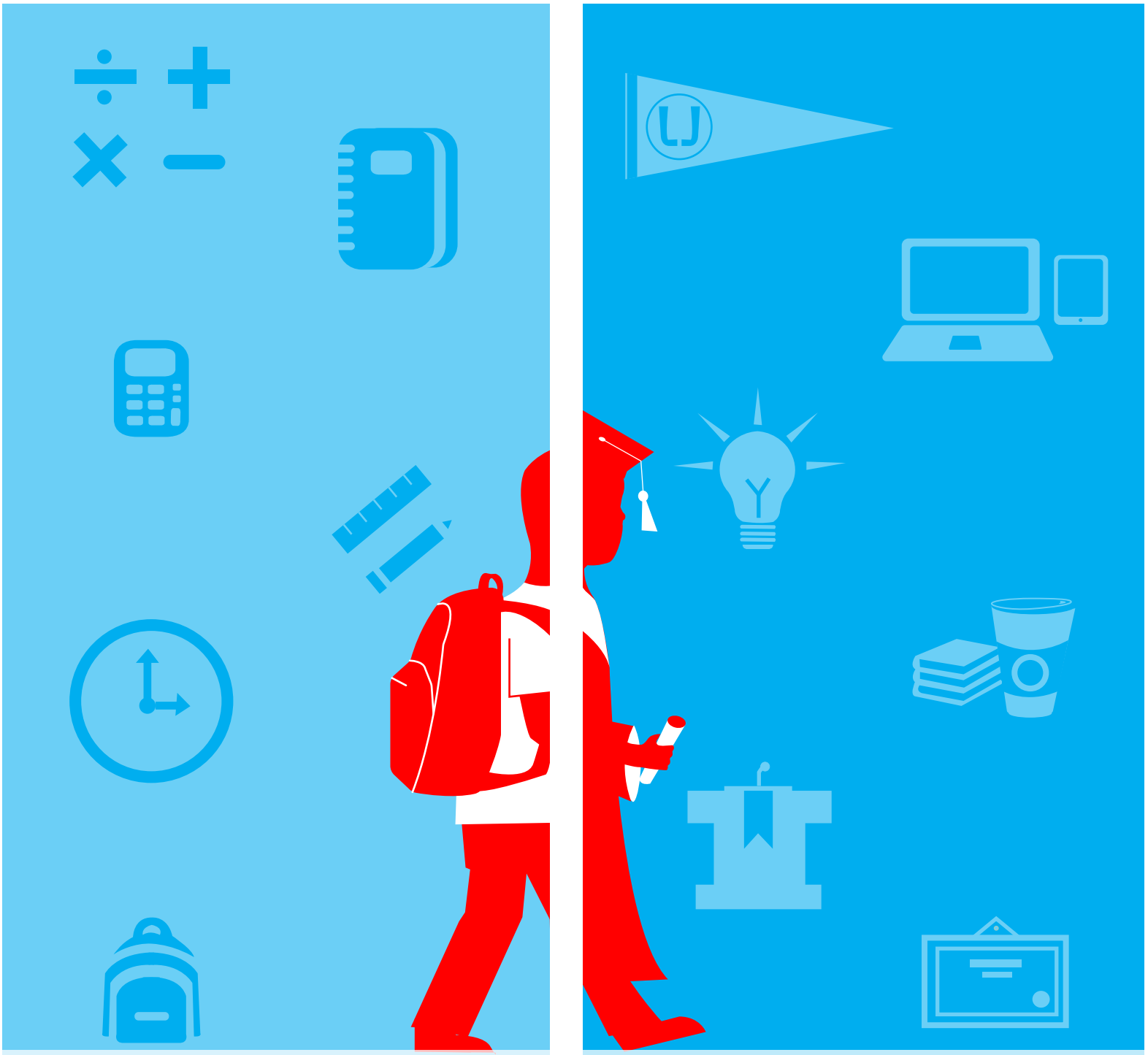

CO-DESIGN, CO-DELIVERY, AND CO-VALIDATION

CREATING HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE PARTNERSHIPS TO INCREASE POSTSECONDARY SUCCESS

By Joel Vargas and Andrea Venezia | Ready or Not: It's Time to Rethink the 12th Grade
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JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

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

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INTRODUCTION

Despite unprecedented national attention on college and career readiness, secondary and postsecondary institutions rarely develop deep systemic ties to help students make a successful transition from high school into college. Each educational system generally operates in its own separate orbit. Among the disparate programs and practices that currently exist to support postsecondary enrollment and success, most target either the end of high school or the beginning of college, and not the integration of the two.

