JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

SCALING INNOVATION

in community colleges

A GUIDE TO ACTION

AUTHORS

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ABOUT THE GUIDE

Creation of this guide was funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation as part of their support of the multiyear Accelerating Opportunity initiative (2011-2016). The guide has been designed to leverage the lessons that Jobs for the Future has acquired through our work across this and other major initiatives supporting the success of underprepared adults pursuing postsecondary education. While much has been written about scaling, there is a lack of guidance around specific steps that educational leaders can take to expand the reach of innovative, effective practice in community colleges. We offer this guide to state and community college leaders to help fill that gap.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ABOUT JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

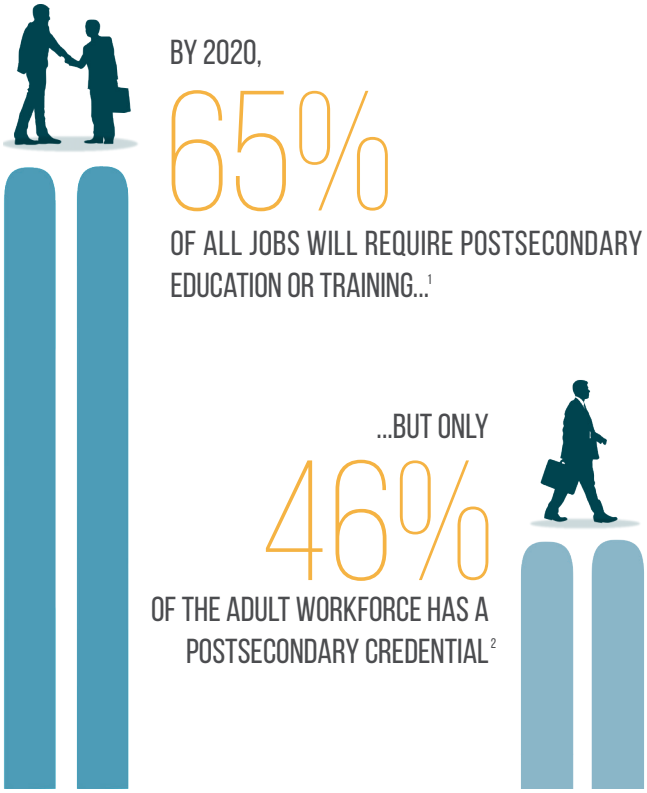
Jobs for the Future is a national nonprofit that works to ensure educational and economic opportunity for all. We develop innovative career pathways, educational resources, and public policies that increase college readiness and career success, and build a more highly skilled workforce. With over 30 years of experience, JFF is the national leader in bridging education and work to increase mobility and strengthen our economy.

WHAT'S INSIDE?

INTRODUCTION

EXCITING YET CHALLENGING TIMES

The last ten years have been a time of great experimentation for community colleges. From the White House to state legislatures to the institutions themselves, there is growing demand that community colleges examine their impact and seek new ways to equip students with relevant postsecondary credentials. And the stakes are high—our country has a critical need for more workers with technical skills, and far fewer people are making it to the middle class with a high school diploma alone. Good jobs—those with family-supporting wages—increasingly require a postsecondary certificate of degree, but educational attainment has failed to keep pace with these changes in the labor market.



SOURCES:
[1] GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY CENTER ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, RECOVERY: JOB GROWTH AND EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS THROUGH 2020" JUNE 26, 2013. HTTPS://CEW.GEORGETOWN.EDU/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2014/11/RECOVERY2020.FR_.WEB_.PDF

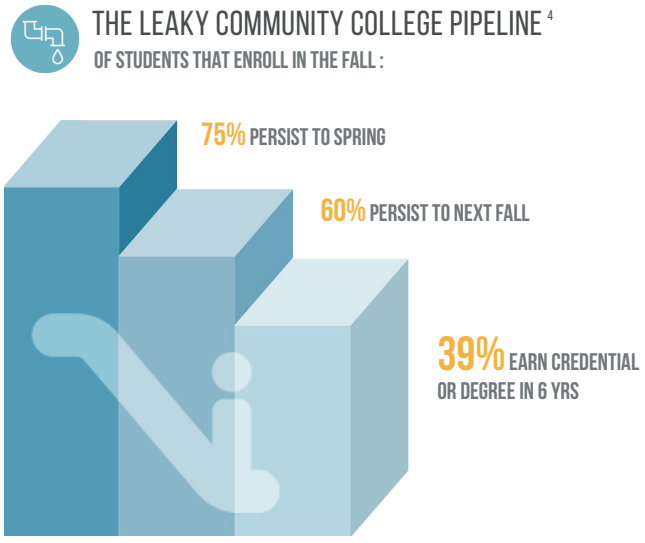
[2] "CERTIFICATES: GATEWAY TO GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT AND COLLEGE DEGREES," JUNE, 2012. HTTPS://CEW.GEORGETOWN.EDU/REPORT/CERTIFICATES

TIMES OF OPPORTUNITY AND PROMISE

Community colleges have answered the call to increase student success, through a variety of innovations such as taking on redesigns of developmental education, building more industry-aligned programming, and establishing stronger systems of student support. Through initiatives supported by philanthropy and government, a number of highly successful models have emerged that show the way to higher rates of college completion and job attainment.

