# Areas of Focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation &amp; Access</th>
<th>Affordability &amp; Financial Aid</th>
<th>Admission &amp; Completion</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Counselor Advocacy</td>
<td>Education Pays</td>
<td>College Completion Agenda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survey of Counselors</td>
<td>Trends in Higher Education</td>
<td>Complexity in Admissions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Advocacy</td>
<td>State Models</td>
<td>Access &amp; Diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational Crisis Facing Men</td>
<td>Cracking the Code: Student &amp; Parent Research</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Color National Writing Project</td>
<td>MTV Affordability Challenge</td>
<td>Community College Transfer</td>
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[Logo: CollegeBoard]

[Tagline: inspiring minds]
Commission on Access, Admissions & Success in Higher Education

- 2008-09 The Commission Convening Experts Across Education Sectors
- 2008-09 The Report Goal and Recommendations
- 2009 Outreach and Advocacy
- 2010 The Completion Agenda Progress Report
- 2010 CB-NCSL State The College Completion Agenda State Policy Guide
- 2011 Outreach and Advocacy Capitals Campaign
Coming to Our Senses: Education and the American Future

The College Board’s Commission on Access, Admissions and Success in Higher Education

Concerned with the current state of American education, the College Board’s Commission on Access, Admissions and Success in Higher Education is a nationally representative group of college presidents, university chancellors, admissions and enrollment deans, school counselors and administrators, and other education experts. The commission was formed to examine demographic, socioeconomic, public policy and education trends that affect college access and success.

Goal:
To ensure that at least 55 percent of Americans hold a postsecondary credential by 2025.

A well-educated population is essential to a strong, democratic society and to maintain our nation’s global prominence. Recent international comparisons contain alarming news for Americans:

- The United States, which led the world in high school completion rates throughout the 20th century, ranked just 21st out of 27 advanced economies in 2005.¹
- We rank near the bottom of industrialized countries in graduation rates for students once enrolled in college.²
- While we are still second among developing nations in the proportion of workers over the age of 55 with an associate degree or higher, we drop to number 11 among younger workers (ages 25-34).³

“The effect of diminished access has a devastating impact on the lives of individuals seeking advancement through education and on our collective hopes for advancing our society’s interests and welfare.”

William “Bill” Gormley
Chair, Commission on Access, Admissions and Success in Higher Education
Chancellor, University System of Maryland

The US ranks 4th out of 36 nations in terms of postsecondary attainment for citizens ages 55-64.

However, among 25-34 year olds, the US falls to 12th in degree attainment.

1. Andreas Schleicher, Seeing U.S. Education Through the Lens of International Comparisons (presentation to the commission, Chicago, IL, March 5, 2006).
Once a world leader in college completion, the United States now ranks 12.

“We must think ‘P–20’ and stop the “leaks” in the education pipeline to secure America’s economic and social future for generations to come.”

**Goal:**

that at least 55 percent of Americans hold a postsecondary degree by 2025
National Overview: Percentage of 25- to 34-Year-Olds with an Associate Degree or Higher

National Average: 41.6%
Goal: 55.0%

13.4 Points Away
The Progress Report is designed to measure or demonstrate the need to establish an appropriate measure of the commission’s goal & recommendations.

The measures identified in this report are meant to give some indication of the current status and future changes that impact the goal & recommendations.
The Ten Recommendations

One
Provide a program of voluntary preschool education, universally available to children from low-income families

Two
Improve middle and high school college and career counseling

Three
Implement the best research-based dropout prevention programs

Four
Align the K–12 education system with international standards and college admission expectations

Five
Improve teacher quality and focus on recruitment and retention

Six
Clarify and simplify the admission process

Seven
Provide more need-based grant aid while simplifying and making financial aid processes more transparent

Eight
Keep college affordable

Nine
Dramatically increase college completion rates

Ten
Provide postsecondary opportunities as an essential element of adult education programs
## 10 Recommendations: Completion at Every Stage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Preschool</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Middle School</th>
<th>High School</th>
<th>Higher Education</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>One</strong></td>
<td>Provide a program of voluntary preschool education, universally available to children from low-income families</td>
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<td><strong>Two</strong></td>
<td>Improve middle school and high school counseling</td>
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<td><strong>Three</strong></td>
<td>Implement the best research-based dropout prevention programs</td>
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<td><strong>Four</strong></td>
<td>Align the K–12 education system with international standards and college admission expectations</td>
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<td><strong>Five</strong></td>
<td>Improve teacher quality and focus on recruitment and retention</td>
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<td><strong>Six</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Seven</strong></td>
<td>Provide more need-based grant aid while simplifying the financial aid system and making it more transparent</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Eight</strong></td>
<td>Keep college affordable</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nine</strong></td>
<td>Dramatically increase college completion rates</td>
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<td><strong>Ten</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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</table>
Recommendations 7 ... 8 ... 9

