

# Equity in Success



## Guided Pathways

### ACTION

The Riverside Community College District requests an increase in full-time equivalent apportionment funding and/or ongoing annual allocation to fully implement and maintain the Guided Pathways model at each of the three colleges.

### ISSUE

Research has shown that by offering community college students Guided Pathways and wraparound support services it increases retention, persistence and degree/certificate completion. However, this model is more intrusive and requires additional services and support that are not currently offered.

While colleges can pursue external funding to develop and pilot key components of Guided Pathways, institutionalization and long-term sustainability requires ongoing funding that is not currently available through existing revenue streams.

To ensure that students have equitable access and successful outcomes in pursuing and attaining their educational and career goals, each college has implemented Guided Pathways and established engagement centers based on meta-majors. A crucial principle is that each center provides a similar standard of care and includes equitable levels of counseling, educational advising

and peer mentoring. To provide this equitable standard of care, the District requires, at a minimum, 50 educational advisors (\$114,538/year per advisor), 10 counselors (\$163,142/year per counselor), 150 peer mentors (\$12,100/year per mentor), and a one-time allocation for equipment for the engagement centers (\$800,000) for a total budget of \$9,143,898 per year. Additional funding for mandatory training and development requirements for 10-15 hours are needed for faculty (full-time and adjunct) and classified staff who are crucial in supporting and ensuring the sustainability of the engagement centers.

## BACKGROUND

The Guided Pathways model is nationally recognized for its effectiveness in reducing completion time and cost of education for community college students. As outlined in the 2015 book, *Redesigning America's Community Colleges: A Clearer Path to Student Success* (Bailey, et al, 2015), Guided Pathways is a whole-college redesign model that helps all students explore, choose, plan and complete programs aligned with their career and education goals efficiently and affordably. At the District, Guided Pathways emerged from several successful completion initiatives at Moreno Valley College and Norco College, and Completion Counts at Riverside City College. In 2012, Completion Counts was initially funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Working in partnership with the city of Riverside, local chambers of commerce, and the region's school districts, Riverside City College implemented the Completion Counts model, which yielded significant improvements in student completion rates, and specifically improved completion time. A majority of the 700 student Completion Counts cohorts were successful in completing their certificates and degrees in three years - rather than the more traditional six-year timeframe. The success of Completion Counts, both locally and in communities across the country, led to a system-wide reform of the community college structure.

The colleges are currently working to scale Guided Pathways, ensuring that 40,000 students in the District have selected a pathway and are making progress toward their educational and completion goals. Specific activities toward each of



the four tenets of Guided Pathways include:

- Clarity – The colleges developed clear program maps and support structures to guide students towards achieving their academic, transfer and career goals. As the colleges progress in their implementation, regular reviews of maps are underway and new maps are created as programs are added. Working with K-12 and four-year partners to align maps, decreasing unneeded units and time to completion is ongoing;
- Intake – Colleges have implemented intentional outreach and orientation for incoming students to connect them to support teams and resources. Students are supported in career exploration and designing an educational plan;
- Support – Collaborative teams of counselors, educational advisors, faculty advisors, librarians, peer mentors, tutors and supplemental instructors provide integrated and comprehensive academic support for students in the identified instructional pathways. The equitable standard of a care model requires additional resources as enumerated above; and
- Learning – Program learning outcomes and student learning outcomes are regularly assessed with a focus on continuous improvement. The colleges regularly review disaggregated effectiveness data, including transfer and career transition. Faculty development and professional learning are aligned with Guided Pathways.