



INSIGHTS REPORT:

The 10 Populations of College Promise Students and the Ecosystems to Support Them



Table of Contents

- 01** Milestones in Higher Education
 - 02** Introduction and Methodology
 - 03** The Need for the College Promise Movement
 - 05** The 10 Populations of College Promise Students
 - 11** Emergent Themes
 - 18** Actionable Steps to Create Ecosystems of Support for the 10 Populations
 - 28** Final Thoughts
-



At ETS, we advance quality and equity in education for people worldwide by creating assessments based on rigorous research. ETS serves individuals, educational institutions and government agencies by providing customized solutions for teacher certification, English-language learning, and elementary, secondary and postsecondary education, and by conducting education research, analysis and policy studies.

Founded as a nonprofit in 1947, ETS develops, administers and scores more than 50 million tests annually - including the TOEFL® and TOEIC® tests, the GRE® tests and The Praxis Series® assessments - in more than 180 countries, at over 9,000 locations worldwide.



College Promise is a national, non-partisan, non-profit initiative that builds broad public support for funding the first two or more years of postsecondary education for hardworking students and ensuring those students have access to quality educational opportunities and supports.



STRATA9 is a certified SBA HUBZone and a minority-owned, woman-led small business committed to B-corp principles.

Milestones in Higher Education

1088

The first true university, the University of Bologna, is founded in Italy. Students are wealthy males from across Europe who bring their servants to campus with them.

1636

The first university in what is now the United States is founded. Called "New College," it is later renamed Harvard University. The first graduating class is made up of nine White men. The order in which they receive their degrees at commencement is based on the rank their families hold in society.

1862

The Morrill Land-Grant Colleges Act is passed. It puts the federal government in charge of the development of public colleges and universities, and initiates public college education in the U.S.

1944

The Servicemen's Readjustment Act, colloquially known as the G.I. Bill, is passed. It provides World War II veterans and future veterans with funds for a college education, unemployment insurance, and housing.

1965

The Higher Education Act of 1965 is passed. It leads to the establishment of government loans, work study, and Pell Grants.

2005

Kalamazoo, Michigan becomes the first American city to provide full scholarships to Michigan public colleges for graduates of the Kalamazoo Public School system. The first College Promise program, it covers tuition and mandatory fees for a bachelor's degree or 130 credits.

2015

The Obama Administration launches the College Promise Campaign to make the U.S. "the best-educated, most competitive workforce in the world." The College Promise organization is also founded. A non-partisan, non-profit initiative, it builds broad public support for funding the first two or more years of postsecondary education.

ETS and College Promise begin identifying populations of college students and the ecosystems of support that could benefit them. Their report, "Depicting the Ecosystems of Support and Financial Sustainability for Five College Promise Populations" is published by ETS in 2019.

2022

ETS and College Promise expand the number of College Promise populations to 10. College Promise launches the MyPromise Tool. It provides access to the first-ever searchable database of College Promise programs in communities and states.

2023

ETS and College Promise announce three new populations, bringing the total to 13.



Introduction and Methodology

The first colleges and universities in the Western Hemisphere were created for and attended by wealthy, White, unmarried, childless men from upper-class families. They were a homogenous group, free from the distractions of work, family, and life outside the university walls. In contrast, the college students of the 21st century are more diverse than ever before. Many work, have spouses/partners and children, and/or cobble together funding from local, state, and federal sources just to pay their way through school. Over the past 20 years, the average tuition and fees have increased by 65% for private nonprofit colleges, 110% for public four-year colleges, and 49% for public two-year colleges.

Average increase in tuition and fees over 20 years

65%	110%	49%
private nonprofit colleges	public four-year colleges	public two-year colleges

The rising costs of college and student debt burdens have led elected officials, organizations, institutions, and stakeholders of various designations to develop initiatives to make higher education more affordable.

The College Promise movement began as a way to educate more Americans in order to make the United States a more globally competitive workforce. At its heart

is the idea that the first two years of college could be publicly supported rather than solely dependent on the personal finances of any given student. The College Promise organization is committed to equity and inclusion, acknowledging that there is no one-size-fits-all Promise solution for all postsecondary students.

College Promise programs can compound their impact as they work together and strengthen the alignment of, and confirm shared commitments from education, government, business, and philanthropy and the broader nonprofit community and state-based sectors. College Promise is more than just “free college for all,” as it is designed to have a positive effect of inspiring students to attend college who might otherwise not enroll or might qualify for aid but may not realize it.

College Promise is about more than just money – it’s about evidence-based practices in the realm of higher education and helping potential students realize that college is for them.

The primary goal of College Promise is that we want everyone to go beyond high school, whether it’s a career/technical field through a community college, a four-year degree, and so on – the goal is for everyone to have an opportunity to advance.