Strong, sustained collaboration between secondary and postsecondary systems is essential in order to prepare more young people to complete college and earn credentials that lead to careers. For example, students entering a community college or broad-access four-year institution—about 80 percent of all first-year students nationally[1]—must take placement tests in English and math. But these assessments do not align with high school standards or curricula; test questions ask students to demonstrate skills they may not have needed to earn a high school diploma. As a result, many college students fail the tests and must take remedial classes before they can start credit-bearing, college-level work. Low-income and first-generation college students are especially vulnerable to this misalignment, which can require extra time and money, and delay or derail earning a college credential.

The focus of this paper—and the series of which it is a part—is on improving student learning during the crucial period spanning grade 12 and the first year of college in order to build momentum for college success. In the introductory paper to this series, Why 12th Grade Must Be Redesigned Now—And How, Jobs for the Future names this period the "transition zone" and argues that it is time for high schools and colleges to consider taking joint responsibility for the college and career readiness of students during these two years. This series suggests a "shared transition zone," in which secondary and

postsecondary education systems and institutions would collaborate in key ways to bridge existing gaps and substantially increase the percentage of youth prepared for college and careers. While high schools and colleges have their own distinct roles in educating students—and are trying to make improvements in their respective systems—their shared interest in student success comes closest to converging at the end of high school and the beginning of college. The needs of young people leaving one institution and entering another are quite similar, but the leaps in academic and cultural expectations are quite large. We suggest that it is at this juncture where sharing responsibility for the same students in a shared transition zone can have a greater effect than acting apart.

The work of creating a shared transition zone has not been attempted comprehensively at any substantial scale. However, promising precedents of practice, which can inform the design of a shared zone, exist across the country in successful K–12 and college collaborative efforts.

In this paper, we extrapolate from these examples to propose principles for designing new and more productive K–12 and postsecondary institutional partnerships that could create a smoother student transition from senior year into the first year of college. Specifically, the paper focuses on the aspects of college readiness and success that K–12 and postsecondary educators could design, deliver, and validate collectively in a shared transition zone. In doing so, we provide brief descriptions of what the principles can look like in practice, including examples from the partnerships from which they are drawn.

At present, in most communities, these two groups are far from embracing this shared mission. The challenges to secondary-postsecondary collaboration are deeply rooted in the history and culture of American education. Interest in collaboration may be growing, however, given:

- the limited life options for individuals without some form of post-high school education,
- the economic need of communities and states to have educated citizens, and
- new state curriculum standards that are trying to support the development of college and career readiness for a larger proportion of students.

The aim of this paper is to frame how educators can build upon this momentum to increase collective responsibility and solutions across systems. We do not claim here to portray a complete array of activities they would need to undertake in a shared transition zone to increase student success. Rather, we provide a framework that the field can use to guide evidence-based experimentation within and across K–12 and postsecondary education systems. The ultimate goal is for many more students to complete a postsecondary degree or credential within a reasonable amount of time. A key benchmark of success, as identified in the first paper, is the completion of at least one credit-bearing, college-level introductory course by the end of freshman year.

High schools and postsecondary institutions can enter into partnerships to redesign grade 12 and the first year of college that observe the three principles[2]: **co-design**, **co-delivery**, **co-validation** (*see box*).

Co-Design

Deciding on and designing together courses, curricular pathways, and support systems, as well as professional development opportunities and data platforms, that impact what and how students learn.

Co-Delivery

Sharing and coordinating faculty and staff, facilities, and other resources to carry out the co-designed learning experiences and supports.

Co-Validation

Accepting agreed-upon assessments, successful completion of performance tasks and experiences, and other indicators of learning as evidence of proficiency, including for placement in credit-bearing, college-level courses.

