



COMMITMENTS TO ACTION ON COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY

The Executive Office of the President

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LIST OF COMMITMENTS

This past January, the President and First Lady issued a call to action answered by over 100 college presidents and 40 nonprofits who announced new commitments to increase college opportunity for all Americans. Expanding opportunity for more students to enroll and succeed in college, especially low-income and underrepresented students, is vital to building a strong economy and a strong middle class. The President and First Lady are committed to doing more in partnership with colleges and universities, business leaders, and nonprofits to support students across the country to help our nation reach its goal of leading the world in college attainment. Since January, a number of additional institutions and organizations committed to strengthening college readiness for academically underprepared students through the following actions:

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Commitments to Action on College Opportunity

As part of the Administration's efforts to increase college opportunity, the President and First Lady made a call to action, asking colleges and universities, nonprofits, foundations, businesses, state officials and other leaders to make new commitments to increase college opportunity. Since the January Summit, several additional institutions have committed to improving college opportunity. The following colleges and universities are making new commitments dedicated to improving remediation services to ensure college completion.

Department of Education, Nonprofits, Organizations, Foundations and Business

Center for the Analysis of Postsecondary Readiness

Community College Research Center (New York, NY)

MDRC (New York, NY)

The Institute for Education Sciences (IES) at the U.S. Department of Education recently awarded \$10 million to the Community College Research Center (CCRC) at Teachers College, Columbia University and the social policy research organization MDRC to launch a Center for the Analysis of Postsecondary Readiness (CAPR) that will strengthen the research, evaluation, and support of college readiness efforts across the nation. The new center will focus on documenting current practices of developmental education and associated reform efforts across the nation and rigorously evaluating the effects of innovative assessment and instructional practices on student success in order to share what works to improve outcomes for academically underprepared students. CAPR will focus on assessing the effects of new approaches to remedial assessment, placement, and instruction. CAPR will conduct three major studies—(1) a descriptive study, based on a nationally representative survey of colleges as well as other sources of evidence, that will delineate the current landscape of developmental education and associated reform efforts across the nation; (2) a random assignment evaluation, carried out in partnership with SUNY community colleges, of a “data analytics” assessment and placement system that makes use of multiple measures, rather than assessment exam scores alone, to predict student performance; and (3) a random assignment evaluation of the New Mathways Project (NMP), an innovative math reform developed by the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas and used in Texas, that employs an activities-based pedagogy, developmental curricula tied to programs of study, and an acceleration strategy to promote progression to college-level coursework. In addition to research, CAPR will also carry out leadership and outreach activities aimed at improving college readiness.

Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation (Madison, WI)

The Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation is pleased to commit to investing up to \$5 million in partnership with MDRC, a social and education policy research organization; the Ohio Board of Regents; and the City University of New York (CUNY) for a replication demonstration of CUNY's successful Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) involving 1,500-2,000 community college students in Ohio.

ASAP offers a comprehensive array of services and supports over a three-year period to help more students graduate and to help them graduate sooner. Prior research by MDRC and CUNY has demonstrated that ASAP has greatly increased graduation rates of low-income community college students with developmental (or remedial) needs in New York City.

The Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation will contribute up to \$5 million over a five-year period to support the implementation and random assignment evaluation of ASAP at three community colleges

in Ohio. These colleges, which are in the final stages of being selected, will also contribute support to the implementation of ASAP. Additional funding partners are also being sought. The Ohio colleges will represent the first sites of a possible multistate demonstration that would eventually include several other colleges across the nation.

The ASAP replication demonstration will provide the opportunity for low-income students in Ohio (and eventually other states) to experience the benefits of a comprehensive program with the potential to propel them towards degree attainment and college success. The evaluation will study how a model program like ASAP can be adapted by other states, colleges, and university systems for their populations and local contexts, contributing to the national debate about how to most effectively increase graduation rates and build human capital among disadvantaged populations.

