Innovations in College Access: Challenges and Lessons Learned from Investing in Innovation (i3) Grantees

An i3 College Access and Success Community co-authored paper

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I. INTRODUCTION

In May 2017, the i3 College Access and Success community embarked on a project to compile shared challenges and lessons learned as a resource for fellow i3 College Access and Success grantees, the larger community of i3 grantees, and the broader field of college access. Through this project, the authors discovered that many of the key challenges i3 College Access and Success grantees faced were not necessarily specific to their college access work, but related to the work of creating change and innovation and strong partnerships. As such, this paper may be of interest to all i3 grantees—regardless of whether their projects relate to college access and success—as well as to individuals working in the field of college access.

The remainder of this chapter introduces the i3 program and describes the i3 College Access and Success community and the development of this paper.

Chapter 2 provides highlights of the key challenges i3 College Access and Success grantees reported, and maps the challenges to the grantee profiles in Chapter 4.

Similarly, Chapter 3 shares key lessons learned, mapping the lessons learned to the grantee profiles in Chapter 4.

Finally, Chapter 4 contains grantee profiles providing at-a-glance information about each participating grantee, as well as more in-depth discussion of their strategies, challenges, and lessons learned.

What is i3?[1]

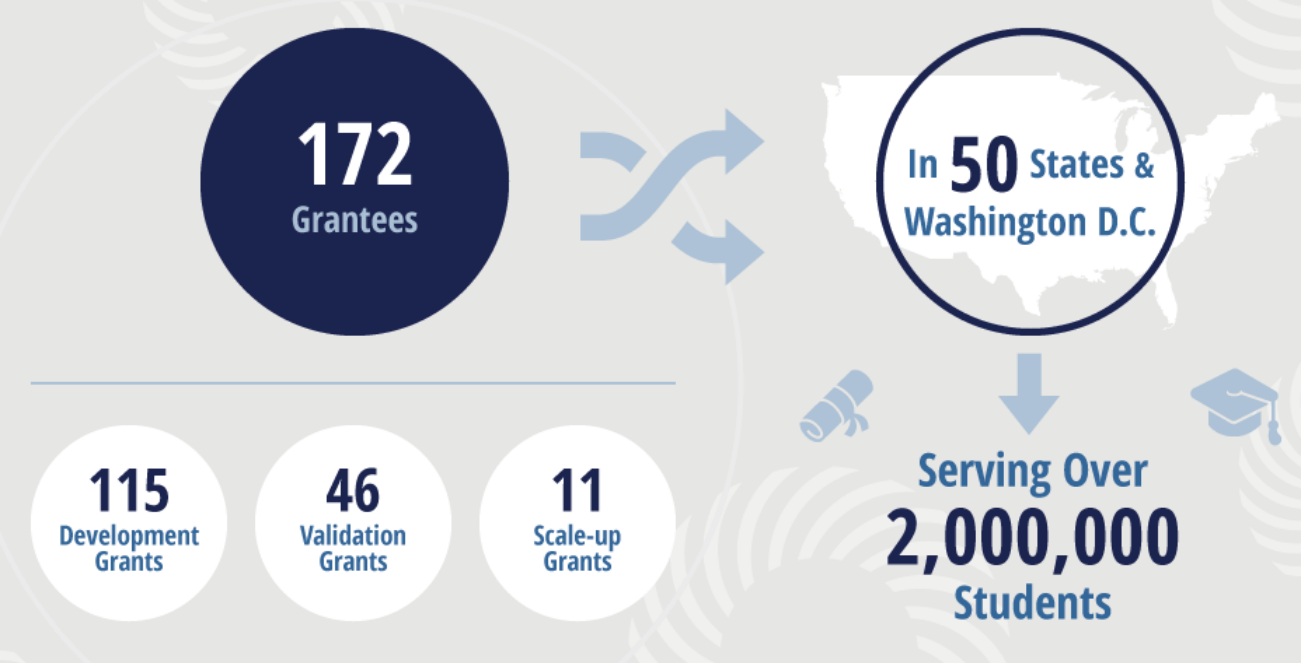
The Investing in Innovation Fund (i3), established under section 14007 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), is a Federal discretionary grant program at the U.S. Department of Education (the Department), within the Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII). It provides funding to support local educational agencies (LEAs), and nonprofit organizations in partnership with one or more LEAs or a consortium of schools.

These grants allow eligible entities to expand and develop innovative practices that can serve as models of best practices, allow eligible entities to work in partnership with the private sector and the philanthropic community, and identify and document best practices that can be shared and taken to scale based on demonstrated success.

The Department awarded 172 i3 grants between 2010 and 2016. I3 grants have served over 2 million students in 50 states and Washington, DC. Interested in learning more about i3? Visit

[1] The information in the "What is i3?" section, including the image on page 2, comes from the i3 Community website. Learn more at https://i3community.ed.gov/.

https://i3community.ed.gov/ or https://innovation.ed.gov/what-we-do/innovation/investing-in-innovation-i3/.



WHAT IS THE i3 PROGRAM'S PURPOSE?

The program's purpose is to provide competitive grants to applicants with a record of improving student achievement and attainment in order to expand the implementation of, and investment in, innovative practices that are demonstrated to have an impact on:

- Improving student achievement or growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, and increasing high school graduation rates; and
- Increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

HOW DOES i3 WORK?

i3 aligns funding amounts with the rigor of supporting evidence. Under this program, the Department awards three types of grants, from greatest amount of funding available to least: (1) "Scale-up grants," (2) "Validation grants," and (3) "Development grants." To be eligible to receive the larger grants, applicants must provide increasingly rigorous evidence of the effectiveness of the strategies, practices, or products that they propose to implement.

i3 has explicit requirements that projects expand their implementation sites. The three types of grants also have different requirements for expansion that correspond with the amount of funding available. The largest grants carry the expectation that the grantee will serve students in a number of districts and/or states.

i3 applicants also must obtain matching funds or in-kind donations from the private sector. The required match is a percentage of the total amount of the i3 grant award made by the Department, and the match percentage is established each year in the Notice Inviting Applications.

WHAT MAKES i3 DIFFERENT?

The novelty of i3's approach means that i3 grantees confront a range of challenges. Below are five of the key characteristics that distinguish i3's approach from many other Federal education grant programs:

- i3 aligns the amount of funding with level of evidence provided by an applicant. The more rigorous the evidence an organization has supporting its intervention, the larger the grant award it can potentially receive.
- i3 supports a portfolio of grants in different focus areas. Existing i3 grants address needs in a wide range of education reform areas, such as teacher and principal effectiveness or improving rural education. They do this using a diversity of strategies and targeting their activities at a range of populations (including students, teachers, principals, parents, and others).
- Through i3's tiered design, the program aims to explicitly scale effective programs by creating a pipeline of funding. i3 helps interventions move towards regional or national scale, while still providing funding for new approaches. i3 requires and provides substantial funding for independent evaluations of effectiveness. Throughout the grant, an evaluation technical assistance contractor helps grantees conduct project evaluations that have the potential to meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Evidence Standards. i3 grantees will be submitting their studies to be reviewed by the WWC, significantly adding to the amount of high-quality research in education. These well-designed, rigorous evaluations will help populate the WWC so that superintendent, principals, teachers, and others can find what works when they need it.
- Lastly, i3 applicants are required to secure matching funds or in-kind donations from the private sector in order to assist in bringing the project's results to scale.

i3 Communities

Since 2012, Westat and its partners EDC and EdScale, LLC have supported the Department and provided technical assistance to i3 grantees. Westat and its partners established several communities within the i3 program to organize groups of committed grantees who build relationships with one another and other external organizations, to share project information within the larger i3 Community and with outside audiences, and to advance the field through their work and sustain momentum of the i3 program's outcomes.

Westat and its partners have provided technical assistance services for 12 active i3 communities, largely organized around the priorities set for the i3 program by the Department:

- College Access and Success
- Dissemination
- Early Learning
- Education Technology
- English Learners
- Improving Rural Achievement

- Parent and Family Engagement
- Promoting STEM Education
- Social Emotional Learning and School Climate (formerly Low Performing Schools)
- Standards and Assessments
- Scaling Up and Sustainability
- Teacher and Leader Effectiveness

Every community is led by a technical assistance provider who facilitates opportunities for i3 grantees to network and to come together to share their work and lessons learned; problem-solve challenging implementation issues; build relationships with each other and leaders in their field; and promote their work together through national venues, such as conferences and publications. Community leads engaged grantees in a variety of ways to ensure multiple types of opportunities for meaningful connections, such as holding monthly meetings via conference call or WebEx, hosting renowned outside speakers and leading outside organizations on relevant topics, and featuring grantees in webinar presentations and in professional conference sessions to speak about their work.

College Access and Success Community

The i3 grant program has prioritized college access initiatives that call for greater support for college readiness and access. This priority reflects a growing recognition across the nation of the importance of college access. The i3 College Access and Success Community brings together i3 grantees that share a focus on improving college access. The community includes about 65 individuals who have participated in one or more community events since 2014. The participants' interests and needs guide community activities, and the community has created ongoing dialogue and opportunities for collaboration through bimonthly community chats and regular community emails.

Developing this paper was a collaborative effort of community. During a May 2017 community meeting, participants discussed a vision and goals for compiling shared challenges and lessons learned as a resource for the community and the broader field of college access. Participants agreed upon the following four guiding questions to which participating grantees would respond:

1. Who/where? Describe the schools/community/population your i3 project serves.
2. What? Describe the activities/strategies you implement through your i3 project.
3. How is it going? Describe changes you have seen since implementing your project. Describe challenges you have faced and have overcome, or challenges with which you continue to grapple.
4. What have you learned? What can others learn from your experiences? What is your biggest success? What do you most want to share with the broader community working towards increasing college access for all students?

Following an initial call for contributions, community members met in July to discuss the findings and the final direction of the paper. During the meeting, the community established the need for a second round of

information-gathering to include "at-a-glance" information, project logic models, and challenges and lessons learned that were specific to college access work. See Appendix A for the final Guiding Questions Template.

Contributing Grantees

Ten College Access and Success grantees contributed to the paper, representing six development grants and four validation grants spanning five different i3 cohorts. Contributing grantees also spanned a variety of project focus areas (such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and social-emotional learning) and target populations (such as English Language Learners and first generation college-goers). Below is information about each of the contributing grantees.

Development grantees

Grantee	Project name	Cohort	Areas of focus	Populations of focus	Read more
Bellevue School District	Re-imagining Career and College Readiness: STEM, Rigor, and Equity in a Comprehensive High School	2010	College-going culture, STEM	English Language Learners, first-generation college-goers, high-poverty students, students with disabilities	p. 21
AVID Central Florida Collaborative	Improving Student Outcomes in a Rural Context	2013	College-going culture	First-generation college-goers, rural	p. 17
Regents of the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA)	Project Exc-EL	2013	College-going culture, STEM, writing/literacy, parent and family engagement	English Language Learners, first-generation college-goers, high-poverty students	p. 39
University of Massachusetts-Boston	Think College Transition Project	2013	College-going culture; early college high schools; college-based, dual-enrollment transition services	Students with intellectual disability and autism	p. 53
College Possible	Closing the Achievement Gap for Low-income Students though Non-cognitive Skill Development	2014	Social-emotional learning/non-cognitive skills	High-poverty students	p. 31
Take Stock in Children	Project UNISON (Uplifting Non-cognitive Skills and Innovation through Student Opportunity Networks)	2014	Social-emotional learning/non-cognitive skills, college-going culture	First-generation college-goers, high-poverty students, rural	p. 43

Validation grantees

Grantee	Project name	Cohort	Areas of focus	Populations of focus	Read more
Council for Opportunity in Education	GO College	2010	College-going culture	First-generation college-goers, high-poverty students	p. 26
Institute for Educational Initiatives at the University of Notre Dame	AP-TIP IN Project	2011	College-going culture, STEM	High-poverty students, historically underrepresented populations in STEM (African American and Hispanic)	p. 11
Jobs for the Future	Early College Expansion Partnership (ECEP)	2012	College-going culture, early college high schools	English Language Learners, first-generation college-goers, high-poverty students	p. 35
Teacher's College, Columbia University	STEM Early College Expansion Partnership (SECEP)	2013	College-going culture, early college high schools, STEM	English Language Learners, first-generation college-goers, high-poverty students, rural	p. 48

2. CHALLENGES

Working to increase college access opportunities—particularly for underrepresented and underserved populations—introduces a number of challenges. Embarking on a new endeavor or implementing a new program presents its own challenges as well. Grantees in the i3 College Access and Success community shared several common challenges related to their *college access work* and related to the *work of innovation*.

Interested in reading more about a particular challenge? Each challenge maps to a more in-depth grantee profile.

Challenges Related to College Access Work

Maybe you have worked to promote a college-going culture in a community underrepresented in higher education. Perhaps you face unique challenges or college access in rural settings. Perhaps you have struggled with access to dual-enrollment courses due to lack of available staff. Sound familiar? These were some of the common challenges among our community doing college access work.

Below are highlights of some key challenges i3 College Access and Success grantees have faced related to their *college access work*.

- **Low expectations/teacher mindset/student mindset.** See Institute for Educational Initiatives at the University of Notre Dame, Regents of the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA), Teacher's College, and University of Massachusetts-Boston to read more.
- **Rural challenges.** See AVID Central Florida Collaborative and Teacher's College to read more.

- **Availability of teachers who can teach college courses for dual-enrollment.** See Jobs for the Future and AVID Central Florida Collaborative to read more.
- **Engaging parents in their student's college planning.** See Take Stock in Children to read more.
- **Supporting first-generation college-goers in steps after acceptance, such as applying for financial aid, enrolling, and registering for classes.** See Bellevue School District to read more.
- **Schools and districts have not necessarily had college access and success work at the core of what they do; *building it into the core of what they do is a challenge.*** See Jobs for the Future to read more.

Challenges Related to the Work of Innovation

Maybe you have experienced turnover in key leadership positions of your participating schools and/or districts. Perhaps you have struggled with district or partner relationships or buy-in. Perhaps the shifting education climate or policies have presented unexpected barriers or challenges to your work—and to your sustainability plans. You are not alone!

Below are highlights of some key challenges i3 College Access and Success grantees have faced related to *implementing a new initiative and doing the hard work of innovation*.

- **Building and sustaining strong relationships and partnerships.** See Chapter 3: Lessons Learned for more.
- **Barriers related to time and traditional school structures.** See Institute for Educational Initiatives at the University of Notre Dame, AVID Central Florida Collaborative, and UCLA to read more.
- **Turnover of administration/leadership/staff in participating districts and schools.** See Take Stock in Children, AVID Central Florida Collaborative, and Teacher's College to read more.
- **Accessing/collecting data and measuring impact.** See AVID Central Florida Collaborative, Council for Opportunity in Education, and University of Massachusetts-Boston to read more.
- **Participating schools/districts coming to the project at different stages of "readiness."** See Jobs for the Future to read more.
- **Logistics of coordinating activities across 18 schools sites.** See College Possible to read more.
- **Changing education climate/policy climate affecting sustainability.** See Institute for Educational Initiatives at the University of Notre Dame to read more.
- **"One of the biggest challenges thus far has been hesitation on the part of a few school administrators who seem to view the presence of the project as an indication that they might have been lacking in their services and that it reflects badly on them that the project has stepped in."** See UCLA to read more.
- **"…as with any experience of significant innovation, we have worked (and sometimes struggled) to recognize how much progress we have made amid the 'messiness' and occasional failures of implementing major change. Looking back… we can see tremendous strides…" See** Bellevue School District to read more.

3. Lessons Learned

Many i3 College Access and Success grantees had challenges or lessons learned related to developing and maintaining strong partnerships. Similar to the challenges grantees in the i3 College Access and Success community reported, grantees shared several lessons learned related to both their *college access work* and the *work of innovation*.

Interested in reading more about a particular lesson? Each lesson learned maps to a more in-depth grantee profile.

Lessons Related to College Access Work

Grantees in i3 College Access and Success community learned valuable lessons about the importance of partnerships with higher education and ongoing professional development. Some shared lessons related to expectations or mindsets about college or a particular intervention. Other grantees shared specific strategies or changes in their models that helped them move forward.

Below are highlights of some key lessons i3 College Access and Success grantees have learned related to their *college access work*.

- **Partnerships with postsecondary institutions/higher education are key.** See Jobs for the Future and University of Massachusetts-Boston to read more.
- **Ongoing professional development/training that is specific to the intervention is essential.** See College Possible, AVID Central Florida Collaborative, and Teacher's College to read more.
- **A mix of reactive and proactive strategies helped overcome teacher mindset about students in Advanced Placement STEM courses.** See Institute for Educational Initiatives at the University of Notre Dame to read more.
- **"It begins with expectations, and building professional and family capacity to see college as a viable option. But once that goal is set, to turn possible into probable, it is critical to provide clear structures and practices to support success."** See University of Massachusetts-Boston to read more.
- **Moving from a central office-driven coaching model to a school-based coaching model led to greater capacity-building, more direct involvement of school staff, and greater buy-in.** See Teacher's College to read more.
- **Combining live presentations with webinars and other online options helped increase the number of students reached.** See Institute for Educational Initiatives at the University of Notre Dame to read more.

