



EXPANDING POSTSECONDARY ADVISING CAPACITY

Invest Forward Convening: July 2022 Session Recap



ABOUT THE CONVENING

In **July 2022**, Invest Forward held a convening in Nashville, Tennessee, bringing together **leaders from 25 districts** to share ideas, learn from one another, and prioritize stimulus funding to support postsecondary pathway programs in their schools.

Research has shown that high-quality postsecondary education and training is the ticket to **long-term opportunity**. But since the pandemic began, we have seen declines in high school graduation rates, drops in direct college enrollment, a youth unemployment rate that peaked higher than it has in decades, and an education system that is still struggling to find a new “normal.”

Many schools have done tremendous work and invested heavily in strengthening and expanding their efforts to support students’ ability to obtain the training and credentials necessary to be successful beyond high school. **Invest Forward** is committed to recognizing and sharing those efforts widely, to build momentum and support for this important work.



ABOUT EXPANDING POSTSECONDARY ADVISING CAPACITY

Access to **postsecondary transition support** varies significantly by geography, achievement level, etc.. Students know when they are prepared and not prepared by district and school leaders; yet, **84 percent of teachers** reported having NO access to data on students' Fit and Match scores. This is not just a counselor problem, but a systems level problem.

HOW MIGHT A DISTRICT/SCHOOL LEVERAGE ESSER FUNDS TO SUPPORT EFFECTIVE ADVISING, ACROSS A SYSTEM?

- Support enrollment, retention, and re-engagement initiatives to ensure academic progression across P-20 spectrum
- Build individualized student fact base with academic and behavioral diagnostics and progress monitoring
- Reimagine school calendar and expand school day/year
- Provide out-of-classroom learning experiences through tutoring, after school, summer camps, etc.
- Connect districts/institutions with community organizations that connect students to comprehensive support
- Enhance accessibility of academic & behavioral counseling resources, especially for at-risk students (including year-round support)
- Invest in infrastructure for mental wellness and trauma-informed, culturally responsive schools, including educator P.D. and support
- Evaluate and Improve hybrid/remote learning models to develop long-term digital strategic priorities
- Improve quality of learning through altered classroom structures, educator professional development, and digital tools
- Increase flexibility of secondary postsecondary environment to accommodate for other responsibilities
- Support students with structured engagement and enhanced communications in transition periods
- Design an integrated education/workforce strategy and playbook and offer work-driven credit opportunities



SUCCESSFUL EXPANDING POSTSECONDARY ADVISING CAPACITY INITIATIVE

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Presenter: **Mavis Jackson**, Director of College Readiness, Baltimore City Public Schools

Roughly 25 percent of Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) students graduate each year and do not enter college and do not enter the workforce. The manner in which the district was tracking postsecondary “success”—college applications and FAFSA completions, for example—did not account for this large population of students that just fell off the radar after graduation. BCPS recognized that they needed to look at data before high school, in high school, and afterwards to truly understand how to build appropriate and effective supports.

As the district worked to align stimulus spending around core values, BCPS found direct alignment with key college and career strategies within that larger mission, including:

- **Expansion of dual enrollment.** The district utilized a consortium to train teachers to teach; this also helped BCPS avoid duplicate course offerings.
- **Building out “City Schools Persists.”** Recognizing that the first two years of college are critical for persistence, BCPS created this initiative to serve as a comprehensive support system for students after graduation.
- **Creation of a “Navigator Center.”** Even graduated students can make an appointment with someone who can help them with postsecondary navigation; personnel is a mix of paid staff and volunteers from community based organizations.
- **Increasing school counseling and advising.** BCPS not only expanded the number of school counselors, they also increased the amount of quality professional development they receive. Additionally, the district has placed a postsecondary counselor in each of its highest need schools to support students regardless of their path after graduation.
- **Creation of a postsecondary consortium.** On a quarterly basis, BCPS brings together college partners and CBOs to share what each partner is currently doing to support students’ postsecondary pathways; this work is creating a much stronger community of support around the students.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

- [Expanding Postsecondary Advising Capacity - Slide Deck](#)