Practices consistent with these principles would be most powerful if implemented together. Though each principle is valuable in its own right, we surmise that the potential for creating a more effective transition from grade 12 through the first year of college is greatest when all conditions are present. A co-designed course that offers high school students some taste of postsecondary expectations but does not result in co-validated credit or the ability to skip remediation in college lacks practical power. It would also provide more coherence and elicit more trust across secondary and postsecondary systems if the course were co-delivered.

The first three sections describe each principle in more detail, including examples of the principles in practice, to the limited extent they exist. These are followed by a section outlining the major barriers to forming productive partnerships. The paper ends with policy suggestions to overcome these barriers and support deeper and broader collaboration across systems.

The principles of co-design, co-delivery, and co-validation should guide high school-college partnerships.

CO-DESIGN: DECIDING TOGETHER *WHAT* AND *HOW* STUDENTS LEARN

The principle of "co-design" refers to educators at the high school and postsecondary levels deciding together *what* and *how* students learn in order to ensure college readiness. In order to co-design effective learning experiences, leaders from school districts and colleges will need a clear understanding of one another's systemic expectations for what and how students should learn, and then use that information to collectively build bridges between grade 12 and the first year of college. This entails working together to design, for example:

- courses and course sequences that span senior year and the first year of college,
- professional development for high school and college faculty who work with exiting high school students and entering college students,
- processes for collecting and examining performance data for students who make the transition between their institutions, and
- formative assessments to gauge student learning in senior year and the first year of college.

A common example of co-design in curriculum today is teams of high school and college faculty from the same field coming together to develop courses and scaffold expectations across grade 12 and freshman year. This often culminates in the creation of a capstone or college-transition course for high school seniors. The **Southern Regional Education Board** (SREB), for instance, brought together

teams of K–12 and higher education representatives from five states to design college-readiness courses in math and literacy.[3] SREB is training hundreds of high school teachers across Arkansas, Mississippi, North Carolina, and West Virginia to deliver the courses to seniors statewide during the 2015-16 school year.[4]

Early college schools—high schools that allow students to earn substantial college credit along with their diploma—provide many illustrations of co-design. For example, faculty from **City University of New York** worked with K–12 teachers at CUNY's early college schools to create a logical sequence of high school and college courses that could result in students earning one to two years of college credit or an Associate's degree by graduation.[5] This required understanding, mapping, and aligning the academic expectations of high school classes with first-year college courses.

In California, "Linked Learning" pathways[6] also illustrate the principle of co-design. Linked Learning, launched by a multi-million-dollar investment of The James Irvine Foundation, integrates rigorous academics with career-based learning and workplace experiences. **West Contra Costa County Unified School District** and Contra Costa County created Linked Learning pathways for high school students to earn postsecondary certificates in emergency medical services, corrections, and administration of justice. Students who want to pursue further education can apply the credentials toward degree programs, including pre-law Bachelor's degrees at four-year institutions.[7]

Ideally, the co-design of *what* students learn would occur in concert with the strengthening of instructional practice to support this learning. Co-designing pre-service training and in-service professional development would embed new cross-system expectations in the instructional approaches of both new and veteran teachers. This is beginning to happen in California, where County Offices of Education are taking on an expanded role in overseeing professional learning opportunities, as a result of the state's new Local Control Funding Formula. For example, the **Sacramento County Office of Education** offers professional development in the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) college-readiness system and trains high school English and math teachers to align instruction with 12th-grade transition courses co-designed by high school teachers and the California State University System to meet nonremedial course entry requirements.[8]

> Strong, sustained collaboration between secondary and postsecondary systems is essential for increasing college and career success.

Students also would benefit from the co-design of formative assessments, which evaluate progress toward specific learning goals and are essential for informing the development of interventions to help those who are struggling. These assessments would be part of a system of multiple indicators that would provide enhanced, individualized diagnostic information for students, their families, teachers, and counselors. Cross-system teams would hold conversations about how to support individual students. This would be an extension of the idea of using "early warning" data that some high schools employ to predict and prevent dropout.[9]

Similarly, co-designed data platforms and data sharing processes would help secondary and postsecondary educators to plan more effectively to meet student needs. For example, **Pharr-San Juan-Alamo (PSJA) Independent School District** in Texas, which is providing early college opportunities for all students, has co-designed systems with **South Texas College** that enable students to graduate from high school with college credit. Nearly 3,000 students take college courses each year. PSJA and the college work in tandem to tackle logistical challenges—such as scheduling—using student achievement data to predict which students will be ready for college courses in a given semester. This allows the two systems to construct the master schedules and teaching staff loads to meet the needs of all of their students.[10]

