TACKLING TRANSFER:

A GUIDE TO CONVENING COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES TO IMPROVE TRANSFER STUDENT OUTCOMES

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE
COLLEGE EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

CCRC COMMUNITY COLLEGE RESEARCH CENTER
TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

PUBLIC AGENDA

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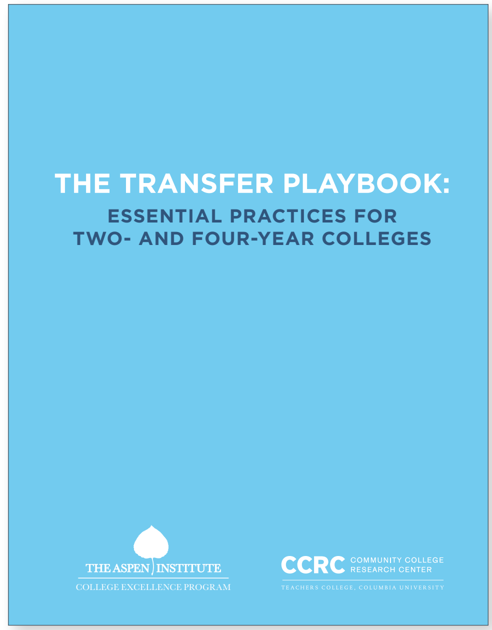
INTRODUCTION

Nationally representative surveys reveal that the vast majority of students who begin community college aim to earn a bachelor's degree, but fewer than 15 percent achieve that goal within six years of community college entry. As the bachelor's degree becomes a prerequisite for an increasing number of jobs that pay a family-sustaining wage, students will continue to aspire to attain a bachelor's degree. For the more than one million degree-seeking students who start their education in community college each year, successful transfer is an indispensable means to achieve that goal.



The college-going population continues to become more diverse racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically. Yet traditionally underrepresented students, who are more likely than others to begin at a community college, are the least likely to experience transfer success. Higher-income students entering community college transfer and complete bachelor's degrees at higher rates than lower-income students (19.6 percent versus 9 percent), and White students transfer and complete bachelor's degrees at higher rates than Hispanic and Black students (19 percent versus 11 and 9 percent, respectively).

While reforming state policy has long stood at the center of efforts to improve transfer student success, improving student outcomes also depends on colleges and universities changing their practices, policies, and social and cultural environments. Findings from a 2016 Aspen, Community College Resource Center (CCRC), National Student Clearinghouse study—*Tracking Transfer*—demonstrate that similar community colleges achieve significantly different student outcomes on every measure of transfer student success and that these differences largely cannot be explained by institutional or student characteristics. Though institutional characteristics explain more of the differences in outcomes at the four-year level, significant variation remains. In other words, what colleges do matters to the success of transfer students. For transfer to work for students, community colleges and universities need to work together to strengthen pathways.

The Transfer Playbook, published by Aspen and CCRC in May 2016, explores the pivotal role of institutional practice. Using lessons learned during visits to six highly effective two- and four-year college partnerships as its foundation, the Playbook outlines specific areas of practice that contribute to transfer student success.

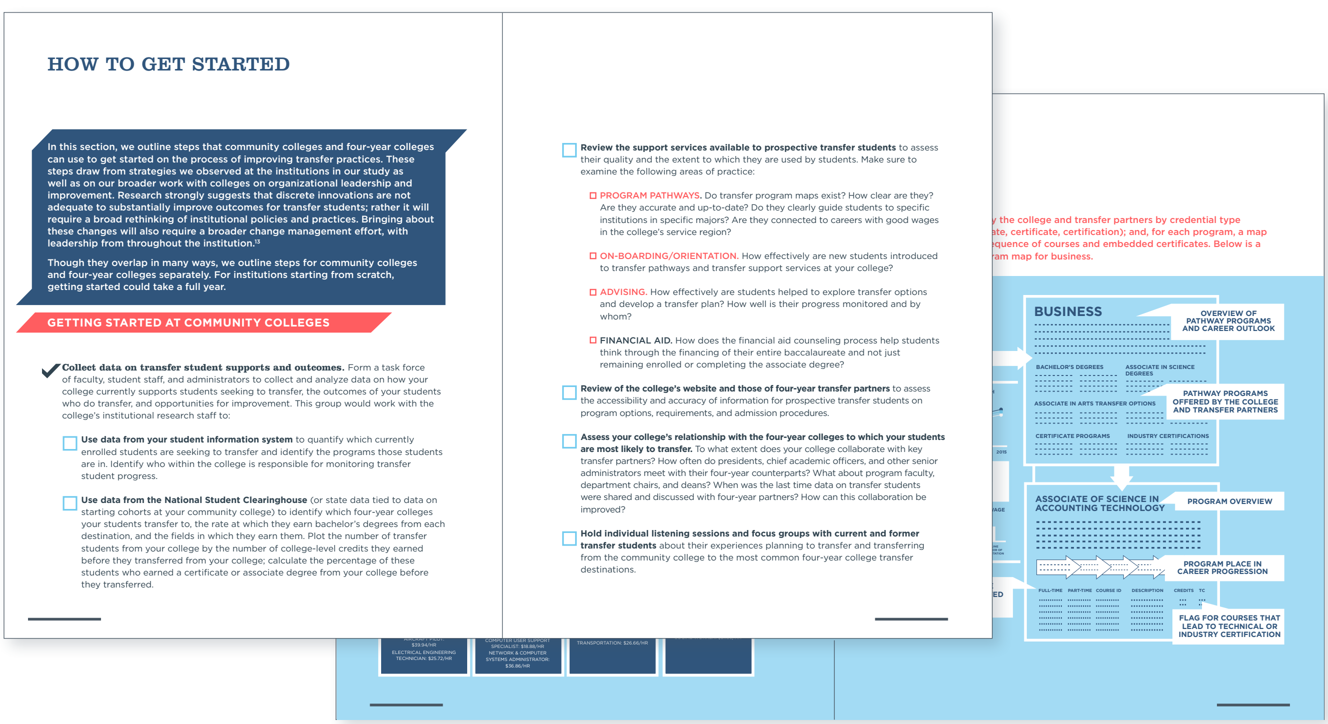
[1] See Shapiro, D., Dundar, A., Huie, F., Wakhungu, P. K., Yuan, X., Nathan, A. & Hwang, Y. (2017, September). *Tracking Transfer: Measures of Effectiveness in Helping Community College Students to Complete Bachelor's Degrees* (Signature Report No. 13). Herndon, VA: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center; and Shapiro, D., Dundar, A., Huie, F., Wakhungu, P. K., Yuan, X., Nathan, A. & Hwang, Y. (2017, April). *Completing College: A National View of Student Attainment Rates by Race and Ethnicity—Fall 2010 Cohort* (Signature Report No. 12b). Herndon, VA: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.

State systems of higher education play an important role in improving transfer outcomes, not just by setting policy but also by setting the conditions through which statewide conversations and plans for transfer improvement can be developed. By understanding that institutional practice is essential to improvement, state systems of higher education can play a role in both inspiring and supporting opportunities for institutional self-reflection and improvement, as well as partnership building.

This implementation guide, a complement to "The Transfer Playbook", is designed to help state entities organize workshops where teams from two- and four-year institutions can work together to improve transfer outcomes for their students. Specifically, the guide is designed to help states bring together two- and four-year public colleges to:

- Better understand transfer outcomes at their institutions, within their partnerships, and across the state.
- Assess their own practices against research-based practices from leading transfer partnerships across the country.
- Develop strategies and plans within their institutions and among partners to improve transfer student outcomes.

Informed by on-the-ground work in three states—North Carolina, Ohio, and Washington—the guide is designed to support high-quality, solution-oriented dialogue, deliberation, planning, and action by diverse actors who have a role in transfer practice and policy, in particular practitioners from two- and four-year institutions. The guidance, templates, and tools provided here can help conveners develop and implement promising strategies and methods for engaging critical stakeholders who can make or break efforts to improve and even transform how students navigate the two- to four-year transfer process.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The guide is separated into three sections and an appendix with related materials:

SECTION 1

UNDERSTANDING TRANSFER OUTCOMES AND SETTING WORKSHOP GOALS

This section focuses on information gathering, in addition to the initial planning decisions related to participants and logistics.

SECTION 2

DESIGNING A WORKSHOP AGENDA

This section dives into the design process for a goal-oriented workshop. It includes an adaptable agenda that can serve as a starting point.