The Need for the College Promise Movement

In 2018, ETS and College Promise began collaborating on an endeavor aimed at identifying five populations of college students in order to:

- increase college access, student learning and college completion.
- better educate 21st century Americans to compete with the rest of the world, as well as meet employer needs that are changing at a faster pace.
- guarantee the first two years of college are free to any actively progressing student, as an investment in America that offers a reasonable approach to addressing rising college costs and college debt.

The two organizations then set out to build:

- widespread support for College Promise programs as a vehicle for students to access postsecondary education.
- widespread support for communities and states to fund – at a minimum – a community college education for students making active progress toward graduation.
- a College Promise paradigm that is financially sustainable and performance based.

From 2018 through 2022, subject matter experts from more than 50 organizations worked in design teams. Seeking solutions that would reduce educational inefficiencies, shorten the time it takes students to earn a credential, and expand students' employment opportunities, the design teams sought to uncover ways to:

- identify student's tuition and non-tuition expenses (for example, transportation, books, supplies, childcare housing).
- provide stable, sustainable state and local revenue models supported by government with public and private sector partners.
- leverage what works (for example, evidence-based high impact strategies).

Their focus was on the original five populations of College Promise students. Then, throughout 2020 and 2021, additional design teams widened the focus to 10 populations.

Each design team was charged with bringing together a cross-disciplinary group of subject matter experts, embedding at least one student who was part of a particular population in the team. Each team was then asked to develop:

A Collective 4-year effort



Over 65 colleagues



Over 50 organizations

The Need for the College Promise Movement

- customized ecosystem models of support to better understand the needs of, and possible supportive services and approaches available to, their respective populations.
- tailored ecosystems that will serve as a guide and framework for understanding the coordinated solutions that are possible in optimizing the support network for their respective populations.

What follows is a description of each of the 10 populations of College Promise students; the themes that emerged as design teams ideated about students' trajectories into, through, and beyond higher education; and actionable steps that college leaders, College Promise leaders, K-12 leaders, practitioners, researchers, and communities can take to create ecosystems of support for a diverse student population.





The 10 Populations of College Promise Students

The 10 populations of College Promise students studied by the design teams are shown below. A summary of each one and examples of its characteristics, assets, and barriers to success follows. Note that individual students may identify with more than one population (e.g. a first generation student with disabilities).



The 10 Populations of College Promise Students

The 10 Populations of Students:

Characteristics, Assets, and Barriers to Success

Population	Characteristics	Assets	Barriers to Success
Traditional Aged Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18-24 years old Account for 25% of college students 	67% of high school graduates attend college within one year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May delay college entry because of issues related to finances, family, and/or health 27% are first generation college students 26% report that anxiety affects their academic performance May face mental health issues, housing and food insecurity, homelessness, insufficient financial support, and inadequate academic preparation
Adult Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age 25 and older May be current or former veterans and/or have dependents Account for 25%-37% of college students 	May be financially independent and/or employed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The postsecondary system is ill-equipped for adult students (for example, inflexible class schedules; inflexible office hours; lack of ways to help adults balance school, work, and family) May face mental health issues, housing and food insecurity, homelessness, insufficient financial support, and inadequate academic preparation
Undocumented Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have resided in the U.S. since childhood but do not have legal status Come from a range of races and socioeconomic statuses Represent one-quarter of the U.S. immigrant population 	Are often supported by student advocates and student-led organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anxiety about deportation, federal and state policy, the ability to attend and pay for college, the capacity to seek employment or further education during and after college graduation. Lack of institutional support and trained practitioners May live in a state that prevents this population from being eligible for College Promise programs Possible language barrier

The 10 Populations of Students:

Characteristics, Assets, and Barriers to Success

Population	Characteristics	Assets	Barriers to Success
Student Veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have transitioned out of the military and into their communities Are typically 25+ years old at college enrollment May be head of household, married with dependents, and/or working full-time 	Can utilize federal benefits to attend college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers are similar to those of Adult students The transition back into civilian society may be difficult More likely to attend a for-profit college than a nonprofit, four-year college. Not all Student Veterans are eligible for GI benefits. Among those who are, less than half take advantage of those benefits. May have difficulty finding: (1) counselors trained to align their educational plans with VA benefit requirements, and (2) career centers to translate military experience into resumes and job interview responses GI benefits can only be utilized 10 months per year. Once benefits run out, more than half of this population is unable to finish their degrees.
Justice-impacted Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include both incarcerated persons as well as those who have been released Are disproportionately Black men and first-generation college students 	Prison education programs exist in all 50 states	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ineligible for Pell grants and state aid At higher risk of being asked to verify FAFSA information Logistical barriers (incarcerated students cannot set foot on college campuses) Limited opportunities to access due to high organization costs to operate prison education programs Technology barriers (for example, lack of digital literacy)

The 10 Populations of Students:

Characteristics, Assets, and Barriers to Success

Population	Characteristics	Assets	Barriers to Success
First Generation Students	Have parent(s) who did not attend or did not graduate from college	Tend to be mature and conscientious because many are responsible for caring for siblings and other family members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no consensus about the definition of “first generation.” • “Digital Divide”- may lack access to technology • May be inadequately prepared for college-level work • May have problems navigating higher education • “Wealth Gap” – have a lower median household income than peers; may take out loans at higher rates than peers • Lack awareness of college services and offerings, for example, advising, internships • May lack a sense of belonging and/or support at college • May be confused by higher education jargon • Lack “cultural capital” (which helps with social mobility) • Often have family responsibilities, for example, caring for siblings
Students in or Aged Out of Foster Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23,000+ people each year age out of foster care • Happens at age 18 or 21, depending on the state 	Can utilize federal benefits to attend college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many students in foster care experience disruptions in their education due to abrupt school changes. • Supports that exist at community colleges may not exist at transfer institutions. • Financial benefits vary depending on state, county, and even agency • Those supports may be limited to tuition only. • College entry is often hindered by financial difficulties, needing to work, and/or concerns about housing

The 10 Populations of Students:

Characteristics, Assets, and Barriers to Success

Population	Characteristics	Assets	Barriers to Success
Students with Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a physical, mental, and/or emotional disability Account for 19+% of college students 	Can access lifelong federal disability services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The onus is on them to self-identify or else risk not being accommodated. They must self-advocate. The definition of “disability” under the Americans with Disabilities Act is open to interpretation. Accommodations may be inadequate. College personnel may be untrained about the needs of this population. May face discrimination, especially regarding hidden or chronic conditions, or mental illness Transition services to students age 16+ may not include information about the difference between high school level and college level services. Disability services provided under federal law (Individuals with Disabilities Act) end at high school graduation or when the student ages out of high school. The federal services (under the Americans with Disabilities Act) that begin after high school may be different. Physical and virtual college environments may be inaccessible. Individual disability services offices determine the eligibility requirements for accommodations.
Student-Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely to be Students of Color, and have children preschool-age or younger Account for 22% of college students 	88% of Student-Parents with children under age 13 are eligible for both a Pell grant and CCAMPIS services. ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In spring 2022, enrolled Student-Parents with children under age 13 were competing for 1.8 million child care slots.² Are less likely to graduate than Non-Parents despite earning higher GPAs, on average.

¹ Johnson, N., Reichlin Cruse, L., Croom, D., Loeramendiola, B., Mercado Lopez, L., Cleary, S., Welton, C., and Wilkerson, W. (May 2022). Expanding Promise: Depicting the Ecosystems of Support and Financial Sustainability for Student Parents (College Promise Policy Brief). https://assets.website-files.com/61bca001bb59d0528645a4bf9/62962abd4e4ef36656ebada3_policy-brief-student-parents-min.pdf

² See footnote 1.

The 10 Populations of Students:

Characteristics, Assets, and Barriers to Success

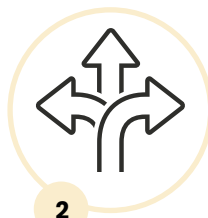
Population	Characteristics	Assets	Barriers to Success
Students Needing Academic Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enter college under-prepared for College-Level work• Disproportionately low-income and students of color	Pursue higher education in spite of lacking the background or experiences that support academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Misalignment between K-12 and higher education systems• Poor academic advising• Lack of social and academic support• Remedial coursework lengthens the time in and cost of college• High attrition rate

Emergent Themes

Several themes emerged from the work of the design teams with regard to the 10 populations. Those themes (below) led to further insights and implications for the field.



There are financial models of expenses at the student, institution and government levels.



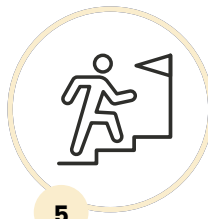
Students may have multiple identities. That intersectionality is an advantage, not a problem.



There are shifts in costs and services inherent in the transition from high school to college.



There are cost implications related to time. Study time, course scheduling conflicts, and the hours needed for accessing student services compound, which may mean it will take longer to graduate.



Transition points are important for students because they enter new phases in their life.



Colleges should have students opt-out-of rather than opt-in-to services.



Clearer and more accurate data should be collected and tracked.



Colleges should take a fresh look at extant policies and practices, and consider rebranding certain services and resources.

Theme 1



There are financial models of expenses at the student, institution, and government levels.

Students face direct education expenses as well as potential ecosystem complimentary expenses.

Direct Education Expenses

- **Tuition & Fees**
- **Textbooks**
- **Technology**
(e.g., computer, phone, or Internet)
- **Supplies and Major Specific Fees**
 - » Major Related Supplies
(e.g., uniforms or equipment)
 - » Major Related Fees
(e.g., lab fees, background checks or test fees for licensure)
 - » Educational Opportunities
(e.g., internships or study at another campus)
- **Pre-attendance Costs**
(e.g., admissions tests, required immunizations, and medical history forms)

Potential Ecosystem Complimentary Expenses

- **Food**
- **Housing**
(rent or dorm fee; electricity; gas and water)
- **Transportation**
 - » public transportation
 - » car purchase or loan payment
 - » car insurance; car maintenance and repairs; gasoline; parking
- **Health Care**
- **Childcare**
- **Legal Services**



It's not just about tuition.