Intermediaries and community-based organizations can play useful roles in helping to provide capacity for data-related needs, although it is important for partnerships to build internal capacity over time so they can own their analytical capabilities. Equal Measure (formerly the OMG Center for Collaborative

Learning) developed a guide on using data to create a college access and success system composed of postsecondary, K–12, school-based nonprofits, policymakers, and funders. The brief outlines how to view data as a tool to build capacity within, and relationships across, the different entities.[11] Similarly, the College Readiness Indicators Project, as described by Michael Grady in a subsequent paper in this series, holds lessons for how K–12 and postsecondary systems can work together to use data to inform interventions to raise college readiness and success.

CO-DELIVERY: SHARING EXECUTION OF DESIGN

The principle of "co-delivery" refers to sharing and coordinating resources across secondary and postsecondary systems to deliver the co-designed learning experiences. This is arguably one of the more difficult principles to put into practice because district and college staff members are each typically employed to do a job and deploy resources in their own realm. Rewards for cooperation or coordination across systems are rare, and the risk of threats to professional autonomy may even discourage collaboration. However, students in a shared transition zone stand to benefit from increased collaboration between faculty and staff in both systems. Improving coordination between secondary and postsecondary support systems, for example, would help to bridge the gap between the distinct cultures of high school, where adults direct most of the learning, and college, where students must exhibit more independence.

To expand upon this issue, high school counselors and college advisors could come together to create a smoother handoff of students between systems based on individual academic and non-academic needs. As part of their early college partnership, the **PSJA** school district and **South Texas College** agreed to house five PSJA college-transition guidance counselors on campuses to help PSJA graduates find supports and other resources they need to succeed. Services range from helping students choose and secure the right courses to applying for financial aid. The counselors also advise college guidance staff and faculty about how to better meet the needs of entering students.

Such co-delivery would require new roles and job descriptions in two systems that already face challenges providing guidance to their own students. Most high school counselors have insufficient time now to advise seniors, as many have numerous responsibilities that pull them away from direct service. College admissions, counseling, and intake systems are often similarly overburdened, and they are not typically designed to work in tandem with local high schools. This is one factor driving the need for supplementary services, such as the federally funded TRIO programs, which help local high school students connect to and enroll in college.[12] In a co-delivered transition zone, high schools and colleges would enable designated staff to work together to focus more on supporting students through the high school-to-college space.

The co-delivery of curricula is also challenging, but has some precedent. A number of early college schools have had high school and college instructors team teach college courses for dual credit, for example. Others have created a high school course that "shadows" a college course students take simultaneously to provide important supports and supplementary instruction. The Tennessee SAILS (Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support) program, designed by **Chattanooga State Community College**, uses an online competency-based curriculum and assessments to reach 12th graders who are identified by their prior year's ACT score as not ready for college-level math. With co-delivery from a high school teacher to offer support, the curriculum enables students to progress through developmental education requirements early. Students may be ready for college-level courses by freshman year or earlier through earning dual credit prior to college entry.[13]

Challenges to secondary-postsecondary collaboration are deeply rooted in the history and culture of American education.

These kinds of co-delivered activities could allow educators to use both K–12 and postsecondary education facilities differently, further bridging the gaps between systems. For example, **Aurora Community College** in Colorado created a satellite campus at a local public high school, as the Aurora school system and the college collaborated to offer high school students the opportunity to earn up to 50 college credit hours.[14] South Texas College and PSJA share facilities through their early college partnership. Not only are early college students able to use the same college campus resources as any traditional college student, but traditional South Texas College students can take some of their courses at PSJA facilities, maximizing the use of shared equipment and space.

CO-VALIDATION: USING AGREED-UPON MEASURES OF PROFICIENCY

The principle of "co-validation" refers to the acceptance of agreed-upon assessments and other indicators of learning as evidence of student proficiency, including for placement in credit-bearing, college-level courses. The redesign of 12th grade will require assessments of learning and types of formative feedback between the systems that educators in both K–12 and postsecondary education agree on, trust, and accept.

