



KEY FINDINGS FROM STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PRIORITY STUDENT POPULATIONS WORKGROUP

"I want to go to college, but my main concern is just being able to balance a life, the [academic] work, and a job on top of that. The money has to come from somewhere." - High School Student

Capitol Impact conducted a series of interviews and focus groups with students, families, K-12, community college, and university staff, and employer stakeholders from May through October 2025. The following are salient themes and actionable recommendations arising from those conversations.

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES AMONG STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Transportation

Key insight: Transportation barriers limit access to education for rural and low-income students. Geographic isolation and financial constraints prevent K-12 students from participating in advanced coursework and career programs. Community college students struggle to reach required courses, making completing their education and career pathways harder.

Student Supports

Key insight: Many students, especially low-income, first-generation, and students of color, lack adequate support. While colleges offer many resources, their decentralized nature makes access difficult, leaving students unaware of available services. K-12 students need more advocacy, mentorship, and career guidance, while community colleges struggle with limited funding. Strengthening and streamlining support services is key to student success.

The Cost of College

Key insight: Many students struggle to afford college while balancing work and school. Financial aid often falls short, and low-income students lack financial safety nets. Rising tuition and limited aid options force students to work more, impacting their academic success. Some students even lose aid due to scholarship penalties, adding to financial stress.

ACTIONABLE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Expand knowledge and resources around college for students and families.
- Provide financial aid guidance and reduce cost stigma for priority students.
- Address transportation barriers to improve access to a wider variety of courses, along with career and dual enrollment programs.
- Strengthen career pathways through mentorship, networking, and work-based learning.

"The community around the area, which is low income...and so a lot of the focus is mainly on surviving...they don't put a lot of focus on school and it's been generation after generation." - K-12 Administrator

**QUESTIONS?
CONTACT US!**

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FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION: SACRAMENTO K-16 COLLABORATIVE GOALS

GOAL 1: SEND AN ADDITIONAL 1,300 YOUNG MEN OF COLOR TO UC DAVIS AND SACRAMENTO STATE BY 2025 AND 2026.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS:

- Expand targeted outreach & mentorship.
- Strengthen culturally responsive advising.
- Facilitate transfer support workshops.
- Embed proactive retention supports.

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES

- Institutionalize mentoring & affinity-based retention programs.
- Expand scholarships & financial aid programs.
- Engage in data-driven program improvement.

GOAL 2: TRIPLE THE NUMBER OF THE REGION'S STUDENTS WHO CAN GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL WITH BOTH A DIPLOMA AND THE FRESHMAN YEAR OF COLLEGE COMPLETED BY 2026.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS:

- Standardize dual enrollment policies.
- Expand dual enrollment pathways in CTE fields.
- Address faculty shortages in dual enrollment.

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES

- Expand regional data-sharing to inform dual enrollment program improvements.
- Secure state and philanthropic funding to support ongoing faculty training and program expansion.
- Embed dual enrollment equity goals in LCAP plans.

GOAL 3: TRIPLE THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO CAN GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL FROM HEALTHCARE AND ENGINEERING PATHWAYS THAT ARTICULATE TO APPRENTICESHIPS OR STACKED POSTSECONDARY CERTIFICATES AND DEGREES.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS:

- Enhance employer partnerships for career exposure.
- Address STEM faculty shortages.
- Align K-12 coursework with industry standards.

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES

- Develop a regional healthcare & STEM talent pipeline strategy.
- Institutionalize industry advisory boards.
- Expand funding for STEM and healthcare scholarships.

GOAL 4: AWARD 2,000 DEGREES AND/OR CERTIFICATES TO ADULTS WHO HAVE EARNED BUT NOT CLAIMED THEM, 2,000 DEGREES AND/OR CERTIFICATES TO COMEBACKERS, AND 4,000 "REVERSE TRANSFER" COMMUNITY COLLEGE DEGREES AND/OR CERTIFICATES BY 2026.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS:

- Bolster the Comebacker Campaign.
- Expand direct admission and reverse transfer agreements.
- Strengthen wraparound supports for adult learners.

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES

- Sustain the Comebacker Campaign permanently.
- Leverage workforce partnerships for tuition aid.
- Leverage the data-sharing agreement to develop a permanent infrastructure for tracking adult learner outcomes.

GOAL 5: ACHIEVE HISPANIC SERVING INSTITUTION (HSI) STATUS FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES THROUGH THE FULL POSTSECONDARY CONTINUUM.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS:

- Expand Latinx student recruitment efforts.
- Increase Latinx participation in dual enrollment and transfer pathways.
- Promote financial aid and scholarship access.

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES

- Institutionalize HSI-aligned student success initiatives.
- Secure long-term funding through Title V HSI grants.
- Strengthen retention and degree completion efforts.
- Foster inclusive campus environments.