Students' financial needs extend beyond covering the cost of tuition and fees. Students need resources such as childcare, housing, food, and health care to free their time and allow them time to focus on studying. They need to understand the true costs they must cover. Additionally, certain expenses are unique to certain populations but can be customized to specific students within a population.

Braided Funding

Institutions need to braid existing financial sources to maximize their offerings (for example, retention programs, transportation).

Customization

While many of non-tuition and fees expenses are born by all student populations, how needs are met depends on the student population. In addition, approaches to meeting student needs can and should be individually customized.

Students don't know what they don't know.

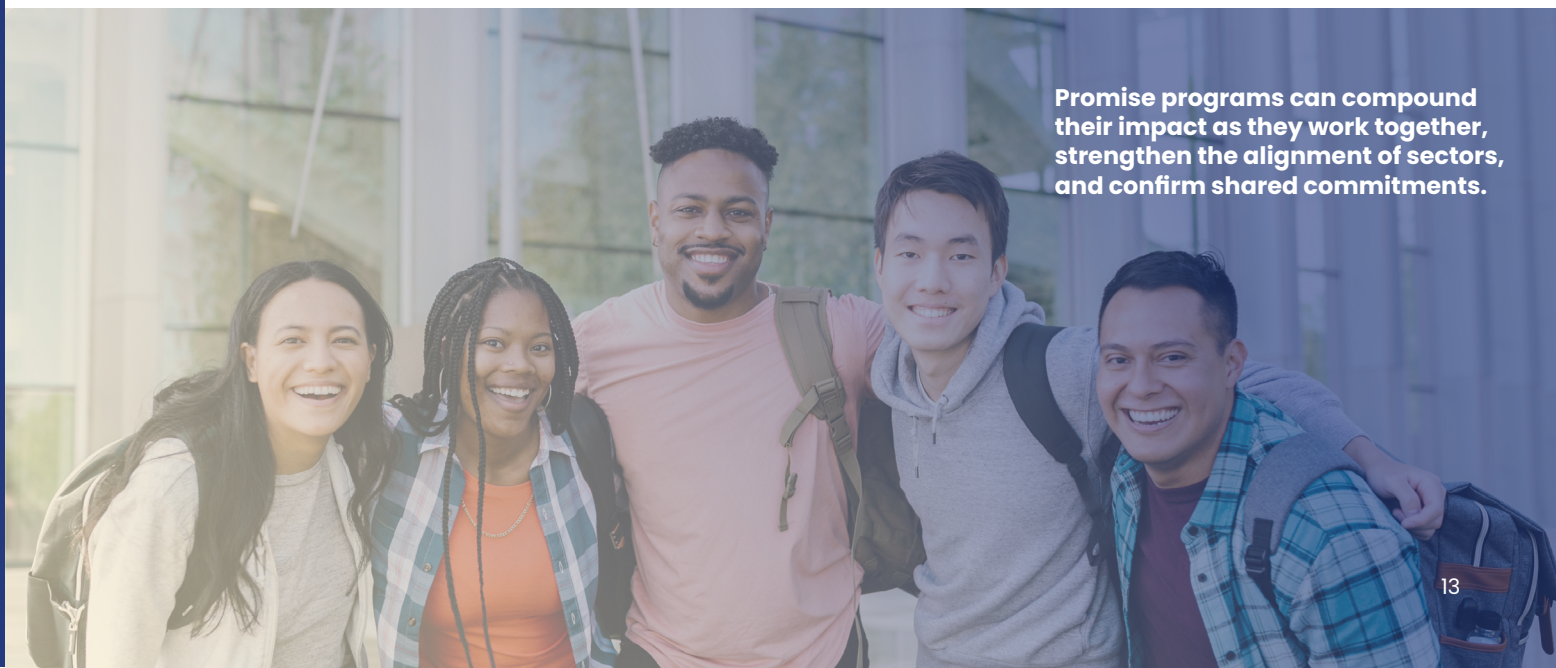
During design sessions, students shared that "they did not know what they did not know" about the resources available to them, the rules for accessing those resources, and sometimes the implications of the timing of when they should access resources.

Examining populations of students

Both the differences and similarities between populations should be considered.

College Promise can maximize its impact.

Promise programs can compound their impact as they work together, strengthen the alignment of sectors, and confirm shared commitments from the sectors of education, government, business, philanthropy, and broader nonprofit community and state-based sectors.



Promise programs can compound their impact as they work together, strengthen the alignment of sectors, and confirm shared commitments.

Theme 2



Students may have multiple identities. That intersectionality is an advantage, not a problem.

Overlap between students' identities is an asset, not a detriment.

Different populations of students have different success rates in college. College Promise programs and colleges can address that more proactively by creating comprehensive supports that begin at onboarding.

Resources for one population may benefit other populations as well.

