



California College Promise: What We've Learned and Where We're Going

RP Group Conference
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Long Beach, California

California College Promise Project



Collaboration between WestEd, PennAHEAD, and College Promise Campaign

Provides to College Promise Programs:

- Professional development and technical assistance
- Evaluation and research
- Convenings and workshops
- Knowledge, strategies and research findings

<https://californiacollegepromise.wested.org/>

College Promise Program Partners

Cerritos Complete, Cerritos College

First Year Promise, College of the Canyons

Long Beach College Promise, Long Beach City College

Los Angeles Promise, Los Angeles Community College District

Pasadena City College Promise, Pasadena City College

Rio Hondo College Promise, Rio Hondo College

Santa Barbara City College Promise, Santa Barbara City College

South Bay Promise, El Camino College

Project Partners



- California Community College Chancellor's Office
- Los Rios Community College District
- Community College League of California
- California College Promise Leadership Team
- Campaign for College Opportunity & Unite LA

Supported by

- The California Community Foundation
- College Futures Foundation
- The James Irvine Foundation
- Santa Barbara City College Foundation

Definitions of College Promise

Two primary features:

- **Financial support** that encourages students to attend postsecondary institutions; and
- **Place-based** eligibility criteria (based on where students live or attend school)
 - Some: stated goals to strengthen community's **economy and college-going culture**

California: A Hybrid Model of College Promise

- Not a state-level program
- Most don't operate independently of state funding

A New College Promise Framework

- Most California programs fit into one of the 5 program types developed by Perna & Leigh (2017)
- Need a more detailed framework for understanding and analyzing our programs

Five Features and Measurable Characteristics

Programmatic Features

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

to minimize or eliminate economic barriers to higher education based on student's residence or school/district attendance.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND STUDENT SERVICES

at all levels of education.

CLEAR, SIMPLE, AND CONSISTENT MESSAGING

to students and their families about the promised financial, academic, and personal support, and the program's eligibility and continuation requirements.

Institutional Features

CROSS-SEGMENT AND CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

including a commitment to the program's success, and participation in program activities and decision-making.

PLACE-BASED ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

and other eligibility and continuation requirements.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

to minimize or eliminate economic barriers to higher education based on student's residence or school/district attendance.

Research

- **Financial support matters**
 - **Merit scholarships:** positive impact, equity issues
 - **Need-based scholarships:** positive impact, transaction costs
 - **Place-based scholarships:** positive impact, equity issues
 - **Sustainable programs**

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

to minimize or eliminate economic barriers to higher education based on student's residence or school/district attendance.

California Programs

- Most common model (81%)
 - Tuition and fees
 - 1 year
 - Specific community college
- 17/43 include non-tuition fees and expenses
- 5/43 first dollar programs

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

to minimize or eliminate economic barriers to higher education based on student's residence or school/district attendance.

Issues to Consider and Decisions to Make

- Goals are the guide
- What is affordable and sustainable. Pilot?
- Who are the target population(s)? What do they need?
- What to cover and how long?
- First/Last dollar?

ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND STUDENT SERVICES

at all levels of education.

Research

- Positive impact with coupled with financial support
 - Study groups and peer advising
 - Learning communities, counseling, mentoring
 - Messaging
 - positive effects locally, minimal effects nationally
 - Information only nudging is less effective

ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND STUDENT SERVICES

at all levels of education.



In California

95% (41/43) have some academic support and student services

K-12

- Campus visits
- Dual enrollment opportunities
- financial aid forms and college applications support
- Counseling, mentoring, tutoring, coaching

College

- Admission and transfer guarantees
- Priority registration
- Cohort models
- Guaranteed course availability
- Summer courses and orientations
- Counseling, mentoring, tutoring, coaching

ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND STUDENT SERVICES at all levels of education.

Issues to Consider and Decisions to Make

- Collaborate closely with partners
- Leverage existing programs
- What to require? Make optional? How to reinforce?
- What resources exist?

CLEAR, SIMPLE, AND CONSISTENT MESSAGING

to students and their families about the promised financial, academic, and personal support, and the program's eligibility and continuation requirements.

