ALLIANCE COMPACT

SCALING STANDARDS

As ratified by the CCA Alliance

July 14, 2017

Indianapolis, Indiana

ALLIANCE COMPACT
SCALING STANDARDS

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The Complete College America Alliance Compact

We believe our students – of every race, gender, age and income level – aspire to *complete* college credentials of value and purpose because they seek secure and fulfilling lives for themselves and their families; consequently, we reject that low aspirations are the cause of low graduation rates.

We accept that as leaders of states, communities, institutions and classrooms, we have a shared responsibility to remove barriers, reform systems, and redesign instruction to facilitate more student success – but never by weakening academic rigor or reducing the exceptional quality of American higher education.

We cannot uphold these ideals without acknowledging these truths:

- **Time is the enemy of college completion.**
  Therefore, early and sustained momentum is vital for student success.

- **Structure benefits students.**
  Therefore, all students deserve clear academic pathways, purposeful program selection, and class schedules structured to allow work and family balance.

- **Student success requires a mutual commitment.**
  Therefore, students must work harder, accepting structures that speed their success; and institutions must be responsive to the needs of their students, utilizing new policy and practice proven to boost achievement.

Accordingly, this Alliance shares the following beliefs and makes these commitments:

We believe in equity. We know we're all in this together – and our collective economic, cultural and civic futures depend upon success in higher education for *all* people, not just the most economically secure. We will move beyond lip service, recognizing that while data disaggregation is an essential starting point, we must do more in our pursuit of concrete actions proven to permanently close educational achievement gaps for those most often left behind: students of color, low-income students, first-generation students and older students. We support students of high ability and high need and reject low expectations.

We believe in evidence and facts. We do not fear the hard truths revealed through an honest assessment of the data, but instead realize that data are key to understanding our strengths, confronting our challenges and identifying solutions. Everyone – from the boardroom to the classroom - must engage in data analysis and the evaluations of results. Data professionals should be empowered to step up to join their fellow change agents, asserting their expertise to help drive continuous improvement.

We believe in smart policy to accelerate and sustain systemic reforms. We will assert the scaling power of policy when it is evidence-based, pursued in an appropriate venue, developed transparently and crafted with implementation in mind. We know that good policy provides flexibility for institutions but does not compromise on equity, quality, or accountability for results. We must restore and sustain public investment in higher education because its benefits are broadly enjoyed by the public, not just privately. We respect the duty of elected and appointed policymakers to protect the public investment in higher education and demand better and more equitable returns for students and taxpayers.

We believe communication accelerates change. We will establish and drive mechanisms to enhance our connectedness, frequently and effectively sharing our reform efforts and stories of success. We will marshal public opinion toward a deeper understanding of the challenges facing our students and the solutions being championed by our movement, focusing all Americans on a shared vision for the future of higher education.

We believe in effective implementation. We will develop and act on clear, concise, highly-structured, evidence-based and goal-oriented implementation plans designed to achieve dramatic improvements in student success. The measurable goals and the plans to achieve them must be equally owned by administrators and faculty with a clear understanding of their responsibilities for generating results. We expect action at scale and with urgency, ensuring all students are provided the opportunity to benefit from reform efforts. We will deploy best practices where they exist and work to discover new solutions where they do not.

We believe in this Alliance. We are impatient reformers, agents of change, and system disruptors from all walks of life and positions of influence – equipped with evidence and urgently driven because our country's future depends upon our success. We must be as diverse as America yet stronger together as we jointly lead and collaborate to push for substantial and sustainable increases in achievement and completion for all students. We will accelerate our pace as we run toward problems, not away from them.

Together, we dream things that never were and ask, "Why not?" [1]

Established and ratified by the Members of the Alliance
July 14, 2017
Indianapolis, Indiana

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[1] George Bernard Shaw, *Back to Methuselah,* 1921.

The Complete College America Scaling Standards

Who is part of the Alliance?

THE ALLIANCE

| CCA Fellows | A select group of the Alliance's most respected and accomplished content experts and thought partners |

CCA Fellows

A select group of the Alliance's most respected and accomplished content experts and thought partners

Complete College Alliance Teams

Teams formed by each Alliance Member that include leads for Equity, Metrics, Policy, Communications, and Implementation

Campus Implementation Teams

Teams, which include faculty, formed at the campus level to enact reforms, customize them for local conditions, and measure results

Impatient Reformers and the Students They Serve

The leaders, administrators, faculty, partner organizations, students and families who share our beliefs and strive for the reforms necessary to ensure more college graduates

What is an Alliance Member?

An Alliance Member is a state, territory, postsecondary system, metropolitan area or institutional consortia that commits to set college attainment goals, collect and report college completion metrics and pursue Game Changer strategies intended to dramatically increase college completion rates and close attainment gaps for large numbers of students across multiple institutions.

What is Scale?

Scale is achieved for an Alliance Member when a strategy is deployed for 100% of the students who would benefit from it.

What is Scaling?

Scaling is the process that states, regions, and institutions undergo together to achieve scale. A successful scaling process starts with a commitment to full scale and phases in the strategy along a clear timeline, refining strategies along the path to 100% scale.

What are the Scaling Standards?

Scaling Standards are concrete, verifiable, and deliberate actions that are necessary to successfully scale Game Changer strategies. Effectively integrating the five scaling standard areas can result in dramatic improvements in college completion and the closing of achievement gaps. The Scaling Standards are a reflection of valuable lessons learned from Alliance members, Complete College America staff, CCA fellows and practitioners who have successfully scaled college completion reforms.

What do we do with the Scaling Standards?