Lessons Related to the Work of Innovation

The success of implementing new programs and initiatives often hinges on strong partnerships. Many i3 College Access and Success grantees learned valuable lessons in communication, shared leadership, and other aspects of strong partnerships.

Below are highlights of some key lessons i3 College Access and Success grantees have learned related to *implementing a new initiative and doing the hard work of innovation*.

- **"Transparency and communication about the project and its initiatives are extremely important in order to gain buy-in and support, especially within the schools. Though the start of any program can be somewhat hectic, our groundwork—especially our relationship building—was instrumental in helping us to mitigate any major issues or concerns."** See Take Stock in Children to read more.
- **Scaling "depends on effective leadership at multiple levels, with actors throughout the system who understand and embrace their roles and share accountability for making essential changes in policy and practice."** See Jobs for the Future to read more.
- **Collect and share success stories. Invite decision-makers to events: "They need to be informed about the quantity of work that plays into the great results our schools earn."** See Institute for Educational Initiatives at the University of Notre Dame to read more.
- **In building partnerships, "the importance of understanding the mission of each organization and making sure to pay close attention to what each partnering community organization is trying to accomplish. By aligning missions and services, the project eliminates duplication and helps to provide seamless additional supports and services…"** See UCLA to read more.
- **Access to accurate data is critical.** See Bellevue School District to read more.

4. Meet the i3 College Access and Success Grantees

This chapter presents profiles of the 10 contributing i3 College Access and Success grantees. Participating grantees responded to a variety of questions about their projects, including the populations served by their projects, areas of focus, challenges, and lessons learned. Past and current i3 grantees responded, providing a wide array of past experiences and current projects. The Guiding Questions Template (see Appendix A) was varied slightly for past grantees whose projects had already ended.

Institute for Educational Initiatives at the University of Notre Dame: AP-TIP IN Project

AT A GLANCE

Project type: Validation

Grant Award Year: 2011

Project partners: National Math and Science Initiative; College Board

Contact information: Karen M. Morris, Morris.3@nd.edu

Populations served: High-poverty students; historically underrepresented populations in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) (African American and Hispanic)

Focus areas: College-going culture, STEM

Impact:

# of students impacted by your project	28,215
# of participating K–12 schools	30
# of participating K–12 districts	22
# of participating colleges/universities	1

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

WHO/WHERE? DESCRIBE THE SCHOOLS/COMMUNITY/POPULATION YOUR PROJECT SERVES.

A program of the Institute for Educational Initiatives at the University of Notre Dame, AP-TIP IN is a statewide math-science initiative dedicated to helping Indiana's students' college and career readiness in STEM courses, which can lead to STEM career pathways. Partnering with the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) as part of an i3 Validation grant (2012-2017), our project is premised on proven success using a philosophy of inclusiveness and high expectations for each student to successfully prepare for and participate in academically rigorous coursework, i.e., the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) Program. To date, we have impacted more than 17,000 Indiana students and 280 AP teachers at 30 Indiana High Schools.

WHAT? DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES YOU IMPLEMENT THROUGH YOUR PROJECT.

Our strategies include: (1) open enrollments: develops a culture of inclusiveness and preparation for more students to enroll in AP classes; (2) student support: targeted materials for tutoring, exam prep sessions, and online support made readily available to students; (3) high-quality teacher professional development including (a) 4-day summer institute, (b) fall conference, and (c) mock exam administration and scoring training; (4) teacher support: guidance, mentorship, and material supports from Content Directors; access to and training for online materials including: webcasts, AP exams and quizzes, pacing guides, rubrics and student support materials; and (5) incentives for (a) students, who receive $100 per Qualifying Score (3, 4, or 5) on AP exams in eligible math, science, and English (MSE) courses, and (b) AP teachers who receive $500 for reaching or exceeding a 91 percent AP exam participation rate in their eligible AP classes, and $500 for meeting or exceeding an AP score goal.

HOW IS IT GOING? DESCRIBE CHANGES YOU HAVE SEEN SINCE IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROJECT. DESCRIBE CHALLENGES YOU HAVE FACED AND HAVE OVERCOME, OR CHALLENGES WITH WHICH YOU CONTINUE TO GRAPPLE.

While our results clearly demonstrate the efficacy of the AP-TIP IN program when the program is implemented with fidelity to the NMSI model, the changing climate of education in Indiana has created obstacles. Initially, a change in leadership at the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) within the first year of AP-TIP IN implementation resulted in a lack of support for any AP program. Without IDOE support, we were not able to gain the interest of the education committees in the state legislature. This was not expected, and in hindsight, I wish we would have engaged lobbyists to gain governmental support (the long-term strategy for program sustainability) right at the start. More recently, the challenge is to maintain the attention of the state legislature on college readiness programs as a complement to, rather than a competitor to, career-technical education (CTE) programs. In my perspective, this democratic approach supports students regardless of their post-secondary pursuits.

With no IDOE or state legislative support, the strategy to expand the AP-TIP IN program to new schools in the 2016-17 school year has focused on grants to public and philanthropic agencies. Although we have been modestly successful, this is not a sustainable alternative. Additionally, due to the limitations on funding, the AP-TIP IN program model required scaling back on some aspects to fit the funding restrictions. Our most recent efforts, therefore, have been to find means to support those components that have been key in the model (student and teacher incentives) with private sources. Currently this is promising, but nothing has yet emerged.

DESCRIBE CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED **SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK**.

CHALLENGE #1 –Students Dropping AP courses: The AP-TIP IN program requires that schools increase their enrollments in AP MSE courses using data tools such as the AP Potential Tool. The challenge, however, was to keep students who were new to rigorous coursework from dropping from these courses at the beginning of the school year. The issues surrounding this challenge had to deal with student self-efficacy (i.e., seeing oneself as capable of college-level work at the beginning of the school year), work load, and post-secondary goals.

LESSONS LEARNED #1—Students Dropping AP courses: Our strategies were both proactive and reactive in dealing with this challenge. Many of these strategies emerged in the first year during our monthly conference calls with program administrators at each school and have been implemented at all program schools in years 2 through 5 of the program.

Our proactive strategies included:

- AP-TIP IN participation in AP family nights at the beginning of the school year to inform families about the rigors of AP and the results. Having this “outside” voice from an university faculty member perspective helped validate the message of the school administrator.
- In addition to school-provided materials, provided flyers about why AP courses were so important for ANY post-secondary study. Also tied into some career information (we are working this more recently with the emphasis on CTE programs in these last few years).

- Supporting teachers with materials at the beginning of the school year that help students meet the challenges of AP courses more readily. This is an important role for the AP-TIP IN Content Staff as they often provide teachers with specific strategies that scaffold content with rigor throughout the year.

Our reactive strategies included:

- Training the Guidance Office staff to hold fast on AP course drops. We often found this was the "leaky pipe" in the system. Guidance Office staff felt they were being "kind" to students who complained without realizing they were not holding to the guidelines of the program.
- Establishing a process for dropping an AP course that includes key benchmarks prior to dropping, such as a prescribed number of tutoring hours for the student outside of class; using Khan Academy to re-mediate or move a student ahead in terms of content; frequent meetings between the student and the AP teacher (e.g., often an AP teacher would NOT feel a student is struggling when the student thinks he/she is; this mismatch of perceptions is alleviated with clear communication between student and teacher.); and finally a meeting with the student's family. Only after these have been fulfilled are drops allowed.
- Frequently schools have found that installing a "wait a few weeks before dropping" policy mitigated the number of drops. By waiting, students have the chance to get to know the AP teacher and the course and the "knee jerk" reaction to drop is diminished.

CHALLENGE #2—Teacher mindset about AP: AP courses have historically been the realm of "high ability" or "gifted and talented" students. Teachers' belief in and practice within this historical context is challenging for a program that considers AP courses as college readiness *for all*. Our challenge has not only been changing the practice of teachers to support all learners, but also to change this MINDSET. We are still working on this.

LESSONS LEARNED #2—Teacher mindset about AP: The College Board provides powerful data about learners with the AP Potential Tool (based on PSAT data—which is paid for by the state so everyone can gain access to it) and the annual Instructional Planning Reports generated after every AP exam. We were surprised to learn that few teachers knew about the AP Potential Tool. We worked with Guidance Office Staffs to get this data into teachers' hands and involve AP teachers in the process of identifying students for their courses. We found that when AP teachers were engaged with the data, their preconceptions about those students that were not previously tracked into the "high ability" or "gifted and talented" programs changed somewhat as they came to realize that these students had the potential for success in AP courses.

Additionally, while many teachers received their Instructional Planning Reports (IPRs) from the College Board, very few of them knew how to use this information to drive instruction. The AP-TIP IN Content Staff spend time with teachers on their IPRs and together they set AP course goals for the subsequent school year.

CHALLENGE #3—Extra Time on Task—Saturdays: One component of the AP-TIP IN program was to provide extra time-on-task with Saturday study sessions. These were implemented three times during the school year for each school involved in the program: Fall, Winter, and Spring (before AP exams). Our goal was to get 60 percent participation from each school for every event, and we rarely got 50 percent; and as the school year proceeded, participation rates declined. Analyzing the data, we found that few students from our historically

underrepresented groups attended the Saturday sessions, which were designed with their participation in mind. Incentives to participate made no difference.

LESSONS LEARNED #3—Extra Time on Task—Saturdays: Saturdays are difficult for students from historically underrepresented groups. Many of them are working, and we were told could not dedicate three Saturdays during the year to attend the study sessions, regardless of how useful or relevant the sessions would be. If these students have family support, their families were not informed about the study sessions in order to emphasize the need for students to attend; or if students don't have family support, they had no way to get to the school for the study session. Ultimately, we found their life issues had priority over any academic needs; a pragmatic and necessary pathway for them to live.

What we did to overcome this was to provide extra study via webinars. Live presentations were conducted after-school, so teachers and students could attend together (mimicking the Saturday study sessions). Presentations were also recorded so that asynchronous learning could occur with teacher supports. We found that the recorded sessions were downloaded and used at a greater pace than the live sessions were attended. Additionally, we found that students could watch and participate in the live sessions, or download the recorded sessions, to use on their mobile devices; an unexpected advantage. We learned much about conducting webinars and compressed the time from 55 minutes to a 20-minute session with more focus on presenting one topic, with practice. This had the advantage of maintain student interest and we experienced fewer students leave sessions before they ended.

We also became more proactive in recommending Khan Academy support to students—another online learning vehicle. This strategy will have greater impact with the recent announcement of Khan Academy support for students in all AP courses.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED? WHAT CAN OTHERS LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCES? WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST SUCCESS? WHAT DO YOU MOST WANT TO SHARE WITH THE BROADER COMMUNITY WORKING TOWARDS INCREASING COLLEGE ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS?

The results of the AP-TIP IN program are phenomenal. Our schools love it; my colleagues "ooh" and "ahh." Data, however, is NOT a compelling story. In order to gain governmental support, we have to change the hearts and minds of those who make the decisions. Here are some things we have done that have had modest success.

(1) With limited resources, we have been trying to establish our social media network, and have participated in i3-supported events from the technical assistance (TA) teams to that effect.

(2) Additionally, we invite decision-makers to every school, every event, every professional development… they need to be informed about the quantity of work that plays into the great results our schools earn.

(3) With new IDOE leadership starting this 2017, we are frequently meeting with the decision-makers who have the ear of the new state superintendent (who is also "pro-AP"), as well. It is good to have this support in all facets of the government.

In my perspective, my efforts in sustaining the AP-TIP IN program should focus on the growth of our teachers and success of our students. This is our sustainability plan! Some recommendations:

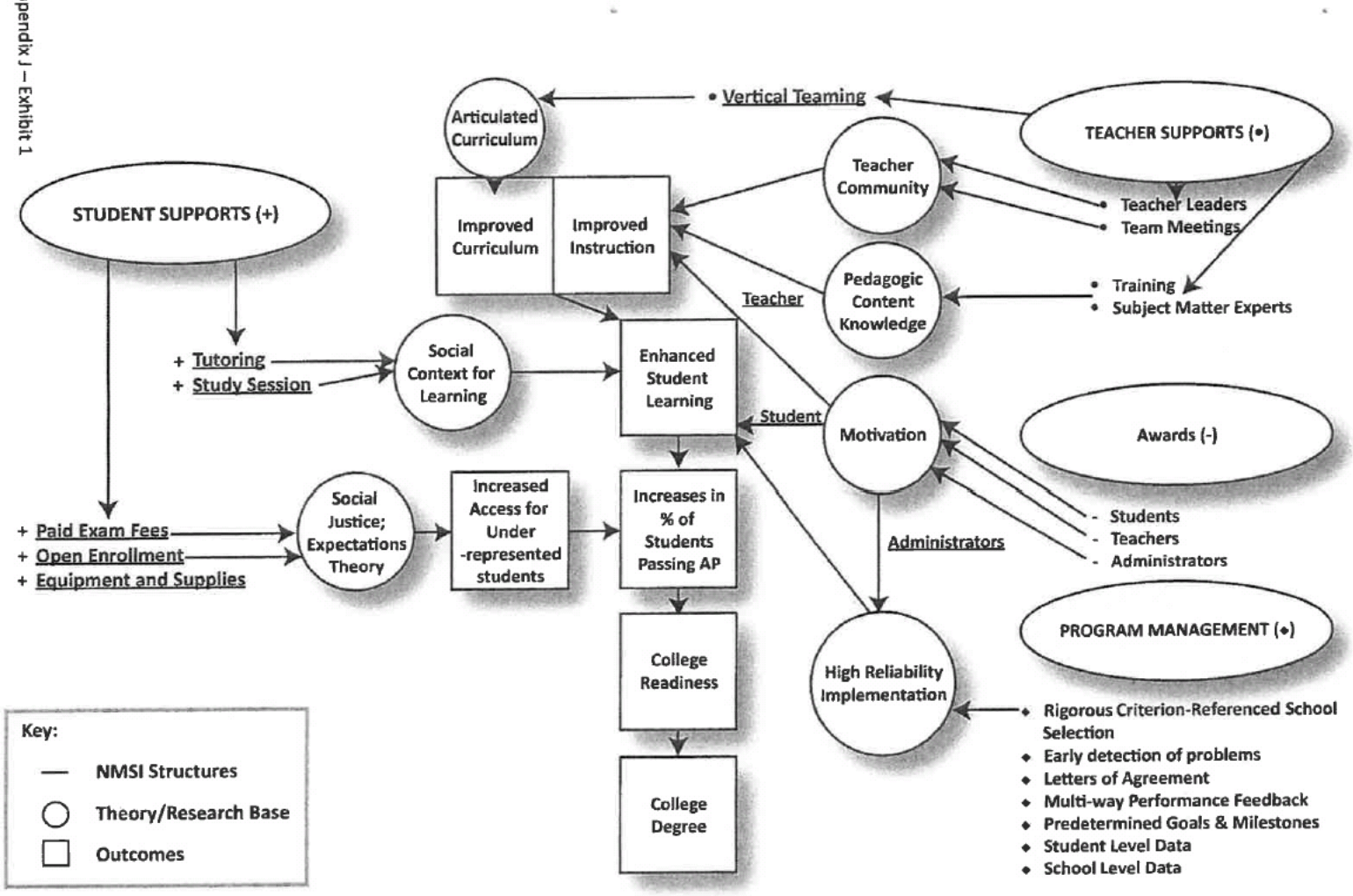
(1) Collect success stories and share them. They are not only compelling tools enhancing sustainability, but also motivators for others.

(2) When reaching out to an individual or a group, don't ask for money, but ask for help. This change in focus has provided me with a wealth of information that I can use for fundraising AND usually produces some funds, no matter how small.

(3) Find ways to collaborate with your "competition." We are stronger together and can both mutually find support with funding.

Logic model

Appendix J – Exhibit 1



AVID Central Florida Collaborative: Improving Student Outcomes in a Rural Context

AT A GLANCE

Project type: Development

Grant Award Year: 2013

Project partners: School District of DeSoto County, Hardee County Schools, The School Board of Highlands County, South Florida State College, Heartland Educational Consortium

Contact information: Sarah Newman, snewman@avid.org

Populations served: First-generation college-goers, rural

Focus areas: College-going culture

Impact:

# of students impacted by your project	700 students/year were directly impacted; 7,670 students/year (estimated sum of school populations) are impacted via our schoolwide work
# of participating K–12 schools	8
# of participating K–12 districts	3
# of participating colleges/universities	1

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

WHO/WHERE? DESCRIBE THE SCHOOLS/COMMUNITY/POPULATION YOUR PROJECT SERVES.