Research

- Students' understanding of financial aid influences college-going behavior
- Students and parents — misunderstandings about stable, 18 year old program

CLEAR, SIMPLE, AND CONSISTENT MESSAGING

to students and their families about the promised financial, academic, and personal support, and the program's eligibility and continuation requirements.



In California

- Most programs formally collaborate with K–12 partners to share information about College Promise

K–12

- colleges visit K–12 campuses
- Counseling staff knowledgeable/trained
- Promise information nights

College

- Information nights
- Campus events, tours, summer programs
- Email and direct mail campaigns
- videos

CLEAR, SIMPLE, AND CONSISTENT MESSAGING

to students and their families about the promised financial, academic, and personal support, and the program's eligibility and continuation requirements.

Issues to Consider and Decisions to Make

- What is your central message
- What is the purpose of your message – guides timing, audience
- Who are the messengers and what are the modalities
- How to build and maintain trust (keep the Promise)

CROSS-SEGMENT AND CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS
including a commitment to the program's success, and participation
in program activities and decision-making.

Research

- K–12 and higher education partnerships as strategy to promote college access
- Cross-sector partnerships can strengthen education and career efforts
- Few rigorous analysis (difficult to measure impact of intervention *and* partnership)

CROSS-SEGMENT AND CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS
including a commitment to the program's success, and participation
in program activities and decision-making.

California Programs

- 77% (33/43) report having formal partnership
- ~ 50% with an education segment
- ~ 50% include education and non-education partners

CROSS-SEGMENT AND CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS
including a commitment to the program's success, and participation
in program activities and decision-making.

Issues to Consider and Decisions to Make

- Identify existing and potential partners (internal and external)
- Convene partners to identify shared goals, mission, vision
- Establish expectations, commitment, MOUs

PLACE-BASED ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

and other eligibility and continuation requirements.

Research

- Place-based scholarships (exclusive of need or merit) have positive effects on student enrollment. Weaker effects on persistence
 - Kalamazoo: +enrollment in 4 year institutions; increase in-state enrollment; more credits attempted
 - Unidentified CC: +enrollment, good retention; modest academic progress by end of Year 1

PLACE-BASED ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS and other eligibility and continuation requirements.

California Programs

- Most define “Place” as smaller than state
- Need based = 3; Merit based = 3
- Recent high school graduates
- FAFSA required

PLACE-BASED ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS and other eligibility and continuation requirements.

Issues to Consider and Decisions to Make

- How to define “place”?
- Include merit requirements? Need-based requirements?
- What other requirements?
- Is there adequate support to help students achieve eligibility?
- Eligibility criteria as barriers? Who is left behind?



An overarching framework for improving college affordability, access, and completion.



Programmatic Features	FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE to minimize or eliminate economic barriers to higher education based on student's residence or school/district attendance.
	ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND STUDENT SERVICES at all levels of education.
	CLEAR, SIMPLE, AND CONSISTENT MESSAGING to students and their families about the promised financial, academic, and personal support, and the program's eligibility and continuation requirements.
Institutional Features	CROSS-SEGMENT AND CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS including a commitment to the program's success, and participation in program activities and decision-making.
	PLACE-BASED ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS and other eligibility and continuation requirements.

Summary

Engage partners to define (or revise) goals

Design, expand, or improve program

- In alignment with goals
- With sustainability in mind
- Based on internal and/or external evidence

Summary

Adopt continuous improvement processes

- How to measure progress and impact
- Type and frequency of assessment
(remember the students!)
- Processes for making change
- Test for unintended outcomes (+/-)

Next Steps for CCPP

Analysis

- Design and evaluation of individual programs
- What program models have biggest impact on student outcomes
 - Students underrepresented in higher education
- Influence of AB19 on College Promise programs
 - New programs
 - expansion of existing programs

Next Steps for CCPP

Projects

- Landscape Scan of California College Promise Programs
- Alliance and Community of Practice: L.A. County
- California College Promise Guidebook
- Regional Workshops



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