

Masterclass Series

Awareness to Action:

How Board of Trustees and Senior leaders can lead and empower community colleges to transform Students' Lives and their communities.

2023 Board of Trustees Institute

Lakeway, TX

February 22, 2023

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Thanks!

Dr. Ferrell
Dr. Bailie
Dr. Flores
Ms. Youngston

CUBAN IMMIGRANT: MY EDUCATIONAL PATHWAY



CUBAN IMMIGRANT



TENURED TAMU FACULTY
MEMBER



President Biden &
Vice President Harris

- This is **WHO I AM**: A Cuban immigrant, Cisgender male, First-born son to Luis & Martha Ponjuán, Naturalized U.S. Citizen, Bilingual learner and speaker, First-generation Undergraduate graduate and a University of Michigan Doctoral recipient, Brother, Uncle, Father, & Friend.
- This is **WHAT I DO**: Researcher, Collaborator, Advocate, Ally, Mentor, Teacher, Servant Leader, Scholar, & Lifelong learner.
- This is **WHAT I TEACH**: Graduate level Statistics, College Teaching, & College Student Development Theories.
- This is **WHAT I STUDY**: Latinx/a/o & male students, Community colleges, STEM, Faculty of color, & College Teaching.

The purpose of this Plenary talk



The purpose of this keynote address is to have an engaging and thought-provoking discussion about the value and importance of BOT leaders in **creating an action plan that focuses on improving the culture of change**, developing a strategic direction, and monitoring their community college's progress on key student outcomes. **The future of community college funding relies on a cohesive and collective commitment to advocate for the success of our students and communities.**

What do I want to accomplish today

- Reflect on our previous conversations
- Understand our new realities beyond the pandemic era.
- Examine the State of Texas higher education Coordinating Board “Building a Talent Strong Texas”.
- Understanding the importance of rethinking as a leadership trait.
- **Create an action plan** focused on **Students’ Belonging, Wellness, & Success**



September 2021

The COVID pandemic has created new realities for community colleges with declined enrollment trends, different teaching modalities, and diminished social and mental health wellness for students, faculty members, staff, and administrators.

March 2022

The six dimensions of
courage to advance
institutional goals
during shifting and
uncertain times.



2022-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN

Building a Talent Strong Texas

Fostering the skills and spurring the innovation vital to the Texas economy.

Now is the time to seize the vast, Texas-sized opportunities before us, to achieve impact at scale, and dedicate ourselves to **Building a Talent Strong Texas**.

-Commissioner Harrison Keller



1. Attainment of Postsecondary Credentials

Building a Talent Strong Texas expands attainment to include all working-age Texans. In doing so, we can increase employment opportunities and income for individuals, create a deeper talent pool for employers, and align students' skills with workforce demands.

TARGETS

- 60% of Texans ages 25-64 will receive a degree, certificate, or other postsecondary credential of value by 2030. Whereas 60x30TX focused on 25-34-year-olds, we are expanding our commitment to serve all working-age Texans.



2. Postsecondary Credentials of Value

Credentials from Texas institutions of higher education must propel graduates into lasting, successful careers. **These careers must equip them for continued learning and greater earning potential, with low or manageable debt.**

TARGETS

- 550,000 students will complete postsecondary credentials of value each year.
- 95% of students will graduate with no undergraduate student debt or manageable levels of debt in relation to their potential earnings.



95%

The demographic shift is a reality that we must accept and leverage as a strength to achieve institutional success.

Across all these goals, we will break down the data by race, gender, income, and geography to make sure all Texans have an opportunity to succeed.

Over the past decade, **95% of our state's population growth was in communities of color**. If we do not advance our higher education goals equitably, we can't achieve them.

This goal underscores the importance of shifting our focus to think more broadly about who we serve — to acknowledge and embrace all Texans who want to pursue higher education, **even when they don't fit the traditional student profile.**



RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 State Funding for Outcomes
- 2 Affordability for Students
- 3 Investments in College Capacity

We have a clear mission and goal as community colleges, but we cannot solely rely on our past actions and thoughts. We must **THINK AGAIN** on how we develop an **ACTION PLAN** to meet these recommendations.

