

# Success by Design: *Creating College-Bound Communities*

The work of the UC Santa Cruz Educational Partnership Center



*Creating college bound communities*

Edited by :

Carrol E. Moran, Ph.D.

Jessica M. Roa, M.S.

Barbara K. Goza, Ph.D.

Catherine R. Cooper, Ph.D.



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## INTRODUCTION

### *Success by Design: Creating College-Bound Communities The Work of the UC Santa Cruz Educational Partnership Center*



This book, inspired and supported by a dissemination grant from the California Academic Partnership Program, is written for anyone working in K-16 or P-20 partnerships to spark a community of thinkers and researchers, both within and among regional partnerships. It includes practical tools for building regional-systemic partnerships in which research forms the heart of the learning community. It is a reflection on 10 years of building P-20 partnerships at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and describes many of the programs resulting from and contributing to those partnerships implemented during the first years of operations at the UC Santa Cruz Educational Partnership Center (EPC).

The book is designed to offer a practical “how-to” approach to building college-bound communities. We have tried to provide the details: from laying the groundwork,

to designing and building a web of interlocking partnerships, to the day-to-day work of providing the variety of programs needed. The goal of all these partnerships and programs is to support the ability of underrepresented students from first-time college-going families to reach their potential through higher education.

In Chapter 1, “Building Foundations for College-Bound Communities as a P-20 Research Partnership,” Carrol Moran, Catherine Cooper, and Barbara Goza draw on the work of the EPC and on research on educational partnerships to propose six key strands that contribute to the sustainability of such partnerships as college-going communities. These are (1) a shared vision, mission, and measurable goals; (2) a flexible web of collaborative governance structures; (3) interlocking theories that connect goals from childhood through college to careers; (4) cycles

of data-driven decision making that refine innovations; (5) action planning that keeps the focus for EPC and its institutional partners and frontline staff; and (6) communication tools that engage diverse partners in the research partnership. These six strands align with core principles of the California Academic Partnership Program (CAPP), the California Alliance of PreK-18 Partnerships, the University of California (UC) Strategic Review Panel Report, the National College Access Network, the Pathways to College Network, the National Council of Community and Education Partnerships, the Education Trust, and other analyses of P-20 partnership research, policy, and practice.

In Chapter 2, "Creating a Flexible Organization: The EPC Change Process," Coleen Maldonado, Carrol Moran, and Ellen Levy show how sparking leadership from all levels helped EPC move from a portfolio of separate programs to a dynamic regional customer-service organization. Cross-functional teams allowed all levels of staff and managers to contribute to decision making and planning. The authors give practical details of how the change pods, or small task groups, worked. Organizational outcomes included greater flexibility and efficiency, staff development, and a growing organizational identity, with "the EPC way" as a unified system. The continuing use of these cross-functional teams and continuing creation of the "EPC way" procedures, together with sharing across units, have served to perpetuate many practices developed in the original change process, even during budget challenges. The authors' lessons learned focus on the importance of promoting data-driven reform, fostering leadership from all levels of the organization, acknowledging staff development as key in the change process, promoting consistent and open communication, and viewing organizational change as an ongoing journey.

In Chapter 3, "Formative Evaluation in the Service of Educational Outreach Program Development," Evellyn Elizondo, Carrol Moran, Joyce Justus, Gabriela Chavira, and Stephen Mello focus on the role of formative evaluation in shaping and improving college-bound programs. They describe the political and theoretical contexts for the K-16 partnership work of the EPC and its commitment to increase the number of underrepresented students who are eligible for admission to the University of California. The chapter describes how formative evaluation is built into the operation and function of each unit and how it guides the creation of new approaches that look at sociocultural contexts and issues. Focusing on EPC programs such as Kids Around the University (KATU) and Students Achieving A-G Expectations (SAAGE), the chapter details the EPC cycles of data-driven planning and the ways that the strate-

gies and tools used in evaluation inform EPC programs. Finally, the authors highlight the importance of providing resources for a continuing cycle of formative evaluation in student academic preparation and partnership work.

In Chapter 4, "Vertical Teams as Vehicles for Partnership Development," Stephen Mello and Carrol Moran trace the ways in which vertical teams are created, developed, and sustained as vehicles for launching effective partnerships between universities and schools. In telling this story, they weave theoretical and practical issues, including the goal, role, and function of vertical teams, into the narrative. This chapter describes the stages of development of vertical teams and the types of projects and interventions that represent the educational content of vertical teams' work. Many publications aim to help districts create vertical teams between middle schools and high schools, but EPC vertical teams span preschool through graduate school (P-20). The authors define key terms and describe the context of the development of vertical teams in the EPC region and the theory of action that EPC applied to its work. They provide insights, highlighted by examples from vertical team notes on EPC partnerships, into the development of successful vertical teams as vehicles for guiding the partnership, and reflect on lessons learned and sustainability.