The official partners were three school districts in central Florida (eight secondary schools), a local state college, and a regional consortium service agency. All communities have high levels of unemployment, poverty, and are geographically large and disconnected. College-going rates are very low in these districts. During the 2011-12 school year, the percentage of students who were minorities at the eight schools ranged from 48 to 69, and percentage of students on free and reduced lunch ranged between 69 to 85. Each targeted high school has a branch campus of the local state college nearby, creating four distinct feeder patterns of middle school to high school to college to be aligned.

WHAT? DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES YOU IMPLEMENT THROUGH YOUR PROJECT.

- The three districts engaged in a vertical alignment system that supported collaboration around common challenges that most rural districts face. Key decision-makers focused on aligning systems; instructional practices; and creating a common culture across their feeder pattern, district, and inter-district. Content teacher leaders worked to align best practices across a feeder pattern, to reduce the variability students face when matriculating to the next grade level or between classes during a school year. These collaborative teams empowered teachers to become peer leaders, and allowed administrators to learn from colleagues in like roles with similar challenges.
- A significant number of faculty members engaged in professional learning each year, resulting in more rigor and engagement in classrooms. The professional learning opportunities was extensive and

intensive. This supported better instructional practices, including utilizing best practices that help to scaffold rigorous work, meeting various student needs.

- Schools and districts intentionally worked to shift their beliefs and behaviors resulting in a culture where students are pushed and supported. Students had opportunities to visit college campuses, and hear from college and career guest speakers. Schedules were reviewed to open access and provide more opportunities for students to take rigorous courses.
- In addition to data collected for the grant's performance measures, we also used AVID's own Coaching and Certification Instrument to ensure fidelity. This monitoring tool helps schools strategically plan for growth and sustainability in the four areas of instruction, systems, leadership and culture.

HOW IS IT GOING? DESCRIBE CHANGES YOU HAVE SEEN SINCE IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROJECT. DESCRIBE CHALLENGES YOU HAVE FACED AND HAVE OVERCOME, OR CHALLENGES WITH WHICH YOU CONTINUE TO GRAPPLE.

- We have seen tremendous growth within the districts, some stronger than others, but all have all seen positive change due to implementation of the project.
  - Teachers are using common best practices and methodologies, which provide support for students as they engage in more rigorous courses. The vertical content collaborative plans for specific strategies to be used across the content area. Administration and AVID District Director periodically engage in walkthroughs to assess implementation.
  - Skills and expectations have been articulated from grade level to grade level, and across specific grade levels. More students are matriculating to 10th grade on time, and the graduation rate has risen.
  - Teachers are learning from each other by engaging in classroom walkthroughs where they observe and then debrief, thinking about their own practice.
  - Teachers have become peer leaders in various ways—model classrooms, vertical content leaders, coordination of parent events and school activities, etc. AVID Coordinators and instructional coaches attend walkthroughs with administration to assess implementation.
  - The school campuses created college-going cultures that were both visually encouraging, but allowed for opportunities to learn about opportunities post-high school. Many schools have created college corners in classrooms, displayed college banners and pennants, and decorated bulletin boards to bring college and career awareness.
  - Students have more access to rigorous courses. More sections of honors and Advanced Placement courses are offered in the master schedule. Students who have been underserved now have opportunity to take those courses, and receive the supports they need to be successful.
- There were many challenges that the project faced, particularly due to the rural nature of the communities.
  - There was tremendous turnover in staff year after year. Professional learning was always offered to try to fill the gap, as well as providing embedded professional learning opportunities (i.e.

walkthroughs, after school trainings, etc.), but the percentage of faculty trained was always fluctuating.

- There is only one school that has not had a principal change over the course of the project. Some schools have had multiple principal changes. For example, one high school had four principals in 5 years. Administrative turnover made it hard to have a consistent vision, mission, and expectations that supported the project.
- Schools had a hard time staffing the substitutes necessary to fully execute the vertical meetings necessary.
- Districts have a hard time hiring high qualified teachers' due to their rural location, as well as retaining quality teachers. The districts recruit new teachers from out of state, and some end up leaving the area for other opportunities (both professional and personal).
- Implementation of the vertical alignment system was challenged by three district calendars and proximity.
- Turnover and change challenged the commitment of leadership stakeholders.
- Continued sustainability and follow through after the grant ends requires the districts to communicate and organize on their own, as well as each individual district aligning the work of the project with their district initiatives. Throughout the grant we have worked to support the districts building the structures for sustainability.

DESCRIBE CHALLENGES SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK.

- Students struggled to access dual-enrollment courses because they lacked transportation to the local state college. There was also a lack of secondary teaching staff certified to teach dual enrollment; therefore, they couldn't embed it into their high school master schedule.
- Monitoring and tracking graduates' matriculation into college and their persistence required a membership to the National Student Clearinghouse be purchased. The school districts had no avenue for collecting and compiling this data on their own.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED? WHAT CAN OTHERS LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCES? WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST SUCCESS? WHAT DO YOU MOST WANT TO SHARE WITH THE BROADER COMMUNITY WORKING TOWARDS INCREASING COLLEGE ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS?

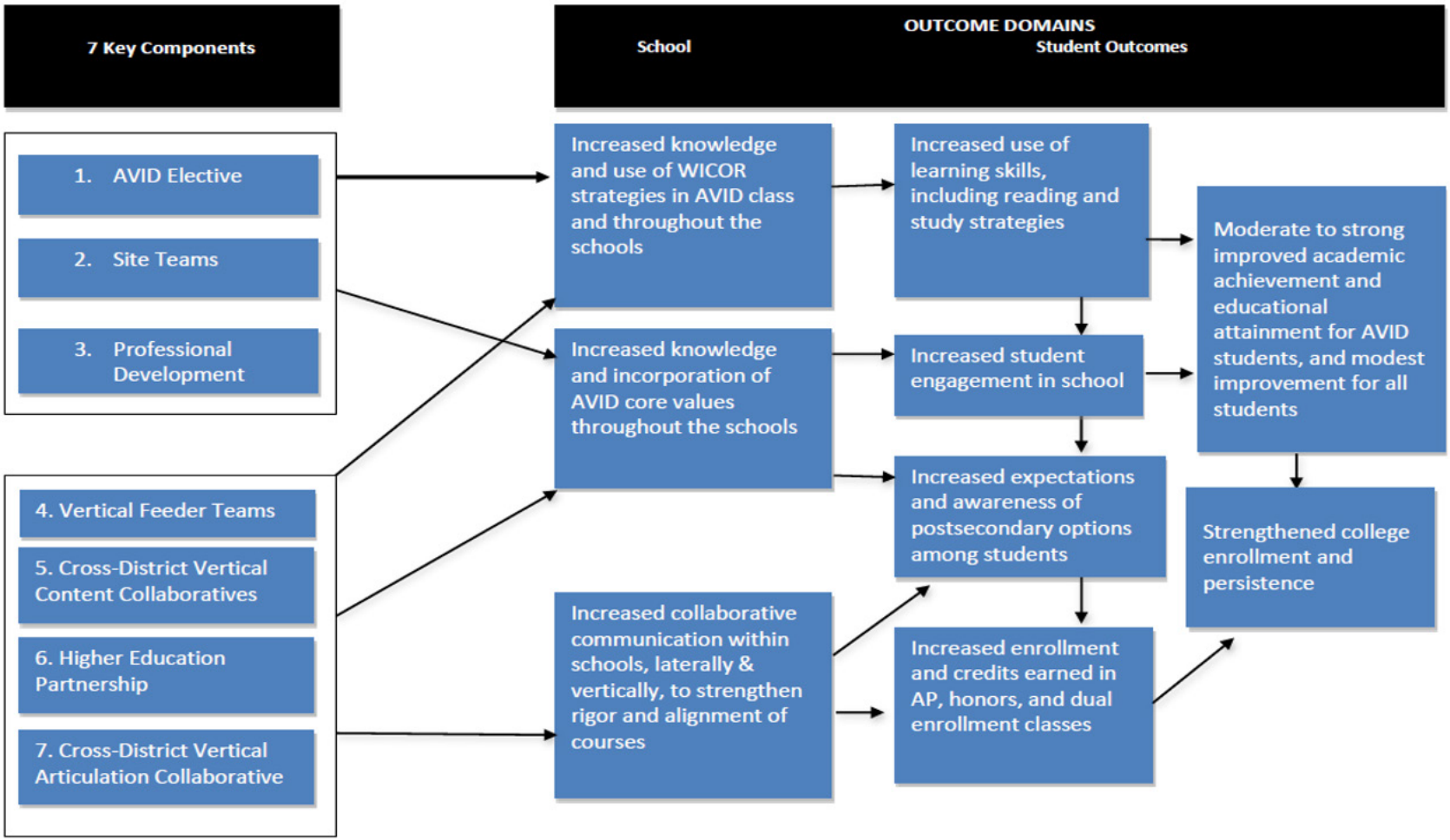
- How to develop systems for college readiness, instruction, and articulation of expectations across and between grade levels. Specifically we have worked with leaders to empower teachers, articulate expectations that teachers utilize strategies learning in professional learning opportunities. Through various collaborative sessions we have modeled for leaders how to structure meetings and make the work relevant.
- Professional learning is a key ingredient, and it must be supported back on the school sites with things such as classroom walkthroughs and follow ups.

- There were many successes, but potentially the biggest is the cultural shift that happened in the communities. There is a growing belief that all students can have opportunities post-graduation, and all should be college and career ready.
  - Two students and one teacher were honored as speakers at AVID Summer Institutes (only 11 teachers and 22 students from across the nation are chosen annually).
- To ensure college access for all students they need to be consistently supported in middle school, high school, and in college. There needs to be calibration between those levels to reduce variability for the students. Common strategies, practices, and language should be used. It needs to be clearly defined and articulated across a campus, and within a feeder pattern, what academic rigor looks like.

DESCRIBE LESSONS LEARNED SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK.

- When there is commitment, optimal conditions, and students are provided with support systems, they can be successful in rigorous coursework.
- When teachers have systems in place to support their trying new instructional strategies, as well as an opportunity to discuss pedagogy, the culture of a school will change significantly.

Logic model


7 Key Components
OUTCOME DOMAINS
School
Student Outcomes
1. AVID Elective
2. Site Teams
3. Professional Development
4. Vertical Feeder Teams
5. Cross-District Vertical Content Collaboratives
6. Higher Education Partnership
7. Cross-District Vertical Articulation Collaborative
Increased knowledge and use of WICOR strategies in AVID class and throughout the schools
Increased knowledge and incorporation of AVID core values throughout the schools
Increased collaborative communication within schools, laterally & vertically, to strengthen rigor and alignment of courses
Increased use of learning skills, including reading and study strategies
Increased student engagement in school
Increased expectations and awareness of postsecondary options among students
Increased enrollment and credits earned in AP, honors, and dual enrollment classes
Moderate to strong improved academic achievement and educational attainment for AVID students, and modest improvement for all students
Strengthened college enrollment and persistence

Bellevue School District: Re-imagining Career and College Readiness: STEM, Rigor, and Equity in a Comprehensive High School

AT A GLANCE

Project type: Development

Grant Award Year: 2010

Project partners: University of Washington Institute for Science and Math Education (partner university), Microsoft Corp, Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC), College Board, George Lucas Educational Foundation, Washington STEM (past partner), Bellevue Schools Foundation

Contact information: Tom Duenwald; duenwaldt@bsd405.org

Populations served: English Language Learners, first-generation college-goers, high-poverty students, students with disabilities

Focus areas: College-going culture, STEM

Impact:

# of students impacted by your project	19,000
# of participating K–12 schools	32
# of participating K–12 districts	1
# of participating colleges/universities	1

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

WHO/WHERE? DESCRIBE THE SCHOOLS/COMMUNITY/POPULATION YOUR PROJECT SERVED.

The project began at one district high school, Sammamish High School (SHS), which serves the most diverse and highest-needs high school student body in the district. Sammamish students speak 43 languages and come from 53 countries; 45 percent of them qualify for free or reduced price meals, and approximately 40 percent of them would be the first in their families to graduate from a 2- or 4-year college in the United States.

Over the course of the grant funding, curriculum units and professional learning strategies that were developed at Sammamish have spread to other schools in the district. We also continue to communicate with and build partnerships with schools and districts throughout western Washington and around the country, especially through our designation as a Microsoft Showcase School.

WHAT? DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES YOU IMPLEMENTED THROUGH YOUR PROJECT.

Our project focused on creating a scalable, sustainable, and fundamental shift in the comprehensive high school learning experience. We have emphasized three areas. First, we have designed and enacted problem-based curricula in both Advanced Placement (AP) and non-AP courses, using problem-based learning (PBL) as a framework to support student growth in key cognitive strategies and college-ready academic behaviors. Second, we have implemented a series of specific supports for underserved students, including intensive PBL partnerships with local industries in a summer program targeting students who would be the first in their

families to graduate from college. Third, we have built capacity in teachers to co-design and co-lead professional learning that has helped them to implement new problem-based curricula and evaluate their effectiveness. Though not originally part of the proposal, a recent commitment in our district toward piloting the use of 1:1 student laptops has added a further dimension of integrating technology into rigorous, authentic instruction.

A model of shared leadership among principals, teachers, and students has been critical to our success. Essential parts of this process include the following:

- Using current research related to college and career readiness to develop locally owned priorities and vision (including the document Key Elements of a Sammamish Classroom, which has anchored the PBL curriculum design).
- Phasing in the design and implementation of PBL curriculum over the 5-year period of the grant, with each year spreading PBL to new teachers and new content areas.
- Providing dedicated, paid time during the day for almost half of the teachers working at SHS during this 5-year period to redesign course curriculum using the Key Elements–authentic problems, authentic assessment, student collaboration, student voice, academic discourse, culturally responsive instruction, and the use of expertise from a range of sources.
- Creating leadership positions filled by teachers working half time in the classroom to ground the work of leadership in the realities of day-to-day instruction.
- Enlisting a wide variety of staff members in designing and leading sessions of professional development, always anchored to the needs of students and to the vision of a Sammamish classroom as outlined by our Key Elements.
- Frequent, clear communication with district leaders and staff at schools throughout the area about our goals and the positive results we have seen.
- Seeking out intentional partnerships with university, government, and business organizations to add resources of money, time, and knowledge toward increased student college and career readiness.

HOW DID IT GO? DESCRIBE CHANGES YOU HAVE SEEN SINCE IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROJECT. DESCRIBE CHALLENGES YOU FACED AND OVERCAME, OR CHALLENGES WITH WHICH YOU CONTINUE TO GRAPPLE THROUGHOUT YOUR PROJECT.

One initial challenge was in defining our vision for PBL in a variety of content areas and grade levels. We were prepared, for example, that PBL in pre-calculus might look different than PBL in world history, and that 9th graders may need different supports than 12th graders. In practice, though, we have had to work closely with teacher teams and school leaders to find the right balance between structure (to ensure a common vision across a school) and flexibility based on the needs of students.

A second challenge has been training teachers and sustaining the PBL vision through the natural turnover that characterizes U.S. public schools. We have increased our intentionality in bringing teachers new to SHS onboard, and in checking in with and supporting them throughout their first year.

Third, there have been significant changes in external assessments during recent years, including state tests and teacher and principal evaluations. We have found, however, that new standards (Common Core, Next Generation Science Standards) and new frameworks for evaluation (Charlotte Danielson's framework for instruction) align well with the philosophy behind PBL and building students' 21st century skills. Despite this changing assessment landscape, we have seen significant increases in student performance on a wide range of measures.

Finally, as with any experience of significant innovation, we have worked (and sometimes struggled) to recognize how much progress we have made amid the "messiness" and occasional failures of implementing major change. Looking back at SHS in 2009 and 2010, however, before the i3 work began, we can see tremendous strides in the degree to which students control and participate actively in their learning.

DESCRIBE CHALLENGES SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK.

One of the biggest challenges related to college access was supporting first-generation college students in taking the steps after college acceptance to enroll and attend. Our AVID teachers and the staff and volunteers in our "College Corps" program worked to enable every student to apply and be accepted to at least one 2- or 4-year college. We found, however, that there were still many steps to complete that could become barriers to college attendance without significant support. These included applying for state and Federal financial aid (especially for undocumented students), registering for classes, and avoiding the "summer melt" phenomenon by attending classes the following fall.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED? WHAT CAN OTHERS LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCES? WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST SUCCESS? WHAT DO YOU MOST WANT TO SHARE WITH THE BROADER COMMUNITY WORKING TOWARDS INCREASING COLLEGE ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS?