SECTION 3

MAINTAINING MOMENTUM FOLLOWING THE WORKSHOP

The work to improve transfer student outcomes statewide continues long after the workshop concludes. This section outlines strategies and suggestions that can aid in this continued work.

APPENDIX

The appendix includes additional resources available for use in the planning, design, and execution of a state transfer workshop.

IMPROVING TRANSFER WITH AN EQUITY MINDSET

While the number of degree-seeking students who enter community college and ultimately attain a bachelor's degree is quite low, outcomes are particularly poor for Black, Hispanic, and low-income students. Nineteen percent of White students transfer and earn a bachelor's degree, compared to 9 percent of Black students and 11 percent of Hispanic students. Nearly 20 percent of higher-income students transfer and earn a bachelor's degree, compared to 9 percent of lower-income students. These data are especially troubling because Black, Hispanic, and low-income students—as well as Native American and Pacific Islander students, for whom data are not available from national data sets on transfer outcomes—are disproportionately more likely to begin their education in a community college.

For these and other reasons, it is important to approach the work with an equity mindset, which the University of Southern California's Center for Urban Education describes as an approach that "considers the impact of policy on the distribution of power, access to resources and knowledge, and the reproduction of social stratification" and encourages policymakers or practitioners "to assess policy by considering who benefits, who loses, and how low-income and minoritized students fare as a result of the policy."

As long as inequities in transfer outcomes persist, both talent and opportunities for socioeconomic mobility will remain underdeveloped. Creating clear and seamless pathways and strong advising structures for baccalaureate-seeking students who begin their education at community colleges can ameliorate structural racial and socioeconomic inequities, but only if those inequities are explicitly attended to.

Several steps can be taken to align the design and planning of the transfer workshop with the goal of addressing transfer equity gaps.

- When collecting and examining data, setting baselines, and establishing data-driven goals for improving transfer, planners should disaggregate student outcomes by race/ethnicity, income status, age, full- and part-time status, and other factors that reflect the student population served by the state's colleges (e.g., veteran status). Doing so will inform whether outcomes are equitable at the outset and, if not, which student populations are the least well served by existing practices and policies. For instance, how do transfer rates and baccalaureate completion rates compare between Black, Hispanic/Latino, Native American, and Pacific Islander students and White students? Lower- versus higher-income students?

- When deciding which institutions to invite to the workshops, planners should be sure to include institutions that serve large numbers of students who transfer and achieve bachelor's degrees at the lowest rates. Overall, do the student populations served by institutions at the workshops enroll at least a proportionate share of the state's low-income, Black, Hispanic/Latino, Native American, and Pacific Islander populations?

- While working with colleges to identify promising practices or needed changes in policy, planners should consider whether and how various strategies work for students from groups traditionally underrepresented in and underserved by higher education. Do colleges know specifically what stands in the way of transfer success for different racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups? Where differences exist, are strategies tailored to address challenges faced by groups that succeed at lower levels?

- When designing the workshop agenda, planners should create opportunities for discussions that extend beyond policy and practice—into the social and cultural environment of the college campuses. What perceptions about student backgrounds might influence inequities in transfer student outcomes, and how can strategies that seek to improve transfer address these underlying social and cultural concerns? Are there opportunities to convene practitioners for cultural competency trainings or other forms of implicit bias training?

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[2] Center for Urban Education. (2017, January). *Protocol for Assessing Equity-Mindedness in State Policy*. University of Southern California Rossier School of Education.


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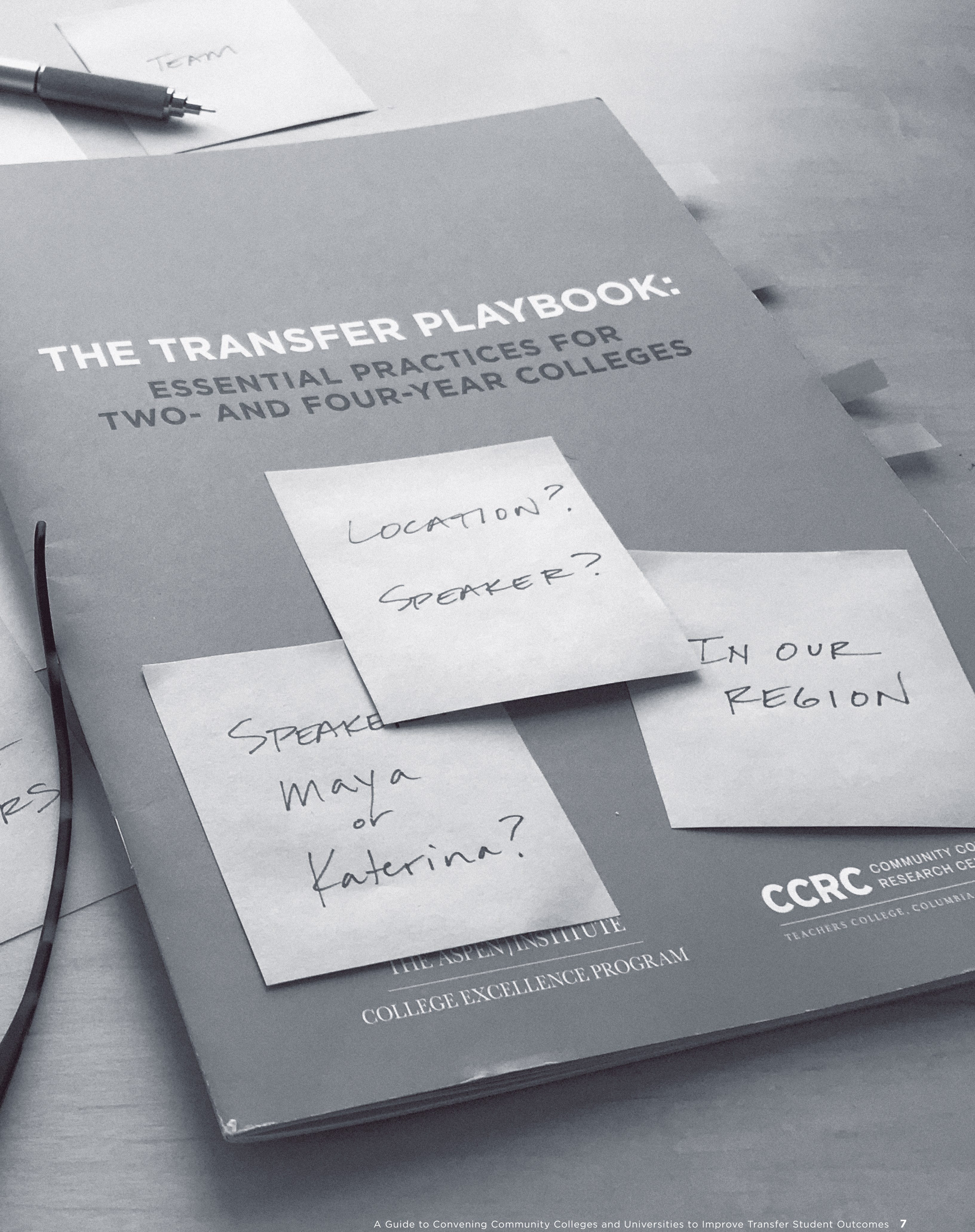
TEAM
THE TRANSFER PLAYBOOK:
ESSENTIAL PRACTICES FOR
TWO- AND FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES
LOCATION?
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THE ASPEN INSTITUTE
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SECTION 1:

UNDERSTANDING TRANSFER OUTCOMES AND SETTING WORKSHOP GOALS

WHEN DESIGNING A STATE TRANSFER WORKSHOP, PLANNERS SHOULD BE CLEAR ABOUT GOALS FROM THE OUTSET. BY TAKING TIME TO SET GOALS, ARTICULATE SUCCESS FACTORS, AND CLEARLY DETAIL THE ACTIONS NEEDED BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER THE WORKSHOPS, PLANNERS WILL BE IN A MUCH STRONGER POSITION BOTH TO DESIGN HIGH-QUALITY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE INFORMATION THAT RESULTS FROM THESE SESSIONS.

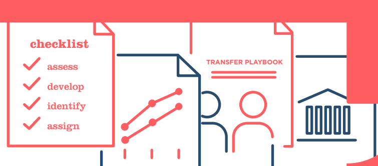
STAGE 1 of transfer workshop planning begins with gathering information about transfer student outcomes in the state, then translating that information into well-articulated and achievable objectives that can be used to guide workshop development.

QUESTIONS FOR THE PLANNING TEAM INCLUDE:

What do the data show, and how do transfer students' experiences align with perceptions of what transfer students experience?

