

Democratizing Access: How California Leverages Data and Technology to Increase Equity and Efficiency

SHEEO

August 2025



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DISCOVER. PLAN. LAUNCH.

Who We Are



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Introduction



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Who We Are

- **Manager of CaliforniaColleges.edu**, the State of California's official college and career planning platform
- A **legislatively-authorized** service provider to all California school districts (California Education Code 60900.5)
- **California's College Planning and Transition Infrastructure**, as established in ECS 60900.5

Who We Are Not

- A vendor
- A grant-funded program

What We Do



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Intended Impact: “What” We Want to Accomplish at the Big Picture Level

We do this work with the intended long-term impact of closing the following equity gaps:

- Access to information about and tools to plan for educational opportunities after high school
- The completion of A-G coursework
- The completion of FAFSA and California Dream Act applications
- College application and matriculation rates
- Credit for completed high school coursework (A-G and dual enrollment)

| | WHAT | HOW |
|-------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Big Picture | Intended Impact | Organizational Strategies |
| Granular | Organizational Objectives | Team Priorities |

Our Three Big Goals

To close equity gaps, we seek to:

Systematize

Provide access to **high-quality college and career knowledge** development tools **for all** 6th-12th grade public school students

Streamline

Create an **integrated college and financial aid application process for California** students and educators

Provide Data

Supply the **actionable data educators need** to provide **targeted interventions** and **inform decisions** as they provide high-stakes college and career support

Systematize College and Career Knowledge Development



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Why?

- Research shows that college knowledge is essential to increasing access
- No standards for guidance and college knowledge development
- College Planning has only recently become a standard of the counseling credential in California





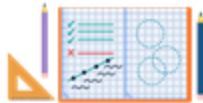
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One Place for College and Career