Texas Commission on Community College Finance

Report to the 88th Legislature



"A must-read." — Bill and Melinda Gates

The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know

THINK AGAIN

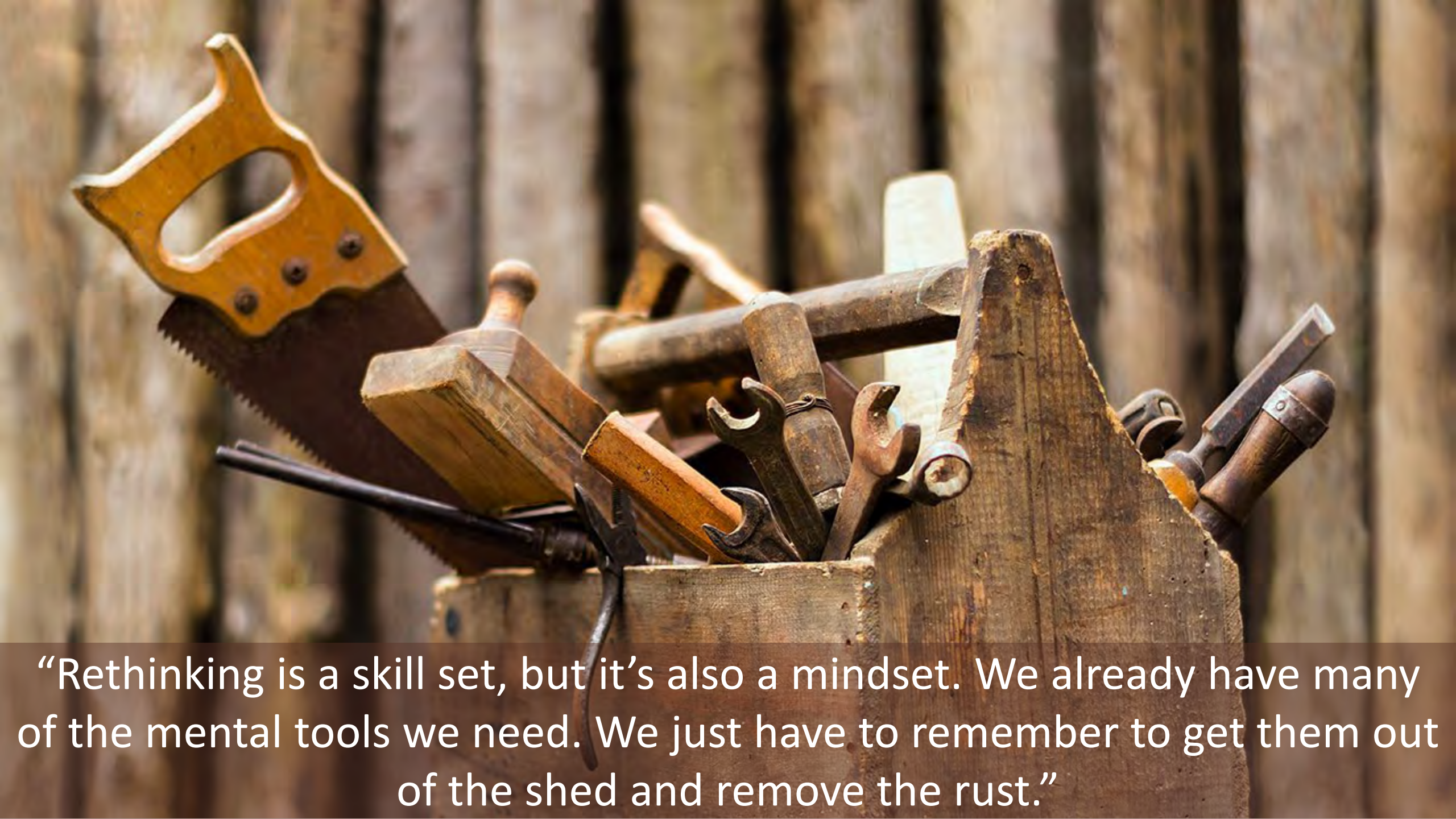


ADAM GRANT

#1 *New York Times* bestselling author of
ORIGINALS

“The curse of knowledge is that it closes our minds to what we don’t know. Good judgement depends on having the skill-**and the will**- to open our minds”. p.31