The Scaling Standards are a framework for building comprehensive action plans by both the Complete College Alliance and Campus Implementation Teams. The Scaling Standards should be used to develop Memoranda of Understanding for scale initiatives, evaluate Alliance Member action plans, and help Complete College Alliance Team Members evaluate their own readiness and commitment to the work of improving college completion and achieving equity.

THE ALLIANCE

Members

Alabama
Arizona Consortium
Arkansas
Central Valley (CA) Higher
Education Consortium
Colorado
Commonwealth of the
Northern Mariana Islands
City University of New York
Connecticut
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Hawaii
Houston GPS
Illinois

Idaho
Indiana
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maine
Maryland
Massachusetts
Minnesota
Mississippi
Missouri
Montana
Nevada
New Hampshire
New Mexico
Oregon
Oklahoma

Ohio
Pennsylvania
Puerto Rico
Rhode Island
South Dakota
Tennessee
Texas
Thurgood Marshall College
Fund
Utah
Vermont
Virginia
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

CCA Fellows

Larry Abele, Provost Emeritus
Florida State University

Peter Adams, Professor
Emeritus
Community College of
Baltimore County

Rob Anderson, President
SHEEO

Kimberly Beatty, Chancellor
Metropolitan Community
College

Angela Bell, Assoc Vice
Chancellor
University System of Georgia

Matt Bergman, Program
Director; Assistant Professor,
Educational Leadership,
Evaluation, & Org. Development
University of Louisville

John Cech, Deputy
Commissioner of Higher
Education
Montana University System

Tristan Denley, Exec Vice
Chancellor
University System of Georgia

Scott Evenbeck, President
Guttman Community College

Joe Garcia, President
WICHE

Ross Gittell, Chancellor
Community College System of NH

Loretta Griffy, Associate Provost
Austin Peay State University

Nia Haydel, Director, Academic
Center for Excellence
Dillard University

John Hetts, Sr. Director, Data
Science
Educational Results Partnership

Cheryl Hyman, Former Chancellor
City Colleges of Chicago

Pearl Iboshi, Director, IR and
Analysis
University of Hawaii

Kathy Johnson, Exec Vice
Chancellor
IUPUI

Chris Juarez, Professor,
Mathematics
Community College of Aurora

Mike Krause, Executive Director
Tennessee Higher Education
Commission

Donna Linderman, Dean
City University of New York

Teri Elkins Longacre, Vice Provost
and Dean, Undergraduate Student
Success
University of Houston

Teresa Lubbers, Commissioner
IN Commission for Higher
Education

Nivine Megahed, President
National Louis University

Nasser Paydar, Chancellor
IUPUI

Carol Puryear, Vice Chancellor
Tennessee Board of Regents

Tim Renick, VP for Enrollment
Management; Vice Provost
Georgia State University

Gary Rodwell, IT Specialist
University of Hawaii

Paula Myrick Short, Sr. Vice
Chancellor; Sr. Vice President for
Academic Affairs and Provost
University System of Houston
University of Houston

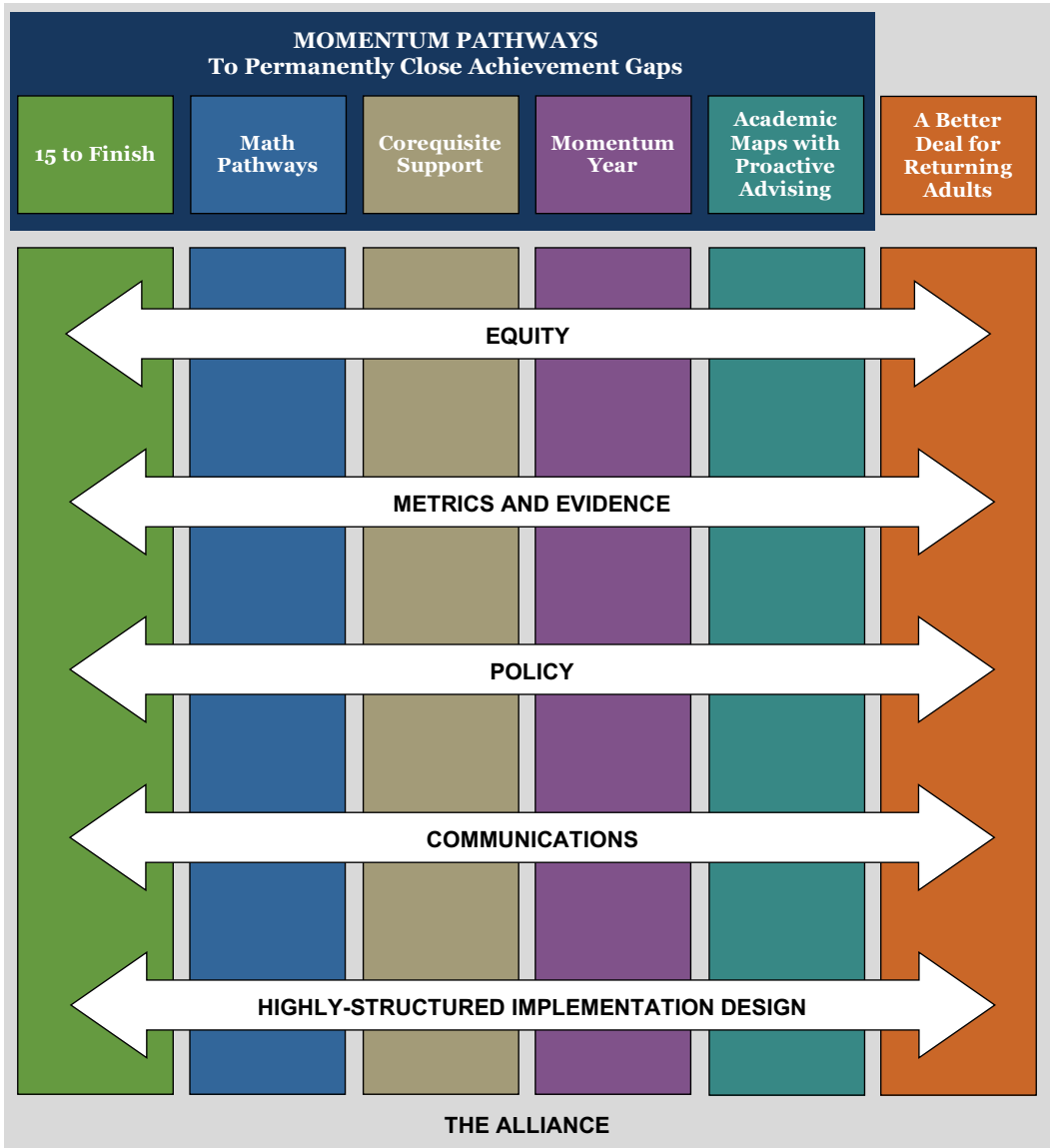Uri Treisman, Executive Director
The Charles A. Dana Center

