



Education
Strategy
Group

Invest Forward: Leveraging the Federal Stimulus to Support Students' Postsecondary Success

Enroll. Complete. Compete.

Education Strategy Group

August 9, 2022

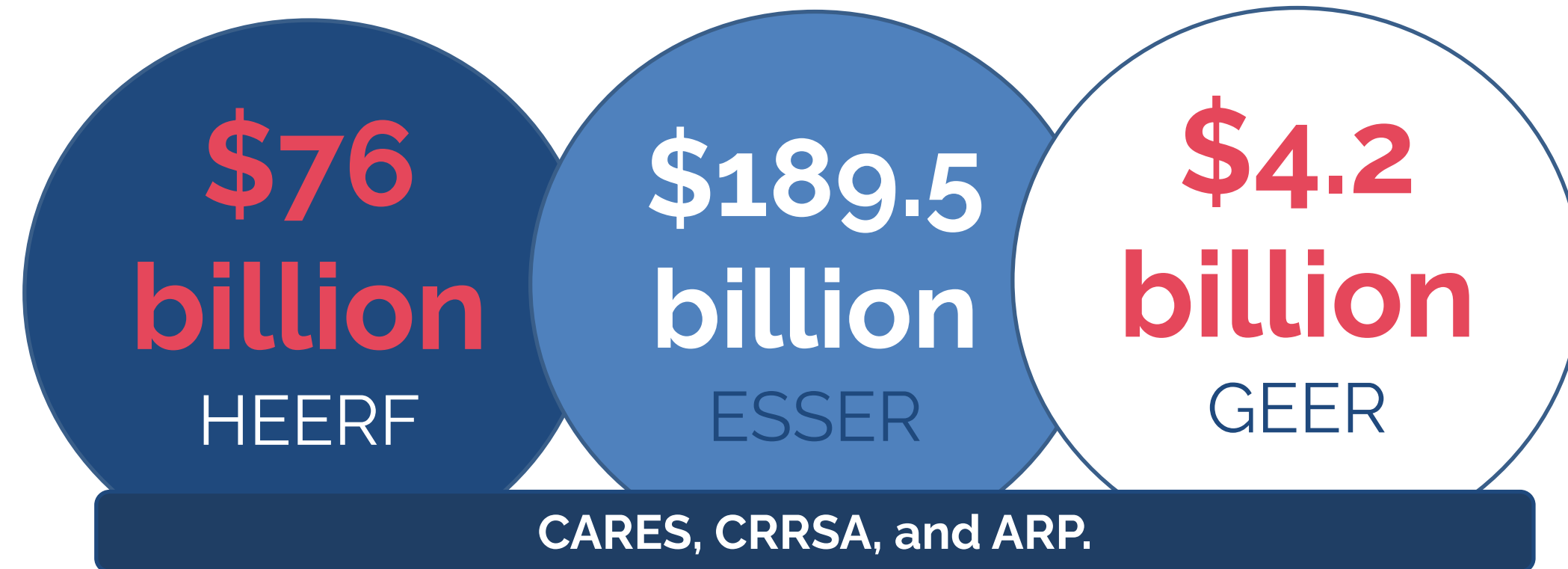
COVID-19's Impact on Education

Disrupted postsecondary attendance

Exacerbated existing disparities in persistence and attainment

Altered our learning environments

Reenergized, collective movement to address systemic inequities



OPPORTUNITY

to reimagine traditional structures in education that do not work for our learners.

Leaders across the field are advocating for strategic use of these funds

“This is a moment where we have investments that give us a chance to pilot and reimagine structures of learning and time to degree. I hope we don’t miss this moment. I’m afraid we will. I’m afraid that institutions will simply use these funds to prop up broken systems, rather than reimagine and rethink them. So, that’s my call. Don’t miss the moment we are in now.”



The federal stimulus can provide learners a path to economic mobility

 **Enroll**

 **Complete**

 **Compete**

Accelerating Recovery
through Credentials

BRIEF

ESG
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A FRAMEWORK FOR POSTSECONDARY
EDUCATION STIMULUS INVESTMENTS

Enroll. Complete. Compete.

The Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated existing disparities across race and income in the United States and displaced thousands of workers. Our higher education institutions faced revenue loss and sharp enrollment declines. Nevertheless, as we collectively recover from the pandemic, postsecondary education leaders have a tremendous opportunity to reimagine current systems and uplift often underserved adult learners through strategic use of the federal stimulus provided by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security ([CARES](#)), Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations ([CRRSA](#)), and American Rescue Plan ([ARP](#)) Acts. These three pieces of legislation collectively equip higher education with approximately \$77 billion in higher education emergency relief funds (HEERF) to support students and institutions.