Evidence of agreement on and actual use of these indicators—such as acceptance for credit toward a degree or credential, acceptance as evidence for bypassing remediation, reporting them as part of state accountability requirements—would constitute validation of proficiency in key college- and career-ready domains. To validate that a student does not need to take remedial coursework in college, these indicators include, for example:

- the use of high school grade point averages,
- test scores from a high school assessment, or
- multiple measures from performance tasks or previous experiences.

As K–12 and postsecondary partners determine what information to co-validate, they will need to consider some of the following questions:

- If students do not meet proficiency level(s) on 11th-grade college- or career-ready assessments, what evidence can they provide during the 12th grade that they have the academic knowledge needed to succeed in college and careers?
- For those who enter 12th grade having shown college-ready academic proficiency levels, what could provide further evidence of their readiness for higher-level learning?
- What alternatives to standardized tests exist to provide valid and trusted information about students' academic and non-academic readiness during this period?
- How would students in either situation know about any agreed-upon learning objectives, and why should they care if they accomplish them?

The answer to the last question is a matter of having high schools and colleges co-validate what students learn by attaching meaningful positive incentives to demonstrations of success. These may include creating a special diploma designation such as "graduating with distinction," permission to bypass remediation in college, receiving college credit, or earning a postsecondary certificate of value in the local labor market. Such options would offer students multiple routes to postsecondary readiness—each valued by K–12, colleges, and perhaps even employers.

There is precedent for co-validating 12th-grade learning experiences. In some states, early assessment programs for 11th graders—tied to state standards or national assessments of college readiness such as the ACT—can trigger student enrollment in transition courses in grade 12. For example, the **California State University** (CSU) system worked with the California Department of Education to co-design key English and math assessment questions that are co-delivered as part of the state's 11th-grade exam. Seniors who do not demonstrate readiness can take an English language arts transition course developed by the CSU system and taught by high school faculty.[15] CSU campuses and many community colleges in California accept transition course success as evidence that students can bypass remedial English courses upon enrollment. Although this measures only a slice of academic readiness (ELA) and does not measure non-academic indicators of college readiness, it illustrates one way of creating a meaningful co-validated outcome for students.

The goal of these principles is for many more students to complete a postsecondary credential within a reasonable amount of time.

Another example of co-validation is when high school students who complete college courses as dual enrollment students receive dual credit from both their high school and college. This is already a widespread practice and it sends a powerful signal to students since their readiness for college is validated by actual college credit. Colleges and high schools could offer college courses to entering 12th graders who show proficiency in specific subjects. For students who have not yet demonstrated proficiency, the two systems could offer postsecondary learning opportunities (e.g., transition courses, competency-based modules and assessments, co-requisite support courses[16]) that lead to credit-bearing courses.

A more experimental approach to co-validation would be to assign high school seniors to produce "capstone" projects for high school and college credit and invite college faculty, business leaders, and community members to evaluate them along with teachers. Projects could include entrepreneurial school-based businesses or community service and require students to demonstrate mastery of key content that each partner values. On-the-job learning and successful performance of occupational tasks through internships at local businesses could also be aligned to K–12 and college expectations and yield credit.

These and other forms of co-validation require a significant amount of co-design to ensure that the experiences and measures of proficiency are aligned with the expectations of each co-validating entity. Furthermore, co-delivery of these experiences could conceivably have the effect of building more trust between the co-validating entities in assessing student proficiency.

BARRIERS TO COLLABORATION

Examples of co-design, co-delivery, and co-validation are encouraging, but still relatively limited in scope and number. Some notable attempts, including some cited in this paper, have encountered hurdles to implementing activities consistent with these principles. And where it has been possible to figure out workable solutions in individual initiatives, the same conditions that give rise to the hurdles make it even more difficult to replicate such promising strategies on a large scale. Thus, to deliver on such principles beyond exceptional programs or pilots, policy and practice leaders will need to address a number of key barriers that create disincentives for high schools and colleges to work together to develop stronger transitions for students from high school to higher education. The barriers are embedded in key areas of school and college operations, including:

- **Accountability systems:** Traditional accountability systems can stifle risk-taking and the development of cross-system initiatives by making test scores a primary focus rather than one among multiple indicators of student preparedness for college and career. In addition, higher education traditionally shies away from any connection with K–12 accountability so that the former can preserve autonomy and independence. This means that high schools and colleges will need to find new ways to work together to support student success when doing so does not typically contribute to the ways that they are judged to be successful or not.

