

# Leveraging the American Rescue Plan to Advise Students on their Paths to Postsecondary and Workforce Success

The funding flowing to districts and states through the American Rescue Plan represents an opportunity to invest in the transformation of advising systems to better serve every student. Below are investment recommendations for supporting students' access to and success in postsecondary and workforce pathways. You can view the full set of aligned advising recommendations on our [Making the Connection](#) microsite.

## Prioritize support for the most predictive measures of success.

Every community and state should define a set of key milestones that all students are expected to complete in preparing for the transition to postsecondary education and training - and then build advising capacity that can target support to students of color, those experiencing poverty, and other traditionally underserved student groups. That means investments to:

- **Build the data infrastructure and capacity** to collect, track, and visualize student completion of the most predictive measures of postsecondary success, and provide training to high school counselors, principals, and others providing direct student support on how to access and use the information;
- **Develop targeted interventions** to support students' completion of the Momentum Metrics based on their academic and career interests and preparation; and
- **Restructure the school day** to build in time for advisory or a required college and career readiness course that focuses on both identity formation and completion of key procedural steps to postsecondary education and training.

## Dramatically expand advising capacity.

The only way that robust postsecondary pathways advising will be an expectation for every student, rather than an enrichment for some, is to dramatically increase investment in the infrastructure--both people and systems--of support. Districts and states will need to leverage significantly more adults and near peers to mentor and advise students as they navigate the maze from high school to higher education and the workforce. That means investments to:

- **Partner with leading college access organizations** to direct advising initiatives and target students with the greatest needs;
- **Train and certify existing staff** in college and career advising;
- **Develop and implement structures** to track and support alumni after high school graduation; and
- **Create a statewide or regional postsecondary advising corps** to build capacity in communities that predominantly serve students of color, low-income students, and first-generation students.

## Own the summer to support postsecondary transitions.

Each year, one in five high school seniors indicate that they plan to enroll in some postsecondary education or training but do not show up in the fall. Based on recent enrollment numbers showing year-to-year declines in immediate enrollment of 7 percent, the pandemic turned that traditional “melt” into an avalanche. Every state, district, and higher education institution should invest stimulus resources to ensure a smooth handoff between systems. That means investments to:

- **Extend counselor contracts or partner with college access organizations** to engage students during the summer, especially students of color, students experiencing poverty, and first-generation college students;
- **Offer college bridge opportunities** to shore up student academic preparation and build engaging relationships;
- **Provide tuition-free college courses** to give students a leg up on credit accrual and summer work opportunities for students to earn credit or money to pay for their continued education and training; and
- **Create near-peer alumni engagement opportunities** to ensure that students have a community to which they can turn for support.

Through high-quality advising support, students can develop the knowledge, skills, and social capital to make informed academic and career decisions, attain a postsecondary credential of value, and thrive in life. It's time to ensure each student receives this support.