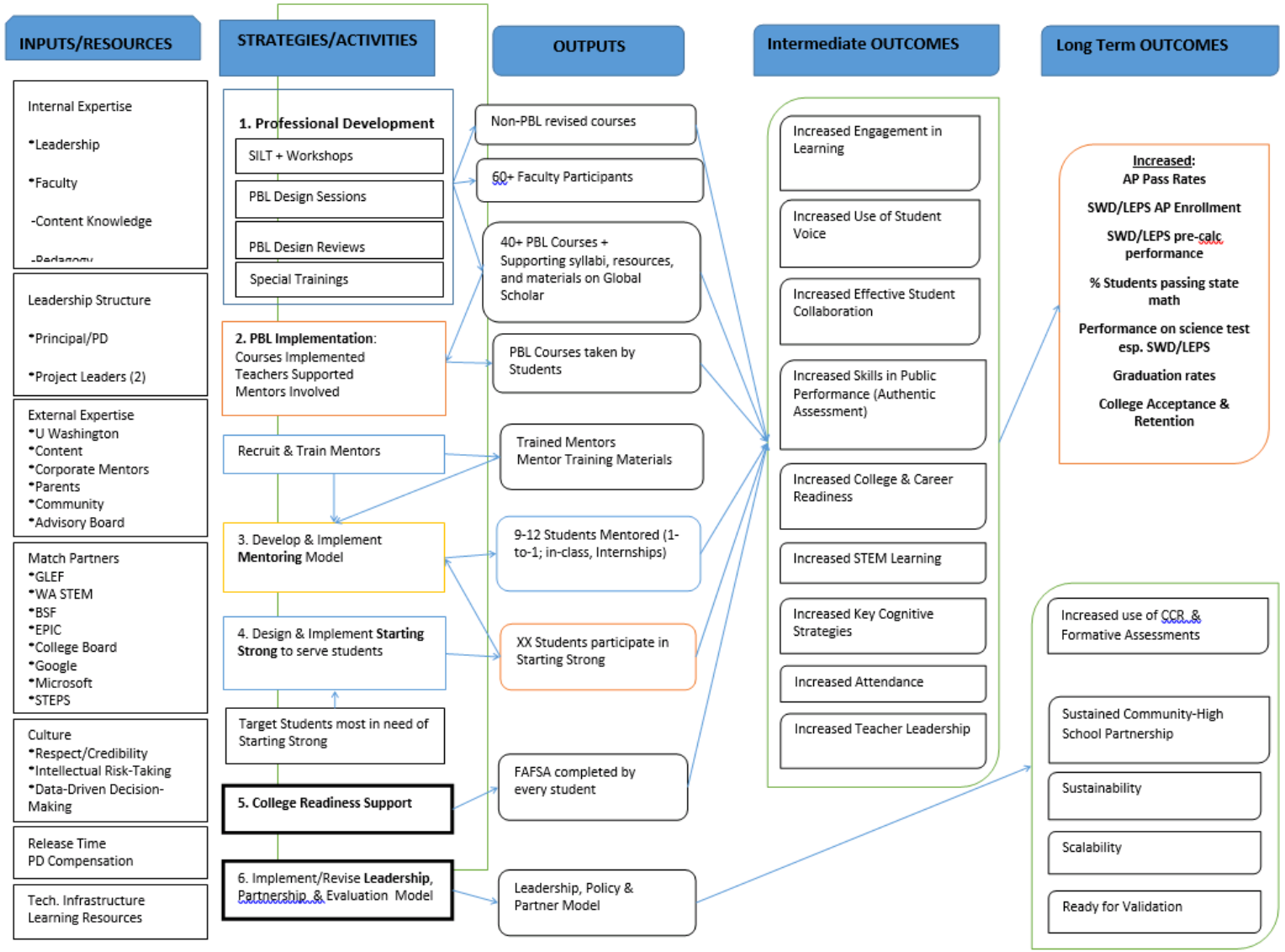
(1) The effort of developing students' knowledge and helping them to navigate college applications needs to be school-wide. In the past, guidance counselors made presentations once or twice each year in addition to meeting with students one-on-one. During our i3 project, we substituted these counselor presentations for three school-wide "College Days" each year that involved all students and teachers at every grade level. On College Days, regular class periods were shortened to accommodate an additional 45-50 minute period in which students at each grade level participated in age-appropriate activities. These ranged from understanding how to calculate GPA and creating a well-rounded course plan (9th grade) to applying to college and completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (12th grade).

(2) Outside of guidance counselors, staff members' knowledge about college may not extend beyond their personal experience. Teachers need support in developing a deeper understanding of what colleges look for on students' transcripts, the impact of GPA, and other factors, especially outside their specific subject areas. When we initially began the school-wide College Days, many teachers did not feel prepared to help students with college access in a broad sense. This finding ties into our thinking about expertise that extends beyond the classroom and helps teachers develop deeper knowledge and networking focused on career and college readiness.

(3) Our project evaluation showed that, as students' exposure to PBL courses increased, their (AP exam pass rates and scores also increased. Since AP courses represent college-level work, this means that students' ability to access and successfully complete college level curriculum went up as they had more exposure to authentic applications of content, culturally relevant instruction, and authentic assessments of their work.

(4) Access to accurate data is critical. Analysis of National Student Clearinghouse data during our grant period showed that Sammamish's freshman to sophomore college persistence rate hovered near 90 percent for the classes of 2009-11. In the class of 2009, at least 75 percent of students had either graduated from college or were still enrolled in 2012-13. These and other data points created a clearer picture for us to work from in setting goals and designing interventions.

Logic model


INPUTS/RESOURCES
STRATEGIES/ACTIVITIES
OUTPUTS
Intermediate OUTCOMES
Long Term OUTCOMES
Internal Expertise
*Leadership
*Faculty
-Content Knowledge
-Pedagogy
Leadership Structure
*Principal/PD
*Project Leaders (2)
External Expertise
*U Washington
*Content
*Corporate Mentors
*Parents
*Community
*Advisory Board
Match Partners
*GLEF
*WA STEM
*BSF
*EPIC
*College Board
*Google
*Microsoft
*STEPS
Culture
*Respect/Credibility
*Intellectual Risk-Taking
*Data-Driven Decision-Making
Release Time
PD Compensation
Tech. Infrastructure
Learning Resources
1. Professional Development
SILT + Workshops
PBL Design Sessions
PBL Design Reviews
Special Trainings
2. PBL Implementation: Courses Implemented Teachers Supported Mentors Involved
Recruit & Train Mentors
3. Develop & Implement Mentoring Model
4. Design & Implement Starting Strong to serve students
Target Students most in need of Starting Strong
5. College Readiness Support
6. Implement/Revise Leadership, Partnership & Evaluation Model
Non-PBL revised courses
60+ Faculty Participants
40+ PBL Courses + Supporting syllabi, resources, and materials on Global Scholar
PBL Courses taken by Students
Trained Mentors
Mentor Training Materials
9-12 Students Mentored (1-to-1; in-class, Internships)
XX Students participate in Starting Strong
FAFSA completed by every student
Leadership, Policy & Partner Model
Increased Engagement in Learning
Increased Use of Student Voice
Increased Effective Student Collaboration
Increased Skills in Public Performance (Authentic Assessment)
Increased College & Career Readiness
Increased STEM Learning
Increased Key Cognitive Strategies
Increased Attendance
Increased Teacher Leadership
Increased:
AP Pass Rates
SWD/LEPS AP Enrollment
SWD/LEPS pre-calc performance
% Students passing state math
Performance on science test esp. SWD/LEPS
Graduation rates
College Acceptance & Retention
Increased use of CCR & Formative Assessments
Sustained Community-High School Partnership
Sustainability
Scalability
Ready for Validation

Council for Opportunity in Education: GO College

AT A GLANCE

Project type: Validation

Grant Award Year: 2010

Project partners: University of Louisville, Kentucky State University, Gannon University, Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit: No. #5, and the Greater Erie Community Action Committee. Over the years, additional partners advancing college access and success joined GO College, to include: 55,000 Degrees, Jefferson County Technical College, Erie Regional Chamber of Commerce, Erie School Superintendent, Erie Together Foundation, Louisville United Way, Louisville Mayor's Summer Works program, NC3, Edinboro University Office of Student Affairs, PHEAA, Erie Water Works, and Erie United Way.

Populations served: First-generation college-goers, high-poverty students

Focus areas: College-going culture

Impact:

# of students impacted by your project	9.965
# of participating K–12 schools	6
# of participating K–12 districts	2
# of participating colleges/universities	3

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

WHO/WHERE? DESCRIBE THE SCHOOLS/COMMUNITY/POPULATION YOUR PROJECT SERVED.

GO College (the branded name of the Council for Opportunity in Education's (COE's) Using Data to Inform College Access Programming in the 21st Century High School - DICAP) combines tiered school-level and student-level interventions previously undertaken by COE. GO College aims to positively impact college enrollment and success, as well as student achievement, student growth and related factors, in six schools with large numbers and percentages of high-needs students by using targeted and whole-school interventions that include data collection, data analysis and the dissemination of analysis. A secondary project goal is to validate a new model for Federal Talent Search programs that will enable them to meet new requirements for providing sufficient academic support to help students succeed in rigorous secondary school curricula. (Talent Search is a federally-funded college access program that annually serves 370,000 low-income middle and high school students in nearly 500 programs in all 50 states.)

WHAT? DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES YOU IMPLEMENTED THROUGH YOUR PROJECT.

The COE, in partnership with General Electric, received funding from the U.S. Department of Education's i3 program to fully develop a program model that increases college enrollment and success at targeted high schools with large numbers of low-income, first-generation students. GO College was designed, in part, to test the feasibility of an updated model of the Federal Talent Search program where all students in schools with high percentages of low-income students can be served. Our model emphasizes the use of data to improve college access programming. Branded as GO College (Gaining Options for College Collaborative),

student participants receive multifaceted college-going supports in six high schools in two cities: Erie, PA, and Louisville, KY.

GO College embeds college coaches–staff employed by local colleges or community agencies–on site in these high schools on a full-time basis. These coaches are available to students on both a one-on-one basis and in the context of workshops, events, and summer learning opportunities. GO College works to align in-school and out-of-school programming to improve student achievement and relies heavily on community collaboration and shared data to achieve these outcomes. Its ultimate goal is to increase college access and success for all students at each GO College high school.

HOW DID IT GO? DESCRIBE CHANGES YOU HAVE SEEN SINCE IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROJECT. DESCRIBE CHALLENGES YOU FACED AND OVERCAME, OR CHALLENGES WITH WHICH YOU CONTINUE TO GRAPPLE THROUGHOUT YOUR PROJECT.

This i3 project was a new venture for both the U.S. Department of Education and the GO College partners. One aspect that stands out is the success of GO College collaborations and partnerships in changing school culture and engaging the communities at large in the work of college access. As one school administrator stated: "We have common challenges. This process gives us an opportunity to discuss how we move forward and how we sustain things and how we do this work of college access, which for us is right in front of our face all the time but for others is ancillary. It is a great opportunity to embellish both our work." —School Administrator Describing the Partnership with GO College

Inspiring GO College coaches and the program directors who supervised them to use data in more meaningful ways was both a challenge and a huge step forward for the project. One TRIO director observed: "When we capture and actively respond to data, it no longer feels like something that our work is subjected to–rather it is a tool… for learning and reflection, action, and planning." —TRIO Director, Interview

GO College students made consistent progress. Students receiving intensive services from the GO College coaches are much more likely to enroll in college immediately following high school graduation. GO College students show the following rates: 64 percent vs. 33 percent for Erie and 56 percent versus 46 percent for Louisville (National Student Clearinghouse).

In discussing the impact of GO College intensive services, one student said, "Before high school and GO College I was never the person to raise my hand in class. I was always the person who waited for someone to say what I was thinking. I was never pushed much. I mean, I had good grades in middle school but I was never an actual presence in the room; I was just another face." —GO College graduate

These increases in college-going rates were only achieved through the robust engagement of a diverse group of high school principals, school district leaders, community advocates, business leaders, and college and nonprofit partners, brought together under the common assumption that the use of shared student data, raised expectations, and increased academic and related supports will increase the college-going levels of all students within targeted GO College high schools.

There is a continuing need for professional development for coaches working within the schools, especially using data sharing and data use. COE will utilize continuation funding to develop an onboarding program–

combining both onsite and online professional development. This professional development program is offered not only to new staff of GO College but also to educators in the over 2,000 college access programs nationwide. COE continues to emphasize using student tracking data to improve college access programs in training of college access professionals. The professional development program was developed with GE funding.

We are targeting the need for better bridging from the six high schools to the receiving colleges: Since few low-income students have family resources to rely upon when they encounter difficulties in college (either in terms of information or finances), a connection must be made with the college where the student is enrolling before the student graduates from high school. This means ensuring there is a hand-off to someone who can assist students with the full range of challenges they are likely to encounter once they enter college, i.e., problems ranging from course selection to lack of funds, over-commitments, work, and family issues, among others.

We recognize a need for increased coordination between i3 and other units of the U.S. Department of Education.

DESCRIBE CHALLENGES SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK.

During the 2017–18 academic year, COE's research arm, the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, will be publishing a series of short papers that discuss the lessons learned and challenges confronted in GO College. These papers will build upon a paper, "College Access Programs at Low-Performing Priority High Schools: A Principal's Perspective," that discusses the challenges for colleges and community agencies in establishing effective partnerships with schools facing intense pressure from school accountability systems.

Building on that experience, a further report will present challenges related to **Aligning Out-of-School Programs with In-School Programs.** Central to those challenges are those related to operating in an uncertain district context. For example, school districts bought into the program, but their commitment did not last and people left. Schools had multiple funded programs and were operating with conflicting accountability pressures. When budget cuts occurred in the district, schools sought to change the role of College Coaches. School administrator turnover in the GO College schools was high. It is noteworthy that of the six principals originally assigned to GO College schools at the beginning of the project, only one remained at its conclusion 5 years later.

In addition to challenges related to implementation of college access efforts, another set of challenges relate to conducting the impact analysis. GO College promoted partnership building across organizations and the program was implemented in changing school contexts, so the intervention evaluated by the impact evaluation evolved over time. This presents challenges to codify the intervention because timing, setting, and the content of the intervention varied by schools and academic year. In addition, because the GO College program also provided whole school services, and some students requested the services that were considered to be the intervention and program, and some students might have been referred to similar services, it is likely students in the control group were exposed to similar services. Based on these observations, we think it is important to review intervention settings to make sense of the findings of the impact analysis.

DESCRIBE LESSONS LEARNED SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK.

Reports to be issued by the Pell Institute will include discussions of three sets of lessons learned from the GO College program. The first report focuses on lessons learned from promoting data use among college access programs. GO College Program addressed the "Use of Data Priority." The report will discuss issues with data sharing across multiple organizations, how to promote demand for data among college access professionals, and how programs can move from data use for compliance to program improvement.

One report will focus on the challenges to data use. These include the multiple sets of data in the college access/college success arena–school data, college data, financial aid data, college access program data–and the discontinuity among them. Further challenges in data use relate to moving educators to a more sophisticated use of data approach–focused on program improvement–when front-line educators daily confront multiple individual student needs and when funder reporting is almost entirely focused on compliance. The data use discussion reflects the greater understanding gained for the need for continuing professional development at both the counselor/coach and administrator level.