TOOLS

Support your progress



MAP OUT YOUR FUTURE

Tools to Plan, Set Goals,
and Record Progress



BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE

College, Career, and
Financial Aid Lessons

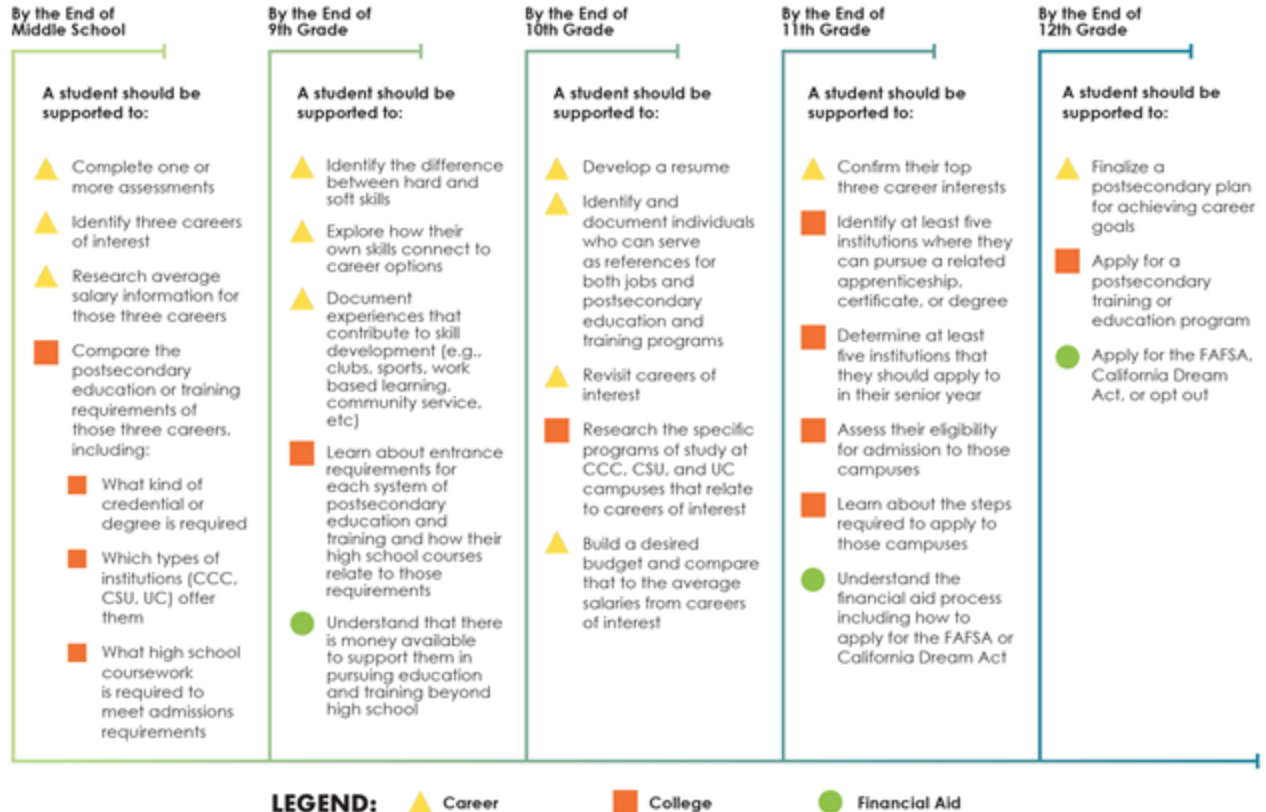


INTENTIONAL EDUCATOR INTEGRATIONS

Reporting Tools to Inform
Student Support



College and Career Knowledge Development Framework



Universal Access to CaliforniaColleges.edu

One goal of the Cradle-to-Career Data System legislation is to make CaliforniaColleges.edu available to every school district, student, and educator in California by 2026.

| | |
|-------|---|
| 436 | Partner Districts and Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) |
| 2.3M+ | 6th-12th grade public school students in California enrolled in a Partner District/LEA |
| 75 | Partner Districts/LEAs in the pipeline for partnership |
| 422K | Additional 6th-12th grade public school students in the pipeline who will be enrolled in a Partner District/LEA |

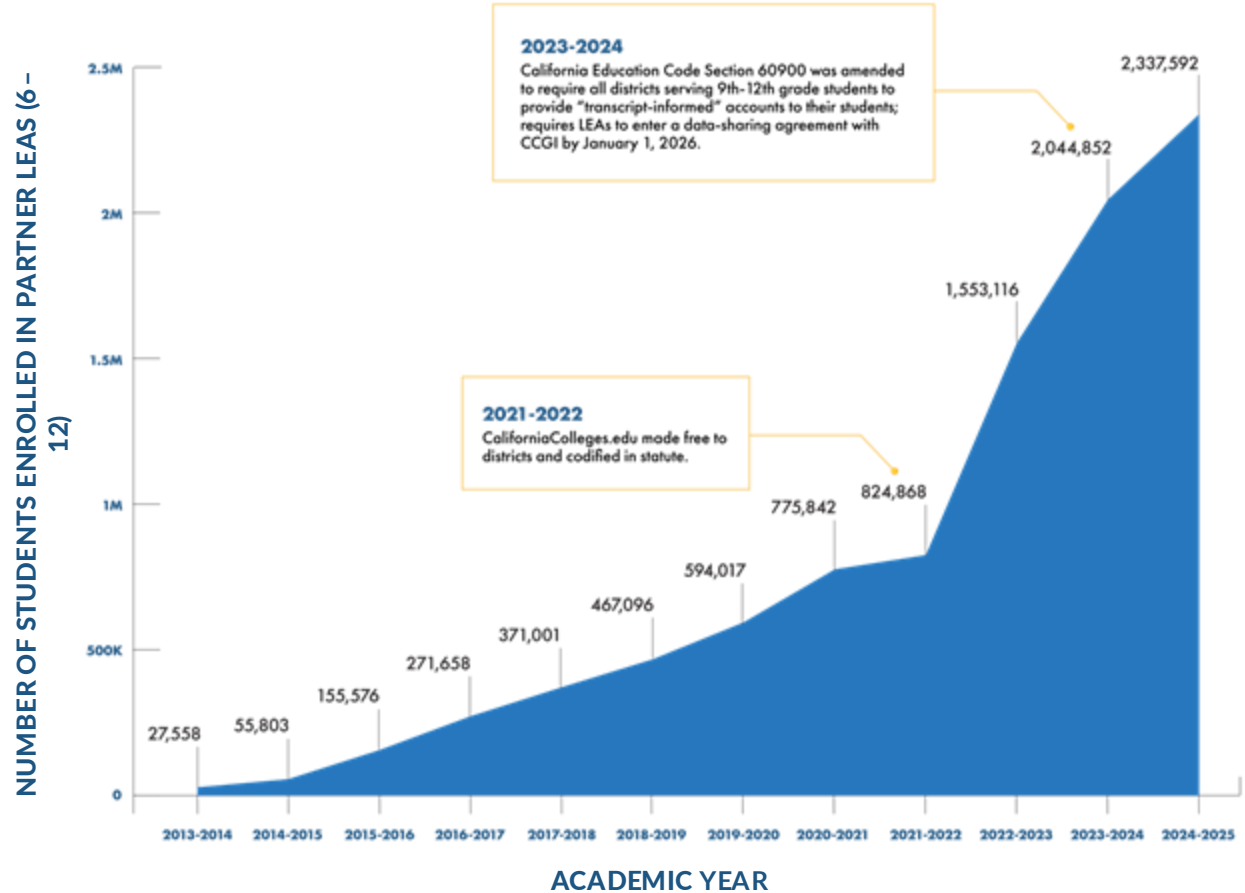
Data accurate as of July 10, 2025.



