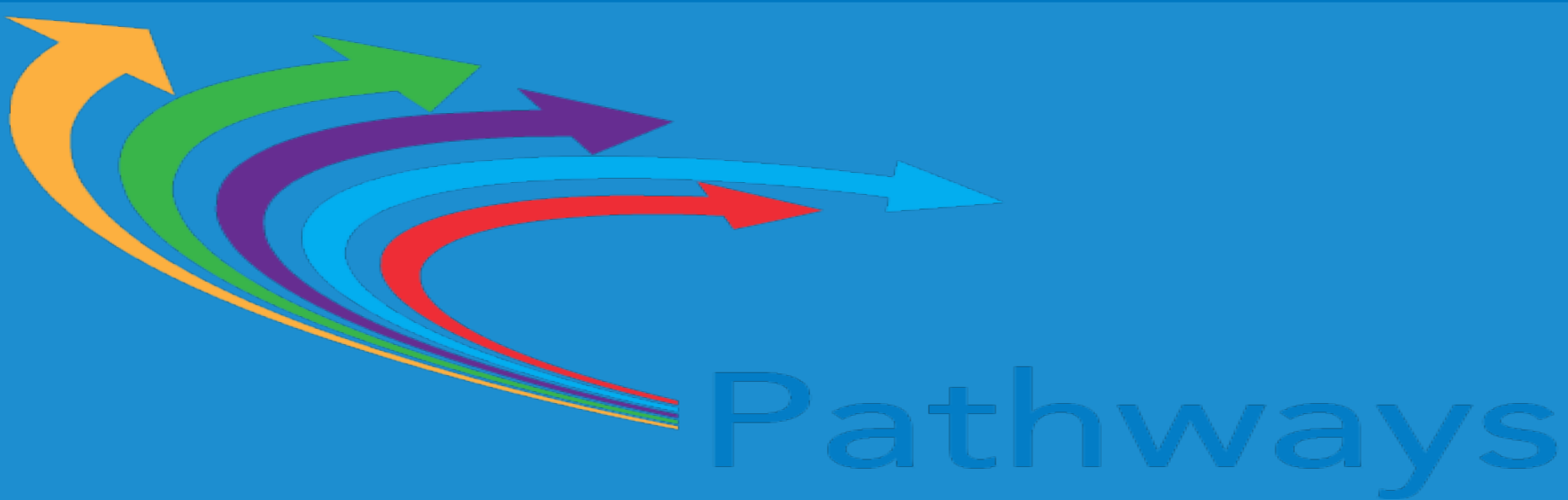# POLICY MEETS PATHWAYS:
What Boards Need to Know about Guided Pathways

BOARD OF TRUSTEES INSTITUTE
2021

BOARD LEADERSHIP TASK:
## Vision, Values, Making the Case

TEXAS & SERVICE AREA CONTEXT

- **Racial & ethnic composition of the population**
- **Poverty data, disaggregated by race and ethnicity**
- **Educational attainment level by age**
- **Educational attainment level by race and ethnicity**
- **Largest industries & occupations, with job projections**

*Data from EMSI (economicmodeling.com)