For example, when institutions offer flexible class schedules, it supports Adult Students who are employed as well as and Student-Parents who have child care obligations.

Students should be viewed holistically, not as labels.

The College Promise movement recognizes that there is no one-size-fits-all program to address all students' needs. Likewise, it recognizes that the students within a particular population are not a monolith. Although supports can be designed with a particular population in mind, they should be flexible and customized to meet individual needs.

Theme 3



There are shifts in costs and services inherent in the transition from high school to college.

Students' transition from high school to college often means a discontinuation of services, as well as a shift in who pays for students' education.

This impacts certain populations (for example, students in or aged out of foster care) more than others. But College Promise can assist students en masse prior to or during the college application process by making them aware of these impending changes. This would prevent disruptions in education that take place while the student is enrolled in college.

Theme 4



There are cost implications related to time in school.

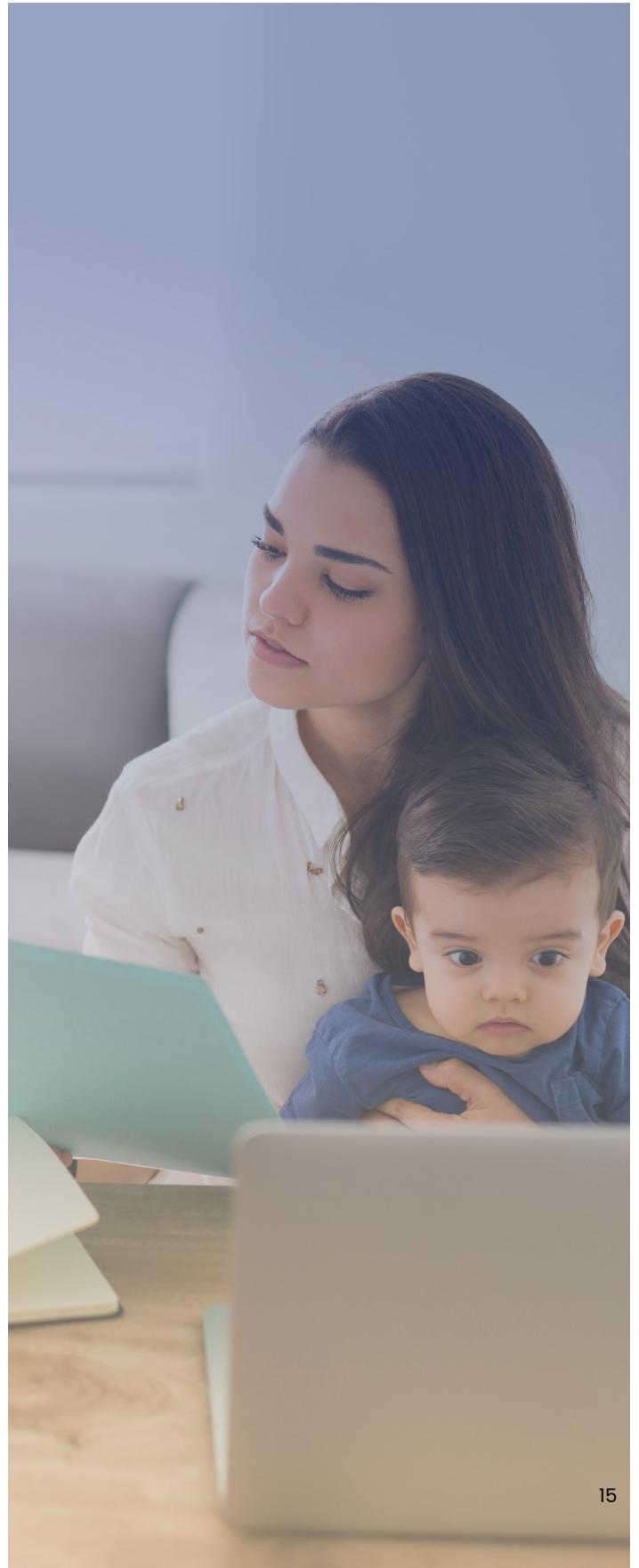
Students' course schedules and the time they have available to study may conflict with other obligations (for example, parenting).

This impacts certain populations (for example, Student-Parents) more than others.

The hours that college offices (for example, financial aid, tutoring, counseling) are open may conflict with students' other obligations (for example, paid employment).

This impacts certain populations (for example, Adult students) more than others.

Conflicts between students' discretionary time and college business hours compound, often lengthening the road to graduation.



Theme 5



Colleges should take a fresh look at extant policies and practices and consider rebranding certain services and resources.

Institutions should regularly ask themselves, “Are we applying 20th Century solutions to 21st Century issues for student success?”

The college students of the 21st century are not the wealthy, White, unmarried, childless men from the early days of higher education. They are male, female, and nonbinary students of different ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, races, and ethnicities. They often have non-academic responsibilities that compete for their time, as well as life experiences that make it difficult to succeed in school.

