

Background

College ready: Although the term is frequently used, we lack a P-16 “real-world,” operational definition of the term that educators in schools and colleges can share and use.

- Who is a “college ready” student?
- What characteristics lead to success in post-secondary education?



Background

Each year, when they get to campus, more than half a million American college students have to take so-called remedial or developmental education classes to teach them basic math and English skills they should have learned in high school. And that's not even the full story. The full story cannot be accurately told, because of problems in how states collect the data — if they collect it at all.

Here's what we do know:

- During the 2014 academic year, at least 569,751 students at 884 public two- and four-year colleges across 33 states were deemed not ready for some college-level work.
- The national total is likely significantly higher, however, due to inconsistencies in how the data was collected. In fact, there's no way to know exactly how many students are placed in these courses, even though they are a financial drain on students and taxpayers and a huge stumbling block on the way to a degree.

Sarah Butrymowicz, *Hechinger Report*

January 30, 2017

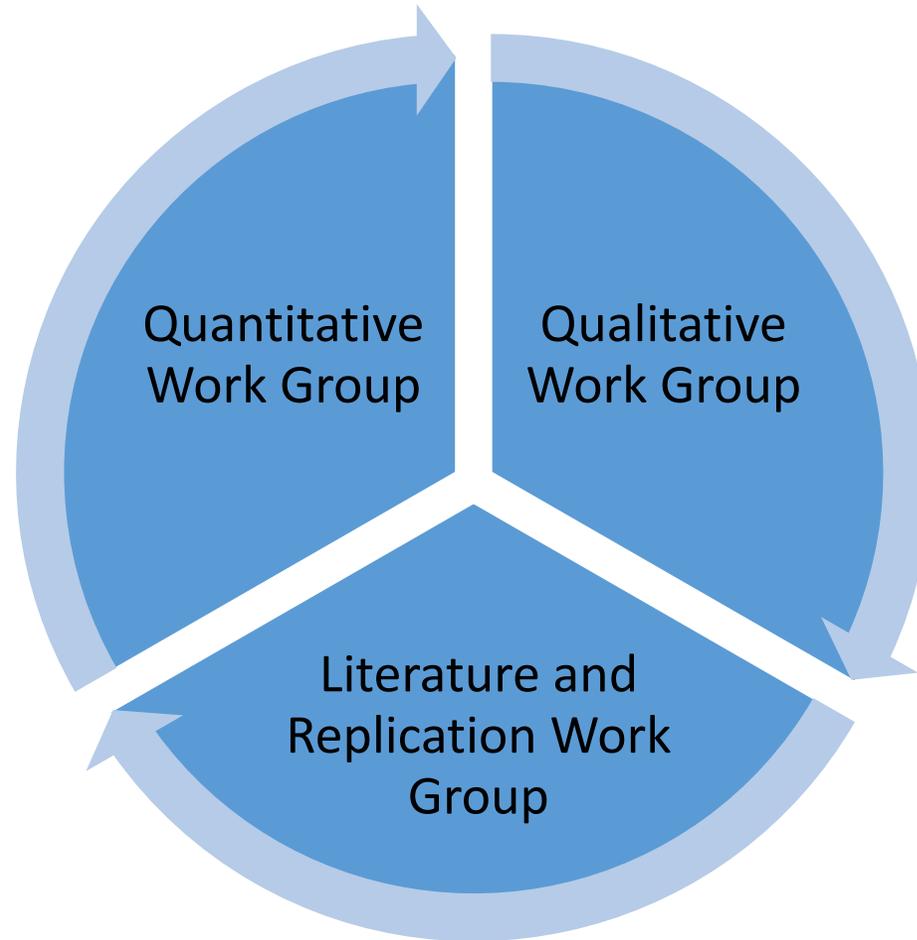
Transition Issues are Costly

- Longer paths to graduation are costly to students and their families
 - Remedial courses do not count toward graduation requirements
 - Frequent changes of major, taking lower course loads, transfers
- Students pay an emotional toll for slow progress toward graduation
- The cost to schools of providing remedial instruction has been estimated at roughly \$2.5 billion dollars annually
- Institutional resources are limited: money needs to be allocated to programs that demonstrate sound returns on investments