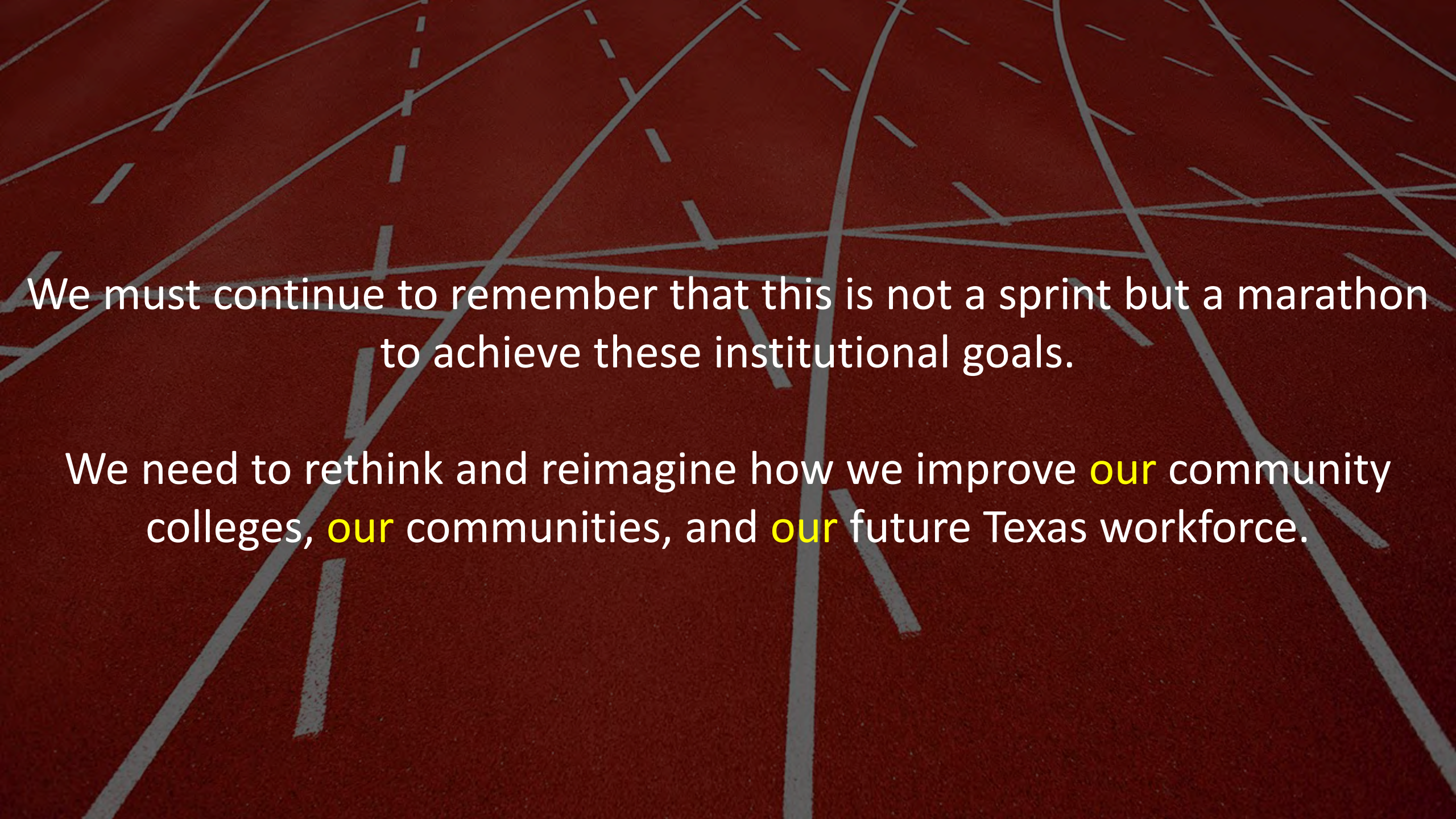
-Adam Grant



“Rethinking is a skill set, but it’s also a mindset. We already have many of the mental tools we need. We just have to remember to get them out of the shed and remove the rust.”



“We all have blind spots in our knowledge and opinions. The bad news is that they can leave us blind to our blindness, which gives us false confidence in our judgment and prevents us from rethinking.”

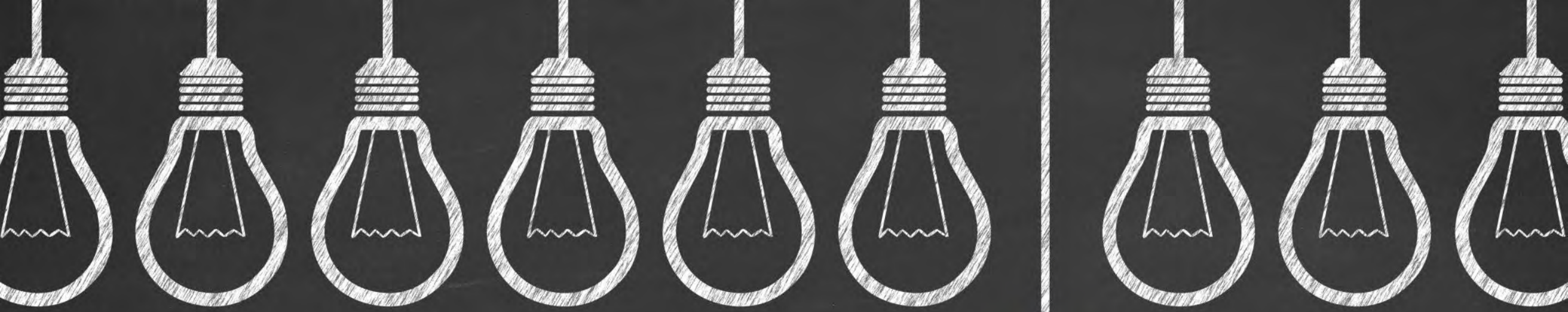


We must continue to remember that this is not a sprint but a marathon to achieve these institutional goals.

We need to rethink and reimagine how we improve **our** community colleges, **our** communities, and **our** future Texas workforce.



We must create greater awareness and have a sense of urgency to act as Board of Trustee leaders to improve how community colleges enroll, engage, and graduate students from every Texas county.



The Future of Texas community college Funding depends on:

- Improving Student **Belongingness**
- Committing to Student **Wellness**
- Focusing on Student **Success**





We need to examine the educational experiences of our students before we can assume they will have successful completion of credentials, degrees, or transfer.

THINK AGAIN:

Student belonging to a community college

We need to make sure that every student across different Texas counties feels like they belong on your campus.

We need to ask critical questions to gather the right institutional data to make the best decisions to ensure that all students feel like they can enroll and remain on your campus.

Which students need greater support to help them enroll and feel like they belong on your campus?

RETHINKING

Institutional action steps for improving student belongingness

1. Who is applying to our colleges?
2. Do we understand what barriers exist why some students who apply never enroll?
3. What institutional policies and practices are potential barriers for our students to enroll?
4. Where do I get institutional data to help me understand this issue better?