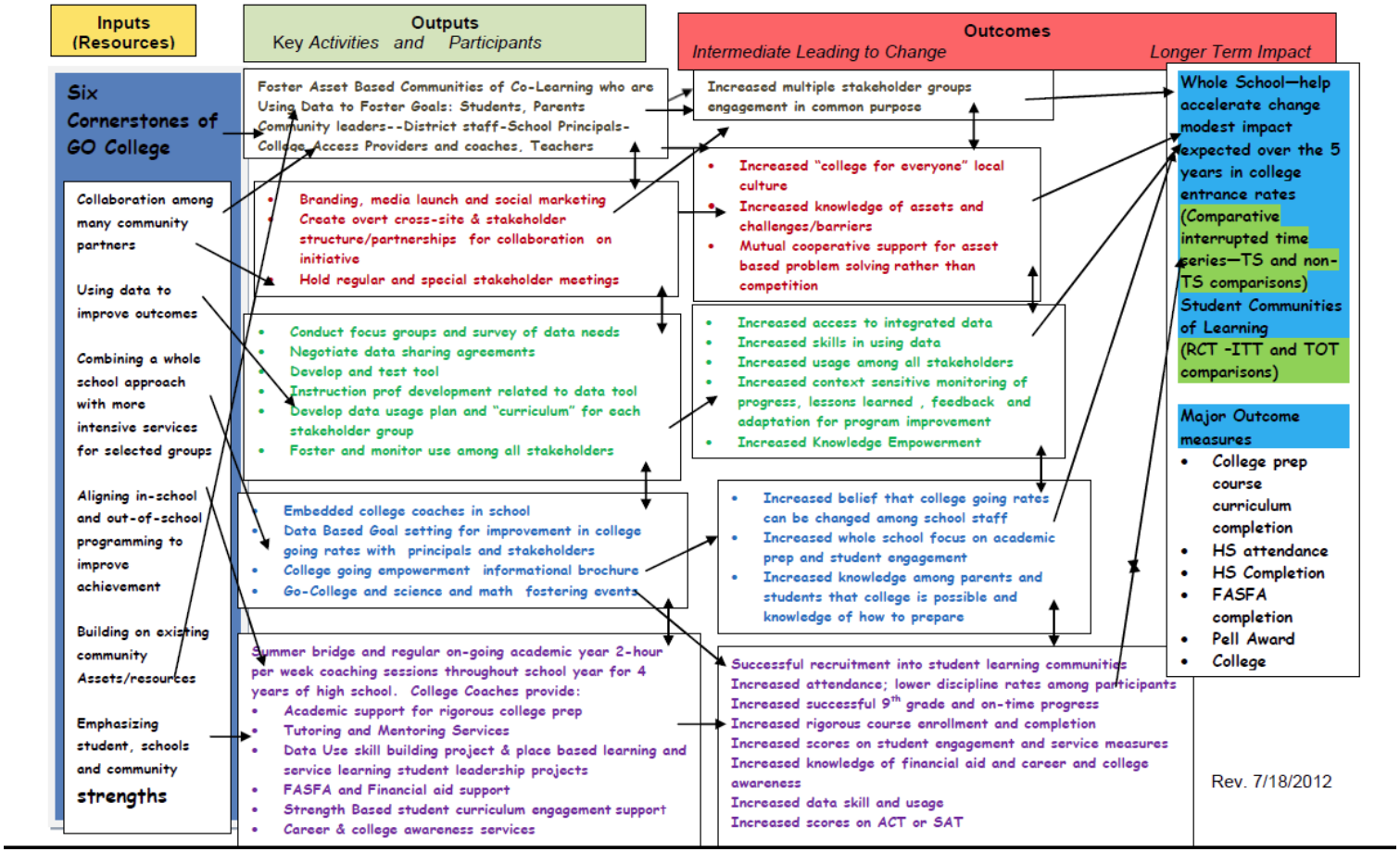
A second set of lessons learned relate to the challenges of encouraging innovation in grant-funded efforts. A final set of lessons relates to factors related to stabilization and continuity of grant-funded programs. GO College was successfully continued (in modified form) in one apparently less resourced environment, despite the apparently greater endorsement of the model in the second city. The schools in site A made a successful transition to funding and the GO College program continues. Funding was provided from a foundation, the United Way, and TRIO Talent Search funding. Leadership of the university president was particularly instrumental in this regard. The transition in Site B was less successful, although the schools continue to embrace the GO College model. A lack of confidence in the university president was given as the reason that applications to several local foundations were not funded.

Logic model

GO College Collaborative: Data Use, Strength/Asset, Academic Alignment Based Model Talent Search ++++++

Logic and Change Model for Innovation in Federal Talent Search Program-

Goal: To Increase College Access and Preparation for Success Among Low Income and First Generation Students



College Possible: Closing the Achievement Gap for Low-Income Students Through Non-Cognitive Skill Development

AT A GLANCE

Project type: Development

Grant Award Year: 2014

Project partners: Partner School Districts: Philadelphia, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Columbia Heights, Parkrose, Omaha, Milwaukee

Contact information: Lara Dreier; LDreier@CollegePossible.org

Populations served: High-poverty students

Focus areas: Social-emotional learning/non-cognitive skills

Impact:

# of students impacted by your project	3,325
# of participating K–12 schools	18
# of participating K–12 districts	7

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

WHO/WHERE? DESCRIBE THE SCHOOLS/COMMUNITY/POPULATION YOUR PROJECT SERVES.

College Possible's i3 project serves low-income high school students in seven school districts across the country.

College Possible, a non-profit, in collaboration with 18 low-performing high schools located in Philadelphia, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Milwaukee, Omaha, and Portland proposes to accelerate the improved performance of high-need students, addressing Priority 2 Improving Low-Performing Schools, subpart (b) Implementing programs that improve students' non-cognitive abilities.

Founded in 2000, College Possible makes college graduation possible for low-income students through an intensive curriculum of coaching and support. Our program places full-time AmeriCorps service members in schools to provide near-peer mentoring for a cohort of high-need students. Coaches use a data-driven structure focused on college success that provides academic support along with opportunities to practice and develop non-cognitive or social-emotional skills. The cohort model creates a community of peer support and expectation of college achievement.

WHAT? DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES YOU IMPLEMENT THROUGH YOUR PROJECT.

College Possible supports students starting their junior year of high school through college graduation. While the logistical aspects of applying, enrolling, and persisting in college are critical, our i3 project allows us to build out our programming to better support the social and emotional development of students as well. Our i3 project has involved building out new and improved curriculum around goal-setting, persistence, developing, and using networks of support, and other skills that help students enter college prepared to succeed.

Additionally, i3 funds an external evaluation of social-emotional learning (SEL) skill development among College Possible students and a comparison group so programming can be further refined.

HOW IS IT GOING? DESCRIBE CHANGES YOU HAVE SEEN SINCE IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROJECT. DESCRIBE CHALLENGES YOU HAVE FACED AND HAVE OVERCOME, OR CHALLENGES WITH WHICH YOU CONTINUE TO GRAPPLE.

One major change externally has been a broader embrace of SEL as a priority across many of our districts. This means that the work we are doing on this topic aligns nicely with many of the schools we support. Coordinating the administration of a survey of all 11th graders across 18 schools was a major logistical challenge, but generally the schools understood the importance of the project and the benefit of participating in the evaluation for the sake of student support, so most were more than willing to accommodate the process.

2016–17 was also the first year the new curriculum that has increased focus on SEL has been implemented. That has meant a new focus for our team internally on SEL skill development, and more conversation on what we can do to facilitate that among both our coaches and students.

DESCRIBE CHALLENGES SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK.

Beyond the logistical challenges of coordinating a survey across 18 high schools, our biggest challenge has been how to adequately prepare our coaches to effectively teach the social-emotional curriculum. Our coaches are all recent college grads who generally do not have extensive classroom experience. The learning curve is steep to provide holistic support in the college access process, and the coaches are often learning on the job about the nuances of the admissions and financial aid process, test-taking strategies and foundational knowledge in core subjects. With the new additions to the curriculum, now they also have the opportunity to teach concepts like goal-setting, growth mindset, and persistence. This has required rethinking the approach to training coaches to ensure they have the right tools to teach both types of curriculum.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED? WHAT CAN OTHERS LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCES? WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST SUCCESS? WHAT DO YOU MOST WANT TO SHARE WITH THE BROADER COMMUNITY WORKING TOWARDS INCREASING COLLEGE ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS?

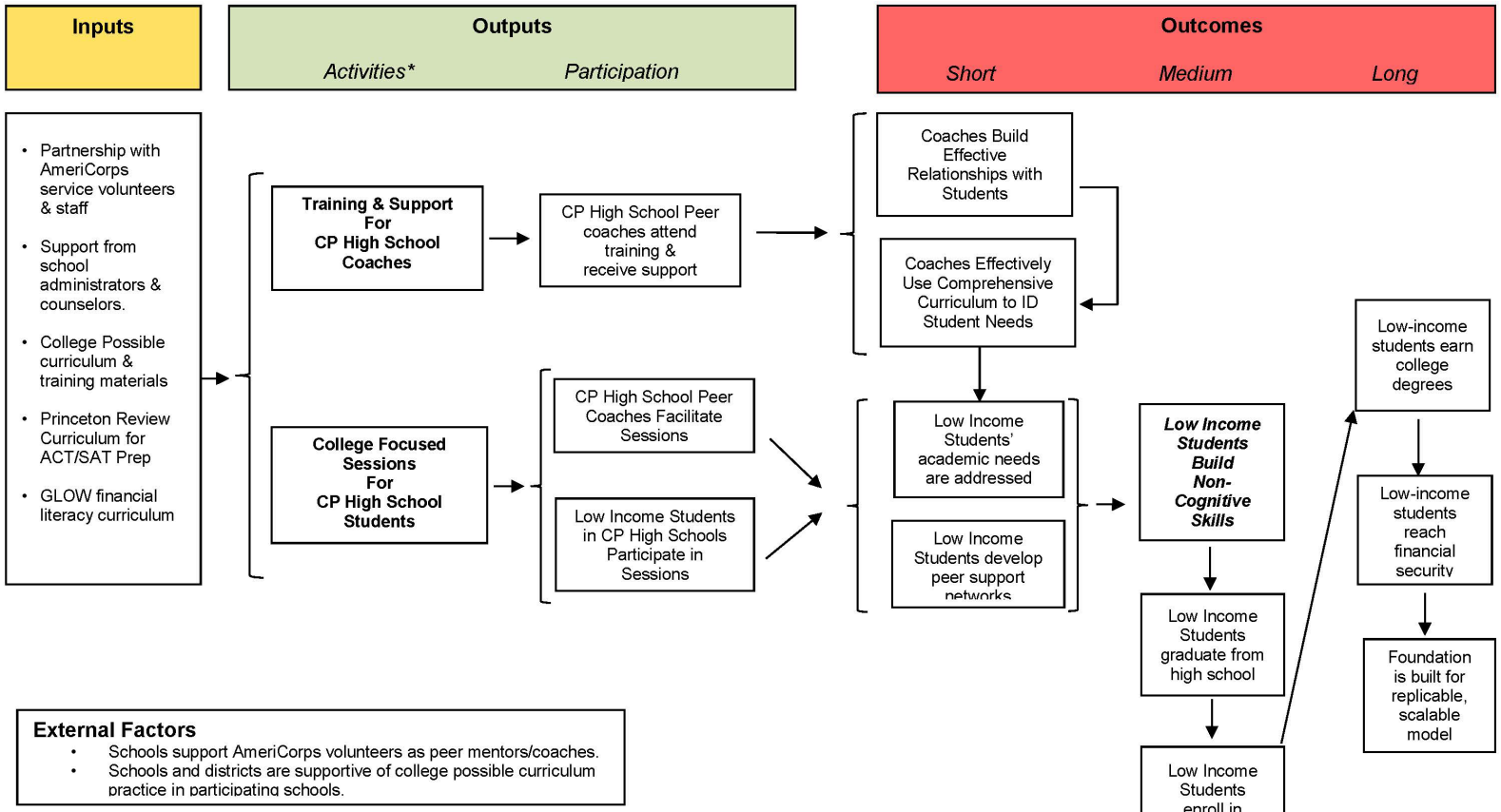
The biggest lesson we've learned is that we need to prepare coaches for how to implement the SEL curriculum specifically. While our approach to lesson planning and content delivery has been largely the same regardless of topic in the past, we're finding that the skills required to prepare students for the ACT/SAT or filing a financial aid application are different than those needed to impart a growth mindset. As a result, we're adjusting how we train coaches and highlighting SEL topics specifically to ensure they feel prepared for those sessions.

DESCRIBE LESSONS LEARNED SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK.

First and foremost is the importance of SEL skills in college success. Though the logistical aspects of the actual admissions and enrollment processes are critical, they are not enough to successfully complete a college degree. Fortunately, there is an increasing understanding of the role these skills play in student success, which makes meaningful collaboration at the high school and college level possible.

Second, as mentioned earlier, the preparation needed by those directly supporting students' needs to broaden as well. Knowing the ins and outs of the financial aid process is not enough to provide holistic coaching that develops the skills necessary for college success. When the programming provided to students evolves, training for those delivering the programming must adapt as well.

Logic model


Inputs
Outputs
Activities*
Participation
Outcomes
Short
Medium
Long
Partnership with AmeriCorps service volunteers & staff
Support from school administrators & counselors.
College Possible curriculum & training materials
Princeton Review Curriculum for ACT/SAT Prep
GLOW financial literacy curriculum
Training & Support For CP High School Coaches
College Focused Sessions For CP High School Students
CP High School Peer coaches attend training & receive support
CP High School Peer Coaches Facilitate Sessions
Low Income Students in CP High Schools Participate in Sessions
Coaches Build Effective Relationships with Students
Coaches Effectively Use Comprehensive Curriculum to ID Student Needs
Low Income Students' academic needs are addressed
Low Income Students develop peer support networks
Low Income Students Build Non-Cognitive Skills
Low Income Students graduate from high school
Low Income Students enroll in college
Low-income students earn college degrees
Low-income students reach financial security
Foundation is built for replicable, scalable model
External Factors
Schools support AmeriCorps volunteers as peer mentors/coaches.
Schools and districts are supportive of college possible curriculum practice in participating schools.

Jobs for the Future: Early College Expansion Partnership (ECEP)

AT A GLANCE

Project type: Validation

Grant Award Year: 2012

Project partners: Jobs for the Future, Educate Texas, Brownsville Independent School District, Denver Public Schools, Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District

Contact information: Joel Vargas, jvargas@jff.org

Populations served: English language learners, first-generation college-goers, high-poverty students

Focus areas: College-going culture, early college high school

Impact:

# of students impacted by your project	30,000
# of participating K–12 schools	29
# of participating K–12 districts	3

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

WHO/WHERE? DESCRIBE THE SCHOOLS/COMMUNITY/POPULATION YOUR PROJECT SERVES.

The Early College Expansion Partnership (ECEP), led by Jobs for the Future (JFF), has two main goals: (1) to scale up early college designs from single schools to entire districts as a system-wide strategy to improve graduation rates and increase college readiness for 30,000 students in South Texas and Denver, and (2) to position early college designs for sustainability and further scale up within South Texas, metropolitan Denver, and beyond. Intermediaries JFF and Educate Texas have served as fellow strategists, technical assistance providers, and coaches. All partners have learned important lessons about what it takes to scale up innovative ideas from individual schools to entire systems.

Three School Districts, Three Different Contexts for Change

The three school districts in the ECEP each enroll high shares of students from low-income backgrounds and English Language Learners (ELLs). The districts also have striking differences:

- Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District (TX)—PSJA enrolls approximately 32,500 students from three small cities in the Rio Grande Valley. Its student population is about 99 percent Latino and 88 percent of students are economically disadvantaged. About 44 percent are ELLs.
- Brownsville Independent School District (TX)—BISD is also in the Rio Grande Valley, directly on the U.S.-Mexico border. The medium-sized district enrolls 48,000 students and 99 percent are Latino. About 95 percent of students are economically disadvantaged and 33 percent are ELLs.
- Denver Public Schools (CO)—DPS is a large, urban district with approximately 90,000 students; 68 percent are economically disadvantaged and 32 percent are ELLs. The district is racially and ethnically diverse; 56 percent of students are Latino, 23 percent are White, 13 percent are African-American, and 3 percent are Asian.

WHAT? DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES YOU IMPLEMENT THROUGH YOUR PROJECT.

The Premise and Approach

The initiative's "early college for all" approach is based on the premise that all students, regardless of prior academic performance, can achieve college readiness when they have sufficient academic and social support, engaging instructional practices, strong postsecondary partnerships, and sequences of high school and college courses taken as dual enrollees and aligned with their postsecondary goals.

All sites have received coaching to implement JFF's "Common Instructional Framework," a set of six high-engagement, research-based strategies to achieve college readiness. JFF and Educate Texas have also provided strategic advising to central office staff and assisted with the development and strengthening of postsecondary partnerships, expanding dual- enrollment offerings, and designing grade 9-14 pathways leading to college degrees and certificates. Leadership coaches have worked with the principals of each participating school to guide the transformation of instruction, curriculum, and school culture. JFF also convened a "community of practice" to facilitate peer learning and sharing of best practices across districts.

HOW IS IT GOING? DESCRIBE CHANGES YOU HAVE SEEN SINCE IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROJECT. DESCRIBE CHALLENGES YOU HAVE FACED AND HAVE OVERCOME, OR CHALLENGES WITH WHICH YOU CONTINUE TO GRAPPLE.

Scaling early college designs across large high schools and districts is a complex undertaking. It requires simultaneous efforts across a diverse set of system-wide functions, including instructional support, curricular alignment, human resources, counseling, budgeting, and career and technical education. The participating districts and intermediary partners have grappled with challenges at various stages, including: fostering buy-in from teachers and administrators in a context of initiative fatigue; dealing with unexpected policy changes from partner colleges; developing staffing strategies to accommodate a rising demand for college courses offered in the high schools; and adapting to frequent turnover at all levels of leadership. Nonetheless, all of the early college schools have shown promising results (see "What have you learned?" below).

DESCRIBE CHALLENGES SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK.

As the ECEP districts scaled up early college, they encountered the common challenge of increasing the number of instructors who can deliver college courses for dual credit. High school teachers often need additional graduate training to teach as college adjuncts; meanwhile, relying on faculty from the college level can be costly and logistically challenging. Other challenges included dealing with unexpected changes in the partner colleges' dual enrollment policies and procedures.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED? WHAT CAN OTHERS LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCES? WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST SUCCESS? WHAT DO YOU MOST WANT TO SHARE WITH THE BROADER COMMUNITY WORKING TOWARDS INCREASING COLLEGE ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS?

