Higher Education Access for America’s Vulnerable Students

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Education Commission of the States
For CCHS/CR Annual Conference 2012
December 6, 2012
About ECS

- 50-state compact established in 1965
- Nonpartisan, nonprofit
- Serves all state-level education leaders and their staffs:
  - Governors
  - Legislators
  - State board members
  - State superintendents
  - Higher education leaders
What ECS Does

- Provides P–20 perspective
  - Across the spectrum and across agencies
- Provides technical assistance
- Convenes policymakers
- Analyzes and tracks state policy
College Counseling: Where Are We Now?

- Recent focus on raising HS expectations, college completion rates has not translated into meaningful state policies to improve college counseling

- State actions assume students will “figure it out”

- U.S. unlikely to meet 2020 college completion goals on current trajectory
% of ‘92 HS grads progressing through each step to 4-year enrollment, by parents’ highest level of education

Susan Choy, *Students Whose Parents Did Not Go to College: Postsecondary Access, Persistence, and Attainment*, 2001
States Earn “Partial Credit”

- Online tools | BUT typically presuppose:
  - Student/parent knowledge of their existence
  - Internet access outside school day
  - Sophistication to ask the right questions

- Individual learning plans | BUT:
  - Limited (if any) meaningful college counseling component
    (CO exception to the rule – yay us!)

- Ask all students to complete college application | BUT:
  - High-quality application without high-quality guidance?
  - Applying where? Issues with student match
  - Support with financial aid forms critical
What Should We Be Doing?

Research (and youth) say:

- More 1–on–1, high–quality support
- Supports targeted to disadvantaged students
- Start early!
Students from different backgrounds tend to value different types and sources of info, and apply them differently

- 1st-generation, low-income students esp. need information, explanation, interpretation on:
  - Transfer, retention, dropout rates
  - Year-by-year guidance starting in 7th grade
  - Resources on free help on completing college application

Career and College Advice to the Forgotten Half: What do Counselors and Vocational Teachers Advise?

- Guidance counselors:
  - Due to caseload, often provided information in large-group settings
  - Few advised students to explore alternatives to 4-year college or work (i.e., apprenticeships, technical school)

- Vocational teachers:
  - Often provide students broader range of PS options

- Guidance counselors and vocational teachers need professional training to learn about job requirements, various post-HS ed. options
76% of 10th graders in 2002 expected to earn at least a bachelor's degree, 15% aspired to < bachelor's degree; 9% = undecided

Stability of aspirations varied by race and gender

10th-grade aspirations = significant predictors of 12th-grade aspirations, even after controlling for all other variables

Parent involvement with child’s education, school personnel aspirations and peer educational values were predictors of high aspirations between 10th and 12th grade, net of all other variables.
Information and College Access: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment

- Hot off the presses! November 2012

- Students took two short online surveys
  - After 1st survey, half shown multimedia page w/ 3- minute video explaining PS costs and advantages, and ways to make college affordable; financial aid calculator
  - 3 weeks later: 2nd survey asked student perceptions of PS costs, benefits, and PS expectations

- Almost 2x of treatment group students w/no PS aspirations requested more school information, compared w/control group
Oregon ASPIRE

What:
- Program administered by Oregon Student Access Commission

How:
- Help schools build sustainable community of trained volunteers
- Provide 1-on-1 mentoring: college search, admissions, financial aid
- Supported by state funds

Where:
- 145 middle and HS, community colleges, CBOs across state by June ’13 (also online)

Who:
- 1,500+ volunteers, 8,000+ students
ASPIRE’s Reach

ASPIRE Student Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-04</td>
<td>41,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-05</td>
<td>32,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>25,121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>70,684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>37,702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>144,297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10*</td>
<td>67,526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>92,297</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data includes all students who participated in ASPIRE sponsored activities. Fiscal Year July 1 - June 30.
ASPIRE Results

- Students in schools or orgs w/ ASPIRE program more likely to go to college than students who do not
- ASPIRE sought out by sites serving disadvantaged students
- ASPIRE Partnership Grants enhance site-based program, ultimately increasing the # students going to college
- Longer site participation = bigger program impact on college-going
- Sites w/ ASPIRE program see larger # students applying for and receiving scholarships
- Scholarship applicant pools shift to include more applicants from underrepresented populations