Guided Pathways Model

The Guided Pathways Model is an *integrated, institution-wide* approach to student success and equity, based on intentionally designed, clear and coherent educational experiences that guide each student effectively and efficiently from her/his point of entry through to attainment of high-quality postsecondary credentials and careers with value in the labor market.
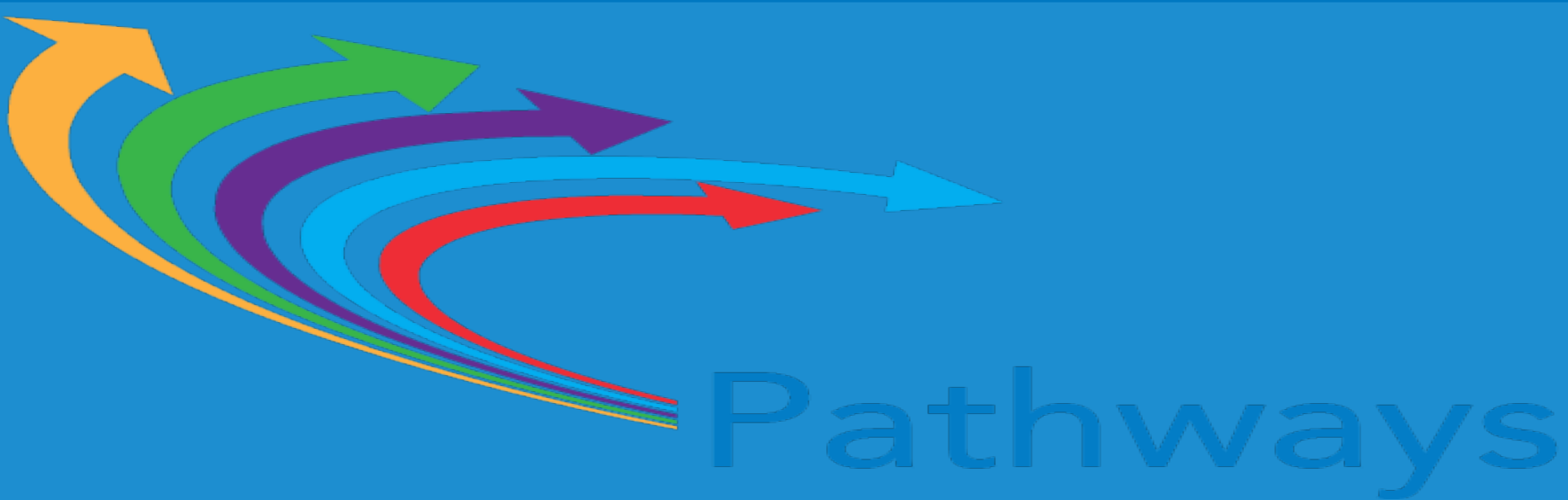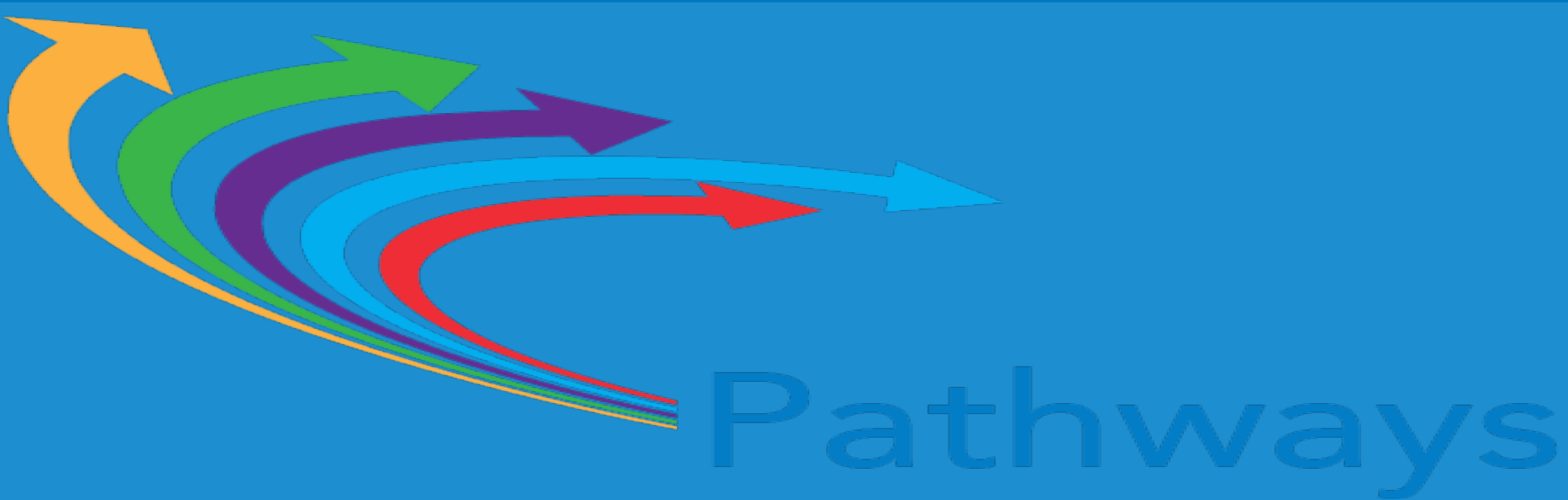
The "4 Pillars" of Guided Pathways