How do existing state policies intersect with both the transfer student experience and institutional practices related to transfer?

What are different stakeholders' perspectives on the conversations or information needed for institutions to change in ways that improve transfer student outcomes?



Assessing State-Level Progress on Improving Transfer Student Outcomes

The first step in designing a workshop is understanding the current state of transfer outcomes. To build this context, planners should gather qualitative and quantitative data, compile details about existing initiatives or related state policies, and talk with stakeholders to hear their perspective on transfer-related issues, such as student outcomes, costs and finances, workforce development, and equity. The sections below provide additional detail on how to gather information that can subsequently serve as the foundation for workshop planning.

ANALYZE STATE- AND COLLEGE-LEVEL TRANSFER SUCCESS METRICS. By taking the time to analyze state-level and, when available, college-level transfer student outcomes data, the planning team can embark on workshop design with a clear idea of how outcomes differ across student characteristics as well as institutions, and how the state as a whole is performing relative to national outcomes. A good place to start is state-level outcomes reports from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, specifically, Report 13, *Tracking Transfer*. These reports can help identify areas where improvement could have the greatest effect.

[1] Shapiro et al. (2017, September). *Tracking Transfer.*

States interested in more comprehensive data on transfer student outcomes can conduct additional analyses that examine differences in outcomes across a broader set of student characteristics as well as differences in college-level outcomes. The appendix includes a guide to help community colleges recreate the reports with their own data, with example tables for reporting on these five key transfer outcomes:

1. **Transfer-Out Rate** Transfer rates from community colleges to four-year colleges and universities, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, income status, age, and other student characteristics.

2. **Transfer-with-Award Rate** Transfer with a certificate or associate degree from community colleges to four-year colleges and universities, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, income status, age, and other student characteristics.

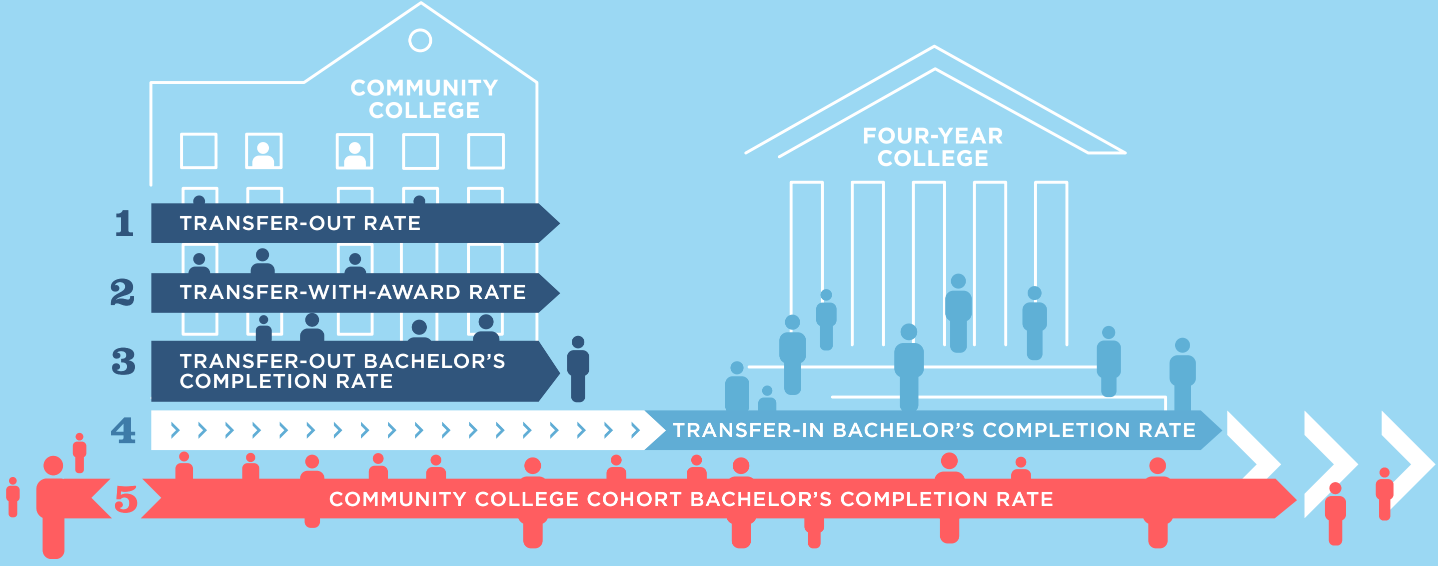
3. **Transfer-Out Bachelor's Completion Rate** Among students who start at a community college and transfer into a four-year college, the percentage who earn a bachelor's degree from the four-year institution.

4. **Transfer-In Bachelor's Completion Rate** Completion of a bachelor's degree among students who transferred from community colleges to four-year colleges and universities, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, income status, age, and other student characteristics.

5. **Community College Cohort Bachelor's Completion Rate** The percentage of entering community college students who earn a bachelor's degree, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, income status, age, and other student characteristics.

Five Measures:

Transfer-Out Rate; Transfer-with-Award Rate; Transfer-Out Bachelor's Completion Rate; Transfer-In Bachelor's Completion Rate; Community College Cohort Bachelor's Completion Rate



We also recommend incorporating qualitative data about the transfer student experience. The best way to gather such insights is to conduct transfer student focus groups that include students who have struggled to transfer or who transferred successfully but did not complete their bachelor's degree. The conversations that occur within focus groups can help practitioners better understand how well the transfer student experience maps to the experience the college thinks it has designed for students. We recommend below that institutions conduct transfer student focus groups in advance of a workshop. In addition, some state systems have chosen to conduct transfer student focus groups statewide. For more information on how to conduct transfer student focus groups, planners should refer to the guide "Planning and Conducting Transfer Student Focus Groups," which is listed in the appendix.

IDENTIFY EXISTING POLICIES OR HIGHER EDUCATION INITIATIVES THAT INTERSECT WITH TWO- TO FOUR-YEAR TRANSFER IMPROVEMENT. Using the State Policy Discussion Guide (see resource list in the appendix) as well as the Center for Urban Education's Protocol for Assessing Equity-Mindedness in State Policy, planners should examine existing initiatives that either directly address or influence two- to four-year transfer. In reviewing these resources, planners should consider both policies explicitly focused on transfer (e.g., guaranteed transfer, common course numbering) as well as other initiatives that could have a significant impact on transfer student outcomes (guided pathways, dual enrollment, applied bachelor of arts degrees at the community colleges, performance-based funding, and the duration and amount of need-based financial aid).

GATHER INPUT FROM IMPORTANT STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS. This can be done in a variety of ways, including interviews, small meetings, focus groups (as with students), or a brief electronic pre-survey that asks invited participants to reflect on their own ideas for and expectations of a workshop on transfer. In identifying and interacting with stakeholders, planners should consider the following:

- How can you ensure that you are receiving input from a cross section of colleges and universities (consider student demographics as well as institutional location, size, and selectivity)? In addition to colleges and universities, what other organizations within the state might play a role in improving transfer pathways?

- Are there colleagues from within the state system office or other statewide college associations who could contribute to your understanding of transfer student experiences or existing transfer-related practices and policies?

- How do institutional representatives articulate their view of transfer? Is it integral to the college's mission? Does this differ by sector (two- and four-year), level of control (public, nonprofit, for-profit), or other institutional characteristics (e.g., Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Minority-Serving Institutions, Predominantly White Institutions; open-access versus selective institutions)?

- How do non-institutional representatives view transfer? Are they aware of student mobility and success rates within the state? Are they concerned about instances where outcomes are below average or inequitable across student demographic groups?

Developing Workshop Objectives

After establishing a strong sense of the current landscape of transfer within the state, the next step is to develop clear objectives for the workshop. For example, in Washington, workshop organizers sought to build on a strong history of state policy and institutional collaboration by designing a workshop that provided participants with opportunities to deepen their partnerships and connect transfer strategies to other statewide initiatives to improve student success (specifically, Guided Pathways redesign; for more detail, see the textbox on page 29, "The Integration of Guided Pathways and Transfer Practices"). In North Carolina, those organizing the workshop sought to focus less on program maps—choosing to rely on existing statewide articulation agreements—and more on ensuring that colleges could improve transfer student advising. Ohio took an approach that directly aligned the goals of the workshop with the goals of a recent change in state policy meant to incentivize improvements in transfer outcomes.