Oregon Student Access Commission, 2011 report
## ASPIRE Gets Results!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>College-going rate BEFORE ASPIRE</th>
<th>College-going rate AFTER ASPIRE</th>
<th>Years in ASPIRE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crow High School</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashland High School</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estacada High School</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eldon High School</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaverton High School</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanfield High School</td>
<td>8 of 146 seniors attended an Oregon university between 2003-2008</td>
<td>7 of 35 seniors are bound for an Oregon university in 2011</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31 of 35 (88%) are bound for postsecondary education &amp; training in 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Colorado School Counselors Corps

- **What:**
  - Program administered by CO Dept. of Ed.
  - Competitive grants to districts, BOCES, charters

- **Why:**
  - Increase # of counselors and improve level of counseling services
  - Increase % of students “who appropriately prepare for, apply to, and continue into” PS (and improve HS grad. rates)

- **Where:**
  - In 2011–12: 77 middle and HS statewide
Colorado School Counselors Corps (cont’d)

How:

◦ Funds must increase, not supplant, school-based counseling

◦ Require applications to specify:
  • Local adoption of standards for school counselor responsibilities that meet or exceed NCSA standards
  • Commitment to partnerships with HE that support, increase the capacity and effectiveness of counseling and postsecondary preparation services
  • A plan for providing PD to counselors and other faculty to provide postsecondary preparation service
Colorado School Counselors Corps (cont’d)

- In reviewing applications, department must consider:
  - Schools where dropout rate exceeds state average
  - High % of free-/reduced-price lunch students
  - % of students enrolling in HE w/in 2 years of HS graduation

- Grantees must annually report:
  - Pre- and post-dropout/PS matriculation/PS remediation rates
  - Information indicating increase in postsecondary preparation services
“Comparable non-SCCGP schools are demographically and academically similar to SCCGP schools. These schools also have similar free and reduced lunch rates.”

Colorado Department of Education, 2012 Legislative Report: School Counselor Corps Grant Program
### School Counselors Corps: Outcomes (cont’d)

#### Table 3: Academic, Postsecondary, Career and Technical Education Course Enrollment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Student Enrollment Reported by Cohort 1 Grantees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 1 of Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Placement Courses</td>
<td>5,861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Preparation Courses</td>
<td>1,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honors Courses</td>
<td>5,714</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Baccalaureate Courses</td>
<td>3,778</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postsecondary Educational Opportunity (PSEO) Courses</td>
<td>1,847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>4,251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career and Technical Education Courses</td>
<td>6,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Enrollment</strong></td>
<td><strong>29,416</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: School Counselor Corps Grantee Evaluation Data

Colorado Department of Education, *2012 Legislative Report: School Counselor Corps Grant Program*
### School Counselors Corps: Outcomes (cont’d)

#### Table 4: College Preparation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Counselor Corps College Preparation Related Data (2008 to 2011)</th>
<th>Number in Year 1 of the Grant</th>
<th>Number in Year 2 of the Grant</th>
<th>Number in Year 3 of the Grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Free Applications for Federal Student Aid Completed</td>
<td>1,240</td>
<td>3,405</td>
<td>2,752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of College Applications Filed</td>
<td>8,911</td>
<td>9,922</td>
<td>12,053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Scholarship Applications Submitted</td>
<td>3,543</td>
<td>7,612</td>
<td>6,153</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Scholarship Dollar Amount Received</td>
<td>$18,172,719</td>
<td>$23,682,426</td>
<td>$32,826,836</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: School Counselor Corps Grantee Evaluation Data
States Addressing Other Obstacles for Vulnerable Students

- Better alignment
  - HS curriculum and PS entrance requirements
  - HS assessments, and PS admissions, placement exams

- Raising aspirations
  - Using test scores to ID who can succeed in advanced HS courses
  - Basing dual enrollment eligibility on indicators of potential for college success (not indicators of engagement in HS environment)
Involving Parents

Parents (at least annually) need:

- Information re: 4- and 2-year college entrance expectations
  - Ideally starting in middle grades
- Help guiding child’s
  - Goal-setting on child’s post-HS aspirations
  - Selection of HS courses aligned with those goals
- Updates on their child’s progress toward completing HS grad. reqts.
  - Including info on remediation opportunities, as needed
Parents of 11th and 12th graders

- Need:
  - Guidance on college options, admission procedures, and deadlines
  - Guidance on financial aid options and eligibility requirements
Additional ECS Resources

Web:
- Research Studies Database FAQs (www.ecs.org/rs)
- State policy tracking databases
- Many short reports (www.ecs.org), including
  - *Strategies to Empower Low-Income and Minority Students in Gaining Admission to and Paying for College* (http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/79/03/7903.pdf)
  - Involving Families in High School and College Expectations (http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/70/37/7037.pdf)

People:
- Legislative testimony, responses to information requests