- CLARIFY THE PATH
- HELP STUDENTS CHOOSE AND ENTER A PATH
- HELP STUDENTS STAY ON THEIR PATH
- ENSURE STUDENTS ARE LEARNING

EQUITY AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY AT THE CENTER

PATHWAYS FOR WHOM, TO WHAT?

INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION
THROUGH GUIDED PATHWAYS:
Shifts in Culture, Policy, & Practice

Rethinking Program Mapping

| FROM		TO
Alphabetical program lists	❯	Academic and career communities (meta-majors)
A la carte courses (distribution requirements and electives)	❯	Program maps with designated course sequences, critical courses, and cocurricular requirements
Algebra as default math requirement	❯	Program- or field-specific math requirements
Certificates and degrees as disconnected credentials	❯	Certificates or certifications embedded in degree pathways
Unclear connections between programs and career and transfer options	❯	Clearly specified career and transfer opportunities and requirements for all programs

Rethinking Student Onboarding

FROM		TO
Job and transfer support for students approaching completion	❯	Career and college exploration and planning for all students from the start of college
Current semester schedules	❯	Full-program educational plans
Academic assessments of students' readiness for college-level work	❯	Holistic assessments of students' plans, goals, and challenges
Prerequisite remediation	❯	Corequisite academic support
Algebra and English composition courses as college gatekeepers	❯	Courses (not just math and English) critical for program success
A la carte dual credit courses in high school	❯	Exploration of career/academic pathways beginning in high school

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Rethinking Student Advising

FROM		TO
Information dump at orientation	>	Support for major decisions along students' paths
Class scheduling based on what suits the college's schedule	>	Class scheduling planned to fit students' plans and schedules
Student progress gauged based on full-time vs. part-time status	>	Student progress conceived of as on-plan vs. off-plan
Advising and teaching thought of as two separate endeavors	>	A student-support environment where advisors teach and teachers advise
Course registration as a task where students self-advise	>	Course registration monitored by advisors to ensure students register for the right courses on their plan

Source: CCRC (Jenkins, Lahr, Fink and Ganga, 2018)
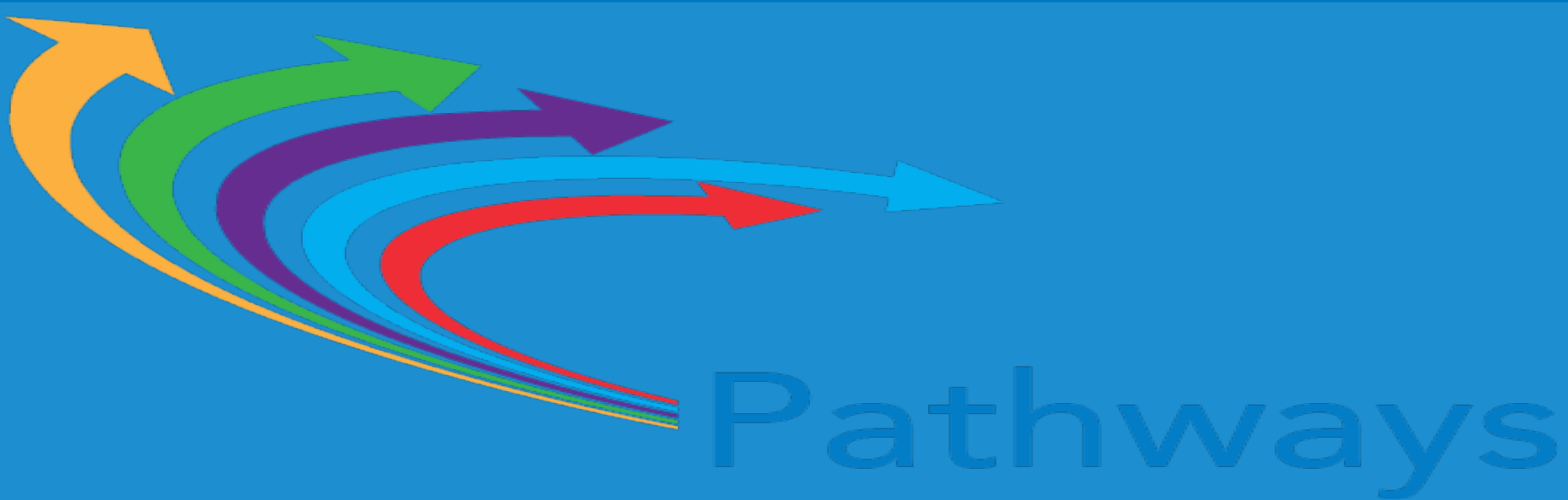
LEADERSHIP TASK:
Building Data Capacity and Data Use