Sarah Tucker, Chancellor
WV Council for Community and
Technical College Education

German Vargas, Assistant VP
College of Coastal Georgia

Steve Wrigley, Chancellor
University System of Georgia
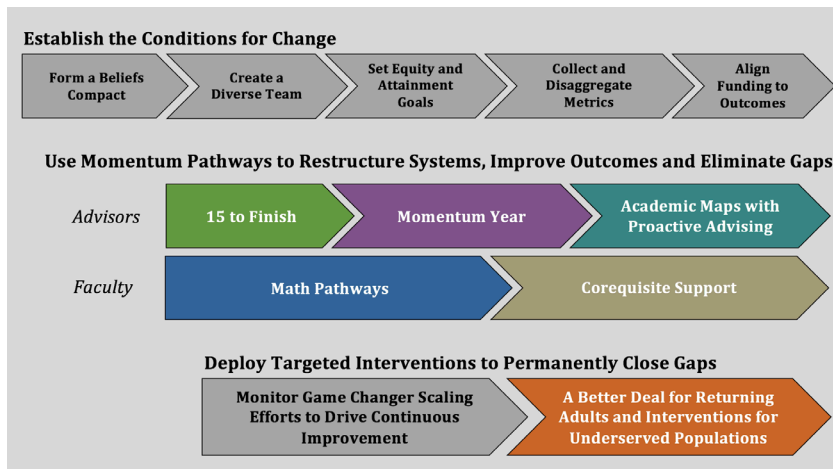
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COMPLETE COLLEGE AMERICA

The CCA Way
The Game Changers and Scaling Standards

MOMENTUM PATHWAYS
To Permanently Close Achievement Gaps

15 to Finish	Math Pathways	Corequisite Support	Momentum Year	Academic Maps with Proactive Advising	A Better Deal for Returning Adults

EQUITY

METRICS AND EVIDENCE

POLICY

COMMUNICATIONS

HIGHLY-STRUCTURED IMPLEMENTATION DESIGN

THE ALLIANCE

The Game Changer Strategies

15 to Finish	Boost the number of students who are on track for on-time graduation by encouraging enrollment in 15 credits each semester (30 credits per year, including summers). Financial aid dollars, as well as institutional process and practice, should support that standard.
Math Pathways	Ensure all students enroll in and complete gateway math in their first year by designing math courses that are aligned with the skills students need for their chosen program of study.
Corequisite Support	Increase gateway course completion within the first year by enrolling entering students into the college-level math and English courses, providing those who need additional help a concurrent course or lab that offers just-in-time academic support.
Momentum Year	Build early momentum so students meet key, first-year benchmarks: informed choice of a meta major or major, enrollment in 30 credits, completion of nine credits in the program of study and completion of gateway math and English requirements. Provide early support and guidance that empower decision making, including the use of interest assessments and labor-market data.
Academic Maps with Proactive Advising	Default students onto highly-structured academic maps that lay out a semester-by-semester plan toward on-time completion. Design maps to include 15 credits per semester (or 30 per year), indicate milestone and pre-requisite courses, and empower advisors to effectively monitor progress and provide intervention as needed.
A Better Deal for Returning Adults	Increase degree attainment by inviting adult learners back to complete their education, providing a redesigned system that offers accelerated courses, year-round enrollment and predictable schedules that fit their busy lives. Give credit for prior learning and experience and additional support to help students navigate the system.

MOMENTUM PATHWAYS

A Game-Changing Sequence

Establish the Conditions for Change

Form a Beliefs Compact → Create a Diverse Team → Set Equity and Attainment Goals → Collect and Disaggregate Metrics → Align Funding to Outcomes

Use Momentum Pathways to Restructure Systems, Improve Outcomes and Eliminate Gaps

Advisors — 15 to Finish → Momentum Year → Academic Maps with Proactive Advising

Faculty — Math Pathways → Corequisite Support

Deploy Targeted Interventions to Permanently Close Gaps

Monitor Game Changer Scaling Efforts to Drive Continuous Improvement → A Better Deal for Returning Adults and Interventions for Underserved Populations

Equity Scaling Standards

We believe in equity. We know we're all in this together – and our collective economic, cultural and civic futures depend upon success in higher education for *all* people, not just the most economically secure. We will move beyond lip service, recognizing that while data disaggregation is an essential starting point, we must do more in our pursuit of concrete actions proven to permanently close educational achievement gaps for those most often left behind: students of color, low-income students, first-generation students and older students. We support students of high ability and high need and reject low expectations.