AND SOME DISAPPOINTMENT

Despite a great deal of innovation, the majority of promising new approaches remain just models, or project-related small-scale efforts to demonstrate new approaches. And because they have remained small, they have not had a meaningful impact on the measures of community colleges success. Certificate and degree completion rates remain stubbornly low, with most students entering not college ready,[3] and time to completion remains stubbornly high.



SOURCES:
[3] 68% OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS REQUIRE AT LEAST SOME DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION. WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES. HTTP://CCRC.TC.COLUMBIA.EDU/MEDIA/K2/ATTACHMENTS/WHAT-WE-KNOW-ABOUT-DEVELOPMENTAL-EDUCATION-OUTCOMES.PDF. JAGGARS AND STACEY.

[4] COMMUNITY COLLEGE FAQS - HTTP://CCRC.TC.COLUMBIA.EDU/COMMUNITY-COLLEGE-FAQS.HTML. JAGGERS AND XU.

INTRODUCTION

THE IMPERATIVE: BRING INNOVATION TO SCALE

JFF has led or supported several large-scale community college reform initiatives, including Accelerating Opportunity, Student Success Centers, and the Gulf Coast IT Consortium (GCITC), a Round 2 Department of Labor Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) initiative grantee, and we have learned a lot along the way, especially about what it takes to scale promising innovations. We know there is an urgent need to apply our knowledge about what works to make fundamental lasting change to complex systems. Building discrete successful programs is not enough; innovations with evidence of success must be implemented across institutions and community college systems.

Scaling innovation has proved challenging for a number of reasons. In higher education, as in other domains, people are often resistant to changing the "way things have always been done." Scaling an innovation beyond a single department or institution often means confronting both structural and cultural barriers. Models of governance and relationships among entities at state and college levels can affect the likelihood of successful scaling efforts. And ultimately, scaling requires large investments of time, money, and human resources. In the end, however, scaling is imperative if higher education is to truly "move the needle" on the success of underprepared learners and institutionalize change for the long term.

Through a concerted effort to scale success, community colleges can truly live up to their promise as institutions that support access to meaningful credentials, providing opportunity for everyone to build a family-supporting career.

INTRODUCTION

SHARING OUR LEARNING

This guide addresses the urgent need for scaling innovation in community colleges. It brings together lessons from across Jobs for the Future's work over the past decade to help leaders understand what supports scaling and plan their own scaling process. Three initiatives that have been critical to our learning are described here:

Accelerating Opportunity represents an $18 million investment to support the redesign and integration of adult basic education and postsecondary level career and technical education. Over four years, the initiative has grown from 32 colleges in four states to over 85 colleges in seven states (Arkansas, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi). JFF managed the initiative and provided technical assistance to sites throughout its duration.

Through the U.S. Department of Labor's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) initiative, nine community and technical colleges from Mississippi and Louisiana formed the **Gulf Coast IT Consortium** to address the critical challenges facing trade-impacted workers and to meet the high demand for IT workers in their regions. JFF served as a technical assistance partner to the Consortium. The colleges responded to the significant economic need to develop evidence-based career pathway programs leading to industry-valued credentials and degrees for TAA impacted workers, students who have recently dropped out of high school, and students who are interested in the program. The Consortium served over 2,000 students over the grant period.

JFF and our partners assisted the Consortium to implement a groundbreaking IT curriculum based on the Accelerating Opportunity model pairing adult basic skills instruction with technical training to accelerate learning and promote completion. The results have been impressive, with Mississippi scaling elements of the model statewide to all 13 community colleges by leveraging the TAACCCT investment with support from the Kellogg Foundation.

