A photograph of three students in a classroom setting. One student is holding a small, black, four-wheeled robot with various electronic components attached. Another student is looking at the robot, and a third student is working on a laptop. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day. The image is partially obscured by a large teal circular graphic on the left side.

# Bridging Systems, Building Pathways

Sacramento K-16 Collaborative: Career Pathways  
Stakeholder Engagement Insights

Designed for Sacramento K-16 Collaborative

Presented by Capitol Impact, March 2025

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# About Us

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## Sacramento K-16 Collaborative

[The Sacramento K-16 Collaborative](#) launched in 2022 as part of the California Regional K-16 Education Collaboratives Grant Program. The Collaborative is committed to advancing educational equity and workforce opportunities by strengthening college and career pathways across California's Capital Region through a multi-county partnership between K-12 county offices of education and districts, higher education institutions, and employers.



CAPITOL  
IMPACT

## Capitol Impact

[Capitol Impact](#) serves as the backbone convener, providing project management, research, and strategy for the Sacramento K-16 Collaborative. Capitol Impact is a social impact consulting firm that is dedicated to forging a better future for all Californians. To achieve this mission, we partner with visionary leaders across the social sector to advance practical solutions to our state's most pressing challenges.

Previous research products of the Sacramento K-16 Collaborative and Capitol Impact are available at: [www.sacramentok16.org/resource-hub/](http://www.sacramentok16.org/resource-hub/)

For more information about Capitol Impact's services, please contact: [research@capitolimpact.org](mailto:research@capitolimpact.org)

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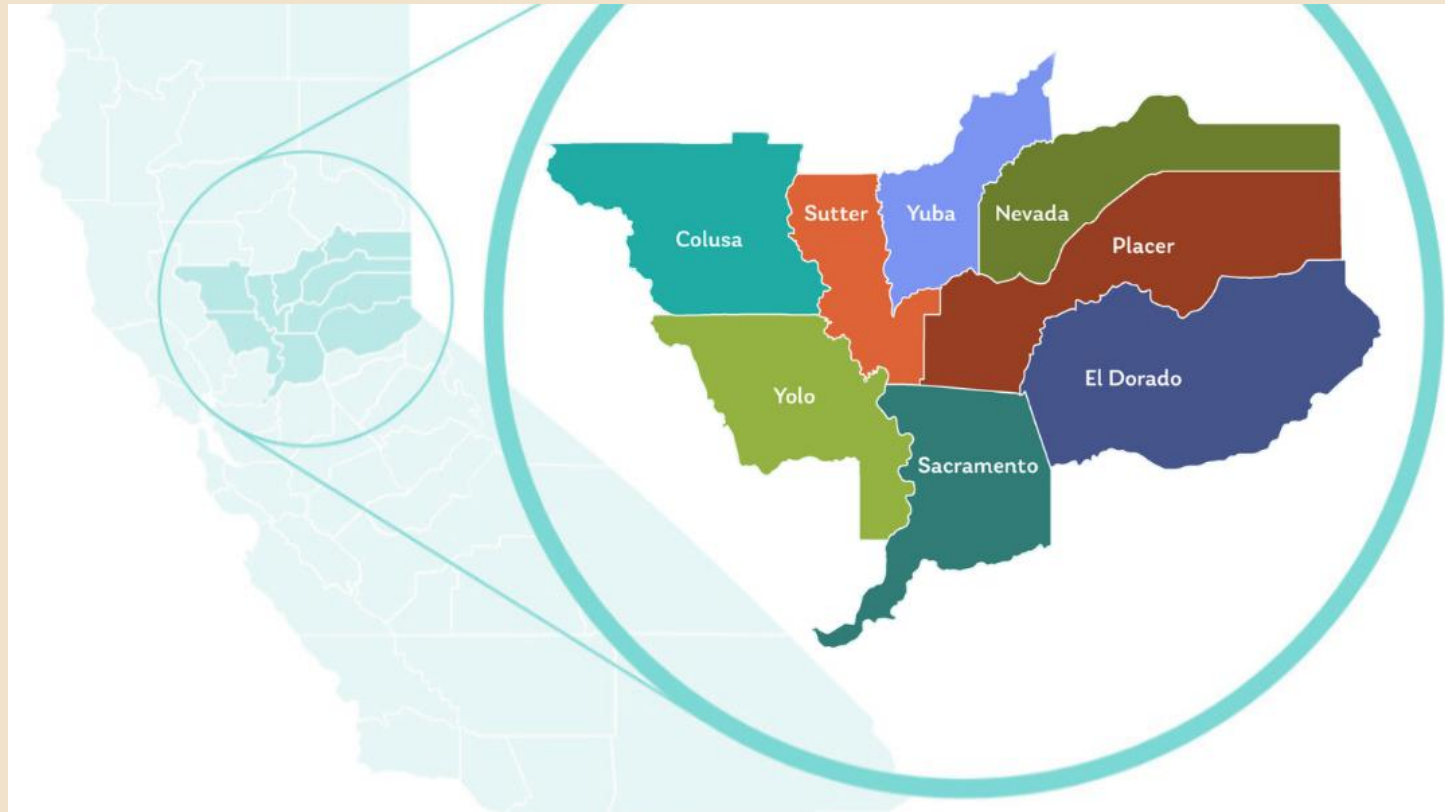
A group of five professionals are gathered in a meeting room. A man in a blue shirt is seated and speaking to a group of four people (three women and one man) who are standing around a table. The room features large windows, a bookshelf, and a whiteboard with handwritten notes. A large, semi-transparent circular graphic is overlaid on the left side of the image.

# Introduction & Context

*From Insight to Impact: Closing the Loop on Stakeholder Engagement*

## BACKGROUND

# Sacramento K-16 Collaborative



### Expand Career Pathways

Into healthcare, engineering, and computing.



### Expand Dual Enrollment

Expand dual enrollment opportunities for students across the region's education ecosystem.



### Support Priority Student Populations

Students of color, low-income, first generation, rural, and adult learners.