While a portion of these funds are given directly to students and will be used to backfill budgets, leaders have an opportunity to invest in long-term solutions to address higher education's pre-pandemic challenges. This includes addressing equity gaps in access and attainment as well as supporting post-traditional learners. In alignment with the Accelerating Recovery through Credentials [Rapid Response Toolkit](#) and [Adult-Ready Playbook](#), Education Strategy Group, with generous support from the Kresge Foundation, presents a new framework for federal stimulus investments in higher education. Effectively titled, "Enroll. Complete. Compete.," this framework aims to address the current pain points of postsecondary education institutions and our workforce, while uplifting adult learners.

It is clear that we have an opportunity to help more post-traditional learners **enroll** in higher education, **complete** a credential of value, and **compete** in our global economy using the federal stimulus. To seize this one-in-a-generation opportunity, we must act now.

CARES, CRRSA,
and ARP collectively
equip higher
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and institutions.

MAY 2022



Enroll.

Enrollments are on a steady decline, especially at community colleges

5.1%↓

Overall enrollments in postsecondary education have dropped by a total of 5.1 percent since fall 2019.

13.2%↓

Community colleges are experiencing the largest decline in enrollment since the pandemic began: -13.2 percent

Source: National Student Clearinghouse (2022)

Anxiety and concerns surrounding COVID-19 and health.

Unstable and shifting personal finances



Example for **Enroll**: Stimulus dollars can be used to support engagements with students that can improve enrollment among traditional and post-traditional learners.



Colorado invested \$51M in ARPA dollars to help re-enroll learners displaced by the pandemic. Specifically, HB21-1330 provides additional funding to the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship, invests in local businesses to hire additional workers, equips institutions and community-based organizations with grants for FAFSA completion, bolsters data collection and reporting, and provides direct and indirect supports to traditionally underserved student populations.



Complete.

COVID-19 exacerbated existing disparities in persistence and completion, and we haven't recovered...

2%↓

At the height of the pandemic, there was a **2 percent decline in persistence** across the United States, with the community college sector being hit the hardest. **According to NCES's recent report on persistence and retention, these rates remain below pre-pandemic levels.**

3.2%↓

The pandemic has only exacerbated existing disparities among Students of Color. **The overall first-year persistence rate fell the most among Latinx students (-3.2 pp to 68.6%)** and continues to impact Native American students as well.

Source: National Student Clearinghouse, 2021; 2022



Example for **Complete**: Investing in strategies that promote **persistence and completion** efforts will have a positive impact on recovery, students, and the institution's bottom line.



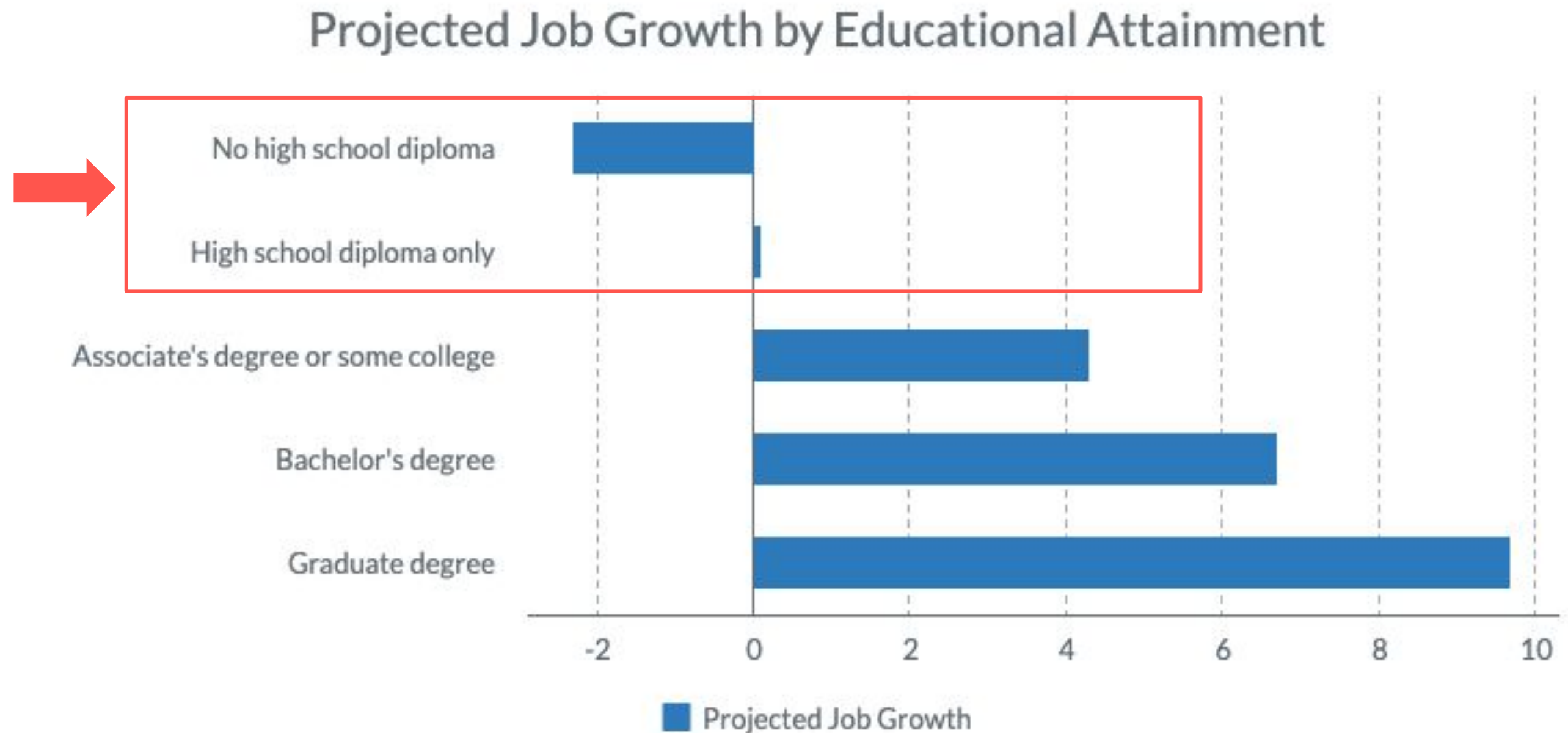
Connecticut used ARPA - approximately \$19.5M - to expand **Guided Pathways advising** across the CSCU system. Advisors deploy a holistic, case managed approach to **supporting students and their academic, career, and basic needs**. CSCU's goal is to hire more than 150 new advisors to support students.