By renaming certain services and resources, Colleges could destigmatize them while making them more inviting and inclusive at the same time.

For example, “food pantry” could be rebranded as “nutrition center.”

Theme 6



Colleges should have students opt-out of rather than opt-in to services.

Rather than expecting students to sign up for services (for example, tutoring, personal finance courses, academic advising) and resources, the admissions application should trigger an automatic opt-in for them.

Students who don’t need certain services or resources can opt out of them.

Theme 7



Clearer and more accurate data should be collected and tracked.

When colleges lack up-to-date data on their student population, their ability to support students becomes limited.

For example, because the definition of “first generation” is not standardized, researchers have problems collecting then later analyzing that data to track student persistence and outcomes. That, in turn, limits the interventions that institutions and organizations can make to better support students.

Theme 8



Transition points are important for students because they enter new phases in their life.

Transition points such as moving from high school to postsecondary education, and postsecondary education to the workforce are important, especially for certain populations.

For example, first-generation college students will ideally transition into first-generation professionals.

Transition points may be more jarring for certain populations.

For example, students in or aged out of foster care may need completely new housing.

Institutions and College Promise programs should be cognizant that the goal is to get students into, through, and beyond higher education.

Strategies that focus on only one point in students’ journey (for example, the first year of college) will fall short of fostering long-term success.

Actionable Steps to Create Ecosystems of Support for the 10 Populations

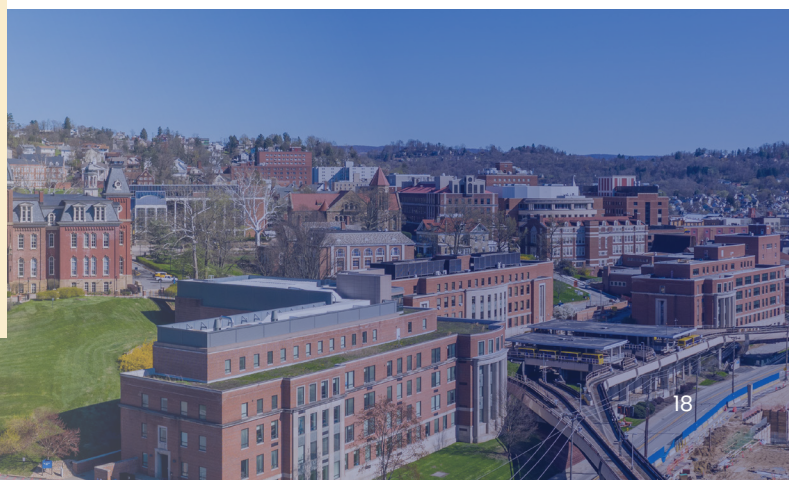
The core of the College Promise movement is making college attendance and completion more affordable. Many College Promise programs are designed to allow eligible students to start and finish a degree or credential without taking out loans that will take them their entire careers to pay off. Two noteworthy issues have been examined with that goal in mind:

1. How would College Promise programs be enhanced if they were reconceived with a deeper understanding and intent to accommodate the diversity within the postsecondary student population?
2. How could extant and new funding models be aligned to leverage the financial support needed to develop and implement these subpopulation-targeted ecosystem designs?

We start our work to develop ecosystems of support and financial sustainability on the proposition that one education model will not meet the needs of the 16.7 million students at undergraduate level. Only if we are equipped with multiple and tailored ecosystems of support and financial sustainability will we be positioned to enable students to progress to, through, and beyond college.

From an ecological perspective, students operate within a network of different environmental and social conditions and fields. To make substantive improvements in educational outcomes, working across fields and through various conditions is a promising strategy. In recent years, research has found a renewed investment in local, place-based, and cross-sector collaborations as a strategic approach for improving educational outcomes and advancing community development in cities across the United States. Organizations collaborate to provide services and support for some young people and their families, coordinating their work to align and improve every stage of a young person's life from "cradle to career." Some models include financial support for college as part of their larger system of impact.

The ecosystems of support that can be created—or fine-tuned—for the 10 populations of College Promise students are shown below. They are based on the work of the 10 design teams that studied each population of students, and include actionable steps that can be taken by College Promise programs, institutions, and community partners to better meet students' needs.



Actionable Steps to Create Ecosystems of Support for the 10 Populations

Population

TRADITIONAL STUDENTS



Ecosystems of Support and Actionable Steps

▶ Financial Support

- Provide a higher level of financial support to a smaller segment of students (for example, limit eligibility to first-generation students from low-income backgrounds)
- Provide different benefits for different students (for example, provide tuition coverage for all students, plus, for low-income students, book vouchers, transportation costs, and free campus-based childcare)
- Make funding streams flexible because they may vary between states, counties, and agencies

▶ Academic Support

- Offer peer mentoring and tutoring, academic advisement, learning communities, student success workshops, study groups, content
- Provide transfer supports

▶ Personal Support

Offer comprehensive counseling services

▶ Social Support

Provide messaging and communication about the program (to prospective students and their families), and advice, feedback, support, and deadlines (to current students)