Careful thinking about the purposes of stakeholder engagement, the specific objectives of engaging particular groups, and the process by which progress toward engagement goals will be achieved and documented is a critical first step in the workshop planning process. This careful thought will help:

- Keep expectations realistic among planners and participants.
- Reveal differences in stakeholders' expectations and aspirations early in the design process.
- Identify information that can better inform the design and execution of the workshop itself.
- Establish indicators that can be used to inform progress.

INCORPORATING DATA AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT. After gathering the information outlined in the section titled "Assessing State-Level Progress on Improving Transfer Student Outcomes," planners should set goals for the workshop. Goal setting begins by interpreting the information gathered and translating it into goals that accurately reflect the progress planners hope to make as a result of the workshop.

Planners should return to the data on transfer student outcomes in their state, this time considering what the findings reveal and how this may change the narrative used to frame the workshop goals.

- If two- to four-year mobility is low among community college students, then the long-term goal may be to increase the transfer-out rate by some amount within the next five years. In this case, the workshop would center on discussions exploring the reasons so few students transfer and devising strategies to better facilitate mobility for community college transfer students.
- If there is a meaningful difference between the rate at which students transfer without an award and the rate at which students transfer with an award, the long-term goal may be to increase the percentage of students who transfer with an award. This could lead to a workshop where conversations are designed to explore structural, cultural, or policy-based reasons for the difference and how to most effectively address the barriers identified.
- If the rate of transfer is above average but the baccalaureate completion rate for students who transfer is below average, then the long-term goal may be to improve the baccalaureate degree completion rate for transfer students. Here, the workshop might focus on ways in which two- and four-year colleges can work together to align expectations and credit transfer as well as to better support students after they transfer.

Next, planners should go through a similar process based on the feedback gathered from stakeholders and an assessment of the policy landscape. What are the key takeaways? Consensus around particular issues—such as credit transfer, transfer student advising, or the clarity of program maps—can become a springboard for goal setting and agenda creation. Likewise, are there recent policy changes, or chatter within the state about potential policies in the works, that might inform workshop goals and design?

DEVELOPING LONG-TERM GOALS. Long-term goals link the workshop to future next steps. What do you, as state leaders, want to see accomplished over the next several years, and how can the workshop help your state get there? What specific transfer outcomes do you want your state to achieve in, say, five years? What about two years? In devising each goal, planners should ask what their state can reasonably accomplish that will have measurable and scaled impact for students and communities. By first setting and keeping in mind the long-term goals, planners are more likely to set well-aligned short-term goals and learning objectives for the workshop itself.

Goals should be revisited and refined as planners learn more about key stakeholders' attitudes, incorporate data gathered on student outcomes, and consider opportunities and challenges as they emerge in the state's evolving policy environment.

DEVELOPING SHORT-TERM GOALS. Short-term goals relate to the discrete goals for the workshop itself. What will participants leave the workshop having learned, discussed, or planned by the time the workshop concludes? Some broad goals to consider might include:

- Generating knowledge and awareness about transfer outcomes in the state, and how improvements could close equity gaps and help the state reach postsecondary attainment goals.

- Building consensus for transfer as a priority in state-level higher education initiatives.

- Deepening existing partnerships between two- and four-year colleges, and providing an opportunity for colleges to forge new partnerships.

- Ensuring effective implementation of state policy, such as legislation calling for improved transfer outcomes.

With those short-term goals in mind, planners should develop learning objectives for participants. Using the above goals as an example, by the end of the workshop, participants will:

- Understand that the state cannot reach its goals for baccalaureate degree attainment without improving transfer.

- View transfer as an important component of their institutional mission and identify ways to incorporate a transfer focus into their daily work.

- Have a clear idea of the specific work that needs to occur at their colleges and with their regional partners over the coming year to improve transfer student outcomes.

- Understand the role that state policy can (or cannot) play in improving transfer.

Once planners have crafted short- and long-term goals, as well as the learning objectives for the workshop, they should return to these often to confirm that the workshop is designed in a way that will help meet the goals.

Identifying and Recruiting Workshop Participants

Using the objectives as the guide, planners should decide which institutions will be invited to participate in the workshop and the composition of participants from each college team.

DECIDING ON INSTITUTIONS. The higher education landscape in each state includes public, nonprofit, and for-profit two- and four-year colleges. The choice of which colleges to include will depend on the broader workshop goals. Below are several questions to guide the decision about which subset of colleges to include for participation:

- Will all community and four-year public colleges within the state participate? Will participation be by invitation only?
- Will private nonprofit colleges have the opportunity to attend? For-profit colleges?
- How will you balance inclusion of institutions with existing support for improving transfer and inclusion of institutions that are not yet fully supportive of the work?
- If all institutions are not invited or are unable to attend, how will the learning from the workshop be shared with others?

DECIDING ON PARTICIPANTS. Below is guidance for determining who within an institution is best suited for participation in the workshop.

Recommended members of the "institutional team":

- Member of the provost's office or institutional leadership team.
- Transfer student advisor.
- One or two faculty members.
- Member of the institutional research office.

Additional considerations when composing a team:

- Who is responsible for transfer students on campus?
- Who within the institution can help set goals and make decisions regarding policy?
- Where in the institution is support for transfer greatest? Where is it weakest?

RECRUITING PARTICIPANTS. This is a critical and challenging task. In recruitment, while certain figures may immediately come to mind, it is important to consider reaching beyond the usual suspects—those who inevitably attend meetings on transfer issues. Planners should take seriously the concept of diversity and outreach, put in the time to bring new faces to the table along with established figures, and ensure broad representation of the desired stakeholder groups. To more effectively include a good mix of stakeholders, planners should allow enough time for person-to-person outreach and enlist the help of people with knowledge of, and credibility within, the groups planners seek to include.

- Who is helping recruit? Having key people to connect you to the desired participants may help you get beyond the usual suspects.
- Is messaging clear? Be sure the purpose of the workshop is clearly detailed when recruiting.
- What are the incentives to attend? Think about various incentives for stakeholder participation, such as professional development credit.

Assigning "Pre-Work"

Once planners have determined which institutions will be invited to attend the workshop, as well as the ideal participants from each institution, they should consider assigning "pre-work" that the institutional participants can use to prepare. Though assigning pre-work and requesting submission prior to the workshop is at planners' discretion, the following four items are encouraged as an effective baseline:

1. **Read "The Transfer Playbook".** One option is to suggest that colleges use the Playbook as a piece for discussion in meetings leading up to the workshop. This can contribute to the overall effectiveness of the workshop by providing an opportunity for participants to become familiar with institutional policies and practices that can improve transfer prior to the workshop.

2. **Conduct transfer student focus groups.** Institution-led focus groups, with guidance provided by the workshop planning group, provide an opportunity for participants to explore in advance the ways in which their own transfer students' experiences differ from institutions' intentions. The topics to be covered in the focus groups are best determined by the planning group based on the goals and objectives of the workshop, and the feasibility of conducting focus groups prior to a workshop depends on the lead time provided to participating institutions. The accompanying resource "Planning and Conducting Transfer Student Focus Groups" includes high-level guidance on how to conduct transfer student focus groups.

3. **Complete the self-assessment tool as a college team.** Designed to complement *The Transfer Playbook*, the self-assessment tools allow institutions to gauge their progress on improving transfer student success by answering a variety of questions geared to the specific practices in place at their institutions. Asking institutions to fill out the self-assessment prior to the workshop can ensure that participants are well-informed and sufficiently prepared to enter a day-long conversation about advancing practices that serve transfer students as an institution or in partnership with other institutions.

4. **Work with institutional researchers to analyze and report on transfer outcomes.** An accompanying CCRC Analytics publication, "How to Measure Community College Effectiveness in Serving Transfer Students," provides descriptions on how community colleges can do this. Contact CCRC for guidance on how to measure transfer outcomes if you are a university.

SECTION 2:

DESIGNING A WORKSHOP AGENDA

IN THIS SECTION IS A MODEL AGENDA, DESIGNED BASED ON LEARNING FROM WORKSHOPS IN NORTH CAROLINA, OHIO, AND WASHINGTON. THIS CAN SERVE AS A STARTING POINT TO OPEN UP CREATIVE AND INCLUSIVE DIALOGUE ABOUT HOW TO DESIGN TRANSFER WORKSHOPS IN A STATE. STATES ARE ENCOURAGED TO CUSTOMIZE THIS AGENDA TO THEIR PARTICULAR CONTEXT AND BASED ON THEIR WORKSHOP GOALS.