One of the overarching lessons learned is that scaling early college depends on effective leadership at multiple levels, with actors throughout the system who understand and embrace their roles and share accountability for making essential changes in policy and practice. The superintendent's office can establish early college expansion as a high priority and continually reiterate its importance throughout the organization and the broader community. Distributive governance structures—such as the "i3 cabinets" developed in the ECEP districts—provide an opportunity for senior district leaders, mid-level managers, and

school principals to collaboratively set goals, review data on progress toward benchmarks, and agree upon common strategies.

When the i3 grant period began, the participating schools and districts were at very different stages in their work to scale early college system wide—both in terms of their experience with and infrastructure for dual enrollment. Nonetheless, all of the early college schools have shown promising results. In PSJA, which began implementing early college designs years before receiving the grant, the number of high school graduates earning associate's degrees and postsecondary certificates continues to rise. In Brownsville, the number of students taking college courses and Advanced Placement classes in the i3 high schools has seen a five-fold increase. In Denver, students in the i3 high schools participate in dual enrollment at a substantially higher rate than the district overall. The approach to dual enrollment has also become more strategic in Denver; students now are guided to take transferrable college courses that are part of degree or certificate pathways, and the district is moving away from its prior practice of using dual enrollment for developmental education. Denver's efforts have earned widespread community support, as evidenced by the passage of an $8 million funding package for college and career readiness in the November 2016 local election.

Notwithstanding these early wins, the work of early college transformation is a long-term process. Looking to the future, leaders in each ECEP site are focused on planning for and promoting sustainability of school- and district-level changes after the end of the i3 grant period.

DESCRIBE LESSONS LEARNED SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK.

Another lesson learned is that the success of early college expansion hinges on the strength of district partnerships with, and the readiness of, postsecondary institutions to develop the course sequences and systems for supporting students' transitions from the high school to college curriculum and environment.

Logic model

ECEP Activities

Technical assistance to districts regarding:

- Strategic planning
- Implementation of Design Elements
- Development of college-school partnerships
- Design of aligned courses of study
- Design of support systems

Professional development on Common Instructional Framework and Community of Practice including:

- Professional development institute and instructional coaching platform
- Regional and cross-regional peer learnings, webinars, site visits

School-Level Implementation of Design Elements

College-Ready Academic Program:
- A coherent instructional framework aligned to college-ready standards
- Engaging instructional practices
- Rigorous untracked academic program
- Strong post-secondary partnerships
- Aligned sequence of college courses and supports

College Headstart:
- Exposure to the culture and norms of college
- College courses, leading to 12+ credits

Wraparound Student Supports:
- Comprehensive academic supports
- Strong social and emotional programming and support
- Explicit instruction on successful academic and social college behaviors
- Inclusive college application and financial aid advising and assistance

Organizational Practices:
- Structures that promote personalization/relationships
- College-going culture
- Ongoing job-embedded and integrated prof. dev.
- Use of student data to inform decisions/eval. efforts
- Set time and support for teacher collaboration

Intermediate Student Outcomes

Approximately 30,000 students participating in early college model

10 percentage point increase in students taking and succeeding in college preparatory courses

10 percentage point higher rate of graduation than comparison group students

90% of students have received some college credit

Long-term Student Outcomes

Increased enrollment and success in postsecondary education

Regents of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA): Project Exc-EL

AT A GLANCE

Project type: Development

Grant Award Year: 2013

Project partners: Partner School Districts: Ossining Union Free School District, Tarrytown Union Free School District. Partner Universities: Westchester Community College. Other Partners: Center for Secondary School Redesign, RSHM Life Center, Latino U College Access, Plus Alpha Research & Consulting, Herff Jones, Jacob Burns Film and Media Center, UCLA Center X.

Contact information: Laureen Avery; avery@gseis.ucla.edu

Populations served: English language learners, first-generation college-goers, high-poverty students

Focus areas: College-going culture; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); writing/literacy; parent and family engagement

Impact:

# of students impacted by your project	1,000
# of participating K–12 schools	4
# of participating K–12 districts	2
# of participating colleges/universities	2

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

WHO/WHERE? DESCRIBE THE SCHOOLS/COMMUNITY/POPULATION YOUR PROJECT SERVES.

Project Exc-EL, Excellence for English Learners is a project that works with low-incidence English Learner (EL) population districts to help provide access to services offered in both the school and community to the EL students and their families. The overall goal of the program is to help ELs become successful academically and college or career ready.

WHAT? DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES YOU IMPLEMENT THROUGH YOUR PROJECT.

Project Exc-EL focuses on three major areas of focus. The first is the classroom, supporting teacher ability to personalize and differentiate instruction. The second is the school, where we look at structural supports that build student agency, such as student-led conferencing and advisory. The third is the community, integrating resources and services offered through the school to help struggling students and their families achieve success.

The project is currently in its fourth year and works within middle and high schools in Tarrytown and Ossining, New York. There are typically 150–250 EL students per school.

HOW IS IT GOING? DESCRIBE CHANGES YOU HAVE SEEN SINCE IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROJECT. DESCRIBE CHALLENGES YOU HAVE FACED AND HAVE OVERCOME, OR CHALLENGES WITH WHICH YOU CONTINUE TO GRAPPLE.

We consider low-incidence districts to be those with EL populations of 10-30 percent of students. In these districts, low numbers of students sharing a common language or background make it difficult to provide comprehensive bilingual programs. Staffing English as a Second Language (ESL) positions is sometimes difficult as well. The district may have limited funding and lack of resources, and may not have mainstream teachers trained to provide EL students with the instruction and services they need. By working with the school and having partnerships in the community, Project Exc-EL is able to help not only the students, but also to offer services and support that can be found within the community to their families. Many of the EL students are from recent immigrant families, and through Project Exc-EL, students and their families can be referred to community organizations that can provide additional support and services, including tutoring or immigration counseling, extending and enhancing the resources the districts are able to provide.

The project supports and has formed professional learning community (PLC) teams in each school. They are mainly composed of teachers but also include administrators, school counselors, or school psychologists. Project Exc-EL helps to give the PLC teams the time and space to meet multiple times each year. In these meetings, the PLC teams track the progress of each individual student by using a tiered approach modeled on response to intervention (RTI). The team uses data, looking at student assessments and discussing individual students. The team uses a color-coding system to track students according to need/levels of performance and discusses and strategizes the best ways to provide for the needs of each individual student. In some cases, it may be that the student's family is in need of support. Project Exc-EL helps to create linkages to the services in the community by partnering with community organizations that can help meet the needs of the students and their families.

One of the biggest successes of the project so far has been the acknowledgment of how much the teachers truly care about the EL populations within the schools and their willingness and eagerness shown in participation in this project. By providing the support and time for this work, the project allows the teachers to become invested and take the lead. The project has found that the PLCs and teacher buy-in have worked well when the school principal supports the project goals. One of the biggest challenges thus far has been hesitation on the part of a few school administrators who seem to view the presence of the project as an indication that they might have been lacking in their services and that it reflects badly on them that the project has stepped in. Where administrators are less supportive as in these cases, the teachers and the PLC are less successful, since they have less ownership of the process without the administrator's full support. The project staff continues to visit the schools and meet with the principals to build a better understanding of the project and its supportive role.

DESCRIBE CHALLENGES SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK.

The adherence to traditional school structures (like seat time) creates and maintains significant challenges for ELs, particularly at the secondary level. ELs at the secondary level struggle to solve the puzzle of mastering a college preparatory sequence of courses while fitting in English language development classes. This creates the paradox of providing *less academic learning time* for students who desperately need *more academic learning time.*

On a societal level, ELs as a population still receive the message that college is not for them. This message is underscored by the limited (and shrinking) postsecondary financial resources available to undocumented students.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED? WHAT CAN OTHERS LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCES? WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST SUCCESS? WHAT DO YOU MOST WANT TO SHARE WITH THE BROADER COMMUNITY WORKING TOWARDS INCREASING COLLEGE ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS?

If ELs are going to be successfully prepared for college, educators need to be proactive in changing the classroom experience. That means content area teachers need to become instructional experts and support student success every day. Every classroom needs to provide daily support for English language learning integrated with academic content learning. Expectations, as well as instructional supports, need to be transformed in every classroom if we truly expect more ELs to succeed.

Classroom teachers also need workable, effective interventions that will support struggling, high-risk students who may not speak English in school or at home. Project Exc-EL works with many different organizations based in the community to ensure that the services provided by these organizations are accessible to the EL students and their families. Partnerships include Westchester Community College, RSHM Life Center (a faith-based organization that provides immigration counseling and services), Latino U—a nonprofit that seeks to increase college-going rates, Literacy Volunteers of America, and the Herff Jones Company.

One of the most important lessons learned in building these partnerships is the importance of understanding the mission of each organization and making sure to pay close attention to what each partnering community organization is trying to accomplish. By aligning missions and services, the project eliminates duplication and helps to provide seamless additional supports and services needed by the EL populations.

Logic model

Inputs

School Districts

Ossining District
1 MS / 1 HS = 200 ELs

Tarrytown District
1 MS / 1 HS = 200 ELs

Project ExcEL Developers

UCLA Center X Staff
- Facilitate community partnerships
- Provide and facilitates systemic school coaching
- Train and support teachers and staff

Community Organizations

- Provide academic tutoring for Tier II / III students
- Support ELs and their families in preparing for college (e.g., FAFSA, college applications)
- Provide family support services (e.g., ESL adult education, job coaching)

Project ExcEL Key Components

School Climate and Structures to Support College and Career Readiness

School Coaching

- Developers and CSSR provide specialized coaching to each school
- Coaches help schools to structure schedules and culture to support teachers and students

Community Partnerships

- Developers help community organizations target their services to students in each school
- Developers meet with community partnerships and school leaders for sustained partnership

Teacher and Staff Training and Technical Assistance

Instructional Strategies for ELs Training

- Developers provide specialized professional development training to support EL students (e.g., Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol [SIOP]) to teachers in each school

Response to Intervention (RtI) Training

- Developers provide RtI training to teachers in each school
- Developers provide coaching and TA to teachers on RtI strategies

Data-Driven Systemic Coaching

Personalized Learning Structures and Environments

- Developers train teachers on providing targeted and differentiated support for academic success to EL students
- Developers support teachers in learning to connect with EL students and providing personalized supports
- Developer monitors development and use of personalized learning environments and structures

Teacher Data Team

- Developers meet with the teacher data team to facilitate the use of data to identify tiered services (TI/TII/TIII)
- Developers facilitate connections between schools and community organizations to provide wrap-around services

Mediators

School Mediators

- Schools support time for teachers to plan and collaborate
- Schools provide extended services to EL students and families

Teacher Mediators

- Teachers meet regularly with EL students to support personal, academic, and career goal-setting and growth
- Teachers help EL students create plans and revise these annually
- Teachers meet as a data team to differentiate instruction
- Teachers identify tiered services for EL students and provide supports

EL Student Mediators

- Students engage academically
- Students connect with teachers, school staff, and partners
- Students participate in TII/TIII supports and interventions
- Students plan for success and update these plans annually

Student Outcomes

EL Student Performance

- Student academic performance
- High school graduation
- Post-high school plans
- Attendance

Take Stock in Children: Project UNISON (Uplifting Non-cognitive Skills and Innovation through Student Opportunity Networks)

AT A GLANCE

Project type: Development

Grant Award Year: 2014

Project partners: Partner School Districts: Duval, Columbia. Partner Universities: Florida State College, Jacksonville, Florida; Florida Gateway College. Other Partners: Helios Foundation, EverBank, Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation, CIS, BBBS, City Year, United Way, Columbia County Schools Foundation, Columbia Chamber of Commerce, Goodwill Industries of North Florida

Contact information: Judy Saylor; jsaylor@tsic.org

Populations served: First-generation college-goers, high-poverty students, rural

Focus areas: Social-emotional learning/non-cognitive skills, college-going culture

Impact:

# of students impacted by your project	3,162
# of participating K–12 schools	3
# of participating K–12 districts	2
# of participating colleges/universities	2

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

WHO/WHERE? DESCRIBE THE SCHOOLS/COMMUNITY/POPULATION YOUR PROJECT SERVES.

The UNISON project focus is on low performing schools and is adapted for use in three demographically different highs school settings (urban, city-fringe/suburban, and rural school-based) to scientifically evaluate its efficacy for replicability and scalability.

- Andrew Jackson High School is in the city center of Jacksonville, Florida in Duval County. It is 93 percent African American. It is 66 percent free and reduced lunch (FRL) and has approximately 500 students.
- Columbia High School is in Lake City, Florida, Columbia County. It is a large high school with approximately 1,900 students in a small town in mid-NE Florida. It is 52 percent FRL, 66 percent White, 25 percent African American, and 4 percent Hispanic.
- Ft. White High School is in Ft. White, Florida, Columbia County. It is a grade 6–12 school in a very rural area of mid- NE Florida. It is 63 percent FRL, 80 percent White, 10 percent African American, and 6 percent Hispanic. The High School has approximately 600 students.

WHAT? DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES YOU IMPLEMENT THROUGH YOUR PROJECT.

Take Stock in Children (TSIC), a statewide, non-profit, private-public partnership in Florida, will expand our traditional 1:1 mentoring model to implement a novel schoolwide mentoring approach through UNISON:

Uplifting Non-Cognitive Skills and Innovation Through Student Opportunity Networks, our 4-year i3 development project. UNISON's approach focuses on improving low-performing schools and enhancing students' non-cognitive abilities.

Our goals and objectives center around (1) building strong evidence of success for promoting students' non-cognitive skill set development to improve academic achievement and increase students' readiness for post-secondary education and employment, and (2) strengthening the case for adoption of a collective impact, whole-school mentoring approach as an effective vehicle to increase stakeholder engagement, promoting sustained improvements in low-performing schools.

UNISON supports and expands our already successful TSIC school-based mentoring model and introduces a new, non-traditional mentoring approach for schoolwide, group mentoring. Our whole school, whole-student approach will use three distinct strategy pathways:

1. Whole School: Focus social-emotional curricula on school culture and climate, use collective impact strategy to build from what already exists, honor current efforts, engage established organizations, align partners around a common agenda, identify shared goals and accountability measures, and use a portfolio of coordinated, aligned strategies.
2. Classroom: Teacher professional development, social-emotional classroom curricula, and a Summer Leadership Institute for students.
3. Individual: School-based college readiness coaching, 1:1 mentoring and group mentoring, college tours and industry field trips, skills and career-based student discovery platform, college readiness workshops and home-school partnership building via events centered on social-cognitive learning theory.

HOW IS IT GOING? DESCRIBE CHANGES YOU HAVE SEEN SINCE IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROJECT. DESCRIBE CHALLENGES YOU HAVE FACED AND HAVE OVERCOME, OR CHALLENGES WITH WHICH YOU CONTINUE TO GRAPPLE.

We have finished our second school year of implementation. We spent the first seven months of the project building district and school staff relationships, training new staff, outlining expectations, and finalizing the evaluation plan for the independent evaluation. Transparency and communication about the project and its initiatives are extremely important in order to gain buy-in and support, especially within the schools. Though the start of any program can be somewhat hectic, our groundwork—especially our relationship building—was instrumental in helping us to mitigate any major issues or concerns.

We have met all of our strategies, major activities, and implementation fidelity measures—a testament to the hard work of our staff and the critical support of our principals. Our students and teachers have responded positively to our interventions, support, and training.

Most of the challenges that we have encountered have been in our large school district. The district made sweeping changes mid-year to mitigate the number of low-performing schools. The proposal for our suburban school was to make it a military leadership magnet. The district also brought in a Community School project that overlapped the services that we were providing. Staying in the school would have

compromised our evaluation and made it impossible to know which intervention would actually contribute to our confirmatory question: whether the intervention resulted in higher graduation rates.

We have also had a more difficult time implementing the program in our urban school. As with most persistently low performing schools in large districts, new interventions and programming are implemented, dropped, and then another new intervention is proposed. Our urban school has gone through many of these transitions so the culture is resistant to any new projects. The staff turnover at the school has also been an issue for us. We have realized that it is much easier working in smaller districts/communities where there is community and district support for the grant.

Our smaller district went through a major change this year. A new superintendent was elected in November and made a principal change at Columbia High School. We were very fortunate that there was very little disruption to the progress we have made. The superintendent is very supportive and is now engaging us in sustainability discussions.

Another challenge is gaining access to teachers and students in regards to training time, professional development, or activities that promote Social-Emotional Learning (SEL). It is a huge culture shift, and though administrators realize how important it is, they are still paid and measured on academic outcomes.

DESCRIBE CHALLENGES SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK.

We have a very successful TSIC College Readiness Advocacy model that we are trying to imbed in the schools where we work. The main challenge is access to students during the school day. This year we will be employing a classroom model where our staff will be coaching and working with students in English Language Arts (ELA) classrooms to assist them in their college application process, essay writing, FAFSA completion, and SAT/ACT prep. We will also be training teachers in college readiness and giving them resources so that they can assist students.