- **Capacity:** Educators in both systems need time to develop cross-system reforms. Such work ought to be in job descriptions as an expectation of key staff or otherwise recognized, but there currently are few expectations or rewards for undertaking cross-system activities. Engagement in this work often relies on individuals with a social justice or equity-focused approach to supporting student learning and opportunities. Reaching a large proportion of youth will logically require broader engagement. Educators need more time, authorization, and support for collaboration to encourage more partnerships and at least to make it less challenging for individuals who are already exceptionally motivated to collaborate in this way.
- **Assessment and placement:** College placement tests have received intense scrutiny from researchers, many of whom have questioned their validity and reliability. Yet most colleges continue to rely on them. As a result, incoming students are often assigned to developmental and introductory courses they may not need, and which include material they have already mastered. High school staff are rarely aware that colleges administer tests that are unaligned with K–12 curriculum or assessments. The two systems will need to work toward agreement on how to judge college readiness rather than continuing to measure separately in ways that reinforce the divided nature of their work.
- **Curricula and instructional strategies:** Both K–12 and postsecondary education need to rely less heavily on didactic, lecture-based modes of classroom instruction that are ineffective for many learners. Teacher training and professional development systems need to focus more on supporting effective and aligned instruction by faculty across systems.
- **Finance:** Current systems need to create more incentives for collaboration instead of pitting K–12 and postsecondary education against each other, taking from one pot to pay for sole ownership of students in another institution. For example, when high schools lose state enrollment-based funding if their students take college courses early, they tend to find ways to keep students engaged in their building and classes instead of creating more dual enrollment partnerships with colleges.
- **Data use and cultures of continuous improvement:** While data systems are evolving to include information from both K–12 and postsecondary systems, they still include standardized test data as the main indicator for college readiness. They do not take into account academic areas outside of English and math, or non-academic indicators such as resilience, resourcefulness, and leadership. In addition, there can be a culture clash between using data for state- and system-level accountability purposes and using data for reflection and improvement. K–12 and postsecondary staff need to develop habits of using data to inform action and improvement within their own domains—even better, sharing and using data across domains in order to support students in the transition zone.

Dual enrollment sends a powerful signal to high school students; their readiness for college is validated by actual college credit.

STEPS STATES CAN TAKE TO SUPPORT K–12 AND POSTSECONDARY PARTNERSHIPS

Despite these deeply rooted challenges, there are signs that K–12 districts and colleges can successfully work together on significant cross-sector policy and practice changes through collaborations inspired in part by the implementation of Common Core State Standards and other college- and career-ready standards and assessments. For example, in some states, new standards have spurred the creation or adaptation of 12th-grade transition courses in English and math that are designed to help students bypass remedial courses upon college entry. Also, numerous colleges have validated such assessments, agreeing to use strong results as evidence that high school graduates can enter non-remedial courses upon college entry. Such partnerships could lead to the creation of bigger breakthroughs in the scope and scale of high school-college partnerships that promote shared responsibility for students.

Moreover, in the face of the growing evidence base about the efficacy of supporting early college course taking by high school students, at least 13 states are using accountability systems to recognize school districts that promote dual enrollment of students, and at least 4 states incentivize dual enrollment by incorporating it into public postsecondary funding formulas. These are signs that while the divide between high school and college—and between 12th grade and freshman year—remains wide, it has the potential to narrow when states take action. Evidence is still needed to determine whether such

efforts ultimately expand student opportunities and increase postsecondary success, but they indicate what kinds of collaboration are possible.

