

# Using Improvement Science to Bolster the Implementation of a College-Based Student Success Plan

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# Graduation Initiative 2025

In 2016, the Chancellor's Office of the California State University (CSU) - the largest US public university system - launched an ambitious effort to increase 4 and 6 year graduation rates. Each CSU campus is challenged to meet the graduation benchmarks while closing degree attainment achievement gaps for under-served students.



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To accomplish Graduation Initiative 2025, each campus received benchmark goals. Many campuses set internal benchmarks. The College of Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences (CAHSS) of CSUMB received among the most ambitious benchmarks for the campus.

<b><u>Graduation Initiative 2025 Goals</u></b>			
<b><u>Graduation Rates</u></b>	<b><u>CSU System</u></b>	<b><u>CSUMB</u></b>	<b><u>CAHSS</u></b>
First Time Freshmen 4YR:	40%	44%	57%
First Time Freshmen 6YR:	70%	63%	66%
Transfer Students 2YR:	45%	46%	61%
Transfer Students 4YR:	85%	80%	84%
URM Gap	0%	0%	0%
Pell Grant Gap	0%	0%	0%



# Within College Consensus Building

Proactively building on the CSUMB campus Student Success Plan (Otter Promise) and incorporating GI 2025, CAHSS laid foundations and built consensus across faculty and staff.

Our efforts targeted precise steps toward improving our students success rates. This 2 year effort culminated in numerous desired outcomes proposed by faculty, staff, and students. Consensus building clustered outcomes into 19 goals that fall into 4 domains:

- Becoming a Student Ready College
- Timely Degree Acquisition
- Ensuring a High Quality and Relevant Curriculum
- Holistic Wellness



# Building Partnerships

Through our consensus building, we realized accomplishing our goals would take partnership outside the college, and in many cases, outside of purely academic campus units (e.g. Student Affairs), and yet the structures for creating and sustaining such partnerships were largely missing.

How would we build structures internal to the college that would help us improve on efforts where partnership is necessary for improvement?

Could we utilize improvement science techniques to (re)organize our work in a way that makes such partnership easier to accomplish?



# Driving Success

Employing driver diagrams, we re-visited the results of the 2 year planning process, focused on the 4 domains of student success we identified as common aims, and integrated the goals we generated in each domain into primary and secondary drivers.

We learned we need to formalize and leverage *existing* partnerships to address two of our domain aims: Timely Degree Acquisition and Becoming a Student Ready College.

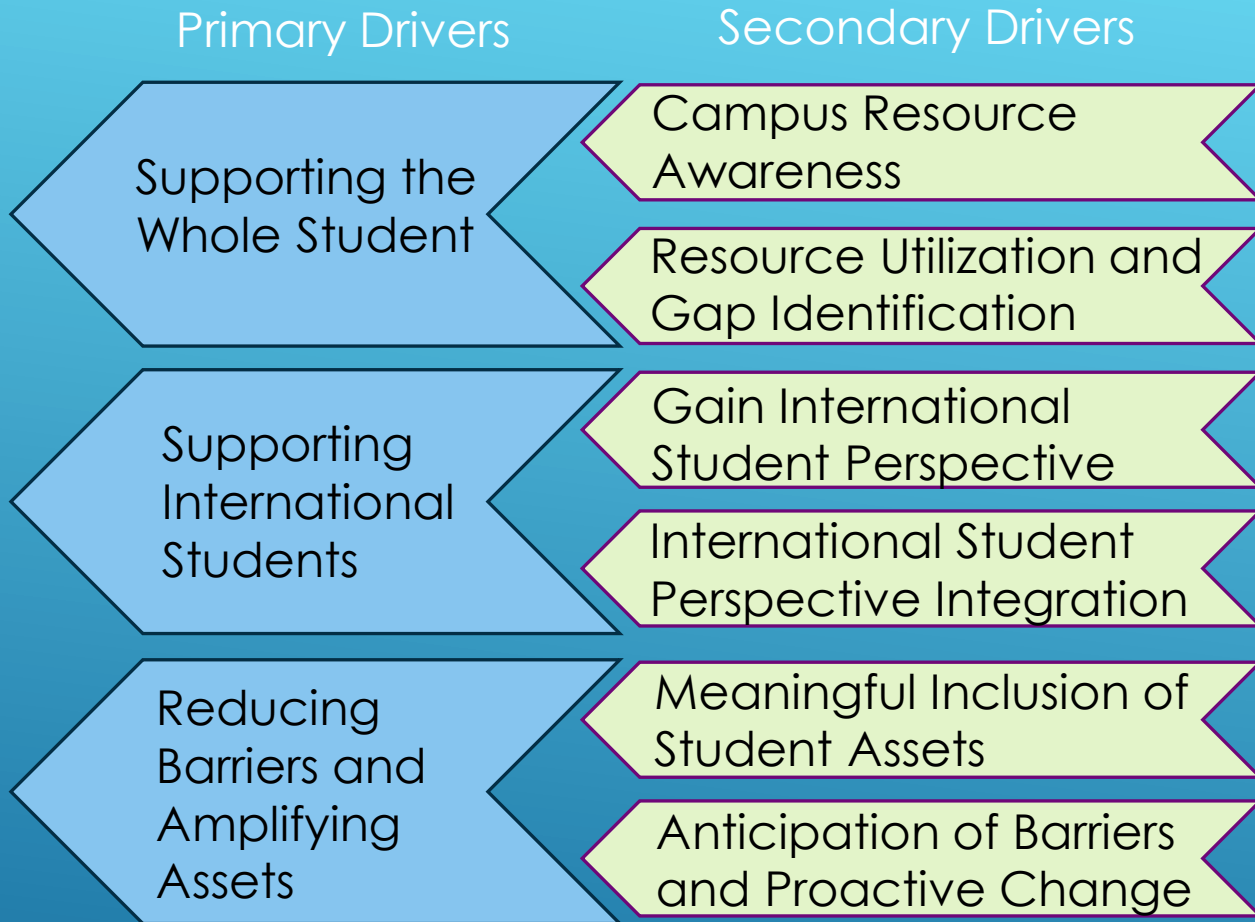
Moreover, we need to develop *new* partnerships as foundations to address the remaining two of our domain aims: Holistic Wellness and Development of a High Quality & Relevant Curriculum.