Make a strong case

Making a strong case for equity in college completion work is itself an important component of a scale effort. The Complete College Alliance Team must review and present disaggregated success metrics to show that attainment goals cannot be accomplished without intentional efforts to close achievement gaps. The Complete College Alliance Team must communicate equity goals, as well as the related strategies for achieving them, in ways that will speak to and motivate various audiences to take action. (See Communications Scaling Standards for more.)

The Standard is met *when a clear, data-driven case for an equity agenda has been developed and publicized.*

Cultivate commitment

It is important that the Complete College Alliance Team dedicates itself to identifying and closing established achievement gaps. The team's Equity Lead must hold the team accountable for that commitment. It is equally important that all institutions, including the most selective, put forth their own commitment to permanently closing achievement gaps for all postsecondary students, not just the students currently enrolled at their institutions.

The Standard is met when *the Complete College Alliance Team and Institutional Leaders have publicly committed to a goal of closing achievement gaps by a date certain.*

Foster trust

When tackling issues as sensitive and complex as education, race, income, and employment, explicit efforts to build and nurture trust are essential. The Complete College Alliance Team must deepen partnerships with institutions that serve the targeted populations. Strategies must be customized to meet the context of these institutions, but not avoided because of that context. The advice of students, diversity experts, community organizations, and those with experience serving target populations must be heeded.

The Standard is met when *leaders of institutions serving targeted populations agree they have strong working relationships with higher education leaders and policymakers across the state or region and that their expertise and perspective influence decisions.*

Focus attention, support, and resources where they matter most

When a Complete College Alliance Team is committed to scaling college completion strategies, it must prioritize support for institutions that serve high populations of low-income, minority, and adult students by providing sufficient resources and support for these institutions to achieve scale.

The Standard is met when *institutions serving underrepresented populations agree they have the support necessary to scale and sustain completion and equity strategies.*

Align financial incentives to equity goals

If equity goals are at odds with state financial incentives and accountability measures, the Complete College Alliance Team should expect friction between policy leaders and institutions serving target populations, which in turn stagnates progress. Policy leaders must design funding formulas to incentivize the closing of achievement gaps and reward institutions that have demonstrated their commitment to serving underserved students.

The Standard is met when institutional funding is directly and explicitly tied to the outcomes of target populations based on race, age, or income.

Safeguard equity throughout scaling efforts

The Complete College Alliance Team, with leadership from its Equity Lead, must relentlessly monitor the results of scaling efforts to verify that they close gaps for underrepresented and lower-performing populations, and adjust as necessary. Structural changes may not be enough to close gaps, necessitating more targeted interventions to address the unique challenges of each underserved student population.

The Standard is met when the Complete College Alliance Team publishes data proving that the strategies they implemented narrowed achievement gaps.

Embed equity in each of the Scaling Standards

The work of creating more equitable outcomes must be continually top of mind for the Policy, Metrics and Evidence, Communications and Implementation Leads of the Complete College Alliance Team. While it is unrealistic to believe progress can be made without a single point of ownership, it is equally unlikely that the Equity Lead can make progress unless equity goals heavily influence the work of others on the Complete College Alliance Team. The Equity Lead must work directly with each team member to explore ways to embed equity goals into their own daily work.

The Standard is met when all members of the Complete College Alliance Team have engaged in meaningful conversation with the Equity Lead to focus their own efforts more intentionally on equity and have changed the way they do their work as a result.

For Complete College Alliance Teams and Campus Implementation Teams that commit to these scaling standards, Complete College America commits the following resources in return:

- **Disaggregated data** from the Complete College America collection process to help shape conversations and goal-setting and drive reform

- **Specialized projects** for minority-serving institutions

- **Sample communications language** that highlights the economic and moral imperatives for closing achievement gaps

- **Expert Advice** on constructing an outcomes-based funding model that appropriately rewards improvements with underrepresented populations

Metrics and Evidence Scaling Standards

We believe in evidence and facts. We do not fear the hard truths revealed through an honest assessment of the data, but instead realize that data are key to understanding our strengths, confronting our challenges and identifying solutions. Everyone – from the boardroom to the classroom - must engage in data analysis and the evaluations of results. Data professionals should be empowered to step up to join their fellow change agents, asserting their expertise to help drive continuous improvement.

If it matters, measure it

The common completion metrics focus on the most important measures of progress, completion, and equity. These simple, consistent measures provide immense value to the field and complement the rigorous research and causal evaluation that drive our work. The Complete College Alliance Team, with leadership from the Metrics and Evidence Lead, must regularly report these metrics to Complete College America and use them to produce digestible, actionable reports to advance their goals. (See Communications Scaling Standards for more.)

The Standard is met when Complete College Alliance Teams publicly share common completion, progress, and equity metrics.

Work deeply with data to drive innovation

Data collection on its own will not drive change. Change comes when people interact and internalize the data, draw their own conclusions and take action. Complete College Alliance Teams must use data to develop the problem statement that catalyzes planning and reform. (See Implementation Scaling Standards for more.)

The Standard is met when college completion and equity metrics are explicitly and consistently incorporated into the Complete College Alliance Team's problem statement, goals, and improvement strategies.

Empower data experts to be leaders in the movement

Data professionals must be more than producers of data, but rather leaders who guide decision-makers, helping them to leverage data to prioritize and focus college completion efforts. Data professionals are the watchdogs of success for all scaling efforts. They should be involved in the development of evaluation plans from the outset, help execute the plans and have access to necessary resources to support project evaluation. They must also help other members of the Complete College Alliance Team develop their own skills so that they can better understand and interpret data independently.