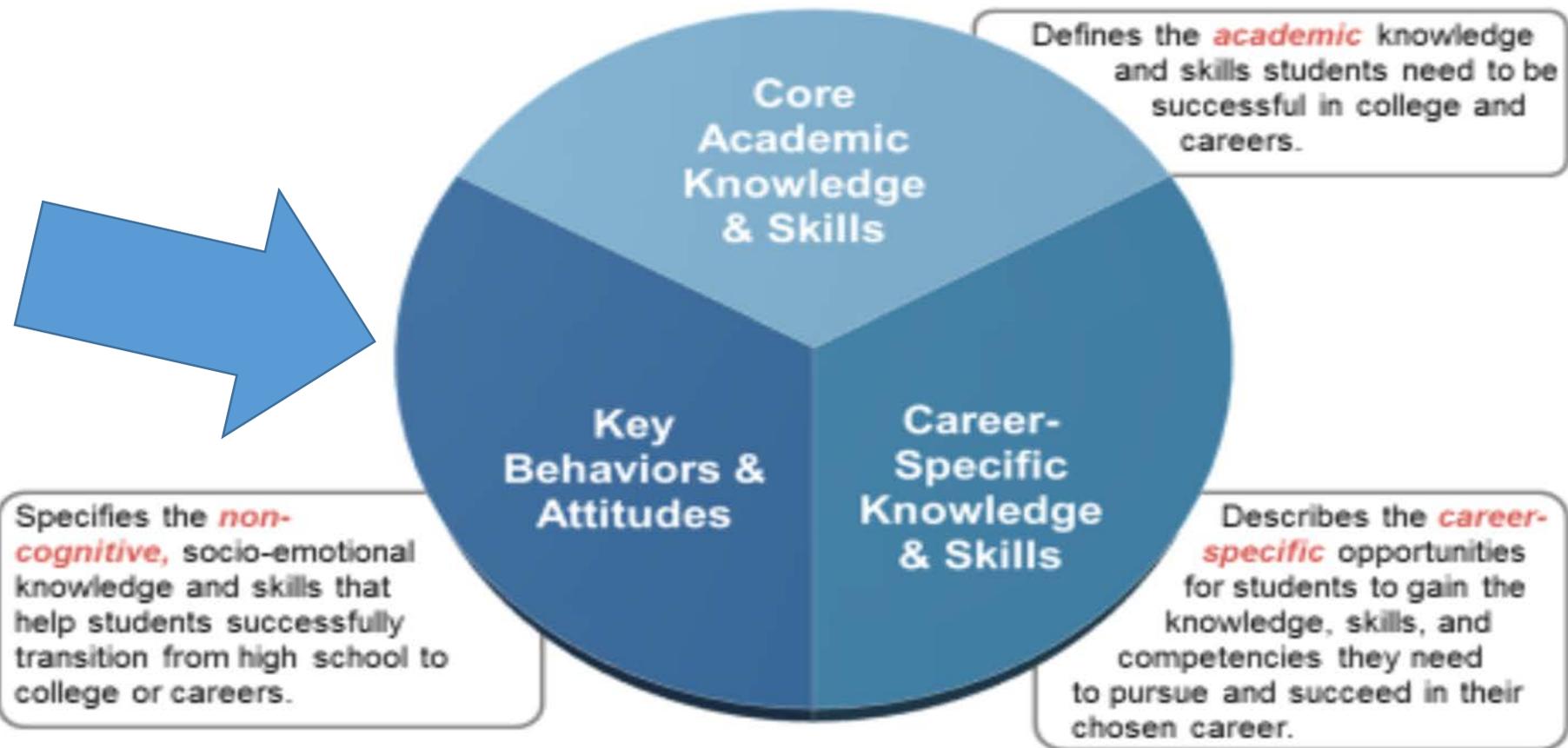
Rich-Poor Divide: Equity Issues In College Readiness

- Even after controlling for achievement, college students from low-income backgrounds are less likely to finish college due to:
 - Economic challenges
 - Less access to college preparatory course work
 - Less access to college counseling
 - Complexity of college application and admissions processes
 - Lack of college knowledge
 - Need for support systems
 - Paucity of relevant transition programs
- **Our project is designed to serve as an engine for equity**

Defining College Readiness: Three Perspectives



Domains of College and Career Readiness



Source: New York State Education Department

Qualitative Work Group: Background

The first year of college is a tough transition, and for many students, a disillusioning one.

A study conducted last fall at the University of Toronto found that incoming students arrived with unreasonably optimistic expectations. On average, students predicted they would earn grade-point averages of 3.6. Those dreams were swiftly punctured. By the end of the year, the average freshman had only a 2.3.

