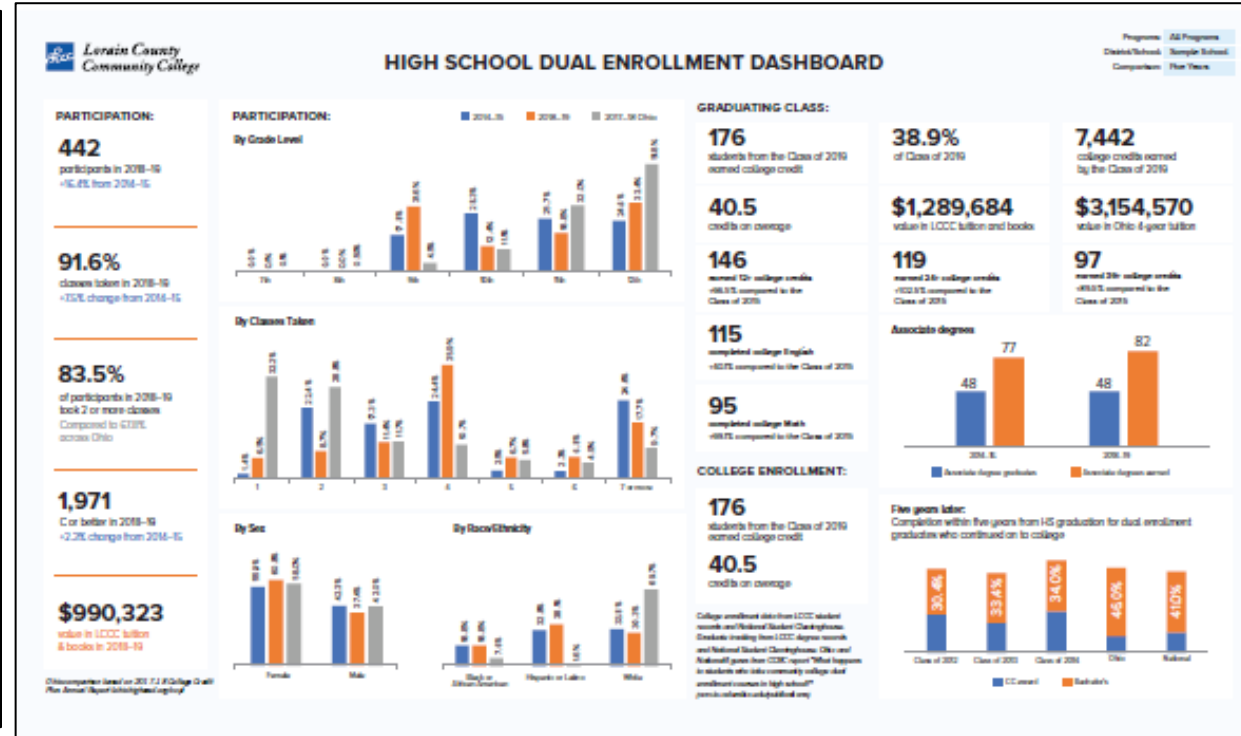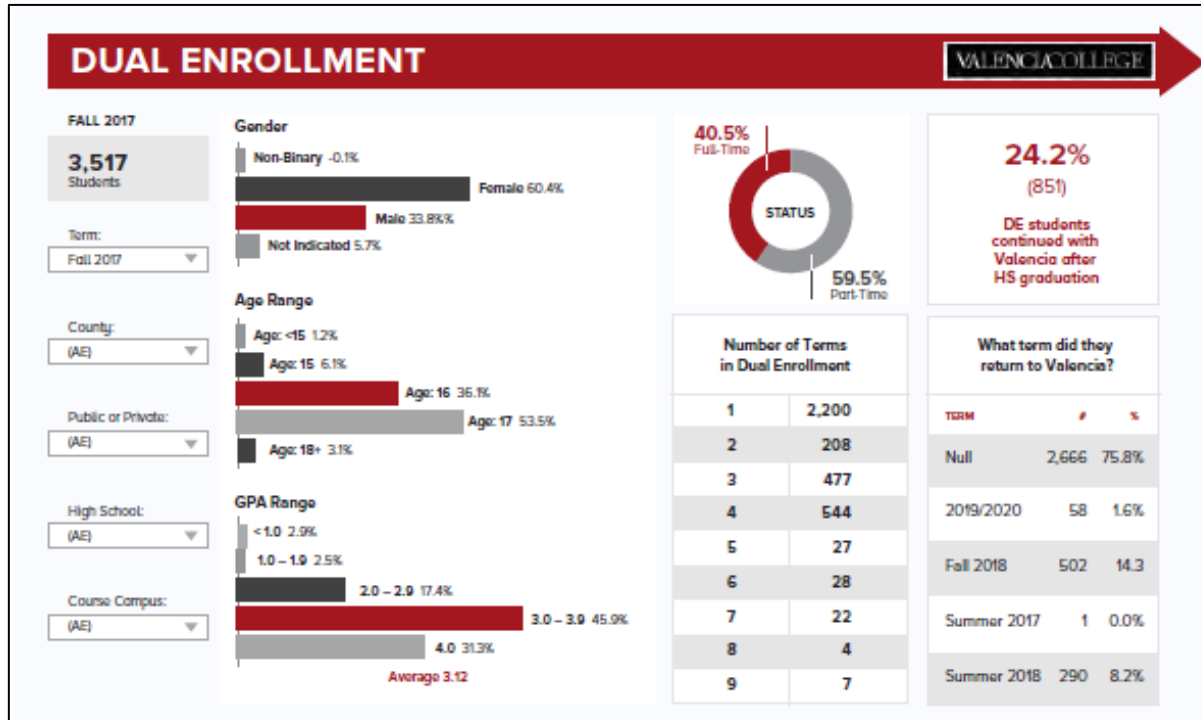
- Disaggregated enrollments/participation rates
- Top courses, course success rates
- Near-term outcomes: Credits/credentials earned in HS
- Post-HS college outcomes (incl. re-enrollment rates)

Further detail on graduating HS classes:
- Credits/credentials earned,
- Estimated cost-savings
- Post-HS college enrollment & outcomes
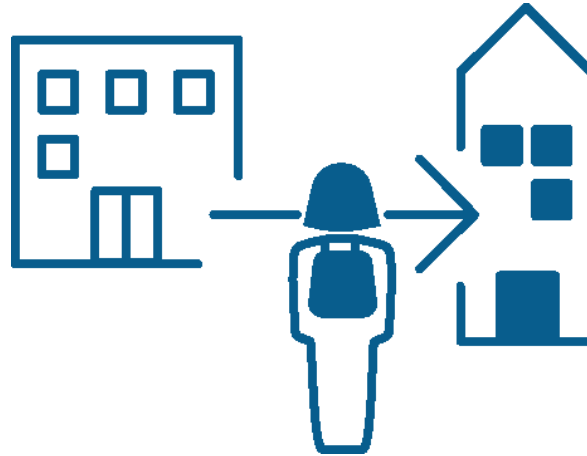
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