We have also had challenges engaging parents in their student's college planning. This year we have put together a Parent College Readiness Guide for junior and senior parents. The folder has grade specific parent and student checklists, handouts on high school graduation requirements, SAT/ACT test prep, college and career website resources, FAFSA and financial aid information all in one folder. These folders are being handed out at the parent senior and junior orientations. We hope that this will give parents a more concrete idea of how they can not only be supportive but involved in their student's college preparation process.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED? WHAT CAN OTHERS LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCES? WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST SUCCESS? WHAT DO YOU MOST WANT TO SHARE WITH THE BROADER COMMUNITY WORKING TOWARDS INCREASING COLLEGE ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS?

Our interventions and activities were mainly focused on students. It became very clear early on that most of the shift in culture had to come from the adults at the school. It is critical that the adults embrace the importance of social emotional learning, building positive relationships with their peers and the students, providing a safe and caring environment for students and then mentoring and modeling the behaviors we want our students to emulate.

We also developed strong partnerships with our local community colleges through our collective impact work. In Columbia County, Florida Gateway College sends college advisors twice monthly to the high schools to assist students and parents with financial aid, applications, dual enrollment, and college and career advising. Students are realizing the importance of postsecondary education and they and their parents are getting professional assistance early in their high school careers.

The support of strong leadership at the schools is critical to the success of the program. Principals play a very important role in providing the vision, clear direction and encouragement to teachers, staff and students. Changes in focus and routine are always challenging and many times the leadership has to be creative to adapt school schedules and procedures to implement the activities and interventions. With strong leadership, these changes are more acceptable to all and the tendency to resist is mitigated. School culture begins to shift, teachers see more learning taking place in their classrooms and students become more engaged and successful in their studies.

There is no substitute for clear and constant communication as well as transparency in all that we do. This is one of the most important takeaways. Our collective impact initiative has been extremely helpful in providing a structure for ongoing communication between both internal and external partners and fostering a culture of collaboration and coordination of student-focused activities around high school graduation and college and career readiness.

We have had many successes and some amazing personal stories of success. We have received a community and parent engagement award, started a Backpack Friday program to serve our most in-need students in Columbia County and have sponsored many appreciation activities for students to thank their teachers and school staff. The most important success however, is that we will be reporting the highest high school graduation rates in many years for all three schools. College enrollment has also increased. Florida Gateway College in Columbia County reported that enrollment was up 20 percent this year. The students are being empowered to positively impact their own school culture and to engage in their education plans for high school graduation and postsecondary success. The results are very promising.

DESCRIBE LESSONS LEARNED SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK.

Our Collective Impact work has been instrumental in coordinating efforts between our high schools and local colleges to provide services on high school campuses to assist both students and parents in all aspects of college readiness and access. College representatives from financial aid, admissions, guidance, and dual enrollment have dedicated dates and times they are available on the high school campuses. The additional services that they provide have made great strides in creating a college-going culture within the schools.

Logic model

RESOURCES		ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	MEDIATING OUTCOMES	IMPACT
• Mentor Corps • Collective Impact Teams • College Success Coach and Collective Impact Coordinator at each school • TSIC College and Careers Success model • School district leadership at three high schools • Existing programs at each school • i3 and private funding • Community Partners • Colleges & Universities		• Implement whole school social/emotional programming - Rachel's Challenge • Create a strategic plan aligning existing and new resources to positively impact school improvement plans	• # of teachers attending 1-hour staff orientation for whole-school program • # of students attending whole-school kick-off meeting • # of FOR Club monthly meetings and activities • Completed strategic plan for Collective Impact Team • CIT collaboration assessment	• Increase non-cognitive skill development • Increase academic momentum • Coordinate, systemic post-secondary support • Fidelity of implementation	Increased graduation rates
		• Conduct annual TSIC Summer Leadership Institute for students • Provide teacher/staff professional development in SEL • Implement the BARR program with participating 9th and 10th grade teachers and students	• # of summer leadership attendees • # of teachers trained in SEL • # of teachers trained/year in BARR • # of students participating in BARR	• College and career-ready students • Prepared and engaged teachers • Building relational skills for teachers and students	
		• Provide traditional 1:1 mentoring, college scholarships, and volunteer opportunities to TSIC students at each school • Implement a non-traditional group mentoring approach to students focused on SEL, career and college readiness • Provide school wide student services via school-based Coach and Coordinator • Provide TSIC College and Career Success model to all students	• TSIC students receiving # sessions of 1:1 mentoring hours/year • # of students in group mentoring program • # of students attending Summer Leadership Institute	• Increase daily attendance • Decrease disciplinary referrals • Decrease dropout rate • Increase academic achievement • Increase average FCAT 10th grade reading scores • Increase graduation rate • Increase SAT participation rate and scores • Increase FAFSA completion rate • Increase parental engagement	

Teacher's College, Columbia University: STEM Early College Expansion Partnership (SECEP)

AT A GLANCE

Project type: Validation

Grant Award Year: 2013

Project partners: Partner School Districts: Delta—Schoolcraft Intermediate School District (MI), Lapeer County Intermediate School District (MI), Genesee Intermediate School District (MI), Washtenaw Intermediate School District (MI), Bridgeport Public Schools (CT). Other Partners: Jobs for the Future, Middle College National Consortium.

Contact information: Elisabeth Barnett; eb2231@tc.columbia.edu

Populations served: English language learners, first-generation college-goers, high-poverty students, rural

Focus areas: College-going culture; early college high school; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)

Impact:

# of students impacted by your project	22,000
# of participating K–12 schools	28
# of participating K–12 districts	5
# of participating colleges/universities	9

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

WHO/WHERE? DESCRIBE THE SCHOOLS/COMMUNITY/POPULATION YOUR PROJECT SERVES.

The STEM Early College Expansion Partnership (SECEP) is working in five districts in Michigan and Connecticut, helping them to implement the Early College model in local high schools while also strengthening STEM education. Over 5 years, SECEP will improve college readiness and STEM education experiences for 22,000 high-need middle and high school students, decreasing dropout rates and boosting college enrollment. SECEP seeks to improve underrepresented populations' access to STEM careers by increasing the number of students enrolling in dual credit STEM courses and pursuing postsecondary credentials.

WHAT? DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES YOU IMPLEMENT THROUGH YOUR PROJECT.

The project is led by the National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools and Teaching (NCREST) at Teachers College, Columbia University, in partnership with Jobs for the Future (JFF), the Middle College National Consortium (MCNC), and school districts and colleges in Connecticut and Michigan. We are achieving our goals through:

- Implementing the STEM Early College design, grounded in early-middle-college high school core principles. The design includes a rigorous college-ready curriculum combined with extensive academic and personal supports from peers and adults to help students achieve success in college preparatory and college courses, with an emphasis on STEM fields of study.

- Delivering professional development and coaching to integrate early college practices into participating schools as well as to improve the effectiveness of middle school, high school, and college STEM teachers through activities that build STEM and pedagogical content knowledge.
- Developing school, district, and college partnerships to fully implement the STEM Early College design. SECEP assists schools to form strong partnerships with institutions of higher education to facilitate collaboration in planning and professional development.

Based on the past experience of the project partners and rigorous third-party evaluations of Early College, SECEP anticipates the following outcomes over the 5-year grant period:

- At least a 10 percentage point increase in students taking and succeeding in core college preparatory courses;
- At least a 10 percentage point higher rate of graduation than comparison group students;
- Ninety percent of students will earn college credit; at least 60 percent of high school graduates will complete two STEM college courses as part of a pathway transferable to postsecondary credentials;
- A 50 percent increase in students who evidence an interest in STEM and pursuing a STEM career;
- Eighty-five percent of teachers who have completed SECEP professional development report ability and confidence to apply STEM content and pedagogical content knowledge in the classroom; and
- A blueprint for district-wide STEM early college high school (ECHS) expansion that can be used by other local education agencies (LEAs), particularly in regions with demographic characteristics similar to the two regions.

HOW IS IT GOING? DESCRIBE CHANGES YOU HAVE SEEN SINCE IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROJECT. DESCRIBE CHALLENGES YOU HAVE FACED AND HAVE OVERCOME, OR CHALLENGES WITH WHICH YOU CONTINUE TO GRAPPLE.

Early College high schools are a proven strategy and have been shown by research to have a positive impact on a range of student outcomes. However, there is much to be learned when it comes to embedding Early College practices into traditional high schools, as we are doing in this project. At the same time, other schools around the country have done this successfully, and there is great enthusiasm for the idea in Michigan and Connecticut.

STEM education is defined in a range of ways by different thought leaders and practitioners. Our project has developed an initial approach to STEM, but we are still refining it to make sure that we offer the best possible experiences to students. We are especially concerned with making sure that students are well prepared to enter locally available college majors and jobs.

This project is devoted to better preparing students for college through collaborations between high schools and colleges. These two institutions traditionally do not work closely together and have different goals, leadership, financing, and accountability systems. However, change is in the air. This project, along with many others across the country, is contributing to the formation of partnerships that can improve student preparation for—and transition into—college.

In addition, we are committed to helping students get excited about STEM education, using hands-on design projects and cross-disciplinary experiences (e.g., combining math and health, or engineering and technology). By working with students beginning in 8th grade, we believe that they are more likely to enter high school prepared to engage in STEM learning.

DESCRIBE CHALLENGES SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK.

- Personnel changes—Turnover of personnel is an issue we have had throughout the project, particularly at the district level (i.e., superintendents, curriculum leaders). While there were fewer changes this year than in previous years, these changes created delays when team members were required to reorient new administrators and gain their trust and buy-in for the project.
- Participation of remote, rural school districts—Rural district, especially those in the upper peninsula of Michigan are isolated from other participating districts by distance and limited travel opportunities, particularly during winter months.
- Urban poverty—Especially in Bridgeport, Connecticut, students face multiple challenges associated with poverty including frequent moves, family struggles, hunger, stable housing, and a lack of educational resources in the home.
- Financial challenges—It is difficult for schools to realign their very limited budgets to pay for dual enrollment while maintaining well-liked community cultural events such as sports, plays, music, etc.
- Declining enrollment and student transiency—This has been a particular issue in Michigan and has created multiple challenges such as staff reductions and further budgetary obstacles.
- Fear of math—Students continue to view math as a content area that is uniquely difficult. This has changed considerably over the life of the project as indicated by responses on student surveys, but continues to be an issue.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED? WHAT CAN OTHERS LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCES? WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST SUCCESS? WHAT DO YOU MOST WANT TO SHARE WITH THE BROADER COMMUNITY WORKING TOWARDS INCREASING COLLEGE ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS?

This i3 project builds on existing successful practices and strategies developed by the lead organizations. Both MCNC and JFF have been leaders in founding and nurturing Early College high schools over many years. They both offer professional development workshops, leadership and instructional coaching, principal's residences, and access to skilled and experienced mentors. NCREST has provided research support to early college high schools for over a decade and is also leading the STEM education component of this project with involvement from Teachers College faculty.

Some especially notable practices that are a part of the SECEP project include:

- JFF, in collaboration with University Park High School in Worcester, Massachusetts, offers training in the highly regarded Common Instructional Framework as well as support to schools in developing Early College designs.
- The MCNC is especially well known for its Principal's Residency program as well as for annual conferences offered to middle and Early College high school teachers and leaders.

- NCREST provides middle and Early Colleges with data reports on student experiences and performance and leads discussions on using data for school improvement.
- Teachers College faculty are nationally known for their leadership in STEM education. Chris Emdin was recently named Minorities in Energy Ambassador by the US Education of Department. Our other two faculty partners, Erica Walker and Ellen Meier, are also very knowledgeable and committed to the project.

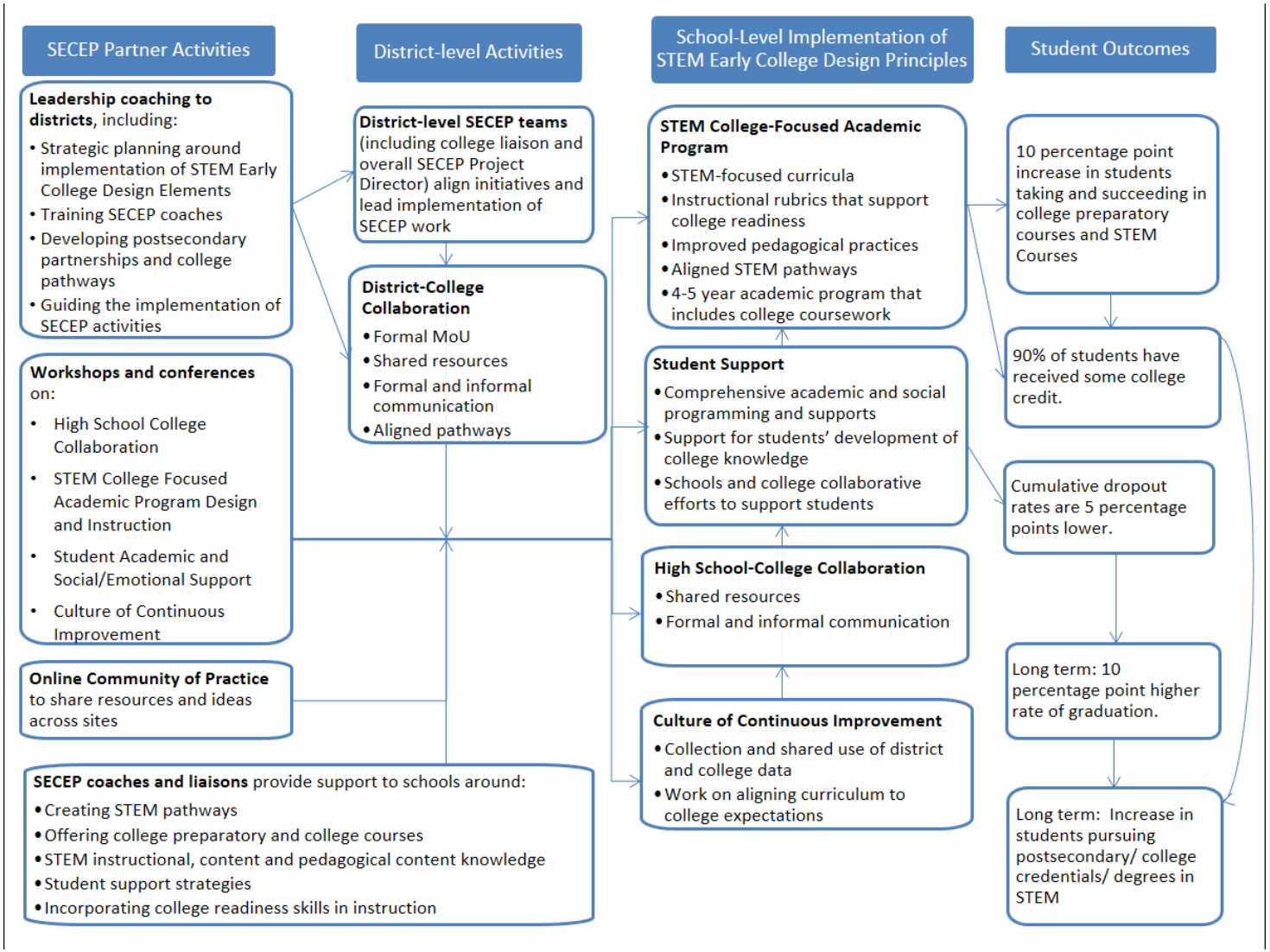
DESCRIBE LESSONS LEARNED SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK.

Evidence emerging from the project supports the use of a team approach to school change. Within the SECEP project, instructional goals need to be coordinated at the school level while a district team with college representation is needed to move the college collaboration. By utilizing district coordinators and adopting a coordinated team approach, we have been able to make substantial progress despite high turnover at both the district and school levels.

In Bridgeport there was a shift from a central office driven coaching model to a school-based coaching model. This shift has allowed greater opportunity for capacity building with regards to the implementation of the Common Instructional Framework (CIF), CIF protocols, and other best practices. In addition, there are more school staff members directly involved in project implementation which has led to greater staff buy-in.

Teachers in Michigan have been particularly enthusiastic about the training that they have received in modeling. This appears to be a significant leverage point for the SECEP project. We need to continue to support these teachers and encourage more to participate as this has become the way to operationalize significant instructional change.