What separated the high-achievers from the low-achievers? As any college admissions counselor will tell you, high school grades have always been the single best predictor of college success. But that does not mean that high school grades are good predictors. **Research shows that differences in students' high school GPAs explain only about 20 percent of the differences between students' college GPAs** [emphasis added].

What accounts for the remainder is still something of a debate and a mystery. Standardized test scores factor in, as does socioeconomic status. **And increasingly, education experts think that character traits such as grit, perseverance and conscientiousness play a role** [emphasis added].

Jeff Guo

Why Students Who Do Well in High School Bomb in College

Washington Post, September 21, 2016

College Readiness Requires College Knowledge: What We Learned

- College readiness is a broad term that is used to define the cognitive and non-cognitive factors that lead to a student's successful transition from high school to college. Simply put, college readiness requires more than just academic preparation.
- Students need “college knowledge”
- **Three factors identified as important for college success:**
 - **Cultural know-how**
 - **Balancing multiple roles**
 - **Help-seeking**

College Readiness: What We Learned About Cultural Know-How

- High school students experience a supportive environment in their schools where help is relatively easy to access and adults take a lead role in “guiding” and “rescuing” them; they often bring expectations for similar faculty roles to college
- High school students feel connected to their teachers and don’t want to disappoint them by not being successful
- College students are expected to engage in independent work and direct their own educational experiences
- Students who can readily adapt to the norms and expectations of the institution meet with greater success
- Cultural know-how promotes the development of the sense of agency needed to successfully navigate the transition to college

College Readiness: What We Learned About Multiple Roles

- In high school, the school's role dominates many aspects of student life
- College students are often faced with more than just being a student: they can play important roles in family life, commute to various places during the day, hold regular jobs, and participate in clubs and activities
- Faculty expectations at college are not always aligned with the pressures on students imposed by multiple roles
- College students need to balance multiple roles because time is a precious resource: once one falls behind, it is very difficult to catch-up because of the quick pace of course work
- Successful college students set priorities and plan appropriately to address them

College Readiness: What We Learned About Help Seeking

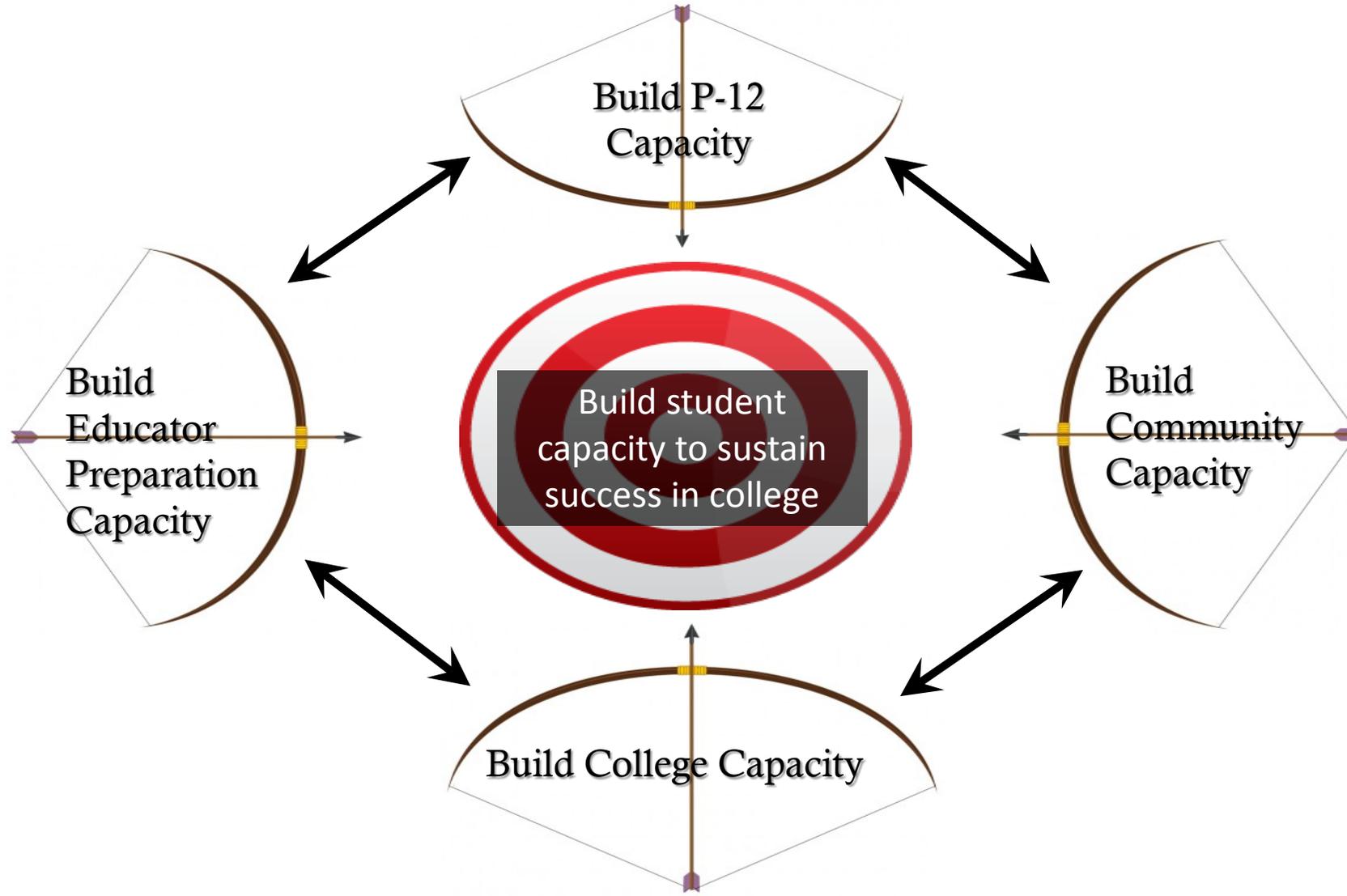
- High school students have interest in gaining more autonomy, but often believe their parents do not want them to be overextended
- In college, students are expected to know where to go to get assistance
- Colleges provide information about services available to those seeking help through such activities as orientation days and first-year seminars **but** providing or offering access to information about programs does not guarantee that students will actually recall or use the information presented
- Students may not feel uncertain about how to access the services or may be reluctant to approach faculty and staff
- Students at the high school and college levels turn to peers for academic, social, and emotional guidance and support

