CALIFORNIA COLLEGE PATHWAYS

California College Pathways Funders Alliance

Who We Are

California College Pathways (CCP) is a public-private partnership rooted in a collective impact framework dedicated to creating a seamless system of support for foster youth as they transition from high school to colleges and universities and as they work towards their post-secondary goals. By engaging institutions to work together, sharing best practices, and advocating for policies that support foster youth in higher education, CCP is helping foster youth across the state achieve their higher education goals and move on to fulfilling careers. The initiative is managed by John Burton Advocates for Youth, which serves as the backbone organization for the project by convening partners, engaging in policy advocacy, and providing technical assistance and support to project partners.

Why This Matters

Access to postsecondary education is the key to enabling foster youth to achieve long-term economic security, yet just ten percent of former foster youth obtain an associates or bachelor's degree by age 23, as compared to 36 percent of the same-age non-foster youth population. Removed from their homes due to abuse and neglect and frequently disconnected from their families, communities and schools, foster youth are much more likely than their peers to lack the support necessary for a successful college experience.

Role of the Funders Alliance

The alliance is a diverse group of philanthropic partners who come together quarterly to share information, identify strategic investment opportunities and move the research agenda of the initiative forward. The alliance works collaboratively to identify what long-term systemic change looks like within our collective areas of interest, and what new practices can be taken forward to create the change envisioned by the alliance.

Key Strategies include:
- _Sharing Knowledge_: Provide opportunities for information sharing regarding new developments in the field, best practice models, and investment opportunities.
- _Identifying strategic opportunities_: Pinpoint opportunities for coordinated funding strategies that leverage individual investments to maximize impact.
- _Driving a research agenda_**:** Review and provide feedback on opportunities for expanding the knowledge base and finding new ways to measure impact.
- _Pooled fund:_ Members may choose to contribute to a pooled fund that allows the funders alliance to maximize leverage and be strategic in its overarching grantmaking strategy.

Join Us Today!

The CCP funders alliance is open to all philanthropic organizations interested in partnering around the mission of CCP. There are no membership dues and no minimum required investment. Current partners include those for whom foster youth educational success is a key aspect of the organization's mission as well as those for whom this a small part of a larger portfolio. Members range from small family foundations to larger corporate philanthropic partners. For more information about joining the alliance, contact Debbie Raucher at debbie@jbay.org.

Major CCP Accomplishments

Leveraging of Public Funds: CCP has leveraged millions of dollars in public finding both by ensuring comprehensive access to existing resources and expanding the pool of funding available to support initiative goals, including:

- Obtaining a $19 million annual investment in addressing homelessness among college students across all three public post-secondary systems in California.
- Establishing a sustainable source of funding for foster youth support at community colleges through sponsorship of legislation that created a targeted program for foster youth students at 45 community colleges with $20 million in funding;
- An increase of $3 million annually to the State funding available for Chafee Education and Training Vouchers, the only financial aid source dedicated to foster youth;
- Keeping thousands of foster youth in California community colleges by stopping regulations that would have substantially reduced access to community college tuition waivers for foster youth;
- Successfully advocated for a measure that will expand access to federal financial aid for foster youth by streamlining the application process, expanding support for foster youth at community colleges and ensuring that a person is identified in the child welfare case plan to support foster youth with the financial aid and college application process.

Statewide Policy Change: The initiative has seen the adoption and implementation of new measures that will significantly improve the ability of foster youth to enroll and succeed in college including:

- Expanding eligibility for priority registration for college courses;
- Requiring county-based K-12 foster youth support programs to support successful high-school to college transition;
- Streamlining the awards process for Chafee Education and Training Vouchers, resulting in a dramatic reduction in delays in grant awards;
- Ensuring that eligible foster youth have access to necessary services and benefits by passing a state law that allows foster youth to obtain verification documents through the Foster Care Ombudsman's Office.

Foster Youth Support

- Developed dozens of training and technical assistance materials to support college campuses, K-12 districts and other partners to expand support for foster youth to successfully enroll in and complete college;
- Increased the number of college campuses providing foster youth support from 47 in 2012 to 125 in 2021.

Communication and Convening

- Maintain websites targeted to professionals and students designed to support college access and success for foster youth, including a searchable database of foster youth campus programs, that are visited by over 15,000 users annually.
- Publish a monthly e-newsletter read by over 1200 individuals each month
- Host the bi-annual Blueprint for Success conference, which has seen the number of attendees increase from 300 in 2013 to 670 in 2019.

Data Collection and Research

- Developed a foster youth data dashboard within the CalPASS Plus data system, that provide campuses with information regarding foster youth milestones and momentum points;
- Published Charting the Course: Using Data to Support Foster Youth College Success, a landmark report offering new insights into the educational experiences of foster youth attending a subset of community colleges and universities in California.
- Published Accelerating Success: Turning Insights into Action for Foster Youth at California Community Colleges, which draws on a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis to highlight pathways and predictors of foster youth success.
- Published Pipeline to Success: Supporting California Foster Youth from High School to Community College, which reviews data from foster youth both within K-12 and community college systems in order to identify factors having the greatest impact on college GPA and unit completion.

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