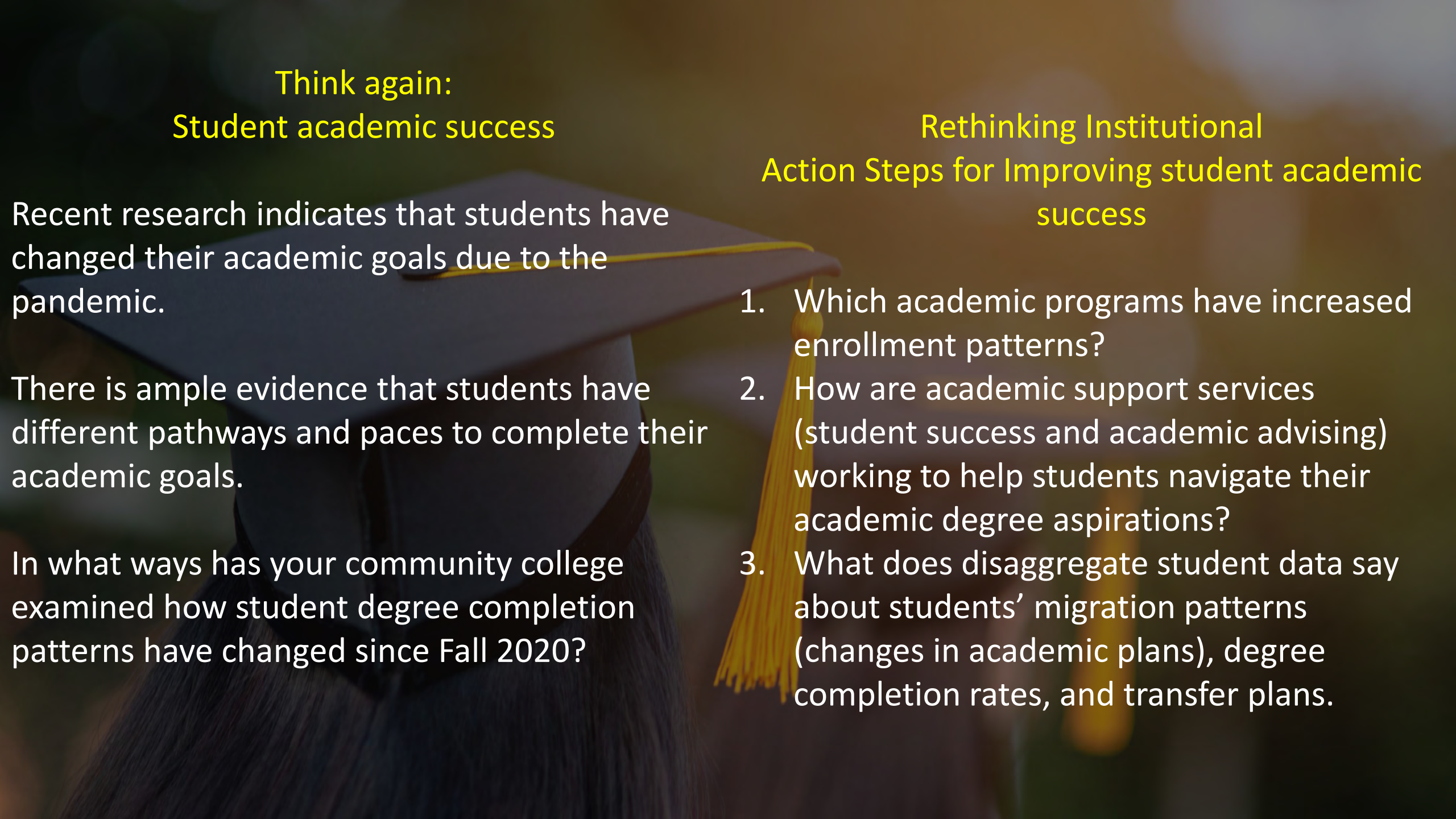
Think again:
Student physical and mental health wellness

The pandemic has changed how we understand student wellness. There are various basic needs that we must understand in order to help our students thrive and persist.

How are we creating the best community college experience that allows all students to achieve their full potential?