Universal Access to CaliforniaColleges.edu

Legend

- The total number of students enrolled in LEAs (6th-12th grade).



Streamline The College Application Process



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Why?

- 80% of college going California students attend in-state institutions
- The process is overly complicated and places administrative burdens on students
- The first touch point with college shouldn't reinforce imposter syndrome
- Streamlining also makes things more efficient for K-12 educators and higher education admissions staff



A-G (College Prep) Requirements

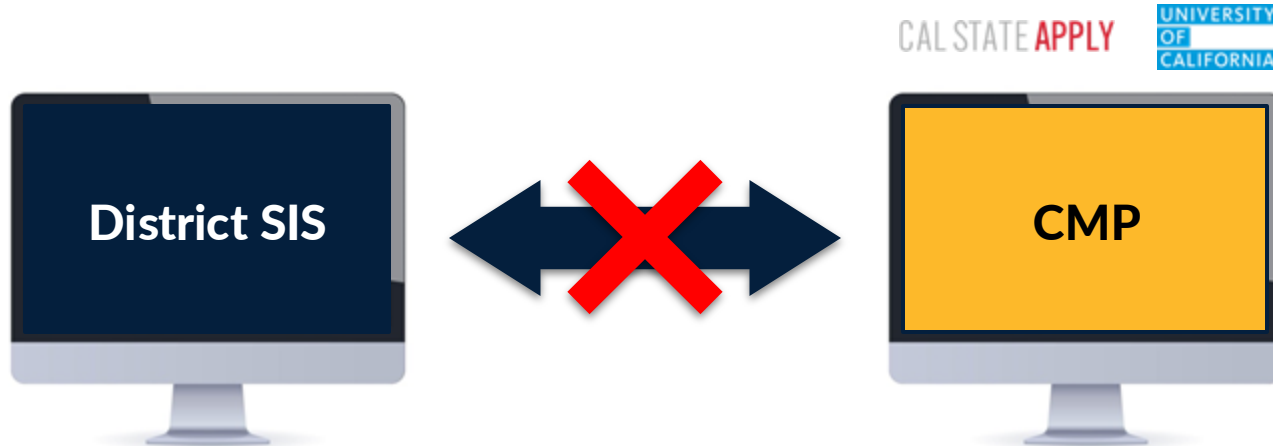
- The A-G requirements are a 15-course sequence of “college preparatory coursework.”
- High school students must complete these courses with a grade of C- or better to meet baseline eligibility for admission to the UC and CSU.
- The courses are categorized by Subject Area.

| | | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A | History/Social Science | 1 Required | 2 Required | | |
| B | English | 1 Required | 2 Required | 3 Required | 4 Required |
| C | Mathematics | 1 Required | 2 Required | 3 Required | 4 <i>Highly Recommended</i> |
| D | Science | 1 Required | 2 Required | 3 <i>Recommended</i> | |
| E | Language Other Than English | 1 Required | 2 Required | 3 <i>Recommended</i> | |
| F | Visual and Performing Arts | 1 Required | | | |
| G | College Prep Elective | 1 Required | | | |



What is A-G Misalignment?