ALIGNING THE AGENDA WITH WORKSHOP GOALS

Once planners have completed the work of translating stakeholder feedback and contextual information about transfer in the state into workshop objectives, the next step is to ensure that the agenda itself is designed to achieve these objectives.

This sample agenda includes an overview section that encourages institutional participants to engage with state-level quantitative and qualitative data on transfer student outcomes, as well as reflect on institution-specific data. Building a shared understanding of the data at the outset is critical to developing a common sense that change is urgent. Understanding the data from the start also prevents unanswered questions about how well the state and its institutions are doing on transfer from derailing conversations and planning about how to improve.

In customizing the agenda to speak to the state-specific context, planners should think about areas where state-level differences may influence agenda design:

- **Transfer outcomes:** Compared to national averages, how well does the state perform on key metrics related to transfer student outcomes? What is the transfer-out rate at the state's community colleges, and does it differ dramatically from the state's transfer-with-award rate? Are there differences in the rate at which four-year schools enroll and graduate two-year transfer students?
- **History of institutional collaboration**: Do two- and four-year colleges within the state have a history of working together to address higher education priorities? Who are the strongest partners, and how can they be used as assets in workshop design and delivery? Are there existing partnerships or locally designed agreements that supplement activity at the state level?
- **Political and governance context**: What have been recent trends in state fiscal support and regulation of higher education? Is the legislature active in issues pertaining to transfer specifically, or is this role typically reserved for the state coordinating board or other governing entity? What, if any, state policies exist for the express purpose of addressing the transfer process (e.g., common course numbering or statewide articulation agreements)? What is the higher education governance structure in the state (e.g., centralized or decentralized)?

HERE ARE SOME ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS PLANNERS SHOULD CONSIDER WHEN CRAFTING SESSIONS:

- **What learning objectives is each workshop session designed to deliver?**
- **How will participants transition from one session to the next? How will these transitions shape their interaction with the material? (For instance, we recommend that college teams revisit the self-assessment pre-work after they have had a chance to discuss their institutional data reports. This provides an opportunity for reflection on practice to be informed by data and can contribute to a more honest discussion about how well practices translate to outcomes.)**
- **How do the activities or discussion questions for each session encourage active engagement with the subject matter?**
- **How might the state's transfer goals inform whether institutions are seated with institutions from the same sector versus seated in combinations of two- and four-year sectors? By region? Are there certain conversations where accomplishing the objectives—especially ones related to candor and experience sharing—is best done by seating institutions from the same sector together?**

SAMPLE AGENDA

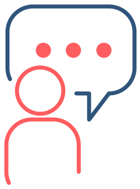
THIS AGENDA, WHICH HAS BEEN TESTED AND REFINED ACROSS THREE STATES AND HUNDREDS OF INSTITUTIONS, is a starting point for states at any stage in their transfer work. The general six-part approach can be readily customized for highly productive workshops in diverse state contexts.

In broad strokes, the ideal 1.5-day workshop will be structured around the following six sessions:

1. MAKING THE CASE FOR TRANSFER
2. REVIEWING INSTITUTIONAL DATA
3. ASSESSING INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES FOR SUCCESS
4. SHOWCASING A MODEL OF SUCCESS
5. CREATING INSTITUTIONAL ACTION PLANS
6. CREATING REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP ACTION PLANS

Day 1 Sessions

1 MAKING THE CASE FOR TRANSFER



(30 minutes). To open the workshop, it is important to build urgency around the topic of transfer student success. A compelling speaker who can speak knowledgeably about the urgent need to improve transfer rates—and the immense opportunity in doing so—can be helpful. There are many cases for improving transfer that may appeal to different audiences. Sharing those cases—alongside stories and critical pieces of data—can help inspire action during the workshop while arming participants with compelling reasons why others should adopt better transfer practices when they return to their campuses. **Among the cases to be made for transfer are:**

- **Affordability.** The 2+2 pathway can be an affordable means to attain a bachelor's degree but requires too many students to repeat multiple credits. This repetition makes transfer pathways unnecessarily expensive.

- **Business.** Two- and four-year college partners with strong transfer outcomes have proven that student enrollment can be increased at both institutions by delivering an affordable bachelor's degree through strong partnership practices.

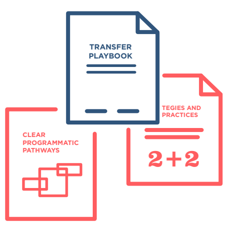
- **Efficiency.** The current rate of credit loss among transfer students translates into duplicated time and effort on behalf of faculty and administration, wasted student tuition dollars, and, ultimately, the inability of many students to attain a bachelor's degree, which could have provided a strong return on investment for individuals and taxpayers.

- **Equity.** Low success rates for transfer students have an especially negative impact on students traditionally underserved in higher education—including Black, Hispanic, low-income, first-generation, and older "nontraditional" students—who are disproportionately likely to begin higher education in community college.

2 REVIEWING INSTITUTIONAL DATA (75 minutes).

The next session of the workshop entails participants examining their institutional data to (1) understand the success rates of students who are transferring to/from their institution, and (2) identify specific areas in which they want to improve. Part I of the template (listed in the appendix) can be used by participants to note their observations about areas of strength and areas for improvement. In providing direction to participating teams, workshop leaders should emphasize the five measures outlined on page 10 and established by CCRC in *Tracking Transfer* as measures against which to analyze results and set goals.

3 ASSESSING INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES FOR SUCCESS (60 minutes).



Next, it is time to assess institutional practices as a way to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. Ahead of this workshop, each institutional team needs to complete the Two-Year or Four-Year Self-Assessment Tool, which enables institutions to compare their practices to those of strong partners summarized in *The Transfer Playbook*. At the outset of this section of the workshop, it is helpful to have someone make a brief presentation on *The Transfer Playbook* to orient participants to the strategies and essential practices for highly successful transfer partnerships. From there, participants can spend time examining their own institutional practices and considering how those practices affect transfer students. During this session, participants can fill out Part II of the template, which groups institutional practices into the following three areas:

- **Prioritize Transfer**
- **Create Clear Programmatic Pathways with Aligned High-Quality Instruction**
- **Provide Tailored Transfer Student Advising**

This will end the workshop's first day, one focused on developing greater clarity regarding transfer students' success and institutional practices. Having an evening to reflect on this information can help participants come to the second day with some initial ideas about what they might do to improve outcomes.

Day 2 Sessions

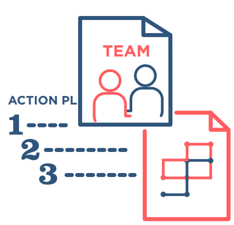
4 SHOWCASING A MODEL OF SUCCESS
(60 minutes).

To kick off day two, it is helpful to showcase a model of exceptional transfer partnerships. The goal of this session is to inspire participants to think big, understanding what can be accomplished with focused work at the institutional and partnership levels. In choosing a partnership to showcase, workshop leaders should consider the following:

- **Has the partnership achieved strong student success rates at scale?**
- **Do the speakers exhibit a clear commitment to transfer student success and possess knowledge about how to achieve it?**
- **Are the speakers compelling in their presentation, capable of balancing enough detail to provide guidance while remaining engaging?**

Such partnerships and presenters can be identified at the state level, or workshop planners can refer to *The Transfer Playbook* for examples of high-performing partnerships that might serve this purpose.

5 CREATING INSTITUTIONAL ACTION PLANS
(75 minutes).



At this point participants will be primed to establish data-informed goals and the beginning of action plans for their institution. During this time, institutional teams should be charged with:

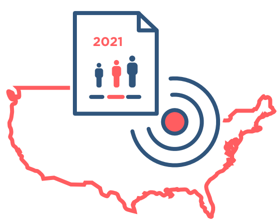
- **Setting targets (e.g., "we will improve transfer-in rates from 16 percent to 25 percent of our incoming classes by the year 2021").**
- **Identifying areas for practice improvement.**
- **Creating action steps for six-month and one-year timelines and identifying responsible parties.**

Many colleges will not have set specific goals prior to the workshop. Accordingly, it can be helpful to have facilitators checking in on college teams to make sure they are creating attainable goals and helpful action steps. A key question for teams that

CREATING INSTITUTIONAL ACTION PLANS CONTINUED

are beginning their goal-setting work will be, What specifically will you do to engage other key campus actors—including academic departments, advisors, financial aid, admissions, and institutional research—in refining the goals and planning your contributions to attaining them? Participants may complete Part III of the template during this session.