### Streamline Transfer Pathways

To create more seamless transitions for students between institutions.

# Timeline of Capitol Impact's Research



# Three-Phase Research Cycle



## **Landscape Analysis** *February-March 2024*

Assessed the current state of systems and supports in relation to four of the Sacramento K-16 Collaborative's key initiatives.



## **Best Practices Literature Review** *March-April 2024*

Determined areas of research inquiry to inform use of Collaborative resources and prioritization of programming to meet needs, gaps, and opportunities within the region.



## **Stakeholder Engagement Findings** *March 2025*

Identify themes and key insights from conversations with students, families, educators, and employers. Make recommendations for short-term activities and long-term sustainability of the Sacramento K-16 Collaborative.

# Target Outcomes

The stakeholder engagement campaign and findings report are intended to provide enhanced understanding for the Sacramento K-16 Collaborative in the following areas:







# Methodology & Approach

*Listening to Understand: Our Engagement Strategy*

# Research Methodology

The following describes our research team's activities and outputs throughout the stakeholder engagement process.

Activity	Output
1. Held brainstorm sessions with workgroup members.	List of research questions and priorities.
2. Drafted research framework and process.	Refined research framework and process
3. Designed interview protocols.	Draft interview protocols for stakeholder groups
4. Sought workgroup feedback and revised interview protocols.	Finalized interview protocols
5. Conducted stakeholder interviews.	Raw interview data in the form of recordings and transcripts
6. Reviewed and cleaned all interview transcripts.	Cleaned and formatted transcripts
7. Designed a codebook for interview transcripts from research questions and protocols.	Codebook with dominant- and sub-categories.
8. Read and coded all interview transcripts.	Master sheets of coded themes by stakeholder group.
9. Analyzed coded comments by workgroup initiative and stakeholder group.	Thematic analysis by workgroup and stakeholder group.
10. Identified cross-cutting themes.	Cross-cutting thematic analysis
11. Analyzed cross-cutting themes by K-16 goal.	Recommendations for immediate actions and long-term sustainability planning for each Sacramento K-16 Collaborative goal.

# K-16 Collaborative Educational Partners

Stakeholder engagement focused on programs, pathways, services, and supports within these institutions.

K-12 Districts	County Offices of Education	Community Colleges	4 Year Universities
San Juan USD	Sacramento County Office of Education	Los Rios Community College District (ARC, CRC, SCC, FLC)	CSU Sacramento
Sacramento City USD	Placer County Office of Education	Sierra College	UC Davis
Elk Grove USD	Yuba County Office of Education	Yuba Community College District (WCC, YCC)	
Folsom-Cordova USD	Yolo County Office of Education	Lake Tahoe Community College	
Placer Union HSD	El Dorado County Office of Education		
Marysville Joint USD			
Western Placer USD			

OUR RESEARCH SCOPE

# Stakeholders Engaged



3 Student Focus Groups (K-12)

1 Family Focus Group (K-12)

5 K-12 District Interviews

5 Community College Interviews

2 4-Year College Interviews

2 Employer Focus Groups

1 K-12 Survey with Dual Enrollment Focus

**20+** Sacramento K-16 Collaborative Partner Entities Engaged throughout the Research Process

Conversations took place from May-October 2025. We conducted outreach for interviews and focus groups, as well as survey responses, through Sacramento K-16 Collaborative workgroup members.



# Career Pathways

*Aligning Education with Industry*

# Landscape Analysis



*Career Pathways -  
Baseline Data*

# Landscape Analysis Recap

## Healthcare & Engineering / Computing Sciences Pathway Landscape Analysis



Sector Pathways  
Imbalance

1

Engineering and computing pathways far outnumber healthcare pathways, with a 3:1 ratio in K-12 and nearly 2:1 in postsecondary programs.

CTE-Focused, Limited  
A-G Alignment

2

Many pathways are CTE-based, however there is an opportunity to strengthen A-G within existing pathways.

Experiential  
Learning vs.  
Career Exposure

3

There are strong WBL opportunities, but there is an opportunity to more clearly define employer and career exposure opportunities.

Pathway Strengths  
by Institutions

4

**K-12:** Effective marketing to students/ parents  
**Community Colleges:** Clear, strong program descriptions  
**Four-Years:** Strong student testimonials and stories