Khan Academy (Mountain View, CA)

The Khan Academy will offer new technology-based solutions customized to improve student success in developmental math. The Khan Academy is adapting and improving their developmental math content and algorithms to better meet the needs of developmental math students and partnering with colleges to pilot innovative uses of the KA mastery based learning platform. Khan Academy will work with EdReady to provide a placement test diagnostic to allow students to identify their skills gaps with links to existing math exercises designed by Khan Academy, so that students can do a targeted review customized to their math needs, at no cost. Soon after launching this effort, Khan will partner with colleges to test these features in the field, providing critical feedback needed to improve and adapt these resources to help more learners.

Colleges, Universities and State Systems

Borough of Manhattan Community College (New York, NY)

BMCC has developed several initiatives aimed at increasing the level of participation among women and low income students in the STEM areas. The college has used its own resources and grant funds to strengthen the number of students into technical and scientific fields.

One example of this work is the Fostering Student Success in Geospatial Technology project. The grant allocation of \$300,000 plus college resources brings together faculty, private industry, and students in a partnership to develop a seamless Geographical Information Science curriculum. The three year project allows students to prepare for entry level employment and facilitates transfer to a CUNY senior college.

ASAP and the Freshman Learning Academies is a second example of BMCC's work to strengthen STEM participation. ASAP is a program to accelerate the time it takes to complete a college program. Many of the features of the Freshman Academy have been from the success of the ASAP program. The ASAP program provides funds for low income students in the form of transportation and increased academic advising. ASAP will be expanded next year and is one of the programs which will see increased funding university-wide because of the increased retention and success of low –income students. Entering freshman, especially those from lower income areas, are placed in block schedules, which provide an aligned set of academic and support services. A pilot program showed a 35 percent increase in retention, much higher than conventional programs.

A third effort is BMCC's use of Quantway curriculum in remedial math. BMCC has over 300 students in a remedial math program designed to help all students, especially those of low-income districts, overcome the biggest obstacle to student success: entry level math courses. The success rate of the Quantway curriculum is much higher than the conventional approaches and BMCC intends to build upon the success for the coming year.

The support for the above mentioned programs comes from grants, the college budget, and in some cases, from the support of the BMCC Foundation. The largest of the CUNY colleges, BMCC currently serves 24,500 students in the credit programs. It is also the most diverse, with students representing more than 155 countries. Nearly 90 percent are comprised of minorities and groups historically underrepresented in collegiate programs.

Building on Existing Efforts: In addition to ASAP and Freshman Learning Academies, BMCC has an ongoing summer immersion program for students entering college before they take a credit course to increase their chances of success in their academic programs. Summer immersion is done in conjunction with the programs in math, developmental skills, and continuing education. This innovative program uses existing resources for the skill development of students at different levels of performance.

Additionally, the college has started a partnership this year with the Department of Education, the advertising industry, and CUNY administration to create a high school curriculum of advertising and graphic arts. This flexible program allows students a variety of options, including the ability to complete their associate's degree while in high school, to earn college credit while in high school, or to complete the high school curriculum and be college ready for a different institution. The program will have advising and career guidance and support from secondary school, private and higher education institutions to help students achieve the goal of securing their education and going into a field that provides a respectable income.

Bunker Hill Community College (Charlestown, MA)

BHCC commits to four outcomes by 2016, through a range of interventions that support students from high school to college entry and through to completion of a degree/certificate program.

First, successful completion of developmental coursework prior to college entry for at least 500 entering students per year. The key strategies BHCC will use to achieve this outcome are curriculum alignment, dual enrollment, peer mentoring with partner high schools, Summer Bridge courses and Boot Camps for entering students.

BHCC also commits to increasing the percentage of entering students completing at least fifteen credits in their first year to 25 percent. This outcome will be achieved through a variety of strategies, including LifeMap, Learning Community Seminars and Clusters, Redesigned Developmental Math sequence, and Math Space. These strategies will also lead to the third outcome, reducing racial, gender and income disparities in first year completion of fifteen credits by 10 percent.