The Standard is met when the membership of the Complete College Alliance Team and Campus Implementations Teams include a data professional who generates data, translating it into actionable information that leads to meaningful recommendations incorporated into action plans.

Give voice to the silent through data

No data analysis can tell the full story until it disaggregates data by various student subgroups that have been underserved by higher education. While it may be tempting for the Complete College Alliance Team to use aggregated data to draw conclusions on the state of student success, the Metrics and Evidence and Equity Leads must insist that further analysis be conducted to account for the differential impact on various student groups. (See Equity and Implementation Scaling Standards for more.)

The Standard is met when *all reports related to completion and intervention implementations explicitly call out the challenges faced by different populations and the impact of interventions on those same populations.*

Support implementation at scale

The Complete College Alliance Team's Metrics and Evidence Lead and his or her counterparts within institutions must support Campus Implementation Teams by collecting and reviewing agreed upon student outcome data and other evaluation data reflecting the overall quality of the scaling effort. Descriptive data, particularly when it is collected as part of a large-scale effort should be sufficient to demonstrate the success of the initiative and areas in need of improvement. Where possible, the Complete College Alliance Team should support rigorous causal research to understand what elements of the intervention had the greatest impact on student performance. Everyone should understand that it takes time to see long-term impacts on completion, but when institutions and states scale, short- and long-term results will be revealed more swiftly. (See Implementation Scaling Standards for more.)

The Standard is met when *the Campus Implementation Teams have reported to the Complete College Alliance Team the qualitative and quantitative results of implementation efforts as soon as they are available.*

Communicate findings from data to drive reform

The Complete College Alliance Team's Data Lead should work with the Complete College Alliance Team to analyze all available data to understand the nature of the completion problem or the impact of an intervention. Data and communications professionals must work together to accurately represent the data and tell the most compelling story possible to drive reform. (See Communications Scaling Standards for more.)

The Standard is met when *a broad range of stakeholders can comfortably describe the lessons learned from the data and published reports are easily digestible and accurately represent the facts.*

For Complete College Alliance Teams and Campus Implementation Teams that commit to these scaling standards, Complete College America commits the following resources in return:

- **Set of industry standard metrics** that are clearly defined and reported by all Complete College America Alliance Members and a mechanism to report those metrics to CCA

- **Series of CCA-created reports** and products designed to facilitate the use of data

- **Support in creating state-level reports** designed to support completion efforts

- **Training, networks and support for data professionals** on the Complete College Alliance Team to understand how the expertise of data professionals fits into goal setting, policy, and implementation processes and to facilitate partnerships with communications staff

- **Data for national and in-state events** to support strategy implementation

- **A quantitative and qualitative evaluation framework** that includes measurement of short-, medium- and long-term outcomes that should be used to assess implementation success

- **Clear definitions, standards and templates** to help facilitate the data collection process to support the evaluation framework

- **Continued commitment to collect the Common Completion Metrics** and all implementation measures broken out by relevant demographic groups and data tools that allow data to be viewed for different demographic groups

- **On-demand assistance** with data collection, interpretation, and presentation as well as assistance with helping Alliance Members with resolve issues related to multiple data systems

Policy Scaling Standards

We believe in smart policy to accelerate and sustain systemic reforms. We will assert the scaling power of policy when it is evidence-based, pursued in an appropriate venue, developed transparently and crafted with implementation in mind. We know that good policy provides flexibility for institutions but does not compromise on equity, quality, or accountability for results. We must restore and sustain public investment in higher education because its benefits are broadly enjoyed by the public, not just privately. We respect the duty of elected and appointed policymakers to protect the public investment in higher education and demand better and more equitable returns for students and taxpayers.

Identify the policy's purpose

Policy can be used to set scale thresholds, define terms, lay out reporting requirements, or reinforce campus-driven reforms. Outdated laws and policies can stand in the way of progress unless amended. The first step of any discussion around policy is to identify the reason the policy is necessary.

The Standard is met when the Complete College Alliance Team's Policy Lead can clearly articulate the issue that the policy is intended to address.

Listen and learn before acting

The Complete College Alliance Team's Policy Lead must examine how others have tackled the problem, either through policy or practice, and whether those efforts were successful. This information should be shared broadly with policymakers within the state or region.

The Standard is met when the Complete College Alliance Team's Policy Lead has data-driven, evidence-based examples of successful policy across the country and uses those examples to inform policy proposals.

Select the venue with the greatest chance of success

If policy is warranted, it could be enacted through legislation, gubernatorial executive order, coordinating board policy, system policy, or institutional policy. The Complete College Alliance Team's Policy Lead must lead a discussion that considers the political environment, higher education governance structure, and stakeholder support or opposition to determine the best venue for the policy and its long-term sustainability, exercising particular caution when considering legislation.

The Standard is met when the Complete College Alliance Team's Policy Lead has discussed and documented the pros and cons of adopting policy in various venues and is confident the selected venue is most likely to achieve desired results.

Create and circulate a draft policy

Details matter, so a draft policy and the steps in the policymaking process should be crafted early on and made available to those who will be responsible for implementing it. The Governor, SHEEO agency, and key legislators should all be engaged early in the drafting process. Stakeholders must not only be asked to comment on the policy in concept, but also offer their unique perspective on the language that is used in its construction.

The Standard is met when a draft policy document has been received and reviewed by stakeholders.

Broadly solicit advice from experts and stakeholders

The Complete College Alliance Team's Policy Lead should use professional associations and designated government liaisons to surface possible improvements and objections to the policy. The feedback process must be done with an open mind and willingness to make adjustments. Feedback should not be taken at face value and instead should be evaluated against known data and established best practices. Doing so will limit the influence of anecdotes and unproven beliefs. The Complete College Alliance Team's Policy Lead should communicate with stakeholders about how their input was either incorporated into the policy or why it was not included.