As the preceding examples of barriers to collaboration indicate, policies—and the institutional cultures and operating norms that provide context for those policies—must evolve in some of the following ways to support deeper and broader collaboration:

- **Creating and supporting cultures of experimentation:** Postsecondary systems, postsecondary institutions, districts, and schools need to take calculated, evidence-based risks and experiment with new forms of collaboration and new strategies to support shared responsibility for students. Policies could support this, for example, by having K–12 accountability systems support the use of multiple indicators that measure improved transitions into the first year of college, in addition to relying on more traditional measures of progress such as test scores. They could provide waivers from selected rules that inhibit collaboration if the institutions show that sharing responsibility is leading to stronger student outcomes.
- **Capacity building:** While the focus on college and career readiness is not new, deep collaboration across K–12 and postsecondary is. It requires not only time and space in order to collaborate and try new things, but also new forms of support and learning for educators. States can encourage capacity building and collaboration by creating professional development experiences that have high school and college leaders and staff work together and participate in common training and planning. Regional partnerships of high schools and broad-access colleges could create a vehicle to develop and deliver these common experiences in geographic areas that are likely to serve many of the same students from secondary through postsecondary education. Institutions could recognize successful participation in such training through professional development credit, performance reviews, credit in the tenure process, or other incentives.
- **Formative assessment:** States can encourage and incentivize districts to provide financial incentives, time, and professional development for educators to develop and use formative assessments of student proficiency in specific subjects. These assessments can provide diagnostic information to teachers, parents, and students, and can help keep students out of developmental education in college by zeroing in on the specific areas in which students need support in high school.
- **Curricular and instructional strategies:** To engage students at deeper levels, innovative educators in both high school and postsecondary classrooms are focusing more on the relevancy and application of skills, and toward greater student ownership of learning. This progress should continue so that it diversifies pedagogy beyond the typical overreliance on lecture-based classrooms in both K–12 and higher education. To the extent that curricular pedagogical changes within each system are made in tandem—with the same kind of vertical alignment work utilized between elementary and middle schools, or between middle schools and high schools—traditionally underserved students stand to benefit the most. College academic deans and faculty senates can shift incentives to support new instructional models in a higher education environment where autonomy in the classroom is the norm and where incentives to improve teaching are weaker than those for research and publication.

Educators need time, authorization, and support to develop effective partnerships.

Finance systems need to create more incentives for collaboration.

- **Finance:** States can incentivize a shared transition zone in areas such as curricular reform, the development of instructional strategies, data system development and use, cross-system diagnostic assessment, and educator learning by providing resources and altering finance structures. For example, states could provide the resources for educators to convene and collaborate on co-designed, co-delivered, and co-validated strategies. States could also promote experimentation by permitting flexibile use of funding streams for high school and college partnerships implementing such strategies. Investment in these strategies should actually result long term in more efficiency and productivity, leading to more sharing of resources and lower spending per graduate.
- **Data use and cultures of continuous improvement:** Data systems require the same kinds of co-development, co-delivery, and co-validation as do other areas, particularly in states that do not have easily accessible regional or local data systems that span K–12 and postsecondary education. For students, decisions to collect and use new data points could mean the use of more accurate and nuanced measures of college readiness—replacing single cut scores, for example, with proficiency bands (ranges) and multiple indicators of readiness. Systems, schools, and postsecondary institutions can begin by defining a range of common data points to track and incentivize.

CONCLUSION

We acknowledge the challenges to greater collaboration between secondary and postsecondary education and that early collaborative efforts have struggled to overcome these challenges. For example, P-20 Councils, which were state advisory or decision-making bodies composed of leaders from K–12 and higher education, and TechPrep, a federal program under the Perkins Act, spawned important and effective innovations such as planned and aligned sequences of high school and college coursework. But these generally were special initiatives that faded with time because cross-system work is not part of the infrastructure of either system. Collaboration is reliant on good will, vision, and leadership, rather than on more sustainable institutional norms.

Prior efforts like these have taught a number of lessons. Attempts to change practice and policy will need to take place simultaneously and ensure that policy does not make demands beyond what education practitioners have the capacity to do. Policy must also enable pockets of promising practice to be elevated, replicated, or adapted across the unique contexts of a variety of schools, postsecondary institutions, and partnerships.

In addition, local and state leaders will likely need to integrate and align more programs and policies to promote these principles of partnership, making more space and capacity for educators to engage in a shared transition zone (rather than layering on another new reform). They will also need to provide incentives in accreditation, tenure, and other processes to ensure that the work is valued, supported, and sustained.

Collaboration is reliant on good will, vision, and leadership.