Finally, BHCC will increase the six-year “Achieving the Dream” success rate (graduation, transfer and persistence) to 48 percent. Many of the same strategies will be used to accomplish this goal, including LifeMap, Learning Community Seminars and Clusters, Redesigned Developmental Math sequence, Math Space, Emergency Assistance Fund, and Learn & Earn.

College of the Ouachitas (Malvern, AR)

College of the Ouachitas has developed and implemented educational and financial coaching services, employment and career development initiatives, and wrap-around services extending to public benefits and resources for low-income students that produce financial stability and break the cycle of generational poverty. Our remediation programs have matured over the past two decades to consistently achieve a greater than 70 percent pass rate.

Building on Existing Efforts: College of the Ouachitas is committed to scaling up integrated student services for all students at the College. After examining student success and persistence data, the College is allocating resources dedicated to moving the needle to significantly improve our fall-to-fall retention rates, especially for our population of low-income students and students of color. The College also intends to extend its focus beyond completion and certificate/degree attainment to examine how to increase our students’ employability utilizing the skills gained as college students.

Davidson County Community College (Thomasville, North Carolina)

Davidson County Community College (Davidson) commits to implementing a summer bridge program in collaboration with a city high school. Students will complete developmental education modules embedded with student success skills at their high school. Several times during the summer, students will come to campus to meet faculty and staff in Enrollment Services, Advisement, the Learning Commons, and other areas of the college that focus on student success.

Davidson commits to scaling its student success course to all first-time college students. During the course, students will learn personal characteristics that contribute to success in college and in life, study skills, and college resources.

Building on Existing Efforts: Davidson employs a centralized, proactive advising model which uses an early alert system to identify students who may be at risk. The College will add faculty mentoring for students on Academic Probation.

Davidson has streamlined all programs across campus to provide more direction for students in selecting courses, particularly electives. The University of North Carolina System and the North Carolina Community College System have created a Comprehensive Articulation Agreement which identifies community college courses that will transfer as general education requirements. Davidson will align our Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degrees with the Articulation Agreement.

Eastern Gateway Community College (Steubenville, OH)

Through Eastern Gateway Community College's Achieving the Dream initiative and its developmental education redesign efforts, Eastern Gateway will continue to assist first-generation and low-income students in preparing for college-level courses and the ultimate goal of student success. More than 70 percent of its student population places in this group.

Eastern Gateway commits to further enhancing the academic advising experience for the target population through use of professional academic advisors and faculty advisors, who receive professional development on how to better assist this at-risk group. Additionally, the college will expand use of the recently acquired academic advising Aviso software. This system allows more intrusive interventions with alerts to students, faculty and advisors about a student's attendance and grades.

For its developmental math curriculum, Eastern Gateway pledges to expand and refine the use of the emporium-style course work, which allows students to complete the curriculum in less time. The emporium-style delivery allows students to work at their own pace. The redesign of the curriculum and refinements made each semester are bolstering success by making it possible for students to complete the lower levels of developmental math and move forward quickly. Also, instructors are mapping content and skills to the students' academic programs and developing alternative pathways to complete math requirements based on intended majors. With the new curriculum, students are finishing these math courses earlier in the semester so they can move to the next level math within the semester or have more time to devote to other classes.

English developmental courses now incorporate the Accelerated Learning Model, developed by Community College of Baltimore County. Students scoring at the top of the developmental range are placed in college-level English 101 instead of a developmental class. These students spend one extra hour with the faculty each week to help them with the course. The college commits to scale this new intervention to more incoming students.

Through these enhancements, Eastern Gateway experienced increases in retention rates which were up 2 percent from spring 2013 to fall 2013 and up another 1 percent from fall 2013 to spring 2014. The retention rate for fall 2012 to fall 2013 was up 6 percent.

Edmonds Community College (Lynnwood, WA)

Edmonds Community College (EdCC) will expand its training for faculty so that they have additional tools for engaging students, increasing resilience, and providing them with needed resources to strengthen college readiness efforts for students at the college. In addition, EdCC will expand its offering of competency-based education certificates in other disciplines beyond Information Technology.