A-G mismatch occurs when the way an A-G subject area course is listed in a district's Student Information System (SIS) doesn't align with the way it is listed in the Course Management Portal (CMP).



Let's Apply to College



WHERE STUDENTS AND THEIR HELPERS GET STUCK

THIS IS NOT A REAL TRANSCRIPT

Demo Only High School
1000 Anywhere Street
Anytown, CA 000060

OFFICIAL ACADEMIC RECORD OF:
DEMO STUDENT
ID: 123-456-789
GRADUATED: 06/13/2023

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT

| YEAR | CLAS | 1 ST SEMESTER | COURSE NUMBER | 2 ND SEMESTER | COURSE NUMBER | | |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------|---|------|
| FRESHMAN | BUILDING 1 | A | 1 | 4.00 | A | 5 | 4.00 |
| | ALGEBRA 1 | A | 1 | 4.00 | A | 5 | 4.00 |
| | SPANISH 1 | A | 1 | 4.00 | A | 5 | 4.00 |
| | WORLDWIDE LEARNING | A | 1 | 4.00 | B | 5 | 3.00 |
| | PHYSICAL EDUCATION | A | 1 | 4.00 | A | 5 | 4.00 |
| SOPHOMORE | WORLDWIDE 1 | B | 1 | 3.00 | B | 5 | 3.00 |
| | BUILDING 11 | A | 1 | 4.00 | A | 5 | 4.00 |
| | WORLDWIDE 1 & 2 | A | 1 | 4.00 | A | 5 | 4.00 |
| | WORLDWIDE 11 | A | 1 | 4.00 | A | 5 | 4.00 |
| JUNIOR | ENGLISH 1 & 2 | B | 1 | 4.00 | B | 5 | 4.00 |
| | ENGLISH 11 | A | 1 | 4.00 | A | 5 | 4.00 |
| | ENGLISH 12 | A | 1 | 4.00 | A | 5 | 4.00 |
| | ENGLISH 13 | A | 1 | 4.00 | A | 5 | 4.00 |
| | ENGLISH 14 | A | 1 | 4.00 | A | 5 | 4.00 |
| | ENGLISH 15 | A | 1 | 4.00 | A | 5 | 4.00 |
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| | ENGLISH 172 | A | 1 | 4.00 | A | 5 | |

Impact of CMP-Misaligned Courses

CaliforniaColleges.edu provides real-time data that helps inform educators' decisions about student coursework, guidance, and support.

This helps ensure that more students are able to successfully transition from high school to higher education.

Alignment with the CMP helps minimize:



Workloads of educators and counselors during application season



Number of students who do not get credit for courses completed



Time required for students to complete their Cal State Apply and UC Application(s)



Number of qualified students whose admission is delayed or denied due to data errors beyond their control



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Unique Application Integrations



<https://vimeo.com/1099718008?p=0s>



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Connected Applications

| Institution | Connected Applications (2023-2024 AY) | Connected Applications (2024-2025 AY) |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| California State University | 162,746 | 243,147 |
| University of California | 130,158 | 252,499 |
| California Community Colleges | 158,377 | 218,602 |
| FAFSA/California Dream Act | 21,558 | 35,978 |

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Provide Data To Support Decision Making and Intervention



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Why - Intersegmental Sharing

- Hard to match data across systems in California due to the use of the Statewide Student Identifier rather than SSN
- No clear rule set for intersegmental data sharing
- Real time transcript data can be used to inform:
 - Admissions
 - Placement
 - Guidance
 - Financial aid
 - Supportive Services



Benefits of Higher Education Systems

Data from CaliforniaColleges.edu is considered official transcript data and accepted by all three public higher education systems in California.