Rethinking Institutional Action Steps for Improving student physical and mental health wellness

1. How well do we know what our students need from the community college to help them succeed?
2. What do we need to rethink to improve how we serve our students?
3. How prepared are faculty members (tenure/d and adjunct) to help students succeed?



**Think again:
Student academic success**

Recent research indicates that students have changed their academic goals due to the pandemic.

There is ample evidence that students have different pathways and paces to complete their academic goals.


In what ways has your community college examined how student degree completion patterns have changed since Fall 2020?

**Rethinking Institutional
Action Steps for Improving student academic
success**

1. Which academic programs have increased enrollment patterns?
2. How are academic support services (student success and academic advising) working to help students navigate their academic degree aspirations?
3. What does disaggregate student data say about students' migration patterns (changes in academic plans), degree completion rates, and transfer plans.

transform 1 of 2 verb

trans·form

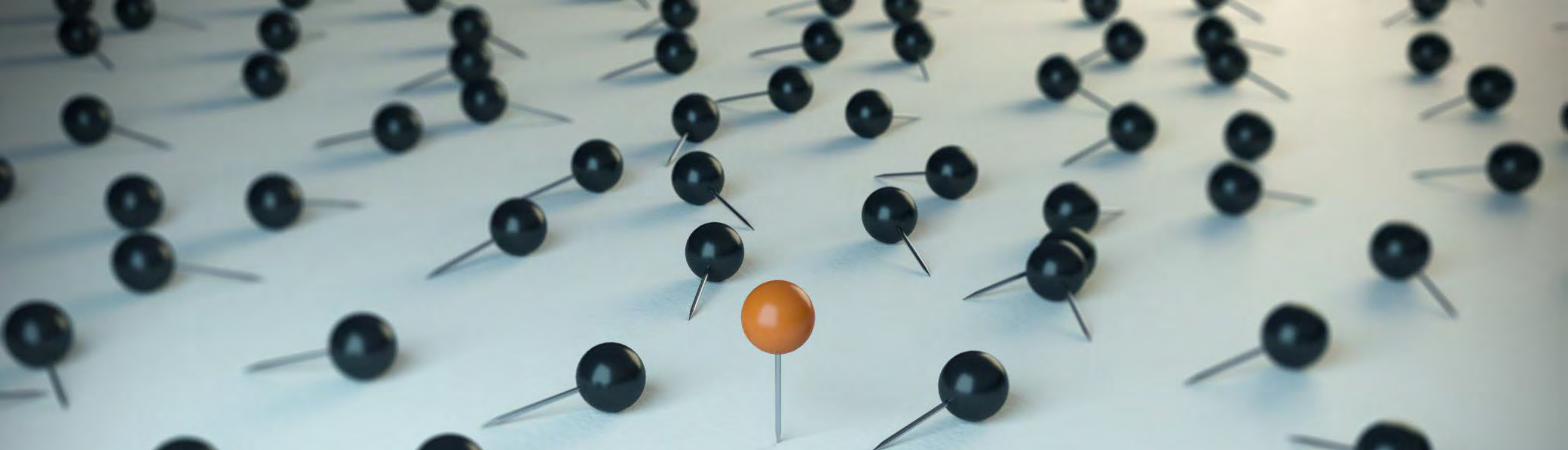
tran(t)s- 'fɔrm 

transformed; transforming; transforms

[Synonyms of *transform*](#) >

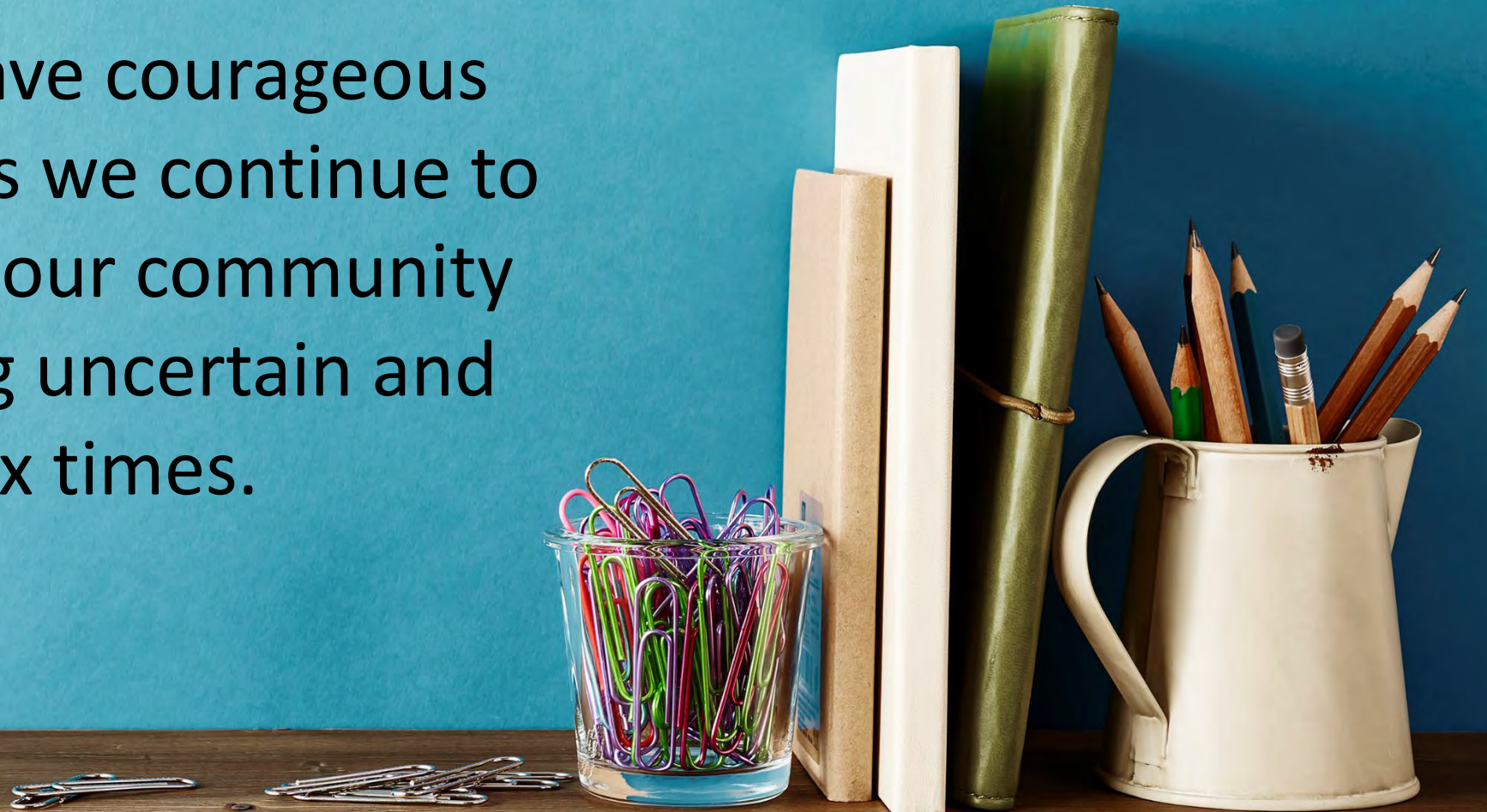
transitive verb

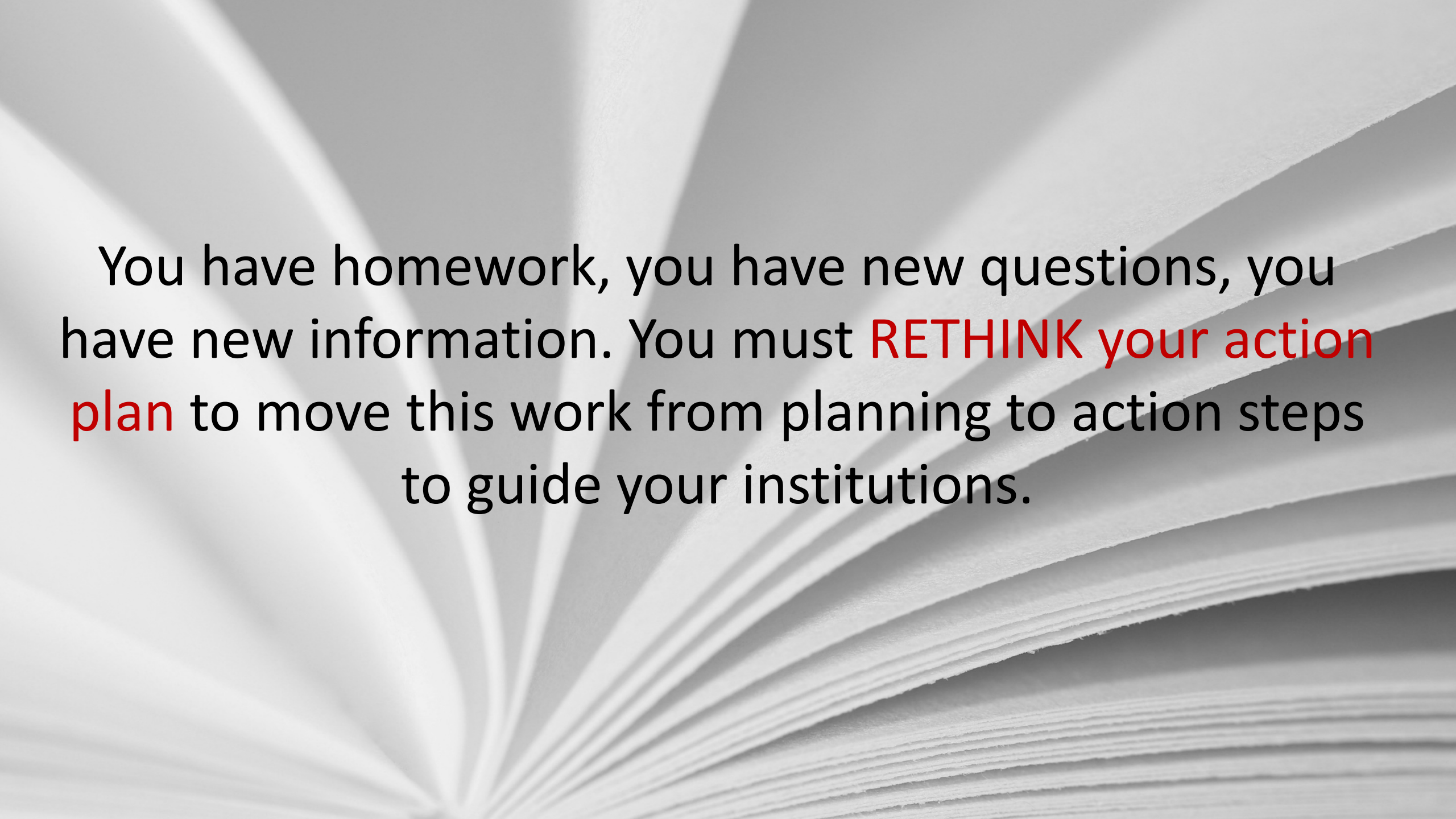
- a** : to change in composition or structure
b : to change the outward form or appearance of
c : to change in character or condition : **CONVERT**



Transformational leaders must rethink how to develop new ideas and action plans to inspire institutional leaders, faculty members, students, and communities to transform their community colleges and improve **students' belongingness, wellness, and success.**

We need to have courageous conversations as we continue to serve and lead our community colleges during uncertain and complex times.





You have homework, you have new questions, you have new information. You must **RETHINK your action plan** to move this work from planning to action steps to guide your institutions.

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