Building on Existing Efforts: Edmonds Community College will continue to expand its I-BEST program whereby English as a Second Language and pre-college courses are integrated with professional technical programs, such as nursing assistant and composites, to increase student understanding by contextualizing the course learning outcomes and shortening the path to completion. Cheyney University of Pennsylvania (Cheyney, PA)

Gaston College (Dallas, NC)

Gaston College commits to redesigning its developmental education curriculum and delivery. Developmental math is modularized into four-week units, reducing the maximum amount of time from three semesters to two. The curriculum is also contextualized. Developmental English and Developmental Reading have been combined to reduce the maximum number of courses from five courses to three. Additionally, developmental courses will be removed from over twenty-five general education courses based on course success data. Gaston College also has programs to meet non-academic needs of students (e.g., Academic Assistance Fund and Food Bank) and is committed to being intentional in engaging students early in their academic careers to transform and empower them.

Lee College (Baytown, TX)

Lee College commits to increasing student success for low income students and students of color through collaborative community partnerships. Working with P-16 education partners, business and industry, government, non-profits, and the community at-large, Lee College will coordinate a systems approach to develop clear pathways to college and career achievement. For K-12 students, the pathways will provide early connections to careers and a college transition success model in each high school. For non-traditional age students, the pathways will include comprehensive advising into short term training programs for local high-demand positions, credit bearing certificates and degrees, and university transfer assistance.

Building on Existing Efforts: Lee College piloted a college transition success model in one service area school district that will be scaled to include all area high schools. Targeting all juniors and seniors, the college transition model provides Lee College personnel for college application completion, onsite testing, advising, career cluster campus tours, financial aid workshops and new student orientation.

Los Rios Community College District (Sacramento, CA)

Los Rios Community College District pledges to expand the STATWAY Math program at Los Rios' American River College to the other three colleges of the District. This program allows students to simultaneously complete developmental math courses and receive math credit in statistics in one academic year. As part of a Breakthrough Collaborative consisting of Borough of Manhattan Community College, Miami Dade College, Austin Community College, Los Rios Community College District, and Northern Virginia Community College, Los Rios has applied for a FIPSE First in the World Initiative grant to supplement the efforts underway to take the successful Statway project at Los Rios' American River College to scale across the four-college district.

A second commitment is the Sacramento Pathways to Success program, which is a partnership of Los Rios' Sacramento City College, Sacramento City Unified School District, and Sacramento State University to streamline the pathway from high school to college to career. Discussions are underway to expand the Pathways project to additional Los Rios colleges. The Los Rios Community College District is exploring expansion of the successful Sacramento Pathways to Success project from the pilot college, Sacramento City College, to Los Rios' Cosumnes River College and possibly other colleges in the coming years. The focus of the Pathways project is to foster collaboration and alignment between Sacramento State University, the Los Rios community colleges, and the regional K-12 districts with which Los Rios works.

Los Rios will also broaden Adult Education to include inmate education. The state of California is in the midst of a two-year transfer of the responsibilities for Adult Education from K-12 districts to community college districts. Los Rios Community College District is leading a capital region collaborative in Sacramento to coordinate Adult Education services. The California legislature is also considering expanded opportunities for inmate education. As a result, Los Rios is exploring opportunities to expand services to individuals currently incarcerated through this initiative.

Building on Existing Efforts: Los Rios commits to continuing the Math Boot Camp Programs at Los Rio's Cosumnes River and Sacramento City College. This summer bridge program equips students who test into developmental math to more rapidly advance in the math sequence. Two of the four Los Rios colleges, Sacramento City College and Cosumnes River College, are currently offering a Math Bootcamp/Bridge Program to help students who place into remedial math classes become better prepared to complete the math sequence. Two additional Los Rios colleges are also considering piloting similar programs.