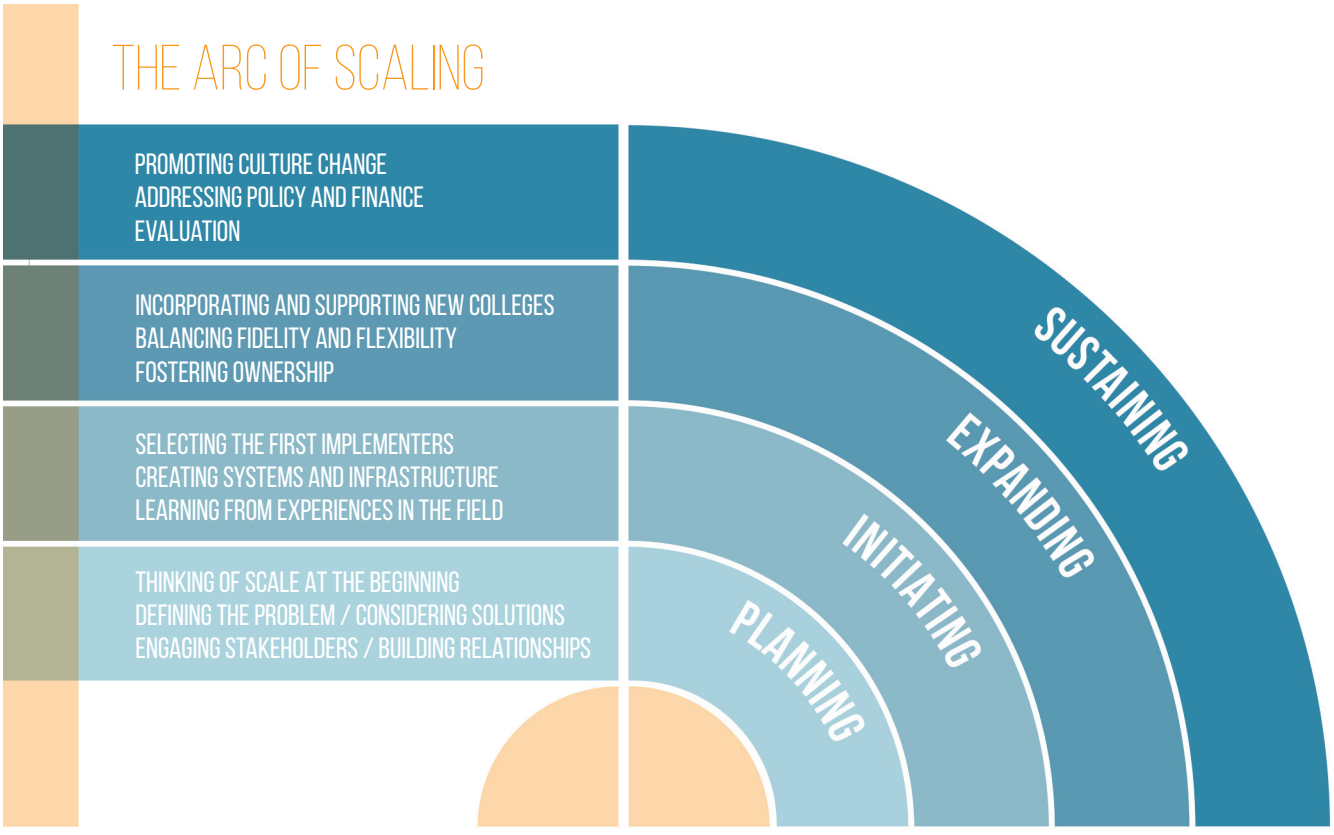
Student Success Centers organize a state's community colleges around common action to improve persistence and completion. JFF leads the Student Success Center Network with support from The Kresge Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The network has grown from four original states (Arkansas, Michigan, Ohio, and Texas) funded between 2010 and 2013, with the addition of three more states (California, Connecticut, and New Jersey) in 2013. As of January 2016, five more states (Hawaii, New York, North Carolina, Virginia, and Washington) have joined the Student Success Center Network through support from The Kresge Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

INTRODUCTION

FOUR PHASES OF SCALING

JFF's report Thinking Big: A Framework for States on Scaling Up Community College Innovation, identified four phases of scaling that apply, whether scale occurs across an institution or a state.

- **PLANNING** During this phase, the innovation to be scaled is identified and plans are made for testing and scaling it across a system, state, or institution.
- **INITIATING** In this phase, scaling leaders identify early implementers of the innovation. This can also be a pilot phase, whether the innovation is implemented at a single or multiple institutions. It is a period of learning and reflection.
- **EXPANDING** This is the phase of broadening the scaling effort, bringing more colleges or departments into a scaling effort and altering policies, structures, and culture to support innovation.
- **SUSTAINING** Planned from early on, this is the phase of identifying the resources and solidifying the structural and policy changes needed to sustain innovation.



INTRODUCTION

CRITICAL FACTORS IN SCALING

The process of scaling is ultimately one of systems change within and across colleges. Scaling changes the way people and entities work and interact. To make change last, innovation must become part of the "way people do business."

Whether innovation is being scaled across a state or college, some things hold true:

- **Strategic thinking** is necessary for scaling innovation. It is required to plan, mobilize, and allocate resources, reflect on progress, and make course corrections.
- **Stakeholder engagement** is required to initiate and implement change. In addition to state and college leaders and partner organizations, engaging faculty at all steps in the process is especially critical.
- **Leadership** is essential to help set vision, mobilize resources, establish accountability, and support progress. Leadership should be shared across system and institutional levels to promote buy-in and ownership of innovation.
- **Networks** foster continued peer learning, model refinement, and support for innovation. This is critical, as scaling is a process of learning. Networks among faculty, college staff and high-level leaders (i.e., chancellors and presidents) can be drawn on to promote and sustain scaling efforts.
- **Data** play an important role throughout the scaling process—to help identify problems to be addressed, provide formative feedback on program development, demonstrate success, and build support for the innovation.
- **Policy** can support or hinder the process of scaling—at both state and college levels. Policy is an important dimension of the context of scaling to be analyzed and adjusted.
- **Communication** is critical to ensure understanding of the model being scaled and the goals for scaling, to communicate progress, share successes, and build buy-in.
- **Resources** are vital to the process of scaling. These include not only dollars to support scale but the time, energy, and attention of multiple staff.