This is an auspicious time for states and districts to act to develop new and lasting collaborative structures, cultures, and norms that are funded as part of daily routines and supported by shifts in policy. There are examples of institutionalized changes that embody some shared transition zone principles, including at least a few cited in this paper. For example, the collaboration between PSJA and South Texas College, though still a work in progress, is becoming systematized at a large scale largely because of the sustained commitment by its two longtime leaders to focus on a shared vision, work with stakeholders to continually make meaning of changes, and capitalize on a supportive state policy environment. While those conditions are challenging to coalesce, they are clear and achievable. Given the national focus on supporting greater levels of learning and success after high school, this kind of shared responsibility must occur if states and the nation are to realize their aspirational goals to support postsecondary readiness and completion for a larger proportion of students.

ENDNOTES

[1] See: http://web.stanford.edu/group/bridgeproject/betrayingthecollegedream.pdf

[2] The authors updated descriptions of the principles of co-design, co-delivery, and co-validation, following publication of the first paper in the series, *Why 12th Grade Must be Redesigned Now—and How*: http://www.jff.org/publications/why-12th-grade

[3] See: http://www.sreb.org/page/1686/about.html

[4] See: http://publications.sreb.org/2015/SREBReadyNewsletterMay2015.pdf

[5] New York's early college schools are part of a nationally recognized network of over 280 schools that are showing great success: Graduation rates are 12 percentage points higher than the national average. In addition, 71 percent versus 54 percent of low-income graduates nationally are going immediately on to more college after high school, and 30 percent are graduating concurrently with an Associate's degree and a high school diploma. See *Early College Expansion* (Jobs for the Future) available at http://www.jff.org/publications/early-college-expansion-propelling-students-postsecondary-success-school-near-you and *Early College, Early Success* (American Institutes for Research) available at http://www.air.org/resource/early-college-early-success-early-college-high-school-initiative-impact-study-2013

[6] See: http://linkedlearning.org

[7] Linked Learning students statewide are showing more engagement and success in college-preparatory course work, completion of high school, and in their understanding of steps needed to advance in careers. See *SRI International California Linked Learning District Initiative Year-Four Evaluation*, 2014. See: http://irvine.org/images/stories/pdf/grantmaking/year5linkedlearningevaluationreportdec2014.pdf. This example is also described further in Career Ladders Project & Jobs for the Future (2014). *College-to-Career Pathways: Getting from Here to There on the Roadmap for a Stronger California Economy*. Background paper for *California Community Colleges Task Force on Workforce Job Creation and a Strong Economy*.

[8] See: http://services.scoe.net/record_detail.cfm?id=445

[9] Neild, Ruth Curran, Robert Balfanz, and Liza Herzog (2007). "An Early Warning System." *Educational Leadership*, October 2007. Volume 65, Number 2 Early Intervention at Every Age Pages 28–33

[10] These efforts are paying off: About 25 percent of PSJA graduates in 2015 earned an Associate's degree or other postsecondary credential while in high school. And well over half of its graduates earned some college credit. For more about PSJA, see http://www.jff.org/publications/sharing-responsibility-college-success-model-partnership-moves-students-diplomas-and

[11] See: http://www.equalmeasure.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/OMG_data_final.pdf

[12] Some research of Talent Search, one TRIO program, has suggested that the provision of such services helps low-income and first-generation college students to enroll in college who otherwise would not have. See U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service, *A Study of the Effect of the Talent Search Program on Secondary and Postsecondary Outcomes in Florida, Indiana and Texas: Final Report From Phase II of the National Evaluation*, Washington, D.C., 2006.

[13] Seventy percent of SAILS students in 2013-14 completed all competencies and were ready for college-level math upon high school graduation. Due to this success, the state invested nearly $2.5 million in the expansion of SAILS in 2014-15, allowing it to reach over 13,500 students, up from 8,400 in 2013, which was the first year of a $1 million investment in statewide implementation. See: https://www.chattanoogastate.edu/high-school/sails

[14] See: http://aurorak12.org/parents/hs-guide/schools

[15] As of the 2014-15 academic year, that test was replaced with the Smarter Balanced assessment, developed by one of two national consortia to align with the Common Core State Standards.

[16] These are recent approaches that try to accelerate student learning of college-ready content with accompanying support and are further described in the first paper in this series, *Why 12th Grade Must be Redesigned Now—and How*.

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