Logic model


SECEP Partner Activities
District-level Activities
School-Level Implementation of STEM Early College Design Principles
Student Outcomes
Leadership coaching to districts, including:
• Strategic planning around implementation of STEM Early College Design Elements
• Training SECEP coaches
• Developing postsecondary partnerships and college pathways
• Guiding the implementation of SECEP activities
Workshops and conferences on:
• High School College Collaboration
• STEM College Focused Academic Program Design and Instruction
• Student Academic and Social/Emotional Support
• Culture of Continuous Improvement
Online Community of Practice to share resources and ideas across sites
SECEP coaches and liaisons provide support to schools around:
• Creating STEM pathways
• Offering college preparatory and college courses
• STEM instructional, content and pedagogical content knowledge
• Student support strategies
• Incorporating college readiness skills in instruction
District-level SECEP teams (including college liaison and overall SECEP Project Director) align initiatives and lead implementation of SECEP work
District-College Collaboration
• Formal MoU
• Shared resources
• Formal and informal communication
• Aligned pathways
STEM College-Focused Academic Program
• STEM-focused curricula
• Instructional rubrics that support college readiness
• Improved pedagogical practices
• Aligned STEM pathways
• 4-5 year academic program that includes college coursework
Student Support
• Comprehensive academic and social programming and supports
• Support for students' development of college knowledge
• Schools and college collaborative efforts to support students
High School-College Collaboration
• Shared resources
• Formal and informal communication
Culture of Continuous Improvement
• Collection and shared use of district and college data
• Work on aligning curriculum to college expectations
10 percentage point increase in students taking and succeeding in college preparatory courses and STEM Courses
90% of students have received some college credit.
Cumulative dropout rates are 5 percentage points lower.
Long term: 10 percentage point higher rate of graduation.
Long term: Increase in students pursuing postsecondary/ college credentials/ degrees in STEM

University of Massachusetts Boston: Think College Transition Project

AT A GLANCE

Project type: Development

Grant Award Year: 2013

Project partners: Holyoke Community College, Westfield State University, Bridgewater State University, Massachusetts Advocates for Children; MA School Districts include: Agawam, Amherst-Pelham, Belchertown, Bridgewater-Raynham, Brockton, Carver, Cohasset, Dighton-Rehoboth, Easton, Hampshire Regional School District, Hanover, Ludlow, Mansfield, Marshfield, Norton, Old Rochester, Pembroke, Silver Lake, Southeastern Regional, Ware, Westfield, Weymouth and Whitman-Hanson.

Contact information: Meg Grigal; Meg.grigal@umb.edu

Populations served: Students with intellectual disability and autism

Focus areas: College-going culture; early college high school; college-based, dual-enrollment transition services

Impact:

# of students impacted by your project	60
# of participating K–12 schools	23
# of participating K–12 districts	23
# of participating colleges/universities	3

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

WHO/WHERE? DESCRIBE THE SCHOOLS/COMMUNITY/POPULATION YOUR PROJECT SERVES.

The Think College Transition (TCT) Project at the Institute for Community Inclusion, at the University of Massachusetts Boston, has developed and implemented an innovative transition model offering access to college-based inclusive dual- enrollment experiences for students between the ages of 18-22 with intellectual disabilities (ID) and autism. Traditionally students with ID have not been supported to consider a pathway toward college and are too often relegated to segregated instructional or vocational experiences. The purpose of the TCT Model is to support students with ID and autism to access inclusive higher education experiences and integrated employment during their final year of transition services to support better outcomes. The TCT Project worked with existing partnerships in Massachusetts that were implementing a concurrent enrollment initiative between local education agencies (LEAs) and colleges and universities. Primary partners in implementing the TCT model include both higher education and K–12 secondary education staff including College Liaisons, LEA transition staff, school administrators, education coaches and employment specialists.

WHAT? DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES YOU IMPLEMENT THROUGH YOUR PROJECT.

Creating and Refining the TCT Model

To develop the TCT Model our team built upon knowledge of effective and evidence-based practices from the field of special education, college and career readiness, dual and concurrent enrollment, career and technical education, supported employment, school counseling, and reflects guidance from the Higher Education Opportunities Act regarding students with ID. A Delphi study was conducted to refine and confirm the essential TCT Model components, which included eight key components:

1. Community-based transition services;
2. Self-determination and self-advocacy;
3. Family engagement and partnerships;
4. Advising, course of study and enrollment;
5. Student support for college success;
6. Dual-enrollment staff development;
7. Integrated paid employment; and
8. Evaluation.

Implementing the TCT Model

The TCT Model is collaborative and engages systems (LEAs, institutions of higher education, and agency partners) in mutual outreach efforts and promotes regular communication to support ongoing inclusive college-based transition services for students with ID/autism. The model builds on a foundation of community-based transition services, supports on-going training, planning and evaluation, emphases student self-determination and self-advocacy and supports family engagement. The TCT Model addresses four domains of practice: PLAN, SUPPORT, LEARN, WORK; with critical benchmarks defined for each area. The TCT Model creates opportunities for students to be included on campus in all aspects of a complete college experience, receiving supports as necessary (e.g., coaching and/or peer mentoring, disability services support). The student's day consists of course participation, social events, and career development activities and integrated competitive employment moving their transition services away from a high school-based setting to a college and community-based setting that is more natural for peers of this age and is more inclusive of peers without disabilities. To facilitate implementation of the model our project used a collaborative inquiry approach, establishing workgroups on critical components. Each workgroup reflected on evidence based and best practices and met regularly to discuss issues, challenges, and strategies and ultimately worked collaboratively to create needed guidance and resources to support model implementation.

Participatory Action Research

An important aspect of the TCT project is explore how the model impacts student access to the college environment. Project staff have partnered with nine students who have completed one semester of college from two college programs to conduct a participatory action research study documenting their college experiences using cognitive mapping, digital mapping with iPads, and creating digital stories about these

college experiences. Preliminary findings reveal that: (1) students are accessing a range of courses that are preparing them to pursue employment and personal goals, (2) students who are spending time on campus beyond class time and lunch are able to access a fuller range of campus activities, and (3) the college that offers peer mentoring and on-campus employment activities are providing comprehensive opportunities to the students to engage with peers and college personnel.

Evaluating the TCT Model

Working with our external evaluator, Education Development Center (EDC), TCT project staff recruited LEAs and colleges that were willing to participate in the project and connecting us with families of potential students to participate in both the treatment and comparison cohorts. With EDC, we established measures of model fidelity, and identified assessment tools that corresponded with our primary focal areas. Data collection and review occurred over the past 2 years and we are approaching our final year with our 3rd cohort of students.

HOW IS IT GOING? DESCRIBE CHANGES YOU HAVE SEEN SINCE IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROJECT. DESCRIBE CHALLENGES YOU HAVE FACED AND HAVE OVERCOME, OR CHALLENGES WITH WHICH YOU CONTINUE TO GRAPPLE.

Some of the challenges of this kind of project relate to the low expectations that people often have of students with ID and autism to access typical college classes, to get jobs in the community at or above minimum wage. Our hope is that this project can be one of the first to document that dual-enrollment transition services can offer important opportunities for growth to students with ID and autism that may not be available via their more traditional transition programs. Another challenge we saw was that these programs, because they are so person centered and support intensive, they often serve small numbers of students. This impacted our recruitment efforts and created some opportunities for us to reflect on how we communicated about this project to school system staff.

Assessment tools: We also took quite a bit of time to identify what we hoped would be the best assessment tools to measure changes in the students' self determination, career maturity, and college behaviors. We reviewed content, language, and any barriers that might lead to testing fatigue. Although we made every effort to address potential difficulties, we did find that some students initially needed further explanation of some questions and also fatigued before completing the surveys. In these cases, students needed 2 days to complete the surveys. A positive result is that over time, students in the 2nd and 3rd rounds of surveys demonstrated more clarity about the evaluation questions and the evaluators were more confident that the students understood the questions.

Scope of model: We also discovered that despite our best attempts to narrow the scope of the model through a Delphi process, we still prioritized more "must-have" key components than was really possible to track or thoroughly address through professional development. Given the number of partnering school districts that partnered with one or more of the colleges, it was very challenging to train all potential dual enrollment staff and track their follow-through. In retrospect, we determined that we should have narrowed the scope of the model to just one to three key components rather than four to eight.

Diversity of players: In order to meet our target student goal to evaluate the impact of inclusive dual enrollment, we were required to collaborate with three dual-enrollment partnerships. That meant three

college coordinators and anywhere from 8-10 school partners at each site. This included special education administrators, transition coordinators, and educational coaches from each of the schools. Establishing collaborative workgroups and inviting all representative dual enrollment staff to participate in these groups allowed project staff to at least offer ongoing professional development to a core group of staff from each of the three partnerships.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED? WHAT CAN OTHERS LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCES? WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST SUCCESS? WHAT DO YOU MOST WANT TO SHARE WITH THE BROADER COMMUNITY WORKING TOWARDS INCREASING COLLEGE ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS?

The largest outcome of this project is that we now have established a foundational model for college-based inclusive dual-enrollment transition services. This project allowed us to gather national input into the creation of this model and then as we implemented it in one state, we were able to see where the model fit into existing service structures and identify gaps or friction with existing service structures. We have also established a professional development model for these inclusive dual-enrollment partnerships that can be sustained through the partnerships given the range of training and technical assistance formats consistently modeled and used including in-person meetings, webinars, conference calls, and online discussions.

DESCRIBE LESSONS LEARNED SPECIFIC TO YOUR COLLEGE ACCESS WORK.

Given that students with ID are the least likely to expect to go to college or access college as a post-school outcome, the findings of this project may have broad reaching impact on transition professionals in their understanding of how create pathway to and through college via established partnerships with higher education. It begins with expectations, and building professional and family capacity to see college as a viable option. But once that goal is set, to turn possible into probable, it is critical to provide clear structures and practices to support success. This takes substantial infrastructure, supervision, oversight, and reflective feedback as well as collaboration between systems that have highly divergent structures and expectations. Due to the emerging nature of this work, there are few secondary special education and transition professionals who have applied experience in cultivating and sustaining inclusive dual-enrollment practices for students with ID. But when offered the opportunity to expand their knowledge and apply shared best practices, transition professionals and college faculty and staff are motivated to push themselves out of their comfort zone in an effort to help students achieve better outcomes.

Logic model

Think College Transition Logic Model
October 2014

TCT Model Project Goals
Establish Think College Transition Model that provides inclusive dual enrollment transition program for students with intellectual disabilities and autism to increase their self-determination, career development skills, employment expectations, higher education expectations, and their employment or higher education outcomes.

Inputs/Activities/Key components

If ICI provides:

Technical assistance and coaching to high school transition staff, administrators, high school staff and IHE program leads, targeted staff and administrators focused on:

- Developing Work-based Learning plan (including job development, paid internships, paid employment)
- Selecting, training, and supervising Coordinator of Peer Mentoring
- Implementing Person Centered Planning (ID student goals and outcomes)
- Providing access to academic classes, supports, accommodations, advising
- Promoting and supporting campus and community navigation and engagement

Tools to develop and foster ongoing partnership between school district and higher education partners that includes

- Understanding of the TCT model and anticipated outcomes
- Clarification of and agreement on who will be responsible for each TCT component
- Common understanding of and commitment to TCT Model goals

Outputs/Short-term outcomes/Mediators

Then High School staff will:

- Understand the purpose and intended outcomes of TCT dual enrollment transition services
- Conduct and implement person centered planning (PCP) for students
- Increase number of students identified to enroll in the colleges
- Support student access for 2 or more years in college
- Support full TCT model: full day inclusion with school day ALL TCT-related, whether on university campus or work site (not in HS)

And IHE staff will:

- Establish and operate an interagency team (BPS, DDS, MRC, other adult agencies) to facilitate communication about TCT model across agencies with quarterly meetings
- Participate in PCP (if invited by student)
- Provide early course registration to ensure students are enrolled in courses related to career goals
- Provide access to existing student services (disability services, tutoring, campus based supports)
- Create and implement peer mentoring program
- Link with college career services to coordinate on-campus internships or integrated competitive employment
- Collaborate with partners from inter-agency team to support student engagement in integrated competitive employment

And students will:

- Enroll in IHE TCT model for a minimum of 2 years
- Participate in person-centered planning at least 3 times per semester
- Engage with peer mentor and/or instructional coach weekly
- Enroll in and complete college courses related to their person-centered plan (of their choosing or related to career goal)
- Work with career services or job development staff (TCT staff on campus) to explore internship/employment options
- Participate in paid internships on or off campus and/or obtain competitive paid employment related to career goal

Medium term outcomes

If students participate in all the activities, they will:

- Build career development and job seeking and retention skills
- Expand expectations for higher education
- Expand expectations for future careers
- Have increased self-determination
- Increased self-efficacy?
- Be more likely to have integrated paid employment or continue higher education

Long term student outcomes

- Higher level of education post high school
- Career Advancement
- Higher wages/ Increased work hours/Increased access to benefits
- Increased self esteem
- Greater independence and success as adults

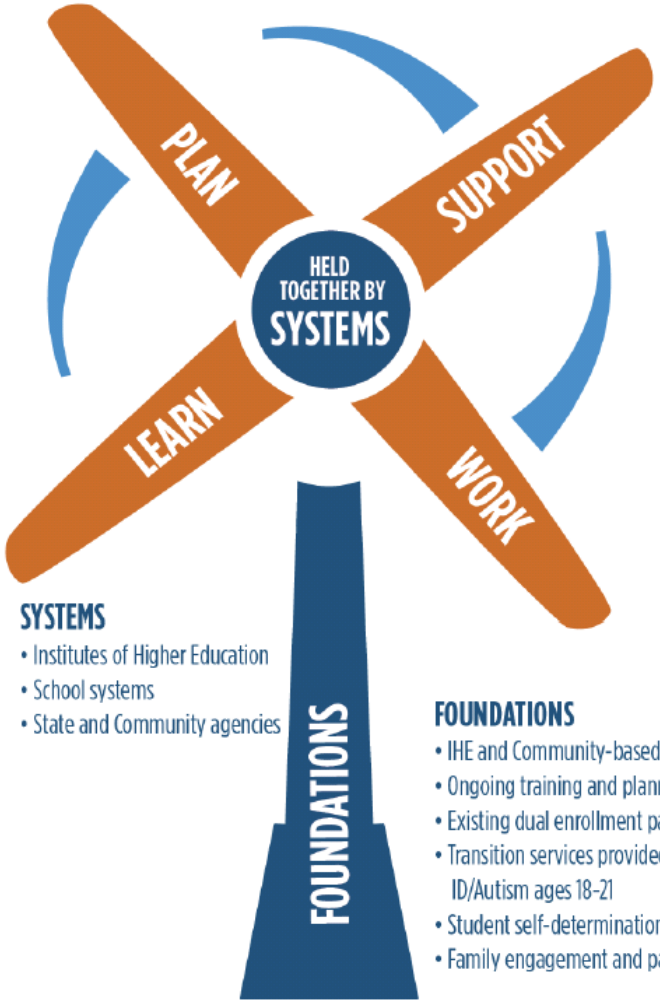
Assumptions

- BPS wants to increase its dual enrollment participation for students with ID/A and are willing to dedicate resources to do so.
- IHE staff want to enhance the quality of their services to include increased student enrollment in college courses and integrated competitive employment outcomes for students with intellectual disabilities and autism and are willing to dedicate resources to do so.

Think College Transition Model for Inclusive Dual Enrollment

DRIVEN BY
COLLABORATION

Driven by Collaboration
- Interagency communication
- Mutual outreach efforts
- Evaluation of transition services



TCT Model Components

PLAN
- Person centered planning
- Inclusive course access
- Internships/employment
- Inclusive campus activities

WORK
- Integrated competitive employment
- Paid internships
- Work-based learning plan

SUPPORT
- Disability services
- Peer mentor/educational coach
- Career & Employment supports

LEARN
- Priority registration
- Courses identified in PCP
- Courses related to employment goals

SYSTEMS
- Institutes of Higher Education
- School systems
- State and Community agencies

FOUNDATIONS
- IHE and Community-based transition services
- Ongoing training and planning
- Existing dual enrollment partnership
- Transition services provided to students with ID/Autism ages 18-21
- Student self-determination and self-advocacy
- Family engagement and partnerships

Appendix A: Guiding Questions Template

At-a-glance information. Please complete the following about your i3 project:

Grantee name	
Project name	
Project contact person name	
Project contact person email	
i3 cohort (i.e., what year was your grant awarded?)	
i3 grant type (development, scale-up, or validation)	
# of students impacted by your project	
# of participating K–12 schools	
# of participating K–12 districts	
# of participating colleges/universities	
List of partners	

Population(s) or area(s) of focus. Indicate the specific population(s) or area(s) of focus applicable to your grant (check all that apply):

English Language Learners	First-generation college-goers	High-poverty students	Rural	Other special population (please describe)	Social-emotional learning/non-cognitive skills

College-going culture	Early college high school	STEM	Writing/ Literacy	Parent/Family Engagement	Other focus area (please describe)

Who/where? Describe the schools/community/population your i3 project serves.

What? Describe the activities/strategies you implement through your i3 project.

How is it going? Describe changes you have seen since implementing your project. Describe challenges you have faced and have overcome, or challenges with which you continue to grapple.

Describe challenges specific to your college access work.

What have you learned? What can others learn from your experiences? What is your biggest success? What do you most want to share with the broader community working towards increasing college access for all students?

Describe lessons learned specific to your college access work.

Please also submit a copy of your project's logic model.