SCALING: AN OVERVIEW

KEY CONCEPTS	KEY QUESTIONS	PHASES		
	PLANNING	INITIATING	EXPANDING	SUSTAINING
STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT	What and how do we want to scale?	Who should be the first to implement the innovation?	How do we involve more colleges/departments?	What aspects of the innovation merit sustaining?
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT/ OWNERSHIP	Who needs to be involved in scaling?	Where can we find champions?	How can we move ownership of the innovation to levels beyond system or college leadership?	How do we maintain commitment to the innovation over time?
LEADERSHIP	What leaders should be part of the process of determining what and how to scale?	Where do we need leadership to support early implementation?	How can we cultivate leadership at multiple levels (e.g., state, college, department)?	How can leaders ensure that the innovation is reflected in " the way things are done" now?
LEARNING & NETWORK DEVELOPMENT	How can we better understand the problem and potential solutions to be scaled?	How can we ensure we are learning from early implementation?	How can we continue to learn from expanded implementation?	How can we maintain a learning network over time?
DATA	What outcomes do we need to track?	What can we learn from early results?	How can data help us tell our story?	How can our results help to sustain the work?
POLICY	How might policy affect the goals of the innovation?	How can policy help/hinder implementation?	How can policy support expansion of the innovation's reach?	What policy changes can help support the innovation over time?
COMMUNICATION	Who needs to know about our scaling plans?	How can we make sure everyone involved understands the innovation?	How can we tell our success stories to build buy-in and expand the work?	What kind of communication about the innovation is needed over time?
RESOURCES	How much will it cost to implement the innovation?	What resources – financial and human – are needed for implementation?	What long-term sources can we use for funding?	What funds can be shifted from elsewhere to fund the innovation?

PHASE 1

PLANNING

KEY CONCEPTS	GUIDING QUESTIONS
STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT	What problem are we trying to solve? What do we want to scale? How? Should we focus on breadth (spreading across more colleges) or depth (spreading an approach across departments), or both?
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	Who needs to be involved (internally and externally)? What are appropriate roles?
CONTEXT	What else is happening that can be leveraged to support our scaling efforts? How can our work contribute to other efforts?
DATA	What outcomes will we want to track for learning and continuous improvement? Who will evaluate the innovation?
POLICY	How can/does policy promote or inhibit the goals of our innovation?
COMMUNICATION	Who needs to know about our scaling plans? How can we communicate our plans?
RESOURCES	How much will it cost to implement the innovation? What sources of funding are available?

PHASE 1 - PLANNING

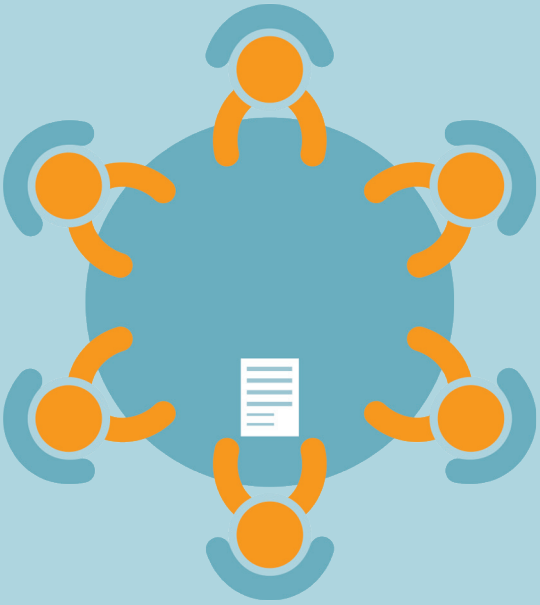
SCALING IN PRACTICE: PLANNING INNOVATION AT MONROE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Scaling is an intentional process. This example shows how Monroe Community College applies a framework to develop strategy, engage stakeholders, and encourage ownership of change.

As they seek to innovate, leaders at Monroe Community College (MCC) in Rochester, NY, employ a framework to organize planning, testing, and implementing change. President Anne Kress notes that after a few years of observing how people can get excited about a good idea but don't always follow through, the college put together a framework, which they call "100 Days to Innovation at MCC: One Bite at a Time." The framework outlines a set of questions around the criteria for selecting a project, such as fit with the college strategic plan and larger student completion framework, relationship to expenditures and revenues, potential impact and realistic completion timeframe. In addition to laying out steps for planning, testing, and implementing with designated check-in points, the framework addresses ownership of the project, required support from the president's staff, and benchmarks of progress.

The process requires a lot of discussion among faculty and staff, and often, Kress points out, the president is not the best messenger about an issue. The people on the "frontlines" —working the admissions or financial aid desks, for example—are best suited to convey information to faculty and staff on how current systems are working and the barriers they pose to students.

Feedback from staff on the framework has been positive as people appreciate the ability to focus on one project at a time as well as the insights gained from working with staff from across the school.



ELEMENTS OF THE 100 DAYS PLANNING FRAMEWORK:

- ORGANIZES PLANNING, TESTING, AND IMPLEMENTING CHANGE
- ADDRESSES FIT WITH COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN, STUDENT COMPLETION FRAMEWORK, RELATIONSHIP TO EXPENDITURES/REVENUES
- ADDRESSES OWNERSHIP OF THE PROJECT BY REQUIRING DISCUSSION AMONG FACULTY AND STAFF
- CONSIDERS BARRIERS AS WELL AS WHAT'S WORKING IN CURRENT SYSTEMS

PHASE 1 - PLANNING

ACTION STEPS

GOALS AND PURPOSE	• Engage a broad group of stakeholders in planning • Define the problem to be solved, drawing on relevant data and stakeholder insights • Identify the evidence-based solution(s) to be scaled
STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT	• Establish goals for scaling, benchmarks, and measures of success • Engage staff and faculty from departments within the college to discuss plans and implications of implementation • Plan for an evaluation to monitor progress and support innovation
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	• Determine roles and responsibilities for collaborators in scaling • Ensure someone is responsible for ongoing communications and convenings
CONTEXT	• Identify existing priorities and reform efforts that can support the scaling effort
DATA	• Define key outcomes and establish an evaluation plan
POLICY	• Conduct state and institutional policy audits • Identify and analyze the latest evidence-based state policy recommendations • Set goals for policy change
COMMUNICATION	• Establish a communications plan, considering key audiences and initiative milestones • Explain the rationale and plans for change
RESOURCES	• Determine the resources that will be required to implement the innovation • Identify state- and college-level resources to mobilize