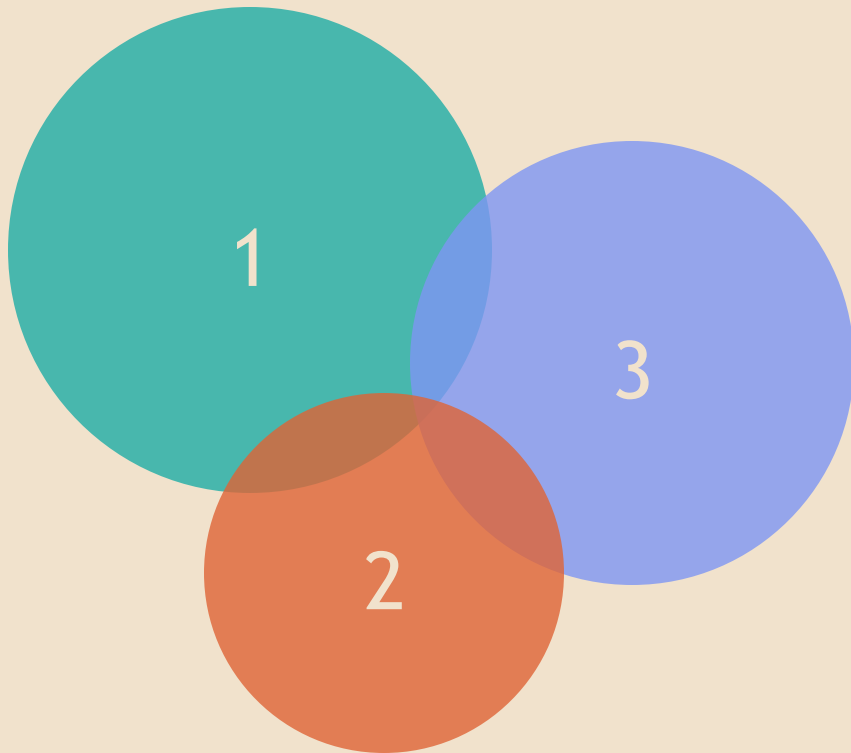
# Best Practices Literature Review

*Career Pathways -  
Preliminary Recommendations*



# Best Practices Literature Review

## Career Pathways Best Practices Action Planning



- **Information Access**  
Enhance WBL access by improving program visibility, communicating advisory outcomes, and expanding student connections to internships, job fairs, and career exploration. Strengthen employer collaboration through targeted marketing and industry networks.
- **Program Strategy**  
Support career pathways by embedding early and continuous career planning, expanding internships, and aligning coursework with graduation and college requirements. Strengthen career coaching, increase student-teacher engagement, and integrate career awareness from elementary through high school.
- **Regional Partnerships**  
Strengthen industry-education partnerships by fostering employer engagement, leveraging business networks, and prioritizing skill-based hiring. Expand paid work experiences and employer-led program design to enhance equity and career readiness.



# Stakeholder Engagement

*Career Pathways -  
Voices from the Field*



*"And when we have industry partners fully engaged with our advisory boards, that's where we see the greatest impact."*

- Community College Staff

# Stakeholder Group: K-12 Students

## CAREER PATHWAYS

Theme	Insights	Quotes
<b>Promising Practices in Career Exploration Highlight Need for More Opportunities</b>	Students value currently available career exploration opportunities such as various CTE Pathways, <a href="#">Kids Helping Kids</a> , and <a href="#">DC Daily</a> . Students express a desire for more CTE offerings and structured opportunities to explore diverse career paths.	<i>"I've heard this from a lot of people, but we want more CTEs at our school, especially in the first years."</i>
<b>Barriers to Counseling and Career Guidance</b>	Students experience challenges in accessing personalized and visible counseling services to support their academic and career planning, leaving gaps in understanding critical requirements and pathways. Dually enrolled students may not have the opportunity to be in career pathways because of scheduling conflicts.	<i>"You got a taste of such a small portion of each of these pathways that it wasn't really beneficial. We didn't learn enough to actually get into the class and figure out that this is what I would like to do. It was kind of more just they threw you in there and it felt like as soon as you were sort of learning about it, they took you back and then we moved on to the next. So I just felt like it wasn't that very beneficial."</i>
<b>Scheduling Barriers Restrict Student Access to Dual Enrollment and A-G Alignment</b>	High school students struggle with having agency in their schedules when they receive them late and face challenges navigating personalized course selections due to overbooked classes, dual enrollment conflicts, and required course constraints.	<i>"I take dual enrollment fourth period and I play flag football and moving my schedule around, they [counselors] overbook a class, ... and I started like with a B in the class because I missed so much stuff."</i>

# Stakeholder Group: K-12 Districts

## CAREER PATHWAYS

Theme	Insights	Quotes
<b>Structural Barriers Present Challenges for Student Participation in Career Pathway Opportunities</b>	Limited flexibility in scheduling, misaligned technology systems between K-12 and community colleges, and transportation access create hurdles for students. Career Pathway alignment such as expanding scheduling flexibility and improving tech compatibility would support students in career-connected learning.	<i>"Access to technology and transportation is also a barrier. A lot of the technological systems at the community college level...doesn't align with our technological systems. So our students can't log on to a Google doc at the community college, because our systems block it...they have to have their own device to make it happen. So those systems don't speak to each other."</i>
<b>Bureaucratic Challenges Hinder Strong Industry-Education Partnerships</b>	Schools and industry partners face bureaucratic hurdles—like long approvals for courses and legal requirements for student contact—that slow collaboration. CTE advisory boards help, but engagement varies. Streamlining partnerships and ensuring consistent employer involvement are key to expanding career pathways.	<i>"So all of our CTE programs must have what they call a CTE advisory committee. As a part of the composition of the CTE Advisory Committee, you have to have industry partners...Some obviously do it at a higher level than others."</i>
<b>Systemic Barriers Limit Dual Enrollment Access and Workforce Alignment</b>	Dual enrollment can bridge high school and college but often struggles to meet student needs. Students face challenges with prerequisite alignment, adapting to asynchronous learning formats, and navigating limited collaboration between K-12 and higher education, making these opportunities difficult to access.	<i>"Labs are a challenge and also the prerequisite rigor expectations with the community college class...So we have a couple of our STEM pathways aligned to AP Computer Science for example, whereas if you even have a statistics class, which is like a high-level math class, at a community college level. They have GPA prerequisites."</i>

# Stakeholder Group: Community Colleges

## CAREER PATHWAYS

Theme	Insights	Quotes
<b>Structural Barriers Limit Faculty Hiring and Course Access</b>	Community colleges face challenges in recruiting and retaining faculty for high-demand fields like STEM and healthcare, limiting course availability and student access to career pathways. Limited course offerings in small or rural high schools prevent students from accessing advanced math and science courses needed for STEM careers	<i>"Recruiting faculty...is very challenging because the wages in private sector or even in public sector are so much higher than what a starting adjunct faculty will earn."</i>
<b>Collaborative Industry Connections Strengthen Career Pathways</b>	Strong partnerships between community colleges and local industries support the development of career pathways, align curricula with workforce needs, and provide hands-on learning experiences for students. However, employer engagement varies, with some companies actively partnering with schools while others only show up to advisory meetings without deeper involvement.	<i>"Manufacturing, for instance, and our partnership with the Sacramento Valley Manufacturers Association—they're all in: helping to develop our apprenticeship program, designing and developing the curriculum, and securing apprenticeships for our future students."</i>
<b>Community College and K-12 Partnerships Strengthen Youth Career Awareness and Postsecondary Readiness</b>	Outreach efforts like spotlight nights and high school industry engagement partnerships such as <a href="#">SMUD's Solar Car Race</a> hosted on college campuses highlight the importance of increasing student knowledge of career pathways and access to postsecondary institutions, including regional community colleges.	<i>"One of our big events is...our spotlight night where we invite all the sophomores, juniors, and seniors from all of our feeder schools to participate in an open house fair...to learn about our programs. We invite high school programs onto campus, to come see."</i>