The Standard is met when *all stakeholders expected to be impacted by the policy have had the opportunity to provide input and agree their input was not only solicited, but evaluated and considered.*

Provide exceptional support for the policymaking process

The Complete College Alliance Team's Policy Lead must proactively coordinate talking points, Q&A preparation, handouts, presentations/testimony, and other resources as needed to support the policy's enactment.

The Standard is met when *the policy's author and decision-makers agree that they had everything they needed throughout the process to enact an appropriate policy.*

Ensure robust communications throughout the policymaking process

The Complete College Alliance Team's Policy Lead must work with the Communications Lead to ensure that all affected practitioners are engaged in ongoing communication throughout the policymaking process. Intentional efforts must be made to ensure that faculty and staff -- not just Presidents and Provosts -- are informed about the proposal, aware of the successful passage of the policy, informed about why it was enacted, and clear on next steps for implementation. (See Communications Scaling Standards for more.)

The Standard is met when *all stakeholders and constituents who will be impacted by the policy are aware of its passage and understand the role they will play in implementation.*

Proactively launch the implementation and set expectations

The Complete College Alliance Team must proactively convene those who will lead the implementation of the policy and those who will execute it, establish expectations and milestones, and connect implementers to available resources. (See Implementation Scaling Standards for more.)

The Standard is met when *the right combination of people has been convened to work on implementation, supported by state or national resources when possible.*

Establish a feedback loop to ensure results

If the policy needs to be modified based on lessons learned during implementation, those suggestions should be incorporated into a future policy agenda. A retrospective analysis should be made publicly available, so that practitioners nationally can learn from others and further refine their own work. The feedback loop must identify existing policies or newly proposed policies that work against the goals of the reform, to both prevent bad policies from being adopted and improve the good policies that have been adopted.

The Standard is met when *those involved with the policymaking process have either confirmed that the policy reached its intended aim or have altered it to better do so.*

For Complete College Alliance Teams and Campus Implementation Teams that commit to these scaling standards, Complete College America commits the following resources in return:

- **Assistance prioritizing** potential policy agenda items and selecting an appropriate venue

- **Pragmatic advice and language review** during policy construction and drafting

- **Facilitation of the stakeholder dialogue** during the vetting process

- **In-person presentations or testimony** to inform policymakers about the national landscape

- **Direct communications and implementation support** upon the policy's enactment and evaluation support to analyze the policy's impact

- **Off-the-shelf resources** to support the policymaking process through Complete College America's publication entitled *New Rules*. This resource provides:
  - ➢ Detailed policy language to serve as a starting point for constructing a draft
  - ➢ A brief national policy scan
  - ➢ Questions to ask stakeholders and their expected perspectives for use in the vetting process
  - ➢ Talking points, Q&A Prep, and digestible data visuals to support the policymaking process

Communications Scaling Standards

We believe communication accelerates change. We will establish and drive mechanisms to enhance our connectedness, frequently and effectively sharing our reform efforts and stories of success. We will marshal public opinion toward a deeper understanding of the challenges facing our students and the solutions being championed by our movement, focusing all Americans on a shared vision for the future of higher education.

Empower communications experts to be leaders in the movement

The Complete College Alliance Team's Communications Lead will serve as the primary contact for Complete College America on all efforts related to communications and media strategy, including helping to identify opportunities within the state, region, or consortia. This individual must coordinate with other members of the Complete College Alliance Team and serve as a leader on advancing college completion.

The Standard is met when the Complete College Alliance Team and Campus Implementation Teams include a communications professional who makes meaningful recommendations about Alliance activities and drives momentum.

Develop a network of communications ambassadors

As Complete College Alliance Teams work to share successes and highlight stories from both within states and regions and around the country, their Communications Leads must cultivate a list of ambassadors, validators and additional communications professionals within their state or region who will help to share content throughout their networks. Amplifying the messages through this network will ensure broader reach and awareness around college completion strategies and the role various players have in implementation.

The Standard is met when the Complete College Alliance Team's Communications Lead has compiled a list of individuals willing to serve as communications ambassadors.

Develop a communications plan for college completion efforts

The Communications Lead must work with the full Complete College Alliance Team and communications ambassadors to assess audiences, construct key messages and lay out which communications tactics will be useful in advancing college completion, including concrete goals on outreach, audience growth, and other outcomes.

The Standard is met when a communications plan is developed that includes proposed tactics and concrete goals.

Tailor messaging and tactics to speak to and motivate various audiences

Advancing a movement requires understanding of the backgrounds and motivations of a variety of audiences, particularly as it relates to equity goals and strategies. The Complete College Alliance Team's Communications Lead - as well as communications ambassadors - must understand different perspectives and craft a communications strategy that will build buy-in from those who are critical to the successful scaling of strategies. Effective communications should leverage the data in the form of compelling visualizations. Information should be reported publicly to key stakeholders in the form of concise and assertive materials that focus on the problem, the impact on students, and proposed solutions.

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The Standard is met when all Complete College Alliance Team Members intentionally communicate with diverse institutions and individuals, within their state or region, with language that represents the shared values within the planned strategies.

Regularly showcase efforts, successes and stories

Based on information received from Implementation and Data Leads, the Communications Lead must curate written, recorded, and presented content designed to highlight leaders who are guiding efforts and capture videos of students who are impacted by the strategies that have been implemented. Data should be integrated wherever possible in digestible manner that tells an accurate story. (See Data Scaling Standards for more.) These tactics help share the story of the reform and highlight the great work underway. In coordination with other leaders, success stories should also be shared with local and regional press. Additionally, information related to the goals of interventions, progress being made on implementation, and decision points that define the intervention should be shared across stakeholders.

