

Advising at Scale: For College Access Organizations (CAOs)

Equitable Postsecondary Advising Systems

Expanding access to help close the degree divide

OVERVIEW

Postsecondary education dramatically increases the likelihood of employment and economic success. This is true for elite colleges, other four-year institutions, and community colleges. But many young people, especially those furthest from opportunity and from the most underserved communities, are not accessing postsecondary pathways or realizing the benefits that come with a degree. To disrupt this inequity, we must better support students to identify, pursue, and complete college, thereby improving their life trajectory.

Quality postsecondary advising — equipping students to identify and evaluate their full set of postsecondary options and to select and successfully pursue the best option for them — is one critical lever for closing the degree divide.

A Common Vision:

All high school students equitably receive high-quality postsecondary advising that results in a successful transition to college and career

CHARACTERISTICS OF ADVISING SYSTEMS THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS

Equitable: Advising supports are tiered and differentiated such that all students receive supports that meet their specific needs

High-quality: Well-trained advisers provide information and assistance to students using resources, curricula, tools, and delivery models that have been demonstrated to be effective

Measurable: Advising meaningfully contributes to and accelerates student progress toward measurable postsecondary outcomes

Aligned to college and career: Supports enable the exploration of multiple pathways to achieving postsecondary success, including a range of college and career options

Financially sustainable: The ongoing costs of delivering supports are primarily covered by public revenue and are not dependent on philanthropy

CONDITIONS REQUIRED TO CREATE EXPAND ACCESS TO THESE SYSTEMS

Our field research suggests that most K-12 systems are relatively early in figuring out how to best deliver postsecondary advising supports. To significantly expand advising access, districts — with the partnership of college access organizations, policymakers, funders and other supporters — must focus on creating six conditions for success.



Case for Change

Build broad support for postsecondary success as a unifying purpose of the core work of K-12



Vision & Milestones

Create a shared district vision for postsecondary outcomes and a strategy to achieve the key milestones that students must reach to successfully navigate postsecondary pathways



Data & Platforms

Use data to understand student needs — prioritizing milestones and which student needs to address — and to track student outcomes



Supports — Content, Coverage, & Delivery

Identify the internal supports and resources available and how/whether to leverage outside supports



Coordination & Continuous Improvement

Identify partners, establish staffing models, and define roles in order to optimize the provision of services, reducing duplication and ensuring coordination



Resources

Identify and secure adequate and sustainable financial resources

FOR MORE INFORMATION bit.ly/PostSecondaryAccess

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CRITICAL STRATEGIES FOR PROVIDING POSTSECONDARY ADVISING SUPPORTS

Lead on innovation

CAOs should lead on the design and development of new program models that build on best practice, interact with existing systems and supports, and more seamlessly meet needs across schools and districts; CAOs should also design and pilot school- and district-wide models that lower costs by effectively differentiating supports and tailoring services efficiently.

Build district capacity

CAOs should provide (and build) expertise with their district and school counterparts to build the capacity of K-12 systems in order to (ultimately) own and implement best practice models; CAOs with proven approaches should provide training, technical assistance, implementation coaching, and other forms of capacity-building to support the capacity of school systems to be the primary provider of postsecondary advising supports.

Strategically partner

CAOs should build partnerships intentionally and bundle services effectively to help reduce duplication of services, increase coordination across K-12 systems, and streamline costs in order to promote greater sustainability of program resources.

Select Recommendations for CAOs to Accelerate Progress

Case for Change



- Seek growth in states that are implementing policies, funding, or accountability measures that incentivize advising
- Demonstrate effectiveness of college advising models by piloting and evaluating in a few schools and building buy-in for the approach

Vision & Milestones



- Develop and build awareness of common milestones to drive alignment across ecosystems
- Serve as trusted advisers to districts to help facilitate the articulation of district-specific vision and/or milestones

Data & Platforms



- Provide technical assistance to help district staff use and analyze their data
- Ensure data systems are built to operate seamlessly with district data platforms

Supports — Content, Coverage, & Delivery



- Design turnkey versions of curriculum that align to advising milestones and develop implementation support resources (e.g., coaching)
- Provide better outcomes evaluation in order to articulate value add to prospective partners

Coordination & Continuous Improvement



- Continue to innovate on and spread best practices re: coordination models and formal partnerships to improve efficiency
- Increase communication with other CAOs in an ecosystem to reduce duplication of services and to share best practices

Resources



- Provide schools and districts with information about available funding streams, drawing from how CAOs have seen others fund the work
- Explore formal partnerships and/or bundle services with other CAOs that reduce overhead and increase efficiency

Access the full research report, including additional strategies and recommendations aligned to the six conditions, [here](#).

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