What Happens When a Student Uses CaliforniaColleges.edu To Apply to...

| California Community College | California State University | University of California |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SSID is linked to CCCID ● 9th-12th grade coursework and grades provided to support first year English and Math placement* <p><small>* Presently, this is done via the Multiple Measures Placement Service.</small></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Links SSID to CAS ID ● 9th-12th grade coursework and grades pre-verified and provided to support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Initial admissions decisions ○ First year English and Math placements ○ Final transcripts pull | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9th-12th grade coursework and grades pre-verified and provided to support: ● Currently working on a timeline for coursework and grades migration into the application (slated Fall 2024) ● Final Transcript Pilot - Summer 2025 |

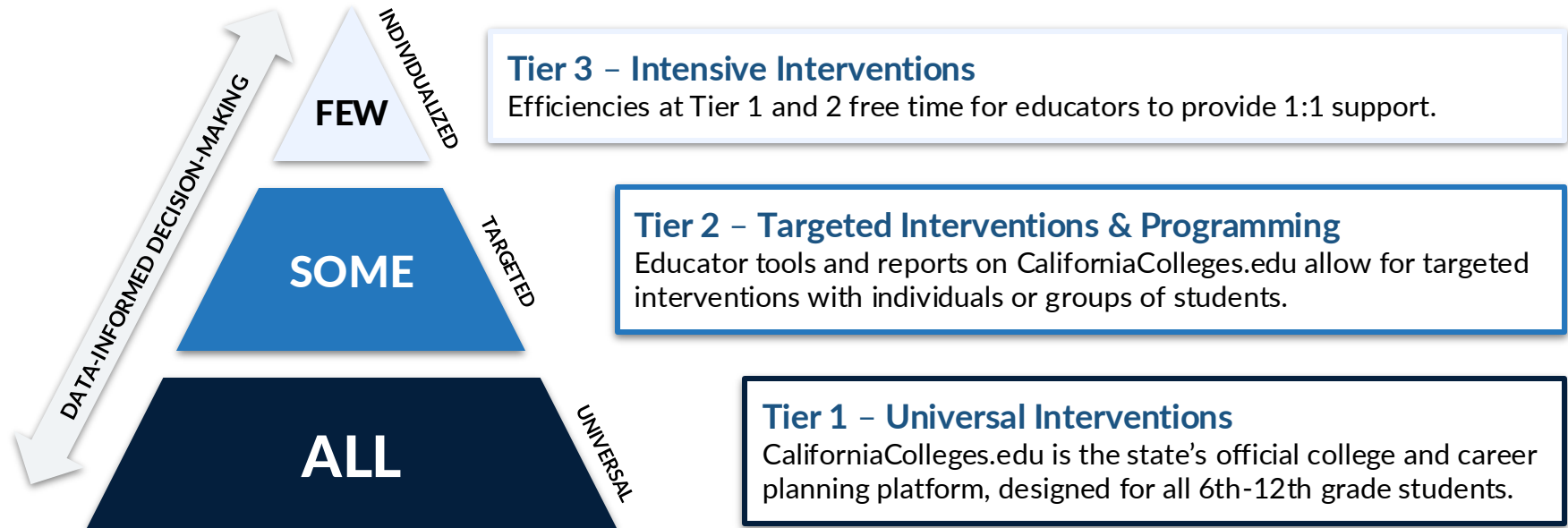
Why - Data-Informed Guidance in K12

- Counselor ratios are 464:1 and most aren't working on college guidance
- Real-time actionable data can support interventions and address equity gaps



Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

CaliforniaColleges.edu can be leveraged to support Tier-1 learning for all students, while increasing efficiency and ability for educators to strategically intervene with those who need support at Tier 2 and 3.



What's Possible?

Direct Admissions



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What is Direct Admissions?

Direct Admissions is a college admission process where students are proactively offered admission by a college, based on predetermined criteria, before a student has even applied.