6 CREATING REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP ACTION PLANS (90 minutes).



Finally, institutions can come together as regions to complete a regional goal-setting and action-planning activity. The important consideration for creating these groupings is which institutions have the largest flows of transfer students between one another. This session can be opened with an "asset inventory" by asking participants to brainstorm the ways they already work together collaboratively on behalf of students. Next, each institutional team can report to the whole regional group its institutional action plans. From there, people can identify overlapping goals and opportunities for collaboration.

It is important to note that this regional planning work entails difficult conversations about competition and structural incentives that impede efforts to improve outcomes for transfer students. We strongly recommend that a skilled facilitator moderate this session. This facilitator can help bring participants to a clear understanding of areas of common ground and areas of disagreement as they complete Part IV of the template.

To close the workshop, it is important to share across regions and institutions what challenges have been uncovered, what both institutions and regional partners have determined to do, and what unanswered questions remain regarding transfer policy and practice. This "share-out" session can serve as an opportunity for state-level groups to hear about next steps and lingering questions, and to have a conversation with institutions about ways in which they can help further this work. In addition, if institutions are comfortable sharing their written plans, state agencies can collect them (see the template, Parts I-IV) as a way to assess how the state can support institutions' further efforts.

Pre-work:

- Read *The Transfer Playbook*.
- Complete either Two- or Four-Year Self-Assessment Tool (one per institution).
- Create transfer outcome data reports, as outlined in CCRC's "How to Measure Community College Effectiveness in Serving Transfer Students."

Objectives:

- Come to a shared understanding of the status of transfer across your state and country.
- Understand success rates for students who transfer to/from your institution and assess your institutional practices.
- Set institutional and regional goals, identify primary improvement strategies, and develop action steps.
- Strengthen partnerships between two- and four-year institutions collaborating on improving transfer student outcomes.

Post-work:

- Institutional Action Plan (due one to two weeks after the workshop).
- Regional Action Plan (due the day of the workshop).

Sample Workshop Agenda

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE	SESSION TITLE AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION
DAY 1	
1PM – 1:15PM (15 MINUTES)	**WELCOME AND WORKSHOP KICK-OFF**
1:15PM – 1:45PM (30 MINUTES)	**MAKING THE CASE FOR TRANSFER**
1:45PM – 3PM (75 MINUTES)	**DATA REFLECTION: TRANSFER STUDENT OUTCOMES FOR YOUR COLLEGE** ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE, PART I
3PM – 3:15PM (15 MINUTES)	**BREAK**
3:15PM – 3:45PM (30 MINUTES)	**OVERVIEW OF THE TRANSFER PLAYBOOK**
3:45PM – 4:45PM (60 MINUTES)	**ASSESSING PRACTICES FOR SUCCESS (COLLEGE TEAMS)** ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE, PART II
4:45PM – 5PM (15 MINUTES)	**WRAP-UP DAY 1**
DAY 2	
9:15AM – 9:30AM (15 MINUTES)	**DAY 2 KICKOFF AND WARM-UP ACTIVITY**
9:30AM – 10:30AM (60 MINUTES)	**MODEL(S) OF SUCCESS PANEL OR PRESENTATION**
10:30AM – 10:45AM (15 MINUTES)	**BREAK**
10:45AM – 12PM (75 MINUTES)	**ACTION PLANNING FOR SUCCESS (COLLEGE TEAMS)** ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE, PART III
12PM – 1PM (60 MINUTES)	**LUNCH**
1PM – 2:30PM (90 MINUTES)	**ACTION PLANNING FOR SUCCESS (REGIONAL TEAMS)** ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE, PART IV
2:30PM – 3PM (30 MINUTES)	**SHARE-OUT AND REFLECTIONS**
3PM – 3:15PM (15 MINUTES)	**WORKSHOP WRAP-UP**

MAKING THE MOST OF A WORKSHOP: KEY CONSIDERATIONS AND FACILITATION TIPS

No matter how strong the structure is, a workshop's success depends on its details and facilitation. This section provides a few tips on designing an effective agenda and facilitating a productive workshop.

SESSION FACILITATORS. The task of recruiting facilitators and preparing them for the workshop is important. As with participant recruitment, several people may need to identify facilitators, to help get beyond the usual suspects.

- Whom will we ask to moderate and record the groups? Do they reflect the institutional diversity among participants? Good moderators must be able to listen without sharing their own opinions, help others express themselves openly, and set a problem-solving tone for the discussion. It is important that they be viewed as neutral by the participants.
- Clearly explain the goals, roles, and responsibilities when recruiting facilitators. Facilitators will have tasks before, during, and after the workshop, and they should have clear expectations before committing. Responsibilities include:
  - Training.
  - Taking notes (flip charts, paper, laptops; it is recommended to have a separate note taker to assist with this task).
  - Synthesizing ideas.
  - Reflecting on their experience as group facilitators.

WHEN AND WHERE. When deciding on a time and place for the workshop, planners should stay mindful of busy periods during the academic calendar as well as the way in which location can mitigate or contribute to existing power dynamics.

- When will you hold the workshop? Consider academic calendars, times of year when institutions finalize their strategic plans for the coming year, and other events or meetings that might conflict or dovetail with a workshop. What is the most appropriate time of day or day of the week? Have you accounted for the time required to ensure that participants can travel to the workshop location?
- Where will you hold the workshop? Consider holding the workshop in an environment that minimizes power dynamics, some kind of neutral setting that doesn't feel like one institution's or person's home turf. Avoid auditorium setups, in which authority figures are up on a stage looking down at row upon row of passive participants.

WORKSHOP FORMAT. There are several instances during workshop planning where the answers to logistical questions will depend on the design of the workshop itself. Included here are several questions that can help planners identify the ideal workshop format.

- Will out-of-town participants have overnight accommodations?
- Will we serve food or other refreshments?
- Who will introduce the workshop?
- Will we need breakout groups? If yes, do we have the space to hold them? If you have 20 or more participants, do much of the dialogue work in small groups. Dialogue takes place best in small-group settings of 10 to 12 participants. Much smaller than that and you lose energy and diversity in each group; much larger and it's hard to have enough time for people to really explore the issues and contribute to the discussion. If you are working with larger groups, create a workshop in which you move back and forth between larger plenary sessions to introduce ideas or share results, and smaller breakout sessions in which most of the real dialogue takes place.
- Do we have facilitator guides for session facilitators?
- Do we have recording materials for our recorders?
- Do we have participant agendas/materials?

SEATING PARTICIPANTS BASED ON WORKSHOP AND SESSION OBJECTIVES. Bringing together two- and four-year institutions within a state can unearth many tensions related to institutional mission, reputational myths, and cross-institutional competition. Planners should consider these tensions when deciding how to seat institutional participants during each of the workshop sessions.

- **Institutional teams.** Best when the conversation is centered on quantitative data, practice assessments, goal setting, or planning for improvements that are specific to the institution.
- **Sector tables**. A good setup to provide a bridge from institution-level discussions to regional ones, as it provides institutions within the same sector the space to share their ideas and goals before diving into conversations with a mixture of two- and four-year institutions.
- **Regional partnership tables**. Provides space for two- and four-year partners to compare notes, understand perspectives, and make specific plans for improvement. Generally, tables can be organized for sets of institutions that are geographically close to each other, as students who transfer tend to do so among geographically proximate institutions. It is possible, however, that some tables may need to include one or two four-year institutions that receive transfers from across the state—such as flagships—or rural two-year institutions that are not physically close to any four-year school.

Framing the Conversation

The following considerations can be useful in framing and managing workshop conversations:

- Acknowledge that the colleges are confronting tough issues, some of which people may have strong feelings about, and that everyone needs to work together to make sure the issues are handled constructively.

- Remind people of the purpose of the dialogue and suggest that tough issues are fair game to the extent that they relate to and inform that purpose—in that case, they are worth the effort required to deal with them. The goal is not to steer away from difficult conversations but to discuss those topics openly and without falling into personal attacks.

- Reinforce the idea that in a dialogue it is fine to agree and disagree but not to get personal with disagreements. Try to steer clear of ascribing motives to individuals, remaining focused on outcomes and solutions. This will help disagreements remain in the realm of ideas, not individuals.

- In addition to making these points to participants in introducing and setting the tone for the dialogue session, remind your facilitator (or facilitators, if you are using several for breakout groups) so he or she can reinforce them as well.

- Provide moderators with guidelines to help them do a good job. On the most basic level, the task of the moderators is to make sure that participants—in each small group if that is how things are organized—understand what they are there to discuss, know the ground rules, and stay reasonably focused and on schedule. Beyond this, moderators work to make the conversation as highly participatory, constructive, and productive as possible.