DATA QUESTIONS
Early Momentum & Prompts for Change

- Of all students who initiate contact/express interest in enrollment, what % are not in classes on census date?
- What % of entering students present at census date never complete a college credit?
- What % of entering students complete college-level English and math courses in their first year?
- What % of students complete a full-program academic plan by the end of their first semester?
- What % of entering students complete at least 3 courses in their program of study in their first year?
- Bonus: What is the average # of college-level credits earned by an associate degree graduate?

EMERGING EVIDENCE

In diverse colleges across multiple states, there is very promising evidence of substantial increases in these early momentum measures:

- **Credit accumulation in the first year**

- **Completion of transfer-level math and English in the first year**

- **Completion of 9 credit hours in the *program of study* in the first year**

- **Persistence from term 1 to term 2**

And in the most advanced Pathways colleges:

- **Completion of college credentials**

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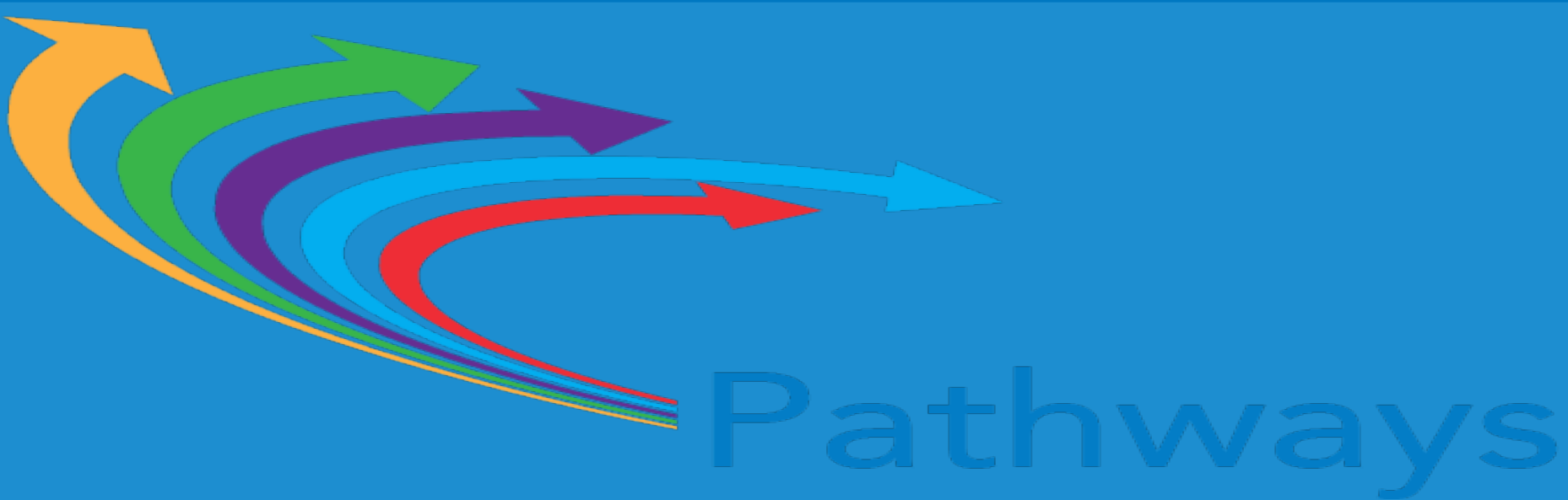
BOARD LEADERSHIP TASK:
Supporting Large-Scale Change
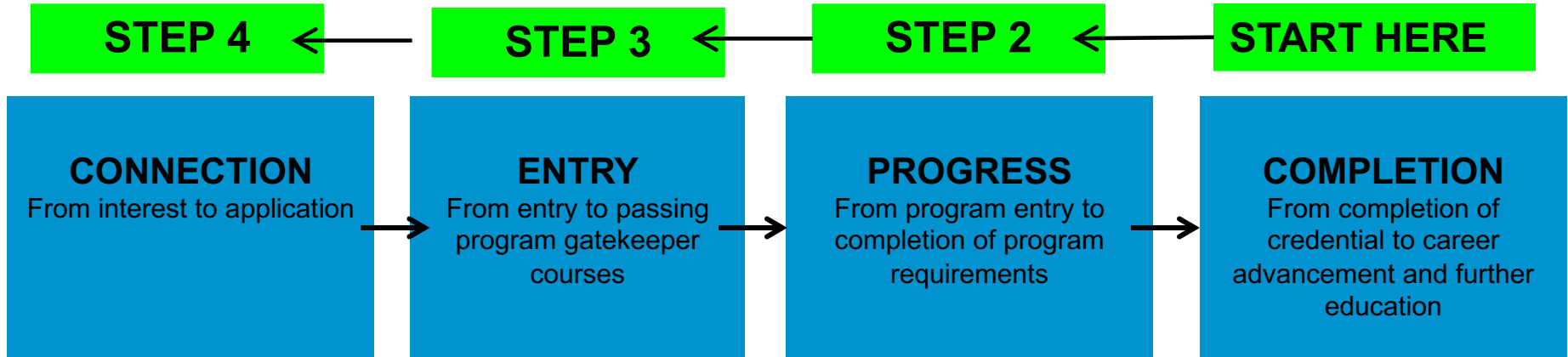
Essential Pathways Practices *AT SCALE*

- Organize programs into "meta-majors," map programs to high-opportunity jobs and to transfer in majors

- Help all students explore career/academic options and develop a full-program plan by end of term 1

- Make schedules and monitor progress based on students' plans

- Integrate academic support into college program gateway courses

- Integrate experiential/applied learning into every program

- Build pathways into high schools, starting with dual enrollment and connecting to HB5 endorsements

LEADERSHIP TASK:
Strategic Partnerships

Start with the End in Mind

| STEP 4 ←	STEP 3 ←	STEP 2 ←	START HERE
CONNECTION From interest to application	**ENTRY** From entry to passing program gatekeeper courses	**PROGRESS** From program entry to completion of program requirements	**COMPLETION** From completion of credential to career advancement and further education

- Market program paths
- Build bridges from high school and adult ed. into program streams (e.g., strategic dual enrollment, I-BEST)

- Help students explore options/ make full-program plan
- Integrate academic support into critical program gateway courses

- Clearly map out program paths
- Redesign advising/scheduling around maps/plans
- Monitor student progress, provide feedback and support as needed

- Align program outcomes with requirements for success in career-path employment and further education