Food for Thought: Recommendations from the March 24th Regional Forum

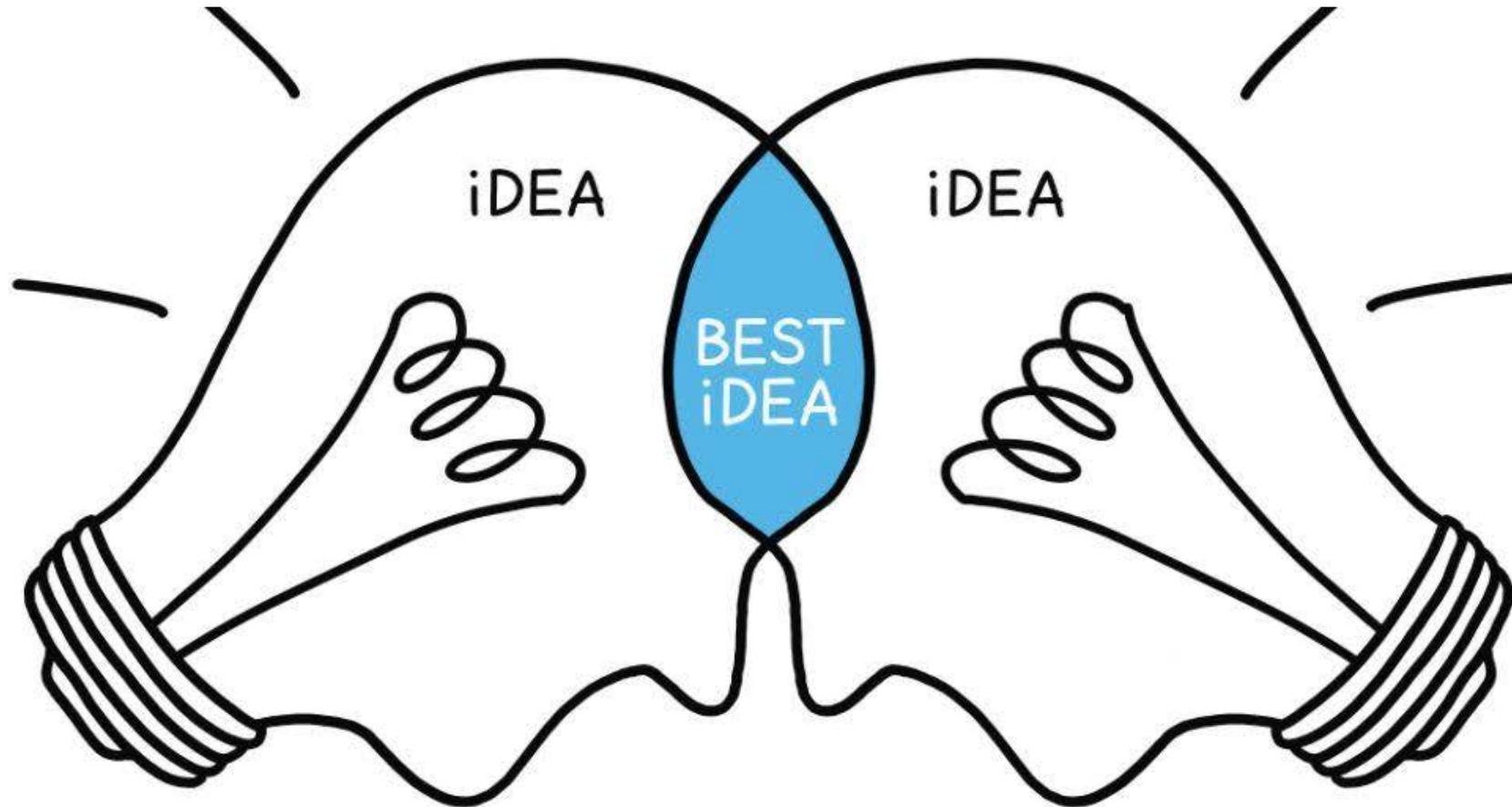
Build networks that span institutional boundaries to promote effective transition experiences