▶ Career Support

Provide career planning workshops

Population

ADULT STUDENTS



Ecosystems of Support and Actionable Steps

▶ Basic Needs Support

- Provide low-cost food services and pantries on campus
- Provide campus-based child care

▶ Financial Support

- Promise programs – Provide tuition-free enrollment
- Colleges – Provide holistic financial counseling and emergency aid
- Make funding streams flexible because they may vary between states, counties, and agencies

▶ Academic Support

- Make Promise program navigators students' first point-of-contact
- Colleges – Provide program-neutral intake advising; make policies and procedures (for example, class schedules, office/student services hours) more flexible; teach strategies on how to balance school with familial and occupational obligations; give college credit for prior learning and experience; provide holistic mentoring
- Provide transfer supports

UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS



▶ Financial Support

- Determine possible sources of funding to support the promise of a free college Education
- Ensure that college websites are a hub of information, including types of financial aid available to undocumented students
- Create first dollar programming (ideally)
- Make funding streams flexible because they may vary between states, counties, and agencies
- Evaluate federal and state policies including limitations on in-state tuition and fees, regulations on the use of public funding for undocumented persons, and the availability of public and/or private philanthropic financial support.

UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS



► Academic Support

- Create staff professional development (“ally training”) and specially tailored academic supports
- Embed resources and support for students in first year programs, orientations, and academic courses
- Develop programs (for example, summer bridge programs, first year seminars) specifically for this population
- Integrate relevant curricula that invites discussion regarding services and supports on and off campus
- Provide transfer supports

► Social Support

- Create undocumented student resource centers on campus to provide access to peer support, information, and legal services
- Create advisory committees and/or task forces that convene campus-wide allies to develop campus-wide equity for this population. Implement the committee or task force at the system wide or district level
- Increase outreach

► Policy/Legal Support

- Develop and implement regulations for responding to Immigration and Customs Enforcement Requests
- Establish criteria for students’ full participation (i.e., requirements related to residence, high schools, or other local stipulations)
- Develop clear protocols and streamlined forms specific to Undocumented Students
- Engage other parties with colleges at the center
- Collaborate with community-based organizations to create supportive social and economic networks, mentorships, internships, scholarships, jobs, mental health services, and other opportunities
- Colleges – Align strategies with the specific environment of their state; ensure that college websites are a hub of information, including sources of legal support; develop a detailed understanding of federal, state, institutional, and local contexts that impact education equity for this population; assess the current policy and programmatic landscape for this population

STUDENT VETERANS



▶ **Basic Needs Support**

Colleges – provide support services for housing, child care, and transportation; apply GI Bill housing benefits and provide community-based living situations; form partnerships with Veteran Affairs and community-based health care providers and emergency services; provide on-campus health care and counseling

▶ **Financial Support**

- Colleges – assist with resources for additional college costs
- Make funding streams flexible because they may vary between states, counties, and agencies

▶ **Academic Support**

- Make veterans eligible for Promise programs and include them in program design
- Colleges – establish veteran resource centers as one-stop shops; train academic and career counselors to translate military experience to college courses and credits; organize coursework to help this population use government benefits within the 36-month window for the GI Bill; train administrators and staff to help students navigate government benefits
- Provide transfer supports

▶ **Social Support**

Establish peer support programs and mentorships

JUSTICE- IMPACTED STUDENTS



▶ **Financial Support**

- Offer financial supports to currently incarcerated students so they don't have to choose between meager wages from prison employment and the opportunity to complete college courses and obtain higher wage jobs
- For individuals nearing release, offer financial aid counseling that encompasses how to finance college as well as how to finance their lives in general.
- Make funding streams flexible because they may vary between states, counties, and agencies

▶ **Academic Support**

- Offer advising and tutoring to members of this population who need additional academic supports
- Provide transfer supports

JUSTICE-IMPACTED STUDENTS



FIRST GENERATION STUDENTS



▶ **Personal Support**

Create learning communities and first-year experience programs inside prisons to build a sense of community

▶ **Policy/Legal Support**

Involve the Department of Corrections and other stakeholders at the state level

▶ **Career Support**

- Offer career counseling, mentoring, and work experience to show how classwork translates into meaningful employment
- Advise students that some courses may lead to industries with occupational licensing restrictions against people with criminal records

▶ **Financial Support**

- Educate students about different ways to pay for college (for example, grants, work-study, scholarships) aside from taking out loans
- Offer financial assistance for non-tuition costs (child and sibling care, books, housing, food, transportation)
- Make funding streams flexible because they may vary between states, counties, and agencies

▶ **Academic Support**

- Encourage students to meet with their advisor on a regular basis
- Connect this population with peer mentors, trained advisors, and coaches
- Offer and advertise stackable credentials
- Provide transfer supports

▶ **Social Support**

Increase feelings of belonging (for example, eliminate complex jargon and unfamiliar acronyms; steer students toward both general campus supports and more targeted guidance)