Seven
Provide more need-based grant aid while simplifying and making financial aid processes more transparent

Eight
Keep college affordable

Nine
Dramatically increase college completion rates
Recommendation 7

Seven

Provide more need-based grant aid while simplifying and making financial aid processes more transparent

• Minimize student debt

• Make financial aid processes more transparent and predictable

• Provide institutions incentives to enroll and graduate more low-income and first-generation students
Key Indicators for Measurement

SEVEN:

• Grant aid for students from low-income families
• Student debt levels
• Simplifying the federal student aid system and the application process
• Implementation of policies designed to provide incentives to institutions that promote enrollment and success of low-income and first-generation students
Grant Aid for Students from Low-Income Families

7.1a
Average Total Grant Aid Per Low-Income Dependent Student, 1993–2008 (In Constant 2007 Dollars)
Source: National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, National Center for Education Statistics, calculations by the College Board
Note: Private 4-year is before inflation

7.1b
National Average Percentage Increase in Total Grant Aid Per Dependent Student by Income, 2004–2008 (Based on Constant 2007 Dollars)
Source: National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, National Center for Education Statistics, calculations by the College Board

Student Debt Levels

7.2a
National Median Loan Debt, 2004 and 2008 (In Current Dollars)
Note: Includes U.S. citizens and noncitizens. PLUS loans, loans from friends and family, and credit card debt are not included.

7.2b
National Average Annual Percentage Increase in Median Debt Level, 2004–2008 (In Current Dollars)
Note: Includes U.S. citizens and noncitizens. PLUS loans, loans from friends and family, and credit card debt are not included.
Recommendation 8

Eight
Keep college affordable

• Control college costs

• Use available aid and resources wisely

• Insist state governments meet their obligations for funding higher education
Key Indicators for Measurement

EIGHT:

• State appropriations to fund higher education
• Tuition, fees and total cost of attendance at colleges and universities
• Net price students pay for college
• Changes in family income levels
• Earnings of college graduates
-1.0%
Between fiscal year 2009 and fiscal year 2010, the change in total public support for public higher education is a decline of 1.0 percent.

-2.1%
Between fiscal year 2009 and fiscal year 2010, the change in state support for higher education is a decline of 2.1 percent.

7.3%
From 2008–2009 to 2009–2010, the change in average tuition and fees at public two-year colleges and universities in the United States is an increase of 7.3 percent.

6.5%
From 2008–2009 to 2009–2010, the change in average in-state tuition and fees at public four-year colleges and universities in the United States is an increase of 6.5 percent.
California’s Progress Towards Recommendation 8
Keep College Affordable

In-State Tuition Prices at Public Four-Year Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>California</th>
<th>United States</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17th</td>
<td>$5,937</td>
<td>$6,874</td>
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</table>

$5,937

$6,874
Recommendation 9

Nine
Dramatically increase college completion rates

• Reduce dropouts
• Ease transfer processes
• Use data-based approaches to improve completion rates at all levels
Key Indicators for Measurement

NINE:

• Freshman-to-Sophomore retention rates
• Three-year graduation rates of Associate degree seeking students
• Six-year graduation rates of Bachelor’s degree seeking students
California’s Progress Towards Recommendation 9
Dramatically Increase College Completion Rates

Full-Time Freshman to Sophomore Retention Rates at
Public Two-Year Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>California</th>
<th>United States</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>67.4%</td>
<td>59.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

California United States
Rank
2nd

Full-Time Freshman to Sophomore Retention Rates at
Public Four-Year Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>California</th>
<th>United States</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>84.8%</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>100.0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

California United States
Rank
3rd

Full-Time Freshman to Sophomore Retention Rates at
Private Four-Year Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>California</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85.3%</td>
<td>79.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>40.0%</td>
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<td>90.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>100.0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

California United States
Rank
2nd
The State Policy Guide includes key questions, research, examples of policy approaches, and an action plan.

An expert in the content area from the National Conference of State Legislatures and the College Board authored each recommendation.
What Legislators Need to Know

To evaluate the state’s college completion performance, legislators may want to seek answers to the following questions:

- What is the percentage of adults in the state who have earned an associate degree? A bachelor’s degree?