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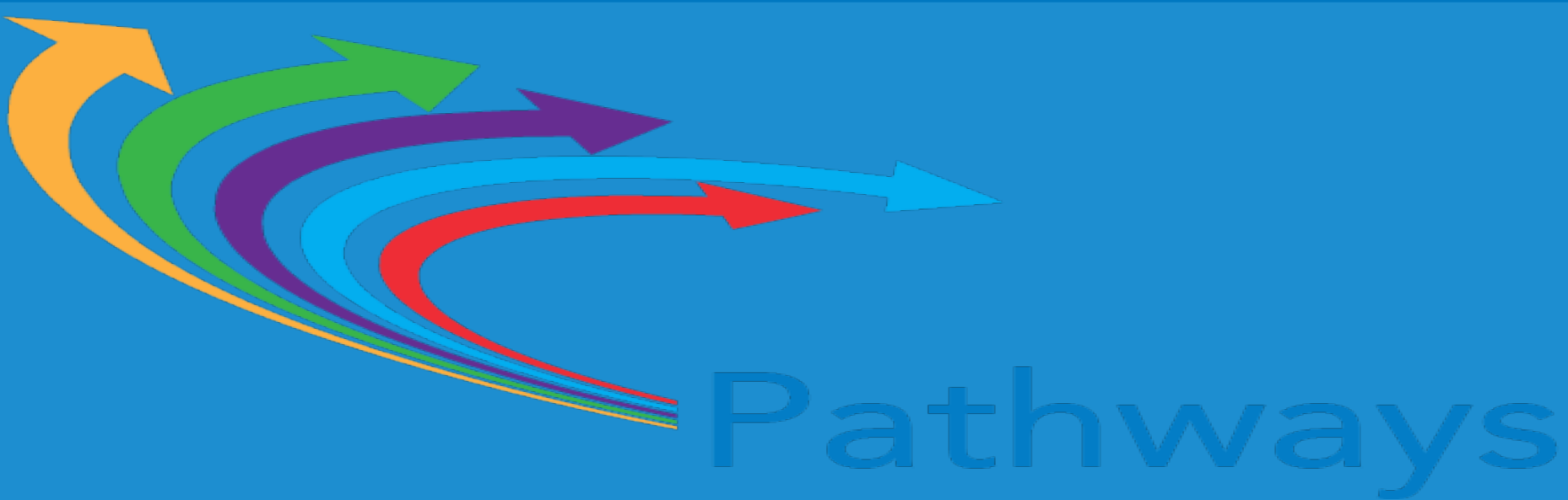
LEADERSHIP TASK:

**Achieving Equity
and Economic Upward Mobility
through Guided Pathways**

Lifetime Earnings Gains by Degree Type (compared to HS only)