- Provide an opportunity for participants to share questions or concerns anonymously with the meeting facilitators: Leave notecards on all tables and designate a spot where completed cards can be placed.

Creating Institutional and Regional Action Plans

Additionally, we suggest that institutions participating in the workshop create action plans as institutions and regions during the workshop that can then be used to shape work going forward (see “Action Plan Template” in the appendix). Action plans can help translate the learning and dialogues that occur during the workshop into concrete actions that take place on the individual campuses. This is where the right participants become particularly critical, because otherwise the right people aren’t in the room and the goal-setting/action plan creation is less valuable. This is also where the medium- and long-term objectives are more valuable, as they can serve as the basis on which this action plan is designed.

- Based on the workshop objectives, what would progress look like in six months? One year? Five years?

- Who within the institution needs to be present for goal-setting conversations?

- Will submission of an action plan be a requirement of participation in the workshop?

- How will the action plans be used, both by your planning team and within the college teams?

- With whom will the action plans be shared, and how will this influence the types of questions asked and the level of detail requested?

- Who on the team will be responsible for ensuring that the action plan is followed? Who will serve as the backbone of your initial effort?

THE INTEGRATION OF GUIDED PATHWAYS AND TRANSFER PRACTICES

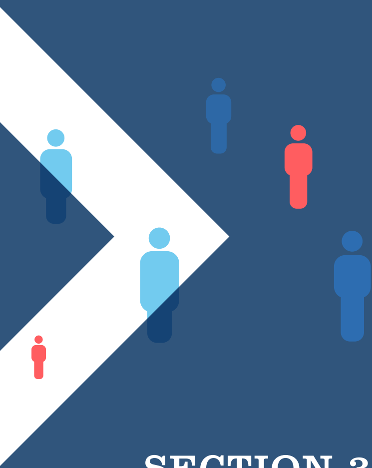
Across the country, a growing number of community colleges and universities are redesigning academic programs and student services to create more clearly structured and educationally coherent program pathways. The goal of these Guided Pathways reforms is to improve student learning and completion and increase labor market and transfer success for students.

A guiding principle of Guided Pathways reforms is to start with the end in mind. For a majority of entering community college students, the end in mind includes earning a bachelor's degree (or an advanced degree). Improving pathways from community college entry to transfer and bachelor's completion is a core aim of colleges implementing Guided Pathways reforms. At these colleges, faculty and student services staff are clarifying academic programs to ensure that not only does students' coursework transfer and apply toward their bachelor's degree, but also students have learned what they need to know to succeed as rising juniors in a particular program of study at the four-year institution.

To help students enter these transfer pathways, Guided Pathways colleges are restructuring intake and advising to help students actively explore options for further education and careers early in their academic journey. Students choose and enter a program of study (and switch, if needed) as quickly as possible and are closely monitored to stay on track to completion and transfer.

There are several large-scale Guided Pathways projects occurring at two- and four-year colleges across the country, many of which consider the linkage between these reforms and improving transfer. The resources being developed as part of these projects, several of which are listed below, can serve as useful tools for college and university practitioners interested in establishing stronger educational pathways for transfer students.

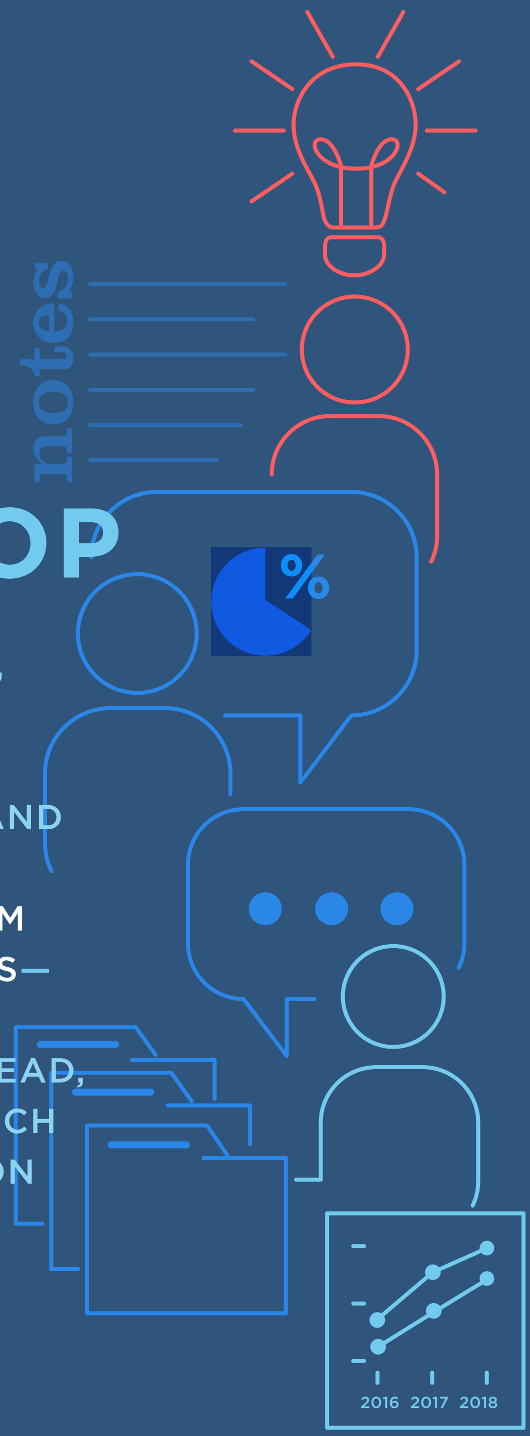
- Bailey, T. R., Jaggars, S. S., & Jenkins, D. (2015). *Redesigning America's Community Colleges.* Harvard University Press.
- Bailey, T. R., Jaggars, S. S., & Jenkins, D. (2015). "What We Know about Guided Pathways." Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Jenkins, D., Lahr, H., & Fink, J. (2017). "Implementing Guided Pathways: Early Insights from the AACC Pathways Colleges." Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Johnstone, R. (2015). "Guided Pathways Demystified I." National Center for Inquiry & Improvement.
- Johnstone, R. (2017). "Guided Pathways Demystified II." National Center for Inquiry & Improvement.



SECTION 3:

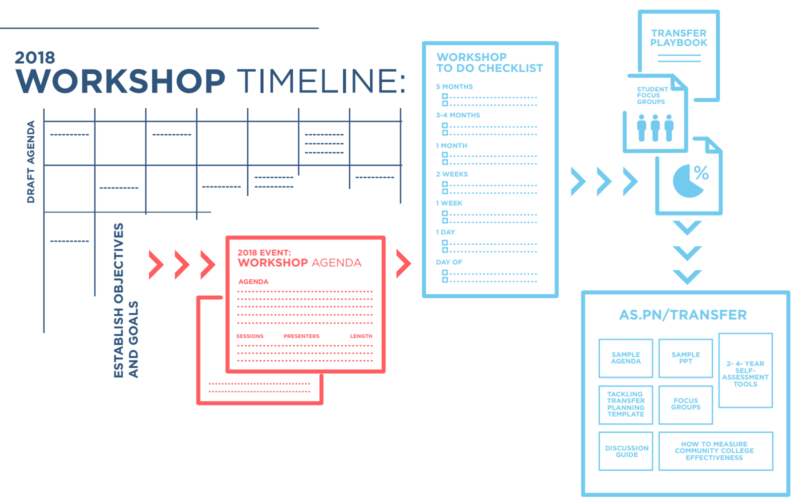
MAINTAINING MOMENTUM FOLLOWING THE WORKSHOP

AFTER THE WORKSHOP'S CONCLUSION, THE WORK SHIFTS TO SYNTHESIS, ANALYSIS, AND FOLLOW-THROUGH. DOING SO SIGNALS TO PARTICIPANTS AND THE PLANNING TEAM ALIKE THAT **THE GOAL OF THE WORKSHOP IS LONG-TERM IMPROVEMENT IN TRANSFER OUTCOMES**—A GOAL THAT DOES NOT END AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE WORKSHOP. INSTEAD, THE FOCUS SHIFTS TO TRANSLATING RICH CONVERSATIONS AND IDEA GENERATION INTO THE NEXT STAGE OF WORK.



Gathering and Analyzing Information Generated During the Meeting

Given the labor-intensive planning required to create an effective workshop, it's easy to undervalue the importance of accurately recording and following up on what happened during the meeting. Treating with care the process of synthesizing notes will build participants' trust and confidence and deliver on workshop aims. Strong facilitators and purposeful follow-up are critical for success.