Complete College Alliance Teams, under the leadership of the Communications Lead, will create local mechanisms to distribute content, including monthly newsletters, success events, press conferences and social media accounts (for example: @CompleteCollegeWyoming).

The Standard is met when the Complete College Alliance Team has developed customized, local mechanisms to distribute stories of implementation and success, and all impacted stakeholders are informed of efforts.

Leverage CCA's broad stakeholder network and robust online platform to further spotlight successes

Complete College America will provide a robust online portal that will serve as a hub for our regional, state, and national efforts. The platform will be an activity center of the college completion movement, showcasing Alliance work and regularly updated content on implementation efforts. In addition to providing content for the platform, Complete College Alliance Teams, led by their Communications Lead, should share their stories and successes with Complete College America so that they can be distributed more broadly, including to national press as appropriate.

The Standard is met when the Complete College Alliance Team's Communications Lead provides a calendar for submitting content to highlight Alliance member's efforts.

Monitor success of communications efforts and refine tactics

Communications efforts must have clear goals on outreach, audience growth, and other measurable outcomes. This will include: number of visitors to the CCA platform Alliance Member page, followers on social media, media mentions and number of publications produced. The Complete College Alliance Team's Communications Lead should work with other team members and communications ambassadors to ensure constant refinement and deployment of new tactics, as necessary.

The Standard is met when Communications Leads have developed and are actively tracking the metrics and goals against which they will measure success of their communications strategies.

For Complete College Alliance Teams and Campus Implementation Teams that commit to these scaling standards, Complete College America commits the following resources in return:

- **Support in the development of communications plans** and tactics to highlight the Alliance member's work and status of implementations.

- **An online platform** to highlight state efforts, including an individual state page that collects stories, resources and data on state implementation efforts.

- **Opportunities for further exposure** through Complete College America's existing network - including monthly newsletters, standalone video content and a venue to showcase the Alliance member's work at national and regional events.

- **Communication templates** that can be deployed within institutions that are customizable with the institutions' own branding.

Implementation Scaling Standards

We believe in effective implementation. We will develop and act on clear, concise, highly-structured, evidence-based and goal-oriented implementation plans designed to achieve dramatic improvements in student success. The measurable goals and the plans to achieve them must be equally owned by administrators and faculty with a clear understanding of their responsibilities for generating results. We expect action at scale and with urgency, ensuring all students are provided the opportunity to benefit from reform efforts. We will deploy best practices where they exist and work to discover new solutions where they do not.

Focus on systemic change

Systemic problems and pervasive challenges to college completion at the state, system, and institutional level are revealed through a careful examination of the data. These problems require targeted, large-scale reforms that are rooted in a sound understanding of the causes of the problem and the solutions that are most effective for addressing them. Familiarity with the research and the most effective practices in the field are critical to implementing a scalable reform strategy. Complete College Alliance Teams must communicate the nature of the systemic problems and the strategies that can solve them to the stakeholders who must be involved in the solution – including faculty, administrators, system and state leaders.

The Standard is met when a Complete College Alliance Team drafts a problem statement and proposed set of strategies for key state-level stakeholders.

Remain steadfast in resolving the most critical issues

Systemic change must be evaluated through the lens of Time, Choice, and Structure. Strategies worth pursuing must reduce time and credits to degree. They must help students develop a sense of purpose by providing them the critical information they need to choose a program of study. Strategies must build student momentum in the first year by increasing the likelihood students will complete gateway courses, earn 30 credits and take at least nine credits in their program path. Increases in on-time completion should be achieved through a smooth and accelerated pathway that both nudges students in the right direction and proactively advises them when they veer off course.

The Standard is met when the Complete College Alliance Team has verified that its proposed set of strategies meet the test of Time, Choice, and Structure and has evidence to support that.

Develop a memorandum of understanding for institutions

The Complete College Alliance Team must facilitate the implementation of its priority strategies and set a timeline for achieving scale. The Complete College Alliance Team should draft a memorandum of understanding for institutional leaders, faculty and staff with a clear charge: to commit to implementing and scaling recommendations on an agreed upon timeline. The MOU should be developed with each stakeholder in mind, clarifying the work to be done and their role in its completion.

The Standard is met when the State Alliance team drafts a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that outlines the strategy to be deployed, the date implementation will begin, the performance metrics to be measured, the level of scale to be achieved and the date by which the reform will reach scale.

Confirm broad commitment

The Complete College Alliance team must build institutional and stakeholder buy-in from the start. Ongoing engagement with various stakeholders throughout the strategy development process will lay a sound foundation of support. Leaders must be intentional about aligning the strategy with other relevant completion strategies and should recognize that some strategies might need to be set aside in favor of this Alliance Team initiatives. When the time is right and you know which institutions are ready to move forward, hold a day-long challenge event to launch the initiative and invite committed institutions to sign the MOU. The MOU should be signed by a representative from the key stakeholders that are critical to the success of the strategy, to include faculty, administrators and other institutional leaders.

The Standard is met when institutions committed to implementing a reform at scale sign the memorandum of understanding (MOU).

Gear plans to achieve results

The Complete College Alliance Team must convene Campus Implementation Teams to develop plans for scaling the strategy that include clear timelines and verifiable action steps. All members of the Campus Implementation Team should set and then commit to ambitious targets on the number of students to be served and the results they expect to achieve. The institutional targets should align with goals established by the overall Alliance initiative. Each campus should be clear about how they are contributing to a scaled solution. Campus Implementation Teams should rely on the expertise of national experts who have successfully implemented the reforms. Institutional plans must be submitted to the Complete College Alliance Team, which will monitor progress.