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# Developmental Aim #1

By 2021, Establish and Engage Partnerships across Campus to Support Holistic Wellness



## Change Ideas



Efforts Already Underway: Campus assets mapping;

# Developmental Aim #2

By 2021, Develop and Refine a CQI Approach that Ensures Access to a High Quality, Relevant Curriculum

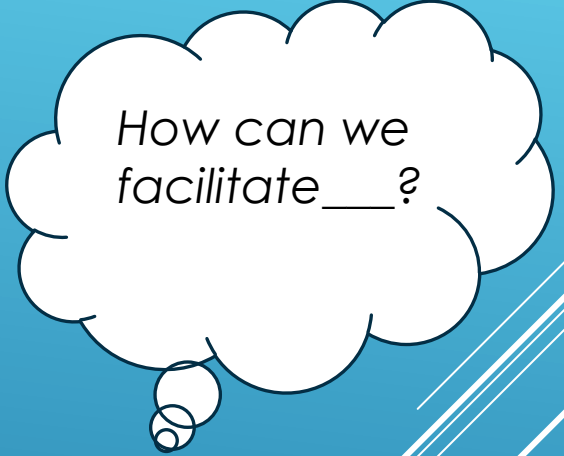
## Primary Drivers

- Integrate Student Success with Program Review
- Integrate FYS into College Aims
- Deepen Skills Development within and across Programs

## Secondary Drivers

- Identify Successful Pilots
- Assess Program-Specific Interventions
- Identify Common Skills in CAHSS FYS Courses
- Realize Value of FYS to Student Life Cycle
- Articulate Value of Minors and Certifications
- Capitalize on Interdisciplinarity

## Change Ideas



Efforts Already Underway: Internship pipeline (Pixar, Monterey County)



# Improvement Aim #2

By 2025, Close the Equity Gap and Meet College Goals for Timely Degree Acquisition