- Direct Admissions has two main principles:
 - Inform students proactively that they qualify
 - Reduce obstacles and steps to receive and confirm admission offers
- Addressing the biggest concern for students:
 - According to the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) [College Admission Process Survey](#), over half of the students surveyed (n = 1,000) ranked applying to college as the most stressful thing they have experienced in their academic life
- Expanding access and opportunity to students who wouldn't otherwise consider college as a viable option, with many benefits

Student Impact

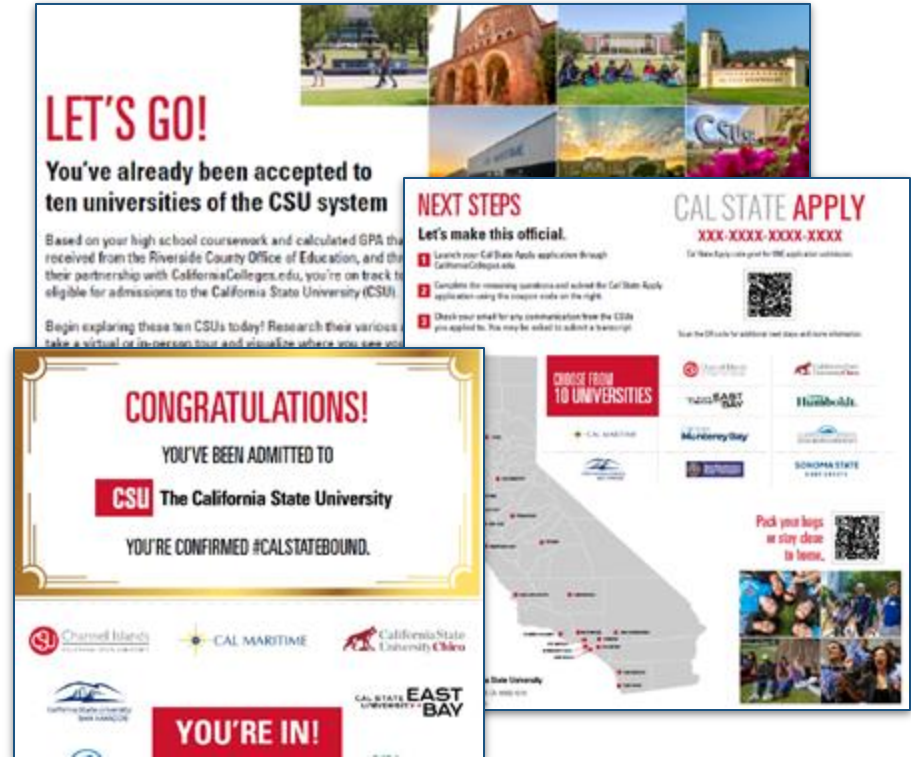
Reached over 17,000 Riverside County high school seniors offering immediate, conditional, admission for Fall 2025 to ten CSU campuses accepting students who met minimum CSU eligibility requirements:

- 17,355 total students received mailers
- 13,044 students submitted applications
- 8,861 students admitted to at least one CSU campus
- 1000+ additional student enrollments YOY



What Did We Do?

- Used verified data to identify eligible students
- Application fee waivers
- Streamlined the application process via CaliforniaColleges.edu
- Financial aid mailers
- Discover CSU Days



How Did We Get Here?



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Organizational Strategies: “How” We Accomplish Our Intended Impact

In order to move towards our intended impact, we utilize three strategies:



Advance Alignment: Surface and help to resolve disconnects between systems as well as student success policies and the tools required to implement them.



Build and Maintain Infrastructure (CaliforniaColleges.edu): Standardize college and career curriculum, tailor guidance tools to the needs of California students and the educators who support them, and provide institutions with data to inform key decisions that impact equity and efficiency.



Support Practice Change: Provide educators with training, technical assistance, and coaching needed for effective implementation.

Lessons Learned

- Center the experiential knowledge of those directly impacted
- Sometimes equity can be aided by efficiency
- Observe deeply
- Coalition of the willing
- Institutional, budget and legislative policy
- Roles of public, philanthropic and nonprofit sectors
- Implement and learn
- Build capacity to scale
- Runway and relationship

Questions?



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Strategies in Action

Example: Credit where credit is due

| Alignment | Infrastructure | Support For Practice Change |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Facilitate development of an agreed upon data standard for how high school transcript data is stored and then shared with public institutions of higher education● Requirements through policy on both K12 districts and the private technology companies that sell Student Information Systems in California to comply with the Standard | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Movement of Data from K12 to Higher Ed, at the point of application and to clear admissions through final transcripts● Generates discrepancy reports for “misaligned courses” | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Technical Assistance supports districts bring course listings into alignment so that data can be pre-verified before it’s shared with higher ed |