The Standard is met when all institutions submit action plans with clear targets on the number and percent of students to be served, results that will be achieved and the actions to be taken to the Complete College Alliance Team for approval.

Don't reinvent; customize

Campus Implementation Teams should identify the proven evidence-based models to replicate. The institutions should customize the model to their institution's context, circumstances and resources. If there is uncertainty about which specific model to replicate, build prototypes to test which model is best for your institution's students. It is critical that institutions make use of curricula, syllabi, advising protocols, policies and practices that have been tested and proven effective by early adopters. Campus Implementation Teams should curate resources and adapt them to their needs. Efforts to innovate should be done with a full understanding of the systemic nature of the problem, what has been learned from successful reforms and what problems have yet to be solved to maximize impact on student outcomes.

The Standard is met when the Campus Implementation Team identifies the implementation design that is most appropriate for their institutional context and accesses the external resources available to effectively replicate the reform.

Don't pilot; commit

Pilots are for unproven strategies. They imply a future decision point to pursue or abandon the intervention. Evidence-based strategies, by contrast, must be pursued with a full commitment to scale from the beginning, understanding that the path may include phasing in, testing, and making adjustments to refine implementation. Parallel models are complicated and inequitable, and the Campus Implementation Teams must seek to limit their duration - or ideally - eliminate them altogether.

The Standard is met when *the strategy is implemented on time and at scale.*

Ensure early momentum

It is critical that plans not only build and sustain momentum for students, but also for those implementing the reforms. Designing key benchmarks that result in early wins is key. There is no greater motivator than seeing the impact of reforms on students. Identify a data collection strategy to determine if efforts are effective both in terms of the student performance and their experience. Focus on outcomes that can be measured immediately, such as changes in enrollment patterns and completion of gateway courses. Quickly review the data and disseminate it to all involved to highlight positive results that confirm that hard work is paying off. Celebrating accomplishments will help build the will to take on the next challenge.

The Standard is met when *early results are measured, shared and celebrated.*

Measure, monitor, and mend

Just as important as measuring the positive impact of efforts is to use that same data to make the necessary adjustments to achieve maximum impact. The Campus Implementation Teams must quickly analyze the quantitative and qualitative outcome data to identify challenges and get to work on resolving them. Focus on whether the strategy has successfully closed equity gaps. (See Equity and Data Scaling Standards for more.)

The Standard is met when *those involved in the reform develop and implement a short- and long-term plan for improving the strategy, including specific steps to ensure equity.*

Sustain scale through organizational reforms and policy

Campus Implementation Teams should use data from their implementation efforts to show the impact on revenue, operational efficiency, and student outcomes and advocate for the necessary organizational reforms and budgetary adjustments to sustain reforms. Campus Implementation Teams, in coordination with the Complete College Alliance Team, should identify a policy agenda that amends outdated laws and policies and sustains the reforms for the future. (See Policy Scaling Standards for more.)

The Standard is met when *institutions have achieved scale and maintained scale for at least three academic years.*

For Complete College Alliance Teams and Campus Implementation Teams that commit to these scaling standards, Complete College America commits the following resources in return:

- **Planning opportunities** with the Complete College Alliance Team to identify the strategies to implement and the key steps for implementing them

- **Standard Memoranda of Understanding** for institutions to sign, signaling their commitment to clear outcomes

- **Planning session** with Complete College America staff and the Complete College Alliance Team to lead the implementation effort of a specific strategy or strategies and ensure fidelity to all Scaling Standards

- **Agenda planning, written resources, and content experts for an initial convening** to roll out the reform effort and to gain institutional commitments

- **Agenda planning, templates, content experts, and facilitation** for a convening of Campus Implementation Teams to develop concrete implementation plans

- **Ongoing connection with national content experts** and on-demand support from Complete College America staff for troubleshooting during the implementation process

- **Comprehensive collection of written resources**, artifacts, and implementation guides to support campus-level work

Expectations of Alliance Members

We believe in this Alliance. We are impatient reformers, agents of change, and system disruptors from all walks of life and positions of influence – equipped with evidence and urgently driven because our country's future depends upon our success. We must be as diverse as America yet stronger together as we jointly lead and collaborate to push for substantial and sustainable increases in achievement and completion for all students. We will accelerate our pace as we run toward problems, not away from them.

Create and coordinate a Complete College Alliance Team

Team members must be representatives who are committed to college completion and equity goals, willing to dedicate time and effort to the work of the team, and best positioned to act as strategic thought partners and leaders. The team must include leads for Equity, Metrics, Policy, Communications, and Implementation (2-year and 4-year). The team must operate strategically and determine the best levers to drive action given the political environment and governance structure within which it operates. The Alliance Team should also strive to build parallel teams at all public institutions to help empower the work at scale.

Attend the Summer Action Summit and develop annual plans

Each year, the Complete College Alliance Team will develop an annual plan that includes clear delegation of responsibilities and timelines for action. It is crucial that all team members attend the Summer Action Summit, since this event provides dedicated time and resources to facilitate that planning process.

Convene quarterly with Complete College America staff

Annual plans and goals must be tracked on an ongoing basis, including regular meetings of the Complete College Alliance Teams. At least quarterly, these meetings should include Complete College America staff. These meetings will help CCA staff better coordinate technical assistance needs and support action plans.

Promote the CCA Annual Convening and send a strong delegation

To build a movement, we must open the doors. The Complete College Alliance Team, in addition to ensuring team members attend the convening, should promote the importance of the event throughout their networks and encourage broad attendance of policymakers, institutional leaders, and faculty.