## Primary Drivers

Clear Curricular Pathways

Integrate Study Abroad to Timely Progression

Remove Administrative Barriers

## Secondary Drivers

Navigable Curriculum from the Outside

Predictable Course Scheduling

Institutionalize Study Abroad Articulations

Integrate Study Abroad into Pathways

Streamline Degree Verification

Streamline Articulations and Substitutions

## Change Ideas

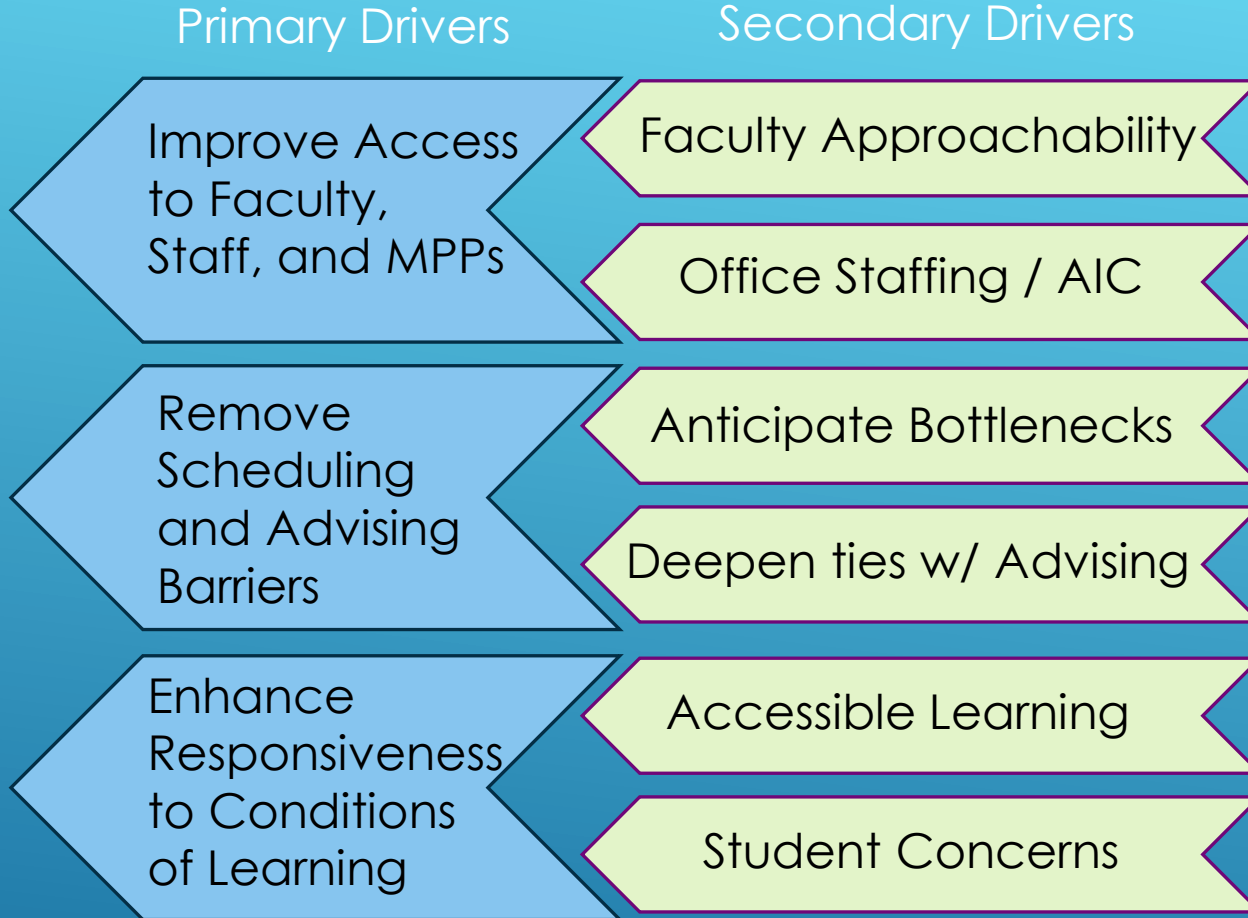
How do we get better at \_\_\_\_\_?

Efforts Already Underway: SmartPlanner implementation; Typically offered courses project; Proposed graduation counselors focus group



# Improvement Aim #1

By 2021, Enhance Student Belonging by Realizing a Student Ready College



## Change Ideas



Efforts Already Underway: College “Out” Calendar implemented in 2018 ; Campus Office Hours Policy passed in 2019 ; Advising Focus Group conducted in 2019; Enrollment Management with Chairs and GE Director is ongoing; Accessible Spaces



# College Partnerships reaching beyond the College

Given the need to establish and formalize partnerships, often with units outside of Academic Affairs, we established improvement communities inside the college as a structure to drive improvement by reaching beyond the college.

These improvement communities are faculty-led, aims-focused, and partnered with clinicians, student serving professionals, and directors of units that support improvement on campus

Four improvement communities, two currently in practice, with the remaining two commencing Fall 2020.



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# CAHSS Improvement Communities

CAHSS improvement communities leverage understandings from both the Scholar Practitioner Model, which is well-accepted in university academic affairs, and from Research Practice Partnerships, like Carnegie's Networked Improvement Communities.

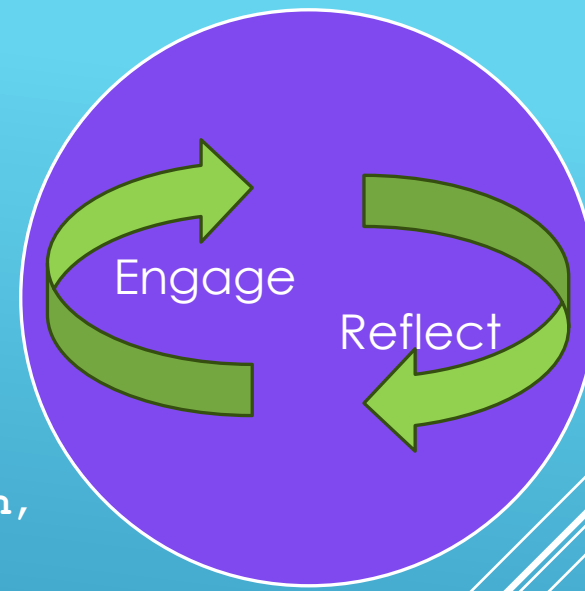
We adapted CAHSS Improvement Communities to function in a solely Higher Ed, shared governance setting - where each partner brings their own vantage point of expertise and their diverse experiences within their specific domains.