CSCU

Compete.

Postsecondary credentials are even more critical to compete in today's economy

Over the next ten years, there is **zero or negative job growth projected** for those with a high school diploma or less



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics via The New York Times (February 2021)



Example of **Compete**: Purposefully prioritizing career and workforce readiness is essential for economic recovery.

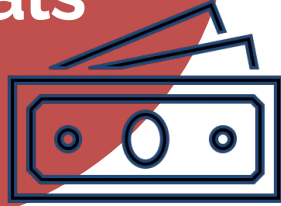
California used \$472.5 million in ARPA funds to establish the **Golden State Education and Training Grant Program** (\$1,000 - \$2,5000) to assist Californians who lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



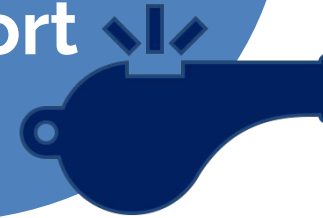
This one-time grant award is given to students to **upskill or reskill and enter the workforce to increase their monthly wages**. Grants are disbursed by the California Student Aid Commission to institutions to cover the cost of tuition and fees for eligible applicants.



Low-cost
short-term
credentials



Coaching
and
navigational
support



Targeted aid
at
populations
with need



Strategic state-level investments of Education Stabilization Funds can promote postsecondary attainment & scale innovative programs.