# Stakeholder Group: 4-Year Institutions

## CAREER PATHWAYS

Theme	Insights	Quotes
Addressing STEM Pathway Equity to Expand Opportunities for Underrepresented Students	Underrepresented students in STEM pathways often face challenges in mentorship gaps, imposter syndrome, and challenges in accessing academic resources. Programs investing in supporting priority student populations in STEM have proven successful.	<i>"For racially minoritized students, it is often a drastically different environment...being the only student or one of few students in STEM courses can be a challenge...imposter syndrome is a real thing, and many students question whether they are capable enough."</i>
Aligning Academic Programs with Workforce Needs Enhances Career Readiness	Aligning four-year academic programs with industry standards is essential for preparing students with the skills needed to succeed in the job market. Leveraging employer voice and pitching ROI to employers is crucial to furthering this goal.	<i>"They're pushing the campus to develop new programs that are responsive to industry needs. And if programs aren't doing that, they're going to probably lose some funding...Are they [our programs] closely aligned with career pathways? Are we enabling students to enter the job market with relevant skills?"</i>
Expanding Healthcare Career Pathways Requires Addressing Access and Faculty Needs	Despite strong interest in healthcare careers, limited courses, program barriers, and faculty shortages delay progress. Expanding partnerships and course offerings is key to meeting workforce needs.	<i>"Everybody wants to be a nurse. We have a program called health science that's basically capturing all students that have an interest in going into nursing and there's about 2800 students in that program...There's not enough course offerings."</i>

# Stakeholder Group: Engineering Employers

## CAREER PATHWAYS

Theme	Insights	Quotes
Primarily Focus on Entry-Level and Need for Expanded Development in Middle-Skill Talent	<p>While strong training programs and regional partnerships exist, they primarily focus on entry-level roles. Employers highlight growing demand for mid-to-senior level talent, particularly with tech advancements like AI. Employers are looking for initiatives that can train and upskill entry and mid-level talent with dynamic skill sets.</p>	<p><i>"Technology has changed a lot within the last five years. So our biggest hurdle is AI, teaching our own employees how to move the docket when it comes to AI, gen AI, and things of that nature. So that's a real tough ask for a lot of folks who just may be dipping their toe in there. For that reason, we have bought a firm that really, that's all they do is cross-train folks in technology."</i></p>
Integrated Learning Experiences Strengthen the STEM Talent Pipeline	<p>A strong ecosystem of hands-on training and workforce development ensure students gain both technical expertise and real-world experience. By combining classroom learning with project-based activities and job-readiness programs, these initiatives create more effective pathways into engineering careers.</p>	<p><i>"And then from a training perspective, we work with...50 organizations a year to support training programs, workforce development, regional workforce development training programs. So that's everything from basic job readiness skills, resume building, computer basic skills, writing to technical training programs."</i></p>
Continued Need: Strong Industry-Education Partnerships to Enhance Career Pathways	<p>Employers emphasize the importance of sustained collaboration between industry and educational institutions to create clear, structured pathways. While partnerships exist, there is a need for more streamlined and continuous engagement which ensure training programs align with career opportunities.</p>	<p><i>"One is like sort of that solution-based outcome as a result of the process. And two is like, how do we start to make some of these interactions with our institutions more uniform so it's easier for our employers to participate versus trying to do one-offs with all the different institutions?"</i></p>



# Stakeholder Group: Healthcare Employers

## CAREER PATHWAYS

Theme	Insights	Quotes
Early Career Exposure in Healthcare Fields to Expand Diverse Career Opportunity Knowledge	Employers stress the need for early exposure through structured career exploration programs, mentorship, and accessible career pathway maps tailored to local job markets. Without these tools, students—especially those from underrepresented backgrounds—may not pursue viable healthcare careers.	<i>"We need to start educating students at a younger age about the different opportunities in healthcare. They're not all doctors and nurses, and that's what a lot of younger people think."</i>
Ensuring Healthcare Employer Participation in Program & Curriculum Design	Programs like <b>KP Launch</b> and <b>Oakmont Health Career Academy</b> offer structured internships and clinical rotations that allow students to explore healthcare roles while gaining job experience. Employers recognize the critical role these play, yet face capacity challenges in expanding these opportunities to ensure students enter the workforce prepared for patient care and operational demands.	<i>"You need to have the clinical professional as a partner to the program, always. And not only a partner, but they have to be able to look at the curriculum. They have to be able to be part of decision-making abilities. And then also they have to commit on the employer side. We have to commit to you."</i>
Healthcare Pipelines Face Outdated Training Programs and Need Streamlined Credentialing	Outdated curricula and slow-moving state qualifications creates challenges in hiring qualified, local graduates. Utilizing TPM methods and collaboration between education and industry will help bridge the gap between educational requirements and industry needs, ensuring a well-trained workforce.	<i>"We all in healthcare should have the same entry point for individuals, the same requirements and not make it where we can't bring people in. Don't put certifications there that are not required. We got to get them through the door and then we can train them."</i>

# Cross-Cutting Stakeholder Themes

## CAREER PATHWAYS



### Theme: Employer–Education Partnerships are Critical for Career Pathway Success

**Key Insight:** Strong partnerships between employers and educators ensure that career pathways align with industry needs. Collaborative curriculum design and strong work-based learning models drive student success. Historically, though, education and industry have struggled to collaborate meaningfully due to lack of clear roles. Talent Pipeline Management has been an effective model providing guidance and responsibilities for collaboration in preparing the future workforce.