Lower Columbia College (Longview, WA)

Lower Columbia College is committed to creating a \$1.5 million endowment that will generate approximately \$50,000 annually to support the Student Success Fund. The Student Success Fund will help students cover the cost of tuition expenses not covered by scholarships, financial aid or grants; textbook expenses; GED testing fees; emergency childcare expenses; and/or emergency transportation. The Student Success Fund is expected to support nearly 150 students annually who are experiencing financial hardship who might not otherwise be able to continue their studies.

Building on Existing Efforts: LCC will also continue to provide mandatory new student orientation to all enrolling degree and certificate seeking students. During the orientation, new students will work with educational planners to register for appropriate course work, including developmental courses if necessary.

In conjunction with mandatory new student orientation, Lower Columbia College commits to continuing the work it has done to expand the use of tools beyond standardized placement tests for math and English course placement. This includes a commitment to transcript evaluation, partnerships with K-12 and offering intensive ("boot camp") sessions to allow students to refresh math skills.

Additionally, Lower Columbia College commits to continuing the critical work being accomplished by math faculty to shorten both developmental and college-level math course sequences. Previously a 20 credit sequence, developmental math now consists of 3- and 2-credit modules (15 credits total) designed to significantly shorten the path to college level studies. Similar curriculum reform is occurring in developmental English. Math faculty are working to reduce the pre-calculus math sequence as well.

Macomb Community College (Warren, MI)

CSSK 1200 College Success Skills (3 semester hours) was developed and approved by Macomb Community College's Curriculum Committee in 2010-2011. The ATD Core Team chose this as an intervention based on research that indicates that students who take such a course persist at higher rates than those who do not.

Data regarding the relationship between success in this course and persistence were collected and analyzed for several semesters. Students who took the course persisted at a greater rate from fall to winter. In addition, there was an interaction between number of developmental placements and impact on persistence, with the greatest impact observed for students with three developmental placements (math, English, and reading). In particular, 67 percent of these students who took CSSK 1200 persisted, while only 54 percent of those who did not take the course persisted.

Building on Existing Efforts: As of Fall 2013, students who place into three developmental courses are required to enroll in CSSK 1200 during their first semester at Macomb. Preliminary data indicate that 70 percent of the students who complied with the mandate persisted to Winter 2014, while only 47 percent of those not complying re-enrolled for winter semester.

The College plans to continue assessing the relationship between CSSK-taking and student success-related outcomes and will extend the mandate to other incoming student groups if the data warrant. This initiative to

help incoming students increase their readiness for college is expected to help them succeed at Macomb and future educational endeavors.

Passaic County Community College (Paterson, NJ)

Gateway Initiative: Backed by funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Passaic County Community College (PCCC) is undertaking a comprehensive curricular reform effort to improve student success rates in 10 highly-enrolled general education courses that have served as a bottleneck for PCCC students. These gateway courses will be linked to a vibrant Academic Advancement Center and supported by an intensive instructional development component that will train faculty in integrating collaborative and group learning, instructional technology, and college success strategies into the revised courses. As a result of this initiative, more than 2,500 college-level students will directly benefit each semester.

As the lead partner in the Northeast Resiliency Consortium (NRC), a four-state consortium involving seven community colleges, PCCC and its partners will create new pathways for dislocated workers, veterans, and other low-skill individuals to earn credentials that have value in the workplace and to move expeditiously into high-skill, high-wage employment in three key industry sectors, including Information Technology, Healthcare, and Energy and the Environment. Through this initiative, funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, ETA's TAACCCT program, the College and its partners will undertake four key strategies: 1) Accelerating Skill, Competency, and Credential Acquisition for Trade-Impacted Workers through Innovative Approaches and Solutions; 2) Utilizing Advanced Technology to Support Student Learning and Program Completion; 3) Engaging Employers and Strategic Partners to Improve Skill Acquisition, Program Completion, and Employment Outcomes; and 4) Providing Comprehensive Outreach, Assessment, and Student Supports.