PHASE 2

INITIATING

KEY CONCEPTS	GUIDING QUESTIONS
STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT	Who should be the first to implement a new model or expand on a pilot?
SYSTEMS AND INFRASTRUCTURE	What needs to be in place to support early implementation? What existing systems might need to change?
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	Who needs to be involved at which levels? Where can we find champions? Who might resist this change and how can we conduct outreach to them?
LEADERSHIP	What kind of support do we need from leaders? Where do we need leaders? How can we cultivate leadership at multiple levels?
SUPPORTS TO IMPLEMENTATION	What kinds of professional development will be needed? By whom? What are ways to encourage implementation?
LEARNING AND NETWORK DEVELOPMENT	How can we ensure that we are all learning from the early implementation of innovation? How can technology help?
DATA	What do data on outcomes suggest for improving the innovation?
POLICY	How can/does policy promote or hinder implementation?
COMMUNICATION	How can we make sure that everyone involved understands the innovation? What information can we gather from early implementation to build support for the innovation?
RESOURCES	How much does it cost to implement? What sources can we draw on for funding? What kind of faculty capacity is required?

PHASE 2 - INITIATING

SCALING IN PRACTICE: LAUNCHING ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY IN ILLINOIS

Initiating a new programmatic model across multiple colleges can be challenging, especially when the new model involves changes to how colleges recruit, instruct, and support students.

This example shows how one state used stakeholder engagement, professional development, and communications to lay the groundwork for successful implementation.

The Illinois Community College Board started laying the groundwork for initiating the implementation of Accelerating Opportunity at the beginning of the nine-month design phase, putting into place systems and infrastructure to support participating colleges and build widespread buy-in for the goals of the initiative over four years of implementation and scaling.

The state leadership team involved college stakeholders from the beginning, investing their own resources to help colleges jump-start the implementation process. They also established a professional development structure, the Transitions Academy, to both prepare the first round of colleges to implement AO and lay the groundwork for later expansion of the model to additional colleges. The yearlong Transitions Academy provides training for team teachers, college navigators, and administrators; structured planning time for college teams; and multiple opportunities for peers to learn from each other's experiences with early implementation.

These early efforts to involve colleges in the planning process helped generate multiple champions for Accelerating Opportunity, including faculty and leadership. Illinois also made a deliberate effort to keep AO on the radar of senior leadership: the initiative was a recurring item on the agenda for the monthly meetings with all college presidents. At the state level, the leadership team worked to engage partners from across adult education, career and technical education, the Department of Commerce, and staff from the Governor's Office.

WHAT WORKS: LAUNCHING ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY

- INVOLVE COLLEGE STAKEHOLDERS
- ESTABLISH A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRUCTURE
- CREATE PEER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
- HAVE MULTIPLE FACULTY/LEADERSHIP CHAMPIONS
- ENGAGE DIVERSE PARTNERS

PHASE 2 - INITIATING

ACTION STEPS

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT	• Develop a plan and a transparent process for selecting early adopters
SYSTEMS AND INFRASTRUCTURE	• Establish and communicate guidelines and expectations around implementation, communication, scheduling, and data collection
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	• Establish a cross-functional team that includes mid-level college staff (registrar, deans, etc.) • Use vehicles such as presidents'/ faculty councils to communicate about and build support for innovation • Involve faculty and encourage them to talk to their peers about the innovation • Identify and cultivate champions. Consider how to connect champions across colleges to build a network
LEADERSHIP	• Encourage state and college leadership to communicate their support for the innovation • Equip leaders with clear and accessible information about the innovation to ensure consistent messaging • Encourage faculty to take on leadership roles
SUPPORTS TO IMPLEMENTATION	• Consider the professional development (PD) needs of instructors, program coordinators, and other staff • Provide PD to faculty on the innovation being scaled and to coordinators to support the change management aspect of scaling • Recognize and reward faculty and institutions that demonstrate exemplary results

PHASE 2 - INITIATING

ACTION STEPS

LEARNING AND NETWORK DEVELOPMENT	• Convene faculty and staff within a college to review progress and identify barriers and opportunities for improvement • Convene faculty, staff and leaders across colleges to promote peer learning and network formation • Establish an internal learning community among faculty/staff implementers • Broker access to experts who can provide on-site technical assistance • Establish mechanisms for two-way feedback • Document barriers to implementation
DATA	• Review early results with key stakeholders to guide improvements
POLICY	• Review and adjust goals for state and/or institutional policy change
COMMUNICATION	• Communicate early and often to ensure common understanding of the innovation, its goals, and the implementation process • Draw on existing communication channels/processes • Gather and share individual success stories and broader evidence of success • Use technology to share successes and inform multiple audiences
RESOURCES	• Determine cost of implementation. Consider cost reallocations; braid funding sources • Leverage state authority over innovation funding and/or performance-based funding • Consider how to use the voices of college leaders to advocate for state policy change and investments