Stakeholder Group	Employers	Community Colleges	4-Year Institutions
Quote	<i>"We have the Oakmont Health Career Academy who come through Sutter. It's like a nine week and they filter throughout the entire hospital with us. It's such a great program and a great example. And then as they go through, then have the ability to kind of select the area they would like to spend more time on."</i>	<i>"But we have such a one-on-one relationship with them [employers]. Not only are we walking boots-on-the-ground in the clinical industry—we're actually on-site—but we also work administratively with them on collaboration. So there's a lot of time spent there, but there are a lot of barriers."</i>  <i>"Manufacturing, for instance, and our partnership with Sacramento Valley Manufacturers Association, they're all in, helping develop our apprenticeship program, designing, developing the curriculum, securing, apprenticeships for our future students."</i>	<i>"But I think that because we have those good connections with different hospitals, clinics, schools even, it does allow for our students to then be able to go right into an actual job as soon as they graduate and get their licensure."</i>

# Cross-Cutting Stakeholder Themes

## CAREER PATHWAYS



### Theme: Strong Career Pathways Require Early Career Awareness & Guidance

**Key Insight:** Early career guidance and awareness help students explore opportunities, build relevant skills, and creates stronger career pathways. When students are engaged early, students, educators, and employers can collaborate more effectively to support their long-term goals.

Stakeholder Group	K-12 Districts	Community Colleges	K-12 Students	Employers
Quote	<i>"It's [STEM Pathways] are readily available to students who are aware of it and start to see themselves as doctors, scientists, and participants in STEM programs. I'd say part of it is early enrollment—early targeting of students who wouldn't normally be well represented in these programs. It's about getting to them early, but also in spaces with people they feel comfortable with. Because outside of that, it's often the same group of kids accessing these opportunities in traditional programs."</i>	<i>"I think that we need to strengthen our community partnership. And especially in those younger years, when students are starting to develop a passion for a certain subject or a certain activity. Or get involved with a club like the Robotics Club, where we can offer those so students are feeling a sense of belonging and find those mentors and find like-minded peers for support."</i>	<i>"Also, there should be more conversations about your future because I feel like we're not again, as she said we're not as connected to the college counselors."</i>	<i>"The K-16 collaborative should come out to the employers and ask about what their current needs are, what their forecasted needs are, and then start building curriculum to meet those needs. But there is a starting point too. We need to start educating students at a younger age about the different opportunities in healthcare. They're not all doctors and nurses and that's what a lot of younger people think."</i>

# What's Working: Success Stories from the Region

## Bright Spots & Promising Practices



### Regional Hospital Pathway Partnership

Barton Hospital offers several programs and educational opportunities for local community college and high school students. Students can explore hands-on learning opportunities while earning credit and fulfilling training requirements.



### Creating Accessible & Equitable Career Pathways

*"But one of the things that the high school is doing really well right now is they have like a really strong collaboration with our local hospital, Barton. So, and tons of students are doing like all sorts of internships there...they're doing rotations and watching the surgeons and watching the physical therapists and watching the nurses."*

*-Lake Tahoe CC Staff*

[Click to Learn More](#)



What's Working: Success Stories from the Region

# Bright Spots & Promising Practices



## AvenueE

Supports community college transfer students transitioning to UC Davis through cohort support, mentorship and career exposure opportunities preparing students for careers in engineering and computer science. Additionally, the program supports women and underrepresented minority students in the engineering and computer science fields.



## Creating Accessible & Equitable Career Pathways

*"So one of the things that I can speak to with pride is the fact that our AvenueE program exists in the College of Engineering. We provide a lot of support to the students in our program....for the university to have invested in such a program in the College of Engineering, knowing that STEM is a place that hasn't historically been a diverse field for folks or for underrepresented communities hasn't been as accessible. I think that's a really great strength."*

*-UCD Staff*

[Click to Learn More](#)

What's Working: Success Stories from the Region

## Bright Spots & Promising Practices



### Kaiser Permanente's KP LAUNCH Program

KP LAUNCH is a seven to eight week paid summer internship offered to high school and undergraduate students that exposes them to non-clinical careers. Our vision for KP LAUNCH is to positively impact the lives of young adults and build a pathway for talent that will become future leaders in health care.

[Click to Learn More](#)

## PROGRAM GOALS

- ☑ Introduce high school and undergraduate interns to careers in health professions.
- ☑ Provide opportunities for interns to develop and foster professional and community leadership skills in a supportive environment.
- ☑ Assist interns in acquiring practical job skills and experiences that will enable them to successfully pursue careers in health professions.
- ☑ Encourage interns to pursue higher education and career development



### Creating Accessible Career Pathways

*“The KP Launch program is our flagship internship program for high school students. We placed over 30 paid interns across Greater Sacramento. These students supported the work being done in local departments in our Sacramento, South Sacramento, and Roseville Medical Centers. Because we want to build a future workforce that enriches our communities, we reach out to local schools and non-profit community partners to engage students who can benefit from healthcare career exposure. It’s not always about GPA, its about motivation, community service and attitude. We take into consideration many factors when looking at students who are interested in learn about healthcare career.*”

*In 2024, we hosted over 300 students in 127 departments across Northern California.*

# Actionable Recommendations

## CAREER PATHWAYS

### Expand Early Career Exploration & Advising

- Fund workshops and guest speakers; partner with local businesses, community members and alumni to host career exploration activities.
- Integrate career exploration coursework into middle and high school.
- Establish case-management-style advising to support students in navigating career pathways and postsecondary options.

1

### Strengthen Education-Industry Partnerships to Build a Resilient Workforce

- Address industry-experienced faculty needs at the community college level.
- Partner with local industries to create part-time teaching positions for professionals, allowing them to share expertise while maintaining their primary employment.

2

### Strengthen Employer Partnerships to Expand Work-Based Learning

- Formalize long-term partnerships with employers to co-design apprenticeships, internships, and hands-on training opportunities using TPM framework.
- Establish regional industry advisory boards to align curriculum with workforce needs, ensuring students gain job-ready skills.

3

### Continue to Support and Expand STEM Career Pathway Accessibility for Underrepresented Students

- Address barriers such as transportation, technology access, and scheduling conflicts that limit student participation in career-connected learning.
- Develop targeted outreach and mentorship programs for Latinx, low-income, and first-generation students in high-demand industries like STEM and healthcare.