In Chapter 5, "The SAAGE Program: Using Data to Help Students Get Back on Track for College," Stephen Mello traces the ideas that led to the creation and ongoing development of the SAAGE (Students Achieving A-G Expectations) program at the EPC. This chapter seeks to demonstrate how emerging technology can facilitate the adoption of new ways to use academic performance data to assist high school students in preparing for college admission and help school staff in addressing issues related to students' preparation for college. In working with high schools to increase the number of graduates who become eligible to attend four-year universities, the authors discovered that many promising students missed becoming eligible by only a few courses or a single exam. The EPC theory of action stresses catching these potentially eligible students early in the sophomore year and providing them with the support they need to stay on track for college admission.

In Chapter 6, "Increasing Mathematics Achievement in Middle Schools/UC Santa Cruz/Pajaro Valley Unified School District GEAR UP Project," Ellen Levy and Isobel Hochberg describe the creation of a mathematics professional development project, from the early stages of understanding the middle school teachers' needs to the actual day-to-day work of the onsite mathematics specialists in their efforts to increase the rigor of middle school mathe-

matics. The authors trace the historical role of CAPP, which provided funds to the EPC to work with two high schools to develop and implement plans to increase college-going rates, through the creation of vertical teams of elementary school, middle school, and high school teachers and community college, University of California, and California State University faculty. They describe the groundwork laid by the vertical teams resulting in GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs). The plan included a mathematics expert to oversee district mathematics specialists and mathematics articulation at each middle school, with teacher professional development in mathematics, tutoring, and college awareness programs, each with its own coordinator. This chapter details the results of shared learning, cooperative leadership, and commitment to continuous improvement of these efforts.

In Chapter 7, "Effective Secondary Mathematics Tutoring Programs with Undergraduates as Tutors," Carrol Moran and Laurie Scolari describe how the UC Santa Cruz Educational Partnership Center developed an approach to the use of undergraduates as tutors in middle school and high school mathematics in some of its service-area schools. The work was developed over a five-year period with funding from a variety of sources and in many settings: six school districts, academic year-round and summer and after-school settings, and middle school and high school classrooms. Both the goal and the approach remained constant: to increase the numbers of students passing algebra and aspiring to college by using undergraduates as tutors and mentors to support student achievement. The authors address key aspects of successful tutoring programs, including the logistical support necessary to foster highly effective tutors: plans for hiring, scheduling, monitoring, and evaluating tutors; programs for training and preparing tutors and teachers for the tutorial setting and experience; the role of tutors in the classroom; the use of tutors as mentors and role models in setting college aspirations; models of tutoring; communication among tutors, teachers, and supervisors and with parents and families; interagency communication regarding tutors; and evaluation of the effectiveness of the tutorial program.

In Chapter 8, "The California Summer School for Math and Science," Gretchen Andreasen, Jamie Alonzo, Scott Seagroves, Lisa Hunter, Malika Moutawakkil, Kene Houser, and Anne Scott trace how the COSMOS (California Summer School for Math and Science) program engages pre-university students, high school teachers, and university faculty to open the pipeline into science, mathematics, engineering, and technology fields. In its first five

summers, COSMOS has provided opportunities to engage faculty in K-14 partnership efforts and to engage talented lower- and upper-income students jointly as they advance their educations, especially by partnering with academic preparation staff. COSMOS at UCSC has worked with the National Science Foundation Center for Adaptive Optics to offer a team-taught academic course cluster emphasizing inquiry and project-based teaching and intensive student advising and support. The authors describe this partnership to provide a detailed view of the COSMOS academic experience and the distinctive efforts associated with this partnership. Finally, COSMOS has incorporated high school teacher fellows into the instructional team, resulting in numerous and often-unanticipated benefits for program effectiveness, for teachers' professional development, and for the curricula and students in the home schools of the participating teachers.