Among its significant innovations, the partners will provide contextualized developmental math classes; add new credentials and reorganize existing credentials to create new lattices and opportunities for obtaining credentials; develop regional standards for Prior Learning Assessments; institute adaptive learning systems, digital tutors and MOOCs to improve program completion and skill acquisition; implement work-based learning and award credit for such experiences; develop a rigorous assessment protocol; and implement a technology-based advising system (IPAS) to monitor student success. The proposed project will serve more than 3,400 participants.

Umpqua Community College (Roseburg, OR)

Umpqua Community College is launching a new program titled UCC Scholars beginning fall 2014. The criteria for acceptance into the UCC Scholars program is: 1) Attend and graduate from a UCC District High School within 1 calendar year. 2) Earn a cumulative (unweighted) high school GPA of 3.5 or better as of first semester grades of final year of high school. 3) Place into UCC's: WR-115 (or higher) and MTH-95 (or higher). This will normally be evidenced by Compass scores or successful completion of applicable Dual Credit classes and 4) Be an admitted student of UCC. Tuition waivers will be granted as long as students maintain a 3.25 GPA.

Building on Existing Efforts: UCC's Academic Support Division is also running many new programs. Since summer 2013 they have run the Core Skills Mastery initiative, allowing students to register for a free, computer based program that increases skills to decrease the time and credit hours it takes to enter college level coursework. The Director of Adult Basic Skills has teamed with the Director of Academic Support to offer students work experience as an incentive to stay in school, complete their high school diploma and eventually enroll at UCC. The Director of Adult Basic Skills is working on a proposal regarding dual-credit options that will allow Adult High School Diploma students to graduate high school with 9 – 12 college credits, and she has designed an accelerated program to prepare students for the GED exam, as well as bypass Developmental Education classes when they enroll at UCC.

Students who place into developmental reading and writing classes are enrolled in one of two Dedicated Learning Communities. The Bridge to Success cohort students are registered for Writing Skills (WR 90), Basic Reading (RD 80), and College Success (HD 100). Students in the Practicing Success cohort take College Writing Fundamentals (WR 95), College Textbook Reading (RD 90), and Strategies for Success (HD 136), along with a non-credit Student Success Initiative course. In addition, the Academic Support Division has piloted two accelerated programs. Accelerated Math Skills (Math 10) and Pre-Algebra (Math 20) are taken in one quarter; accelerated College Writing Fundamentals students, who place into WR 95 but out of pre-college reading, are registered for a section of WR 95 linked with English Composition (WR 121) and Critical Reading Strategies (RD 115).

West Hills College Lemoore (Lemoore, CA)

West Hills College Lemoore commits to the implementation of Student Success Teams to ensure that first-time college bound students (with an emphasis on students from low-income, first generation, and underrepresented populations) receive career counseling and academic advising. Recognizing that there are strategic momentum and loss points, students will automatically be assigned a team based on their declared major. Teams are comprised of a student services and instructional administrator, counselor, advisor, student services technician, financial aid technician, and an instructional faculty. The Student Success Team will monitor students' progress, follow-up with issues, and celebrate accomplishments with the students on their team.

West Hills College Lemoore commits to promoting collaboration between our community college faculty and our feeder high school district faculty to more closely align curriculum and expectations. Collaboration, dialogue, and sharing and calibrating of student writing will increase the number of students entering at the college level in reading and math and decrease the number of students entering at the basic skills level.

West Hills College Lemoore commits to the implementation of Priority Registration, a Board approved policy to incentivize all incoming students to complete their application, placement test, FAFSA, orientation, and preparation of a student education plan with priority registration to ensure they get the courses they need.

Building on Existing Efforts: In an effort to ensure no student falls between the cracks, to promote academic success and graduation in a timely manner, West Hills College Lemoore has implemented a Student Educational Plan initiative. In fall 2011, 33 percent of WHC Lemoore students had an educational plan; in 2013, 85 percent of students had an educational plan. West Hills College Lemoore commits to the endeavor of a sustained 90 percent completion rate for student educational plans.