▶ **Policy/Legal Support**

Operationally define what “first generation” means

▶ **Career Support**

- Offer and connect students with paid internships
- Connect students with career services and job search tools

STUDENTS IN OR AGED OUT OF FOSTER CARE



▶ **Basic Needs Support**

- Create a campus food pantry or partner with a local food agency to provide meals on campus and grocery support off-campus
- Provide on-campus housing or partner with county agencies to provide financial support for off-campus housing
- Provide trauma-informed care training to faculty and staff
- Offer medical and mental health services on campus, and free, unlimited access to mental health professionals off-campus (including medication management)
- Provide on-campus child care or access to off-campus child care
- Allow kids on campus

▶ **Financial Support**

Make funding streams flexible because they may vary between states, counties, and agencies

▶ **Academic Support**

- Offer tutoring, supplemental instruction, flexible course schedules, and accessible course materials
- Connect this population to foster youth support programs at transfer institutions
- Use a Guided Pathways framework to clarify the path to completion from the first college course through life after college
- Provide transfer supports

▶ **Social Support**

- Provide safe spaces on campus for this population to develop relationships with supportive faculty and staff
- Create student support teams that include community-based organizations or county agencies that have expertise in supporting special populations

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES



▶ Financial Support

- Give financial support so students can obtain a diagnosis, evaluation, and/or assessment of their disabilities to increase their access to accommodations
- Make funding streams flexible because they may vary between states, counties, and agencies

▶ Academic Support

- Develop training for high school transition service providers to assist in students' transition to college; use evidence-based practices in high schools to lead to more positive post-high school outcomes.
- Increase faculty knowledge of Universal Design practices
- Provide transfer supports

▶ Personal Support

Explicitly teach PK-12 students self-determination skills and give them opportunities to practice them. These skills predict postsecondary success.

▶ Policy/Legal Support

Federal Level - Increase students' access to services by standardizing how colleges identify disabilities; rework the federal financial aid formula so that students taking reduced credits are treated as full-time and can be eligible for typical financial aid

STUDENT- PARENTS



▶ Basic Needs Support

- Offer intensive case management, including referrals to services such as child care resource and referral
- Provide wraparound services for basic needs by leveraging federal programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Provide physical and mental health services
- Provide flexible, free or subsidized child care, both on-and off-campus
- Leverage federal funds and programs such as Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS), the Child Care Development Block Grant, and Head Start/Early Head Start

STUDENT- PARENTS



▶ Financial Support

- Provide wraparound services that address: discretionary/monetary resources and emergency aid, scholarships, financial aid designations that account for child care, tuition reimbursement, state financial aid, TANF cash assistance, and priority on-campus employment
- Make funding streams flexible because they may vary between states, counties, and agencies
- Leverage the federal Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WOIA)

▶ Academic Supports

- Institutionalize practices for this population such as: priority registration, flexible course options, non-traditional business hours for support services, family friendly classrooms, and facilities policies
- Provide transfer supports

STUDENTS NEEDING ACADEMIC SUPPORT



▶ Basic Needs Support

Provide physical and mental health services

▶ Financial Support

Make funding streams flexible because they may vary between states, counties, and agencies

▶ Academic Support

- Align K12 and higher education systems
- Encourage academic advising
- Provide academic support
- Reexamine placement tests (for example, efficacy and costs) and developmental education programs. Consider replacing these tests with a multiple measures approach.
- Replace student success courses (designed to teach non-cognitive skills) with pre-enrollment onboarding or orientation (that teaches successful habits, provides an overview of major-specific and institutional requirements, and emphasizes the college's commitment to providing support services)
- Replace developmental education courses with co-requisites

STUDENTS NEEDING ACADEMIC SUPPORT



▶ **Academic Support**

- Replace developmental education courses with co-requisites
- Provide alternate guided pathways for students not interested in STEM
- Provide transfer supports

▶ **Social Support**

- Alter students' introduction to academic support services in a way that destigmatizes them, promotes a growth mindset, and offers a success-oriented perspective.
- Create college transition programs that support underserved students

Final Thoughts

ETS and the College Promise organization have laid the groundwork to recognize and address today's student needs, which include housing, food, healthcare, transportation, childcare, finances, academics, social and personal issues, legal issues, and career plans. College Promise programs are maximizing that impact as they work together and strengthen the alignment of and confirm shared commitments from the areas of education, government, business, philanthropy, nonprofit community, and state-based sectors. More than just "free college for all," College Promise inspires students who might otherwise not enroll in college to attend college, thereby giving society the opportunity to advance.

We express our gratitude to these foundations who have made this work possible: Ascendium Education Group, Carnegie Corporation of New York, ECMC Foundation, and The Kresge Foundation. Their generous support has been instrumental in advancing our research endeavors. Furthermore, we extend our sincere appreciation to the ten ecosystems of support design teams for their unwavering dedication and sustained involvement in this research effort over multiple years.