In Chapter 9, "Partnering to Facilitate Community College Transfers," David Kamimoto, Barbara Love, Isma-na Carney, Veronica Leon, and Barbara Goza describe how staff from the UC Santa Cruz Admissions Office joined with EPC to launch the Transfer Partnerships Program (TPP). This program identifies and supports prospective transfer students from 13 California community colleges and helps them enroll at the University of California. This is part of the effort to increase access to the UC system by previously underserved students. Educational data indicates that first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented minority students often attend community college rather than four-year institutions. Many students then have difficulty managing the transition to four-year institutions. In November 1998, the executive officers of the California Community College system and the University of California signed a memorandum of understanding to increase by 33% the number of transfers from community colleges to the UC system from the baseline year of 1995–1996 to 2005–2006. UCSC's approach to achieving this success is two-pronged; UCSC works developmentally both with community colleges to influence educational systems and with students to influence individuals. This chapter describes several examples of each approach to offer potential strategies for others to consider in their own efforts to advance equity in education.

In Chapter 10, "Effective EPC Programs for College Preparation," Tonya Lawrence and Jacqui Adler describe four effective college preparation programs developed by staff members of the EPC. These programs operating out of the EPC, offer services for fourth graders through community college students. Of the four programs, two focus

on the critical transition between middle school and high school, and two highlight final preparations for college. Within each of these critical areas addressed, the authors describe both a resource-intensive approach and a more cost-effective approach, for leaner budget times. The Summer Leadership Institute (SLI) and Eighth Grade Presentations primarily focus on eighth- and rising ninth-grade students, while Senior Odyssey and Senior Strategy are dedicated to working with high school seniors. Although they give a select group of students a rich residential campus experience, SLI and Senior Odyssey are more resource intensive. The Eighth Grade Presentations and Senior Strategy programs are highly cost effective to implement, although they require staff time and preparation. This chapter details the implementation of each of these approaches and the importance of these programs to the students involved.

In Chapter 11, "The Magical School Bus Ride: Getting Students Ready to Learn by Creating an Inspirational Learning Environment," Laurie Scolari and Micah Lubensky address the importance of intensive exposure of low-income, underrepresented populations to college, and the positive impact of this exposure on the students' perceptions of higher education. The Magical School Bus Ride is a two-week summer program designed by EPC. To create college-bound communities, the Magical School Bus Ride takes 40 promising students from the Los Angeles Basin, primarily from one school district, to UC Santa Barbara, UC Davis, UC Berkeley, and UC Santa Cruz to study marine biology and experience college. Research documents that college visits are important for helping students decide to go to college and pick the institution they wish to attend. This chapter describes the program design and strategies that contributed to the success of the program and its student participants. In lectures, labs, and field trips, students learn about environmental issues, marine biology, and native peoples' philosophies regarding the environment. Assessments of the program revealed significant increases in students' motivation to attend college, behavioral changes in the student population, and increased college-going rates at the schools served. Funding for this project came from the Los Angeles Basin Initiative, a collaborative effort of eight UC campuses to expand the pool of educationally disadvantaged students from the Los Angeles Basin who are competitively eligible for UC admission. This program, operated through the EPC, changed the lives of

many students. Ana Olazava, who is currently a student at UC Santa Cruz, began as a program participant, worked as an undergraduate intern on a Magical Bus trip, continues to work as an EPC intern, and was a key asset in the final publication stages of this book.

Finally, in Chapter 12, "The Political Context of Equity and Education and the Necessity of an Ongoing Informational Campaign," Carrol Moran, Pablo Reguerín, Penny Edgert, and Joyce Justus start with a brief overview of the history of the University of California's involvement in academic preparation programs and partnerships and some of the political challenges and useful strategies in this work. This overview sets the context for sharing how and why the EPC developed local and statewide public information campaigns to communicate the added value of the university's participation in academic preparation to those who make decisions about statewide funding. The chapter shows how putting a personal face on the message and providing clear economic arguments both play key roles in effective information campaigns. The authors provide practical details, useful resources, and tools for both components of successful information campaigns. A vivid account of a legislative day in Sacramento highlights the key roles of students, families, and staff in mobilizing support for equity and education.

We hope this book allows other communities to benefit from our knowledge and experience, learn from our mistakes, and take P-20 partnerships to new levels in building college-bound communities. Our attempts to level the playing field in local schools and college entrance processes so that students from traditionally non-college-going families build successful pathways to college are part of a slow and sometimes frustrating process. Only through universities and schools working together, with both recognizing the need for internal change, will we ever transform the P-20 system to achieve greater equity. In the meantime, the need for academic support programs and partnerships as described in these chapters will be greater than our ability to provide them. So we must work as efficiently and effectively as we can, recognizing that this is not a one-size-fits-all world. It will take a broad network of a variety of approaches to accomplish and sustain this goal. We offer you in these chapters some models and tools we hope will be useful as you build a college-bound community in your region, and we look forward to learning together.