4



# Cross-Cutting Themes

*Threads that Bind: Insights Across Focus Areas*



# Theme 1: Institutional Misalignment & Bureaucratic Barriers

**Challenge:** Disjointed policies, complex administrative processes, and lack of coordination between K-12, community colleges, and four-year institutions create barriers for students.

**Recommendation:** Establish streamlined, regionally-aligned policies for dual enrollment, transfer, and career pathway articulation to eliminate systemic barriers.

## Dual Enrollment

Inconsistent enrollment processes across institutions make it difficult for students and families to navigate.



## Career Pathways

Bureaucratic hurdles delay employer-education partnerships, limiting student access to real-world learning.



## Transfer Pathways

Confusion over transfer requirements and inconsistent advising result in missed opportunities for students.



## Priority Student Populations

Outdated policies assume all students are full-time and financially stable, disadvantaging working students and student parents.



# Theme 2: Gaps in Advising & Student Support Services

**Challenge:** Inconsistent or insufficient advising leads to uninformed decision-making, negatively impacting student enrollment, retention, and completion rates.

**Recommendation:** Expand case management-style advising models and mandatory orientation programs to provide structured support at key transition points.

## Dual Enrollment

Students report varying levels of counselor and instructor engagement, leading to difficulties in managing workloads.



## Career Pathways

Limited access to career counseling prevents students from exploring high-growth industries.



## Transfer Pathways

Many students lack early advising and structured onboarding, resulting in transfer delays and uncertainty.



## Priority Student Populations

First-generation and low-income students often receive inadequate guidance, limiting their ability to navigate college and financial aid processes.



# Theme 3: Equity Gaps in Access & Participation

**Challenge:** Priority student populations remain underrepresented in dual enrollment, career pathways, and transfer programs due to limited access, awareness, and resource constraints.

**Recommendation:** Implement targeted outreach, mentorship, and scholarship programs to close equity gaps in student participation and success.

## Dual Enrollment

Participation rates are higher in well-resourced schools, while rural and low-income students face accessibility challenges.



## Career Pathways

Lack of **STEM and healthcare mentorship opportunities** disproportionately affects students of color and first-generation students.



## Transfer Pathways

Students from smaller, under-resourced schools struggle to access transfer guidance and financial aid resources.



## Priority Student Populations

Financial constraints and lack of transportation continue to be significant barriers for low-income and rural students.



# Theme 4: Employer-Education Alignment & Career Readiness Gaps

**Challenge:** Despite strong workforce partnerships, there remains a disconnect between academic programs and employer expectations, limiting student preparedness for high-demand industries.

**Recommendation:** Strengthen employer advisory boards, industry-led curriculum development, and work-based learning opportunities to enhance career readiness.

## Dual Enrollment

Most dual enrollment programs focus on transfer pathways rather than **career-aligned career technical education** programs.



## Career Pathways

Faculty shortages in **STEM and healthcare fields** restrict access to critical coursework.



## Transfer Pathways

Employers emphasize the need for **curriculum alignment with workforce demands** to enhance job readiness.



## Priority Student Populations

Work-based learning opportunities remain concentrated among high-achieving students, limiting access for underrepresented groups.





# From Insight to Action:

Meeting Collaborative Goals

*Actionable Recommendations  
by Goal*

## GOAL ONE

# Send 1,300 young men of color to UC Davis and Sacramento State by 2025.



### In the Next 18 Months: Immediate, short-term actions

- **Expand targeted outreach & mentorship programs:** Continue strengthening partnerships with Improve Your Tomorrow (IYT) and local affinity groups to increase awareness and engagement.
- **Strengthen culturally responsive advising:** Implement peer mentorship programs and “warm hand-off” models between high schools, community colleges, and four-year institutions. Provide professional development for advisors.
- **Facilitate transfer support workshops:** Provide dedicated case management-style advising for young men of color throughout their educational journey.
- **Embed proactive retention supports:** Provide wraparound services including mental health, financial literacy, and career counseling.

### Beyond the Grant Term: Sustainability strategies for long-term impact

- **Institutionalize mentoring & affinity-based retention programs:** Establish permanent funding streams for mentorship, student affinity groups, and transfer support services.
- **Expand scholarships & financial aid programs:** Advocate for state and philanthropic funding to support full-ride scholarships for young men of color in STEM and high-demand fields.
- **Data-driven program improvement:** Use the data sharing agreement to track persistence, retention, and graduation rates and use equity-focused metrics to inform ongoing improvements.

### Accomplishments & Opportunities

- IYT & Sacramento County Office of Education dual enrollment program pilot funded to provide classes to young men of color on Saturdays with near-peer mentor support.
- Enhancing Equitable Transfer Success from CRC to Sac State: two-year pilot funded to place a full-time CSUS advisor at CRC to support priority students with transfer process.

## GOAL TWO

# Triple the number of students graduating high school with freshman college credits by 2026.



### In the Next 18 Months: Immediate, short-term actions

- **Standardize dual enrollment policies:** Create uniform guidelines for use within and across K-12 and community college districts to eliminate administrative barriers.
- **Expand dual enrollment pathways in CTE fields:** Increase offerings in STEM, healthcare, and trades to align with regional workforce needs.
- **Continue to address faculty shortages in dual enrollment:** Provide financial incentives (e.g., tuition reimbursement) for high school teachers to earn master's credentials needed to teach dual enrollment courses.

### Beyond the Grant Term: Sustainability strategies for long-term impact

- **Expand the existing regional data-sharing agreement beyond pilot partners to track dual enrollment participation, identify equity gaps, and inform program improvements:** Leverage data insights to drive targeted outreach, advocate for expanded course offerings, and strengthen credit articulation between K-12, community colleges, and four-year institutions.
- **Sustainable funding model for dual enrollment:** Secure state and philanthropic funding to support ongoing faculty training and program expansion.
- **Institutional commitment to equity in dual enrollment:** Embed data-driven DE equity goals in district LCAP plans to hold schools accountable for increasing access for priority student populations.