- What are the retention rates at state institutions? Is there a common definition of retention? Often there is not, which makes comparing and analyzing retention rates among institutions difficult.

- What are the college completion rates in the state? How are the completion rates calculated?

- What is the percentage of first-time students who require at least one remedial course? Of those, how many successfully complete the remedial course? What is the success rate in entry-level, first-year college courses for students coming out of remediation? How many of these students complete a degree?

- What are the college retention and completion rates for various categories of students (e.g., by race, gender, ethnicity, age)?
Research

College completion improves if students are academically and socially engaged.

As discussed above, college completion rates are around 56 percent for bachelor’s degrees and 28 percent for associate degrees. Most students drop out during their first year of college. The reasons for dropping out vary, but students who are low-income, minority or first-generation are the most likely to drop out. Today’s students who do complete their degrees are taking longer to do so than in previous generations.

In the research community, the consensus is that students who are academically and socially engaged during college are more likely to graduate. A student is academically engaged when he or she interacts with faculty and finds learning meaningful. Social engagement refers to participation in campus activities and multiple connections with other students.

High-impact practices can help students.

Research conducted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities found that certain institutional policies and practices can have a significant effect on retention and graduation rates. The research identifies “high-impact practices,” including service learning, faculty-guided research and internships. These practices increase both social and academic engagement. Students who participate in these activities not only have higher rates of persistence and graduation, but also gain more personally, intellectually and culturally from their education. These positive results apply to all students, but appear to be even more evident in minorities and low-income students. Compared to non-Hispanic students, Hispanic students who participated in “high-impact” activities had better grade point averages, and African American students who participated in “high-impact” activities had higher chances of staying in college than white students.
State Policy Approaches

Require regular reporting.
Reporting requirements are one way states can signal to institutions that student retention and success are priorities, and that institutions will be held accountable for results. State laws can require that institutions annually report to the governor and the legislature on enrollment, retention and graduation rates so the state can track and monitor progress.

In Massachusetts, public two-year and four-year colleges are required by law to report annually to the governor and the legislature on a variety of higher education performance measures, including student success.

Improve the transfer process between two- and four-year institutions.

Progress from community college enrollment to bachelor’s degree attainment is an increasing concern. Many students who make the effort to apply, gain financial aid and attend a two-year college still do not graduate from a four-year college. The reasons for this include the longer hours that students are working, their family demands and the students’ inability to pay for their education. Still, one significant barrier to the smooth movement of students through the educational pipeline is the difficulty of transferring from a community college to a four-year college or university. This has the effect of slowing the movement of students, particularly minority students, toward a baccalaureate degree. Policymakers can strengthen the pathway between community colleges and four-year colleges by developing effective state transfer and articulation policy and by providing financial incentives for transfer.

In Florida and North Carolina, “2 plus 2” articulation agreements guarantee admission with junior standing at state universities to community college graduates who earn an Associate of Arts degree. Florida’s statewide articulation agreement, for example, guarantees that the 60 credits students earn as a part of their Associate of Arts degree will transfer to a state university. Students
### Take Action

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Evaluate transfer, retention and completion rates for the state. How do they compare to other states?</td>
<td>Short-Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Know what the transfer and articulation policies are and evaluate whether they can be improved.</td>
<td>Short-Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Start a discussion around financial policies that encourage institutions to focus on student success, such as performance-based funding or funding targeted to student support services.</td>
<td>Short-Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Form a legislative task force and bring stakeholders together to discuss student success policy options.</td>
<td>Mid-Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Reform transfer and articulation policies, if needed.</td>
<td>Mid-Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Fully leverage federal funding such as the TRIO programs, which award grants to institutions for student support.</td>
<td>Mid-Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Foster a culture within the state that is focused on college completion. The movement to create a “college-going culture” within high schools has increased college enrollment rates. States can focus on creating a “college-completion culture” to encourage students to finish their degrees. This includes fostering a “transfer-going and receiving culture” to support community college students on a path to a bachelor’s degree.</td>
<td>Long-Term</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Outreach Efforts

Launched at the National Conference of State Legislature Annual Legislative Summit – July, 2010

Shared with the Council of Chief State School Officers and State Higher Education Executive Officers – July & August 2010

Discussions with governor’s offices, state legislators, and other education policy leaders – ongoing

Presentations at national, regional and state conferences – ongoing

Coalitions/partnerships with national, regional, and state to advance policy recommendations – ongoing
Eddie Arteaga, College Board

Melissa Moser, Orange Coast College