Flexible
coursework
options

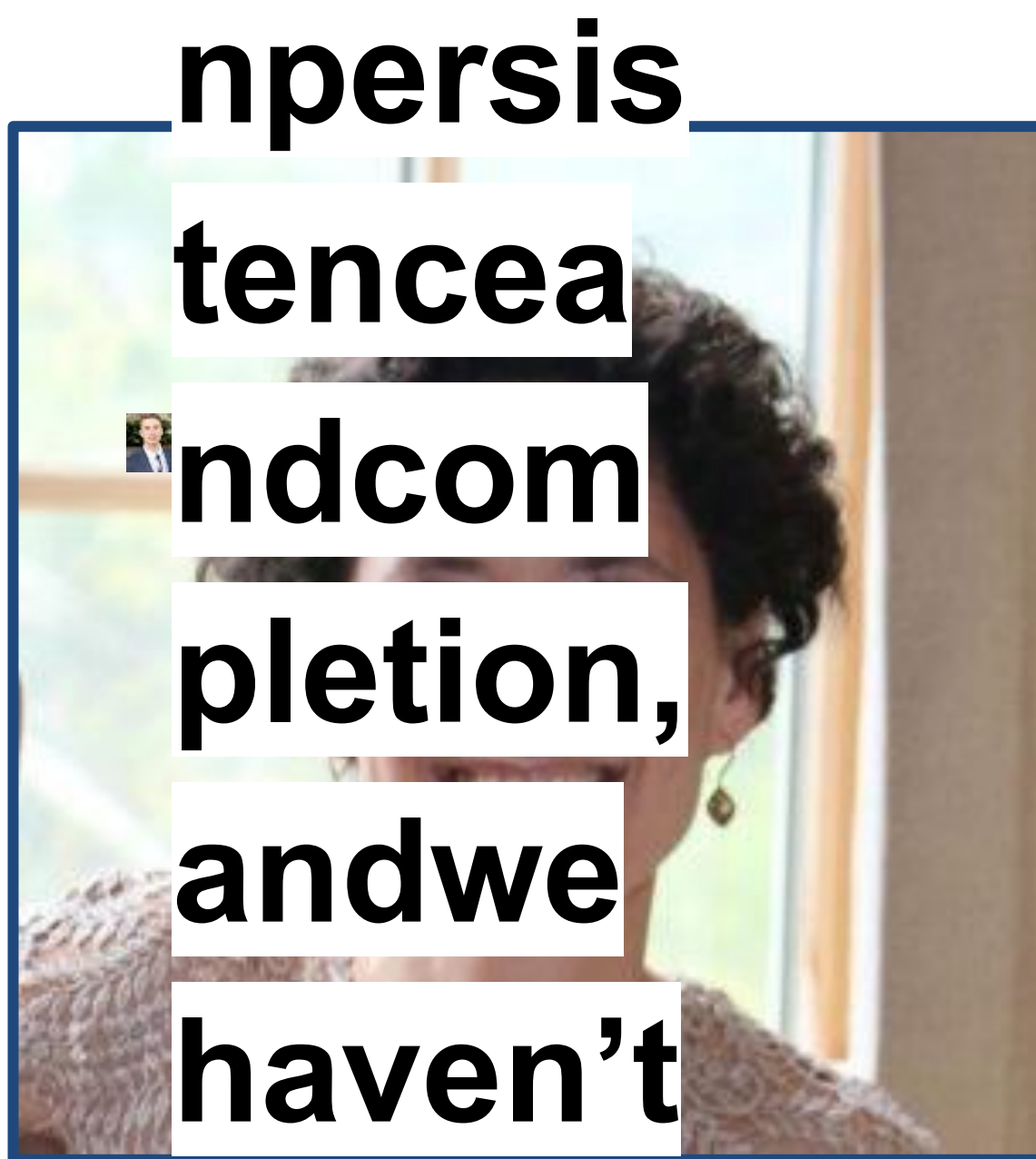


Basic needs
and
wrap-around
d supports

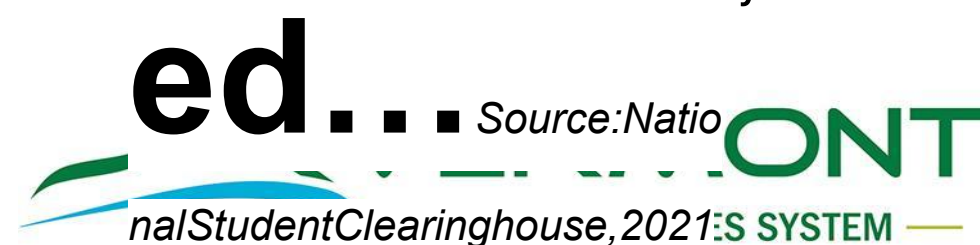


Data
capacity to
inform
decisions





Soph
Chan
Vermont State Colleges System



At the height of

the pandemic, there was a 2 percent

increase in enrollment



Dr. Kim Hunter Reed
Commissioner of Higher Education
Louisiana Board of Regents



Questions?



Enroll. Complete. Compete.

Framework & Resources

In alignment with the Accelerating Recovery through Credentials **Rapid Response Toolkit** and **Adult-Ready Playbook**, Education Strategy Group presents a **new framework and resources for federal stimulus investments in higher education.**

We have an opportunity to help more post-traditional learners **enroll** in higher education, **complete** a credential of value, and **compete** in our global economy using the federal stimulus.



<https://tinyurl.com/stimulus-framework>



An initiative to encourage districts and states to prioritize investing a significant portion of their American Rescue Plan resources in **helping students successfully access postsecondary education and succeed in future career pathways.**

This effort includes arming district and state leaders with **high-impact strategies and peer connection opportunities** to guide their investments in student pathways.



investforward.us




Panelist Resources



Report link

Final Report of the Select Committee on the Future of Public Higher Education in Vermont

 **NCHEMS**

The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems

April 9, 2021

REBOOT

YOUR CAREER



Landing page



Report link





VSCS Transformation Proposal:
A 21st Century Public-Access System of Higher Education for Vermont

February 22, 2021



LOUISIANA
DUAL ENROLLMENT



Landing page

Completers Grant



Landing page

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