### Accomplishments & Opportunities

- Dual Enrollment Toolkit created. Make accessible to K-12 districts for standardization and best practices in DE policy.
- \$5,000 stipends available for teachers to pursue discipline-specific master's degrees. Track effectiveness of initiative and share best practices to advocate for sustained funding. 39

## GOAL THREE

# Triple students graduating from healthcare/engineering pathways by 2026.



### In the Next 18 Months: Immediate, short-term actions

- **Enhance employer partnerships for career exposure:** Where possible use the Talent Pipeline Management framework to align work-based learning, job shadowing, and apprenticeships with healthcare and engineering employers' priorities, requirements, and job descriptions.
- **Address STEM faculty shortages:** Partner with industry professionals to create adjunct faculty pipelines for high-demand technical programs.
- **Align K-12 coursework with industry standards:** Expand A-G aligned CTE courses that feed into stackable credential programs in healthcare and engineering. Offer pre-requisite postsecondary classes in high school.

### Beyond the Grant Term: Sustainability strategies for long-term impact

- **Develop a regional healthcare & STEM talent pipeline strategy:** Formalize K-16 career pathways consortiums that include employers, education leaders, and workforce boards.
- **Institutionalize industry advisory boards:** Ensure long-term employer engagement in curriculum design and career-connected learning.
- **Expand funding for STEM and healthcare scholarships:** Establish endowed scholarships and other public-private talent finance solutions targeting students from underrepresented backgrounds in STEM and healthcare fields.

### Accomplishments & Opportunities

- Allied health career programs funded in alignment with Roseville TPM Healthcare Collaborative's priorities and with employer partnership in programming. Continue leveraging TPM data to build employer buy-in and co-designed solutions.
- Sierra College & Kaiser Permanente partnership pilot to fund instructors on release from KP; opportunity to track and share learnings from this innovation.



## GOAL FOUR

# Award 2,000 degrees and certificates to comebackers and reverse transfer students by 2026.



### In the Next 18 Months: Immediate, short-term actions

- **Bolster the Comebacker Campaign:** Increase targeted outreach to adults with some college, no degree, emphasizing flexible degree completion pathways.
- **Expand direct admission & reverse transfer agreements:** Facilitate seamless credit transfer between community colleges and universities via the Data Sharing MOU and Secondary Data Agreements (SDAs).
- **Strengthen wraparound supports for adult learners:** Establish dedicated adult learner centers offering career counseling, financial aid assistance, and academic coaching.

### Beyond the Grant Term: Sustainability strategies for long-term impact

- **Sustain the Comebacker Campaign as a permanent initiative:** Secure state or regional funding to institutionalize re-enrollment efforts.
- **Leverage workforce partnerships for tuition assistance:** Collaborate with employers and workforce agencies to offer tuition assistance programs for adult learners in high-demand fields.
- **Leverage the existing reverse transfer data-sharing agreement to develop a permanent data infrastructure for tracking adult learner outcomes:** Use statewide longitudinal data systems to monitor degree completion rates for comebackers, assess program effectiveness, and inform targeted re-enrollment strategies.

### Accomplishments & Opportunities

- Reverse transfer piloted between Sierra College, Lake Tahoe Community College, and CSU Sacramento. Share learnings and expand through the Data Sharing MOU and SDAs.
- Comebacker Campaign launched regionally in Fall 2024. Evaluate impact and implement continuous improvements while sustaining the initiative.

## GOAL FIVE

# Achieve Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) status across institutions.



### In the Next 18 Months: Immediate, short-term actions

- **Expand Latinx student recruitment efforts** through targeted outreach, bilingual resources, and culturally relevant high school engagement.
- **Increase Latinx participation in dual enrollment and transfer pathways** by strengthening advising, peer mentorship, and access to financial aid guidance.
- **Develop high school-to-college bridge programs** that provide early exposure to higher education, academic support, and college application assistance.
- **Promote financial aid and scholarship access** by streamlining FAFSA/CA Dream Act support and connecting Latinx students with funding opportunities.

### Beyond the Grant Term: Sustainability strategies for long-term impact

- **Institutionalize HSI-aligned student success initiatives** such as Latinx cultural centers, mentorship programs, and affinity-based academic advising.
- **Secure long-term funding through Title V HSI grants** to expand student support services, faculty development, and targeted retention strategies.
- **Strengthen retention and degree completion efforts** by implementing proactive academic counseling, first-year experience programs, and financial aid renewal support.
- **Foster inclusive campus environments** through Latinx student leadership programs, faculty diversity initiatives, and partnerships with community organizations.

### Accomplishments & Opportunities

- Data Sharing MOU and Secondary Data Agreements will allow targeted recruitment efforts and supports for Latinx students.
- Los Rios Transfer Academy funded by the Collaborative is a 2-day hybrid event providing in-depth information regarding transfer options, focused on recruiting men of color.



# Together Towards Transformation

*Concluding Reflections &  
Next Steps*

# Reflections on Stakeholder Insights



## Seamless Pathways Require Stronger Alignment

Institutional misalignment continues to create barriers for students. Expanding regional collaboration and standardizing policies across K-12, community colleges, and four-year institutions will be critical to improving student transitions.

## Equity Gaps Persist in Access and Participation

Despite program expansion, priority student populations—especially low-income, rural, and Latinx students—face barriers to participation. Targeted outreach, culturally responsive support, and financial aid accessibility must remain a priority.