PHASE 3

EXPANDING

KEY CONCEPTS	GUIDING QUESTIONS
STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT	How do we involve more colleges/departments?
BALANCING FIDELITY & FLEXIBILITY	What are the core elements of the innovation that must be consistently implemented? What are the evaluation implications for inconsistent implementation?
OWNERSHIP	How can we move ownership down to the college level?
LEADERSHIP	What kind of support do we need from leaders to expand? How can we cultivate leaders at multiple levels?
LEARNING & NETWORKS	How can we continue to learn from a broader implementation?
INSTITUTIONALIZATION	What systems and structures require permanent change to institutionalize the innovation?
DATA	What data do we have to demonstrate and communicate success?
POLICY	Which policies can be leveraged to expand a promising innovation? Which state structures are required to promote expansion?
COMMUNICATION	How can we ensure consistent messaging about the innovation as it expands? How can we tell our success stories to build buy-in and expand the work?
RESOURCES	What are sustainable options for long-term funding?

PHASE 3 - EXPANDING

SCALING IN PRACTICE: STUDENT SUCCESS CENTERS

Expanding innovation across colleges within a state requires strategy to coordinate among the various efforts undertaken by colleges to improve student success.

This example demonstrates how Student Success Centers can support scaling innovation through coordinating efforts and leveraging opportunities to build networks, foster communication, and promote learning within and across colleges.

In recent years, leadership in community colleges has focused its attention on student completion and credential or degree attainment. The push toward completion has resulted in the proliferation of many student success-focused initiatives, which has created complexities for many colleges as they grapple with different funding streams, leadership teams, and data requirements. In some states, some colleges participate in multiple initiatives while others don't participate in any, and no single entity has been responsible for coordinating colleges' activities—until recently.

Funded by The Kresge and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundations, and coordinated by Jobs for the Future, Student Success Centers are tackling student completion challenges in 12 states—AR, CA, CT, HI, MI, NC, NJ, NY, OH, VA, TX and WA—by working at the intersections of state and college reform efforts. The goal is to build a coherent state strategy to improve outcomes. The Centers provide a vision; a shared venue; and practical support for research, collaboration, policy development, and program design and implementation. The Centers operate in states of differing size and with a variety of governance structures, offering the opportunity to establish a cross-state policy agenda that can be tested in many environments, as a "national laboratory" for completion innovation.

Making sense of all the individual college reform efforts and identifying success in multiple institutions, the Centers spread best practices to maximize the efforts of all the state's colleges. Among other functions, Centers convene college leaders, promote the use of data for decision-making, identify and disseminate evidence-based interventions, and support policy initiatives.

Centers help states to design for scale from the beginning in order to reach more students more quickly. The Michigan Center for Student Success (MCSS), for example, has supported implementation of the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP), pioneered by the Community College of Baltimore County, to redesign developmental education in 19 Michigan colleges. MCSS organizes an annual Student Success Summit to promote peer learning among college leaders, faculty, and staff across the state and launched the Michigan Student Success Network, which offers a quarterly set of one-day meetings on crosscutting topics related to student success.

HOW STUDENT SUCCESS CENTERS WORK

- WORK AT THE INTERSECTION OF STATE AND COLLEGE REFORM EFFORTS
- HAVE A VISION, SHARED VENUE, AND PRACTICAL SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH, COLLABORATION, POLICY DEVELOPMENT, AND PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION
- DESIGN FOR SCALE FROM THE BEGINNING
- PROMOTE PEER LEARNING AMONG COLLEGE LEADERS, FACULTY, AND STAFF

PHASE 3 - EXPANDING

SCALING IN PRACTICE: POLICY CHANGE ACROSS A STATE

Policy can be a support or a hindrance to implementing and scaling innovation. These examples show how policy can be used to both encourage innovation and institutionalize change to support student placement, completion, and advancement. State models of governance for community colleges can impact approaches taken to scaling. The process is facilitated in states with more centralized systems.

The North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges has used policy to incentivize the expansion of best practices to all 58 colleges. At the request of a group of community colleges, the State Board passed a placement and assessment policy that allows colleges to place students in college-level courses based on their performance in high school. The new policy helps minimize placement errors created by an overreliance on assessments and allows the colleges more latitude to experiment with accelerating students' progress and thus supports the development and scaling of innovation.

The experiences of the cadre of colleges participating in Completion by Design, a Bill & Melinda Gates-funded initiative to dramatically improve community colleges, informed the 2014 revision of a Comprehensive Articulation Agreement. The new policy embraces many of the principles of Completion by Design, including providing community college students with transfer pathways with clearly defined goals, courses that are guaranteed to transfer, a better understanding of university requirements, and guidance on mapping academic pathways.

The new articulation agreement had additional ripple effects, including changing the college transfer pathway for the state's dual enrollment program, called Career and College Promise. The program is now structured to include only those courses that are universally transferable to all University of North Carolina institutions as part of the Universal General Education Transfer component.

Another example of state policy supporting scale comes from Louisiana. An effort that began as part of the Gulf Coast IT Consortium (GCITC) project was scaled to become statewide policy regarding prior learning assessment (PLA). In order to accelerate the path to IT credentials for its trade-impacted workers and other adult students, GCITC developed an improved, streamlined approach to validate the knowledge, skills and abilities its students gained in the workplace and to translate them into college credit through PLA. The new, streamlined PLA policy was later adopted as statewide policy to recognize the prior learning of all students across Louisiana, not just those in the GCITC program.