Source: NELS Data, Marcotte, Bailey, Borkoski, & Kienzl, 2005, p. 164-165, 170-171.
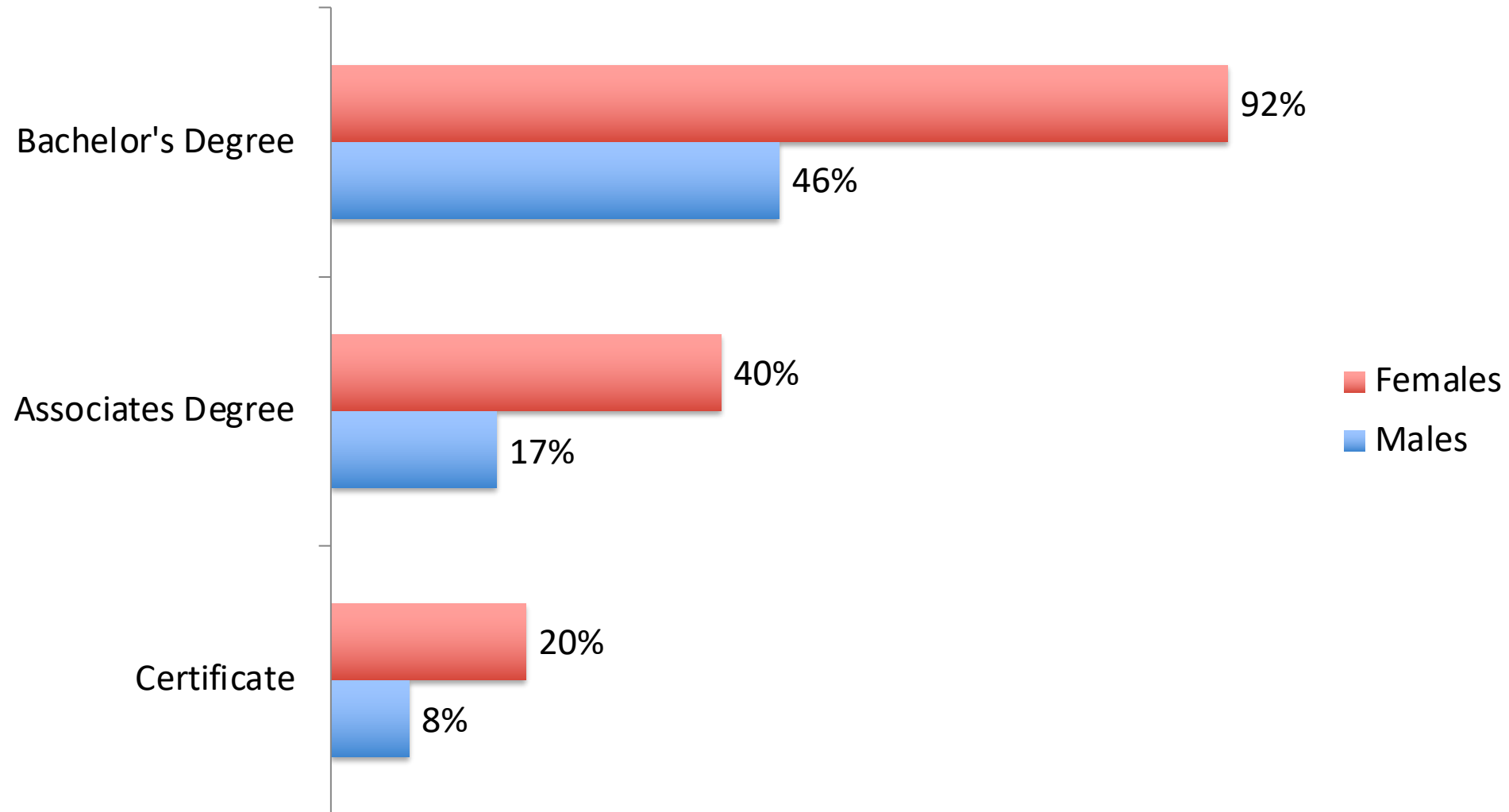
ACHIEVING EQUITY

- **Won't happen by itself.**

- **Is accomplished through change in the educational experience designed for students – as it incorporates the best of what we've learned about what matters.**

- **Requires getting well past disaggregation of data…to the difficult work of uncovering and the addressing sources of institutional racism and unconscious bias.**

- **Equality ≠ Equity**

ACHIEVING EQUITY

- **Reviewing processes through which we support students in exploring options and making choices.**

- **Integrating dramatically redesigned developmental education into pathways.**

- **Embedding academic support within courses**

- **Attending to financial stability/basic needs**

- **Diversifying faculty, advising/counseling, administration**

- **Strengthening culturally responsive teaching, reducing bias in the classroom**

LEADERSHIP TASK:

**Board Actions that
Can Make a Difference**

Boards Can Make a Difference

1. Approve a strategic plan with student success through guided pathways at the core.
2. Approve explicit annual priorities focused on student success and equity.
3. Use Key Performance Indicators to track/monitor desired success outcomes.
4. Approve/monitor goals for student success with equity.
5. Approve increased funding and resource reallocation for student success/guided pathways.

Boards Can Make a Difference

6. Review monthly/quarterly reports on guided pathways design and implementation.
7. Conduct an annual retreat focused on student success and equity through guided pathways.
8. Endorse a plan for integrating and contextualizing basic skills development into guided pathways.
9. Conduct an annual review of key board policies supporting the guided pathways work.

Boards Can Make a Difference

10. Hold purchases of new technology until the college has redesigned the student experience and thought through related business processes.

11. Consider recommended changes in organizational structure, staffing, human resources processes (hiring/evaluation), finance, technology. infrastructure, etc., in support of guided pathways.

12. Have the back of the CEO as she/he leads courageous work on large-scale institutional change.

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?

kmcclenney@aacc.nche.edu
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