## Advising and Support Systems Must Evolve

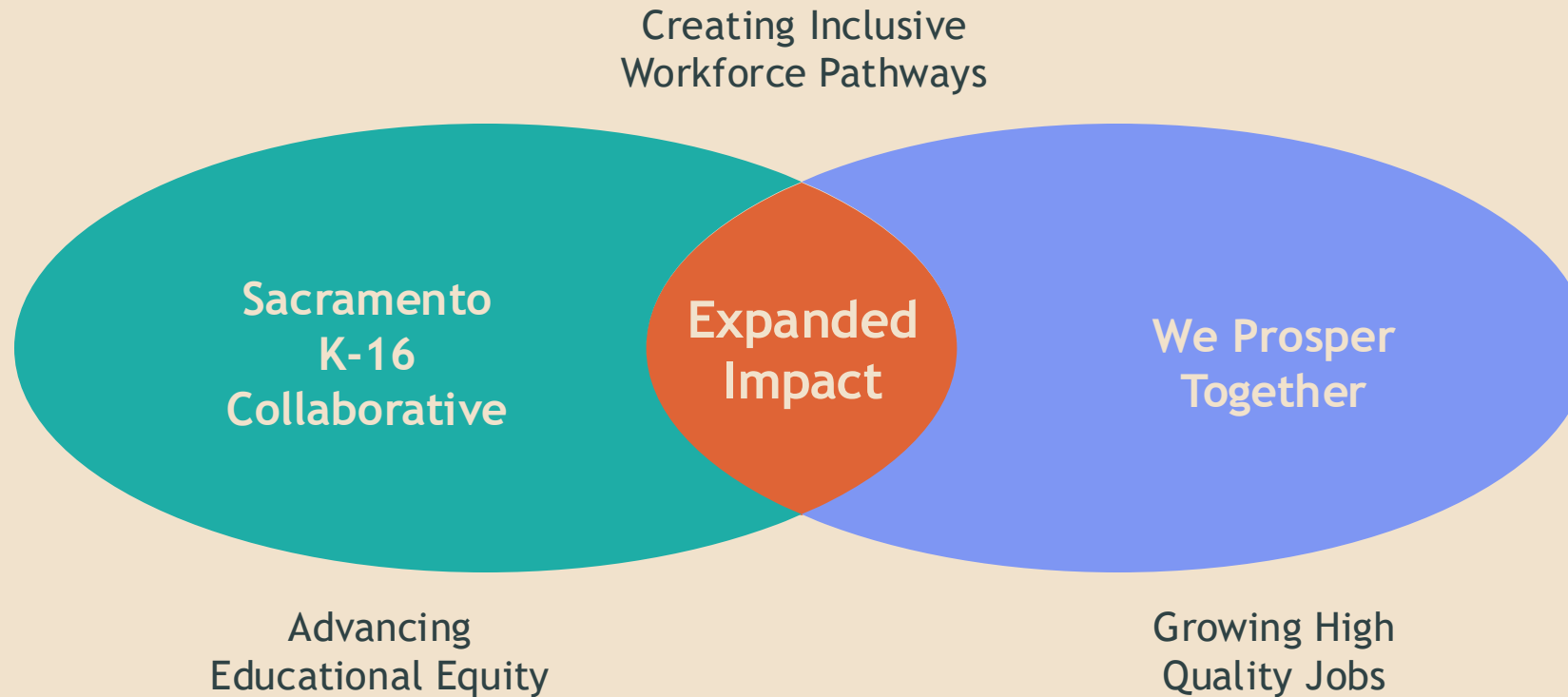
Students at all levels struggle with navigating complex enrollment, transfer, and career pathways. Expanding proactive advising, peer mentorship, and wraparound support services will be key to long-term success.

## Employer Partnerships Strengthen Career Readiness

Work-based learning, industry-aligned curriculum, and employer engagement are essential for bridging education and workforce needs. Sustainable partnerships will ensure students are prepared for high-demand careers.

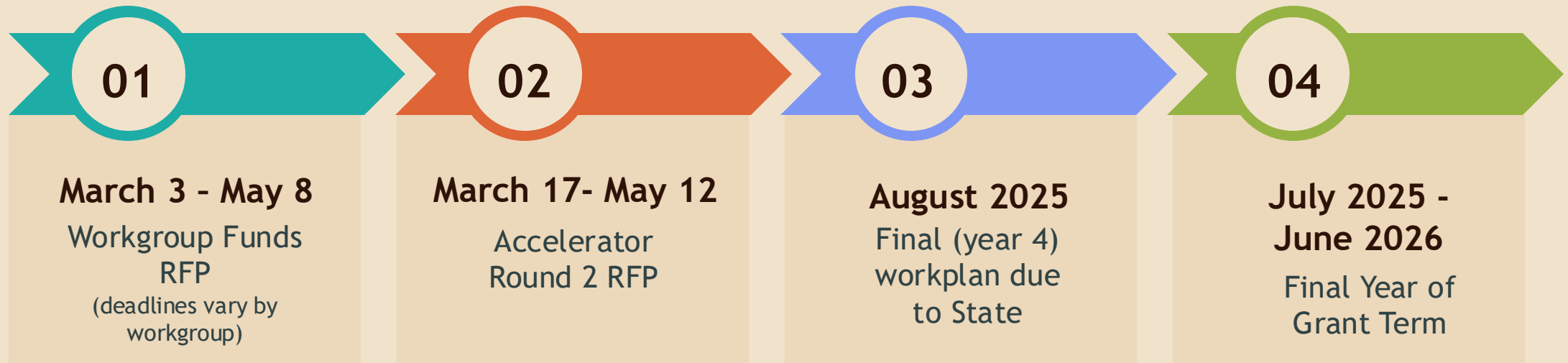
# K-16 Integration with Jobs First

As the Master Plan for Career Education and priorities of the Governor's office signal the importance of regional collaboration, utilizing stakeholder engagement findings to inform how the Sacramento K-16 Collaborative aligns its efforts with We Prosper Together will lead to expanded impact for learners and workers in our region.



# Timeline for Next Steps

As this research cycle concludes, it should be the launch of a new cycle of collaboration, action-planning, program improvement, and funding for the K-16 Collaborative. Use the findings and recommendations as resources to guide project proposals, inform the next year's workplan and to prioritize sustainability activities for the Sacramento K-16 Collaborative.





# THANK YOU

For more information and to access all research produced for the Sacramento K-16 Collaborative to date, please visit:

[www.sacramentok16.org/resource-hub/](http://www.sacramentok16.org/resource-hub/)

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