- Establish network of high school and college counselors to address issues in transition
- Share best practices through an interactive web site
- Committed leadership of college transition experiences is required
- Weekend academies/Boot camps on college campuses to promote academic growth & college knowledge/Year-long transition programs
- Leverage the power of peers: Establish social networks for college transition success that provide peer-to-peer mentoring (college to high school & college student to college student); use student leaders at weekend academies and boot camps
- Staff development for all those involved in transition to meet the needs of a changing population

Preparing students for postsecondary success is a responsibility shared by high schools and colleges



Today's Goal: Collaborating to Move the Agenda Forward



How Can We Work Together to Support Students in the Transition from High School to College?

Cultural Know-How
(College Knowledge)

Managing Multiple Roles

Help Seeking

Format

- You are grouped in clusters of tables:
 - Cluster 1 (Table #1-6) will focus on **Cultural Know-How (College Knowledge)**
 - Cluster 2 (Table #7-11) will focus on **Managing Multiple Roles**
 - Cluster 3 (Table #12-16) will focus on **Help Seeking**



Format

- Step 1: Work with your table (30 minutes)
 1. Brainstorm ways in which counselors can help students become more knowledgeable and skillful in the element assigned to your cluster
 2. **Produce 3-5 top ideas per table that are concrete, assessable and “do-able”—We do not have any commitment for additional resources at this time, so this task may require modifying or reshaping ideas produced in step 1**
 3. Write the top ideas on the index cards provided (Write big!)
- Step 2: Share your top ideas with the other tables in your cluster (30 minutes)
 1. Post the index cards on the boards adjacent to your tables
 2. Discuss the ideas presented on the cards; combine, modify, or reword as appropriate
 3. Using the dots provided to each table member, go up to the boards and place your dots on the ideas you think are most valuable and worthy of joint effort
 - You can place all your dots on one card or spread them around
- Step 3: Identify the 1 or 2 ideas from your cluster with the most dots, select a cluster representative, and report out

Ways We Can Work Together to Help Students Make Successful Transitions from High School to College

Cluster 1:

Cultural Know-How (College Knowledge)

Cluster 2:

Managing Multiple Roles

Cluster 3:

Help Seeking

Next Steps

- Top ideas generated from the dotting exercise will serve as the initial focus for future meetings involving high school and college counselors
- Identify pilot sites
- For those interested, please volunteer today to serve as the organizers of an ongoing high school-college partnership for counselors by registering on the sign-up sheet on your way out
 - Leaders of the group will serve on the Superintendents-College Presidents Partnership Steering Committee
- The high school-college partnership group will develop an action agenda and participate in the fall and spring forums of the Superintendents-College Presidents Partnership
- Assess impact over time

Thank you 😊

For your kind attention & active participation