Synthesize comprehensive, raw meeting notes into natural themes, ideally ones that emerged over the course of the workshop (examples may include the need to better incorporate the student perspective, the best ways to engage faculty, and specific strategies that could contribute to more effective policy creation).

- If finding natural themes is difficult, notes can instead be grouped under each workshop objective.

Schedule a meeting with the planning team to take place no more than one month after the workshop. During this meeting, review synthesized notes and determine together your next steps, as well as any next steps for college teams. The questions in the next section can guide this conversation. Likewise, we encourage you to revisit transfer student data as well as findings from student focus groups.

Depending on your long-term goals, you might decide to schedule another follow-up meeting for the planning group.

Questions and topics to consider as a planning team after the workshop include the following:

Reflect on the workshop as a whole, including what went well and what didn't go as expected. What conversations were challenging? Was this surprising? What issues surfaced that you didn't anticipate?

Review your workshop objectives, including intended learning outcomes. Which were accomplished by the workshop? How do you know? Which ones have more work that can be done?

Questions and topics to consider as a planning team after the workshop include the following:

Ask, what would it mean/look like for "unfinished" objectives to be accomplished?

- What are concrete steps you could take to get there?
- On what timeline would these steps occur?
- Who would need to be involved? Which steps can be taken by you/your organization? Which need to be taken by institutions?
- What essential information are you still missing? How will you go about getting that information?

Ask, what did the meeting reveal about the most productive role for policy in conversations about improving two- to four-year transfer?

If institutions/regions generated action plans, planning teams can review these submissions with the following questions in mind:

What are the common themes?

In which areas are you/your organization equipped to help institutions where they are struggling?

What resources are available to aid these institutions in implementing their action plans?

What timeline should be set to help keep institutions accountable to their plans and check in on their progress?

Finally, as a planning team, return to your list of desired outcomes.

How will you know when you have succeeded in achieving these outcomes, and how will you measure success?

Ask, are there opportunities to re-convene institutional participants?

Ask, are there ways to combine other efforts/initiatives taking place within the state as you take the next steps in this work? What natural spaces/meetings occur in which you can embed continued work on improving transfer practice?

Following Up with Workshop Participants

In a timely fashion, planners should report back to participants, summarizing the key takeaways, clarifying next steps, and reaffirming commitment to ongoing efforts. Here are some questions for the planning team to consider when preparing subsequent outreach to participants:

To whom will we report the process and outcomes?

- Participants.
- State-level stakeholders.
- Other institutional actors not in attendance at the workshop.

What will we report?

- Summary of notes.
- Details about next steps.
- Accountability timeline on institutions' action plans.

Will participants be asked to submit anything—individually or in college teams—after the workshop concludes?

- From whom is the request originating?
- How will these submissions be used?
- On what timeline will these items be needed?

Assessing Progress Toward Short-Term Goals and Identifying Next Steps

After the workshop concludes, it will be important for planners to revisit the short-term goals and workshop learning objectives to assess whether they were achieved. Several promising strategies for assessing progress include:

- **Distribute a post-workshop survey.** In the survey, ask participants to reflect on what they learned and whether their ideas about transfer changed based on the conversations that took place.
- **Follow up with institutions and regions about their action plans**. If you choose to incorporate institutional or regional/partnership action plans into the workshop, we encourage you not only to collect the completed plans but also to follow up with institutions four to six months after the workshop takes place. Ask participants to share the steps they have taken, where they have struggled, and where they intend to go next.
- **Convene participants for a follow-up half-day workshop.** Another option is to schedule a second follow-up workshop, to take place four to six months after the initial workshop. The purpose of this more structured time can be to focus on what participants have accomplished thus far and how the workshop helped them get there, as well as their intended next steps.
- Depending on the higher education policy environment in your state, consider how to **embed lessons learned during the workshop into state-level organizations' work**, specifically in ways that integrate with and strengthen institutions' action plans or other existing state-level work.

APPENDIX:

PLANNING MATERIALS AND HELPFUL RESOURCES

EVENT PLANNING TIMELINE AND CHECKLIST

One of the greatest challenges for dialogue is to level the playing field and minimize power dynamics, so people can speak freely, thoughtfully, and creatively, without worrying that their ideas will

At least five months before the event:

- Select date for the workshop.
- Select workshop venue, ideally in a central location that is perceived as "neutral."
- Establish objectives and goals for the workshop and begin drafting an agenda.
- Create and share important deadlines with your planning team.

Three to four months before the event:

- Continue revising the agenda, including session titles, presenters, and lengths. Begin working on the facilitator agenda, which includes additional detail about the framing of and goals for each session.
- Select institutions (and individuals within institutions) to participate and send invitations:
- Help participants secure hotel and transportation accommodations, if needed.
- Inquire about food allergies or any other special accommodations needed.
- Share with institutional participants the details for pre-workshop assignments (set deadline as one month prior to the event):
- Read *The Transfer Playbook*.
- Conduct student focus groups.
- Complete the self-assessment tool.
- Complete the data template.
- Check in with the venue to begin coordinating on-site logistics (including food, room layout, and A/V).

One month before the event:

- Finalize the external agenda as well as the facilitator agenda. Assign workshop roles (e.g., session facilitation, note taking, materials distribution):
    - Have you created a way for teams to identify where they are sitting?
- Finalize with venue any breaks or meal times, as well as room setup and A/V:
    - Food accommodations (allergies, etc.).
    - Projector.
    - Microphones.
    - Tables of proper size.
- Close institutional registration.
- Help participants who have yet to secure hotel and transportation accommodations, if needed.
- Gather institutional pre-workshop assignments.

Two weeks before the event:

- Send a reminder to any participants who have not submitted pre-work.
- Print materials and assemble folders.
- Buy any workshop materials (flipchart paper, markers, etc.).

be unduly criticized or, worse yet, come back to haunt them. When and where workshops are held, as well as how participants are recruited—details that can fall through the cracks or not seem very important—are just a few of the pieces that can have an impact on power dynamics. Below is a more detailed timeline and checklist that can help ensure a successful workshop.

One week before the event:

- Share final details with participants, including the finalized external agenda and, if relevant, details about travel and lodging.
- Review participants' pre-work (if applicable).
- Host call/meeting with all facilitators to make sure they understand their roles and responsibilities.

One day before the event:

- Check your venue to make sure it is laid out properly.
- Troubleshoot A/V and run through all slide decks to confirm that there are no formatting or compatibility issues.

Day of the event:

- Do you have all the materials you'll need?
- Do you have multiple mics to help with full group reporting-out?
- Are all the slides up to date, and have you done a "test" run through all the slides on the projector?
- Has a member of your team been assigned to note taking? Does that person know what to listen for?
- Suggestion: Before the workshop begins, bring together all facilitators for a brief 15-minute meeting to review roles and responsibilities and to answer any lingering questions.

Less than one week after the event:

- Send a thank-you note to participants with an outline of next steps as a way of holding yourself accountable for what comes next.

One to two weeks after the event:

- Synthesize notes and share with participants.
- Create next steps/action plans.
- If relevant, remind institutions to submit materials to the state team.
    - Create an accountability timeline for action plans and check in with institutions.
- If necessary, send out reimbursement/invoicing instructions to participants.

Accompanying Materials

The following materials are available for download and use on the Aspen Institute website (as.pn/transfer):

1. **Sample Facilitators' Agenda.** This document includes facilitation notes for each of the six sessions outlined in the sample agenda.

2. **Sample PPT Slides.** This document includes PPT slides that correspond to each of the six sessions outlined in the sample agenda and can be used as templates as workshop planning teams prepare their materials.

3. **Transfer Workshop Action Plan Template: Parts I-IV.** This template is used throughout the sessions outlined in the sample agenda. It includes steps related to institutional data reflection and practice assessment, as well as action planning and goal setting at both the institution and partnership level.

4. **Planning and Conducting Transfer Student Focus Groups.** This guide outlines steps to coordinating and convening focus groups of transfer students. It is intended for use by either state organizations or institutional practitioners.

5. **State Policy Discussion Guide.** This discussion guide includes critical context to help frame conversations about the intersection of state policy and institutional practices related to transfer student success.

6. **Two- and Four-Year Self-Assessment Tools.** These tools help two- and four-year institutions assess the level of adoption of practices effective in improving transfer student success.

7. **How to Measure Community College Effectiveness in Serving Transfer Students.** This CCRC Analytics publication provides instructions and example templates to assist colleges in benchmarking their performance on transfer outcomes to national and state averages.

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