HOW POLICY SUPPORTS SCALING

- INCENTIVIZES EXPANSION OF BEST PRACTICES
- ALLOWS THE COLLEGES MORE LATITUDE TO EXPERIMENT
- SUPPORTS DEVELOPMENT AND SCALE OF INNOVATION
- MAY HAVE ADDITIONAL POSITIVE RIPPLE EFFECTS

PHASE 3 - EXPANDING

ACTION STEPS

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT	• Establish plans for expansion and criteria for inclusion • Develop messaging that will encourage others to participate
BALANCING FIDELITY AND FLEXIBILITY	• Monitor implementation to ensure consistency • Develop guidelines to ensure implementation of non-negotiable elements
OWNERSHIP	• Establish performance outcomes that allow institutions to adapt the model to local context • Embed funding in existing revenue streams so that the innovation doesn't end with the termination of grant funding • Recognize and reward faculty and institutions that demonstrate exemplary results
LEADERSHIP	• Draw on the experience of early adopters to share insights/train subsequent rounds of implementers • Encourage existing college leaders to reach out to their peers about expansion
LEARNING AND NETWORK DEVELOPMENT	• Continue to convene faculty and staff across colleges to promote peer learning and network expansion • Expand each college's internal learning community among faculty/staff implementers • Convene faculty and other college staff to review progress and identify barriers and opportunities for improvement • Ensure that lessons learned and replicable elements (e.g., meeting agendas, workplace templates, etc.) are captured, documented, and easily accessible

PHASE 3 - EXPANDING

ACTION STEPS

INSTITUTIONALIZATION	• Weave the innovation into existing goals/budgets/strategic planning
DATA	• Use evaluation results to build buy-in and expand the network
POLICY	• Examine budget requests, performance-based funding, and innovation funding for levers to support the innovation • Determine which institutional policies serve as facilitators/barriers to expansion of an innovation across a college • Ensure that college business processes are in place to undergird and sustain the adoption of the innovation • Consider ways that state infrastructure can encourage cross-college collaboration, professional development, etc.
COMMUNICATION	• Develop communications materials for state leaders/colleges to leverage when discussing the innovation • Develop an online discussion and archive tool that provides broad access to materials and messages
RESOURCES	• Review cost of implementation to identify potential areas for savings • Braid funding sources

PHASE 4

SUSTAINING

KEY CONCEPTS	GUIDING QUESTIONS
STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT	What aspects of the innovation merit sustaining? Have other innovations been developed in the field that have more promise? Is staying the course the right strategy?
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT/ OWNERSHIP	How do we maintain commitment to the innovation over time? How do we ensure ownership of the innovation within institutions?
LEADERSHIP	How do leaders ensure that innovations are woven into the fabric of the institution over the long term?
LEARNING & NETWORK MAINTENANCE	How can we maintain a network over time to share lessons and expand the community of practice? What level of network makes sense on an ongoing basis?
INSTITUTIONALIZATION	How can we ensure that systems and culture continue to support the innovation? Where does innovation need to be embedded to be sustained?
DATA	How can we use evaluation results to build support for sustaining the innovation?
POLICY	What policy changes are needed to support the innovation over time?
COMMUNICATION	What kind of communication about the innovation is needed over time? For what purpose? For what audience?
RESOURCES	What sources can we use for funding? What funds can be shifted from elsewhere to fund the innovation in the long term?

PHASE 4 - SUSTAINING

SCALING IN PRACTICE: SUPPORTS TO SUSTAINING INNOVATION IN LOUISIANA

Two critical supports to scaling are data and resources. These elements contribute to sustainability as resources support ongoing work and data provide the information required for leaders to determine what and how to sustain. This example shows how one state improved its student data infrastructure to provide information that supports ongoing learning to inform strategy development and communication of success.

In addition, the state also mobilized significant public and philanthropic resources to institutionalize innovation.

In December 2013, the Louisiana Community and Technical College System altered its Statewide Student Profile System to facilitate the coding and tracking of students for its Gulf Coast IT Consortium (TAACCCT) grant, as well as for any future special initiative or federal or state grant for any student. The data tracking enhancements include the ability to match student unit record level data with Louisiana's state wage and labor records.

This change facilitates integrated analysis of regional job trends, postsecondary education credentials, and labor market results. Such analysis can provide critical information for determining effective programs to be scaled and provide evidence to build buy-in for innovation.

In 2014 Louisiana's governor signed into law the Workforce Investment for a Stronger Economy initiative (WISE), a $40 million fund to incentivize higher education institutions to attract private investment for training and education in high-demand fields. The Louisiana Community and Technical College System used the experiences from its Gulf Coast IT Consortium and Accelerating Opportunity initiatives to leverage a $1 million investment from JPMorgan Chase Philanthropy, matched by $4 million from the WISE fund, resulting in a total of $5 million to scale career pathways statewide.

WAYS DATA SUPPORT SCALING

- HELP DEFINE THE PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED
- DEMONSTRATE EFFECTIVENESS
- INFORM CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
- BUILD BUY-IN AMONG STAKEHOLDERS
- HELP ATTRACT NEW RESOURCES

PHASE 4 - SUSTAINING

ACTION STEPS

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT	• Analyze all feedback and evaluation results to determine the viability of innovation, changes needed, etc. • Monitor new research and other developments in the field that might suggest a shift in course or adjustment to the model
OWNERSHIP	• Convene stakeholders to review how the innovation continues to contribute to larger state/college goals for student success in order to foster sustained commitment
LEADERSHIP	• Encourage colleges to assume the sustainability of this innovation in their budgets through levers such as performance-based funding
LEARNING AND NETWORK MAINTENANCE	• Determine if the need still exists for a learning network and what level is appropriate to maintain it with available resources
INSTITUTIONALIZATION	• Consider at what point the strategies and practices of a "project" should evolve into "how the college does business" • Review the policies, processes and practices that will be required to ensure institutionalization over the long term
DATA	• Integrate use of evaluation results into sustainability planning and continue data collection to monitor ongoing implementation
POLICY	• Develop messaging and materials to encourage state lawmakers to support and institutionalize the innovation • Consider which policies serve as facilitators/barriers to expansion of the idea across colleges
COMMUNICATION	• Communications should have evolved away from describing a "project" or "innovation" to folding the innovation into how the colleges do business
RESOURCES	• The innovation should now be fully budgeted for and not seen as an add-on or extra

CONCLUSION

LOOKING AHEAD: FROM SCALING TO SYSTEMS INTEGRATION

If there is anything we have learned about scaling from a decade of working across and within several national reform initiatives over the past decade, it's how difficult and elusive it is.

However, we continue to believe that more significant emphasis on scaling is essential for impacting important national postsecondary student success goals and meeting the skill demands of today's complex jobs marketplace.

THE WAY FORWARD: SYSTEM INTEGRATION

As we consider how best to achieve impact at scale, we conclude that the next phase of work and set of investments must include more focus on the concept of systems integration.

The push for systems integration has been emerging over the past five years, amplified in evaluation and research by organizations like MDRC, the Community College Research Center, Jobs for the Future, and Achieving the Dream, Inc., among others.

We believe that scale is not possible if discrete interventions or standalone programs continue to proliferate. In fact, they present some of the strongest barriers to student success. Systems integration, at its core, acknowledges the many silos and barriers in place within state community college systems and at colleges, and seeks to blur those lines in ways that promote learning and credential attainment.

"We have implemented a lot of these strategies,but isolated reforms do not add up to transformative change."

—Community college engineering faculty member

"We're piloting ourselves to death and not really thinking about how we do long-term shifts."

—College administrator, *Inside Higher Ed*

CONCLUSION

SUMMING UP SCALING AND LOOKING AHEAD: SHIFT TO SYSTEMS INTEGRATION

Systems integration can take a number of forms at both the community college systems level and at the institutional level:

INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEMS INTEGRATION EXAMPLES

- **Integrating instruction and student support services**
- **Holistic intake, assessment, advising, and orientation**
- **Co-enrollment models with adult/ developmental education and college level courses**
- **Integrating discrete data systems to bring together early alert systems and course management platforms**

STATE SYSTEMS INTEGRATION EXAMPLES

- **WIOA Unified State Plan Development and Implementation**
- **State Agency Braided Funding Strategies**
- **Collective Impact Initiatives**
- **Data Systems Integration (P-20 data warehouse; cross system student tracking)**

Scaling Systems Integration requires the very same processes outlined in the four phases of scaling. For example, when undertaking a state-level braided funding strategy:

- **PLANNING** During this phase, the innovation to be scaled is identified and plans are made for testing and scaling it across a system, state, or institution.
- **INITIATING** In this phase, scaling leaders identify early implementers of the innovation. This can also be a pilot phase, whether the innovation is implemented at a single or multiple institutions. It is a period of learning and reflection.
- **EXPANDING** This is the phase of broadening the scaling effort, bringing more colleges or departments into a scaling effort and altering policies, structures, and culture to support innovation.
- **SUSTAINING** Planned from early on, this is the phase of identifying the resources and solidifying the structural and policy changes needed to sustain innovation.

As we look to the next decade of catalyzing innovation, building evidence, and scaling what works, we believe systems integration presents one of the most promising strategies toward achieving stronger student success. We are excited to help the field get there!

TO LEARN MORE:

Resources on Scaling

From JFF at **www.jff.org**

Thinking Big: A Framework for States on Scaling Up Community College Innovation

http://www.jff.org/publications/thinking-big-framework-states-scaling-community-college-innovation

Policy Meets Pathways: A State Policy Agenda for Transformational Change

http://www.jff.org/publications/policy-meets-pathways-state-policy-agenda-transformational-change

Heavy Lifting: The State Capacities Required for Scaled Developmental Education Reform

http://www.jff.org/publications/heavy-lifting-state-capacities-required-scaled-developmental-education-reform

Other Useful Resources

More to Most: Scaling Up Effective Community College Practices, MDC

www.more2most.org

Transformative Change Initiative of the Office of Community College Research and Leadership (OCCRL)

http://occrl.illinois.edu/projects/tci/

Case-Informed Lessons for Scaling Innovation at Community and Technical Colleges by Derek Price, Jennifer McMaken, Georgia Kioukis. DVP-PRAXIS and Equal Measure, June 2015.

http://www.equalmeasure.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Catalyst-Fund-Evaluation-Report-FINAL-060815.pdf

Information on Initiatives

Accelerating Opportunity

www.jff.org/accelerating-opportunity

Gulf Coast IT Consortium

http://gulfcoastittraining.com

Student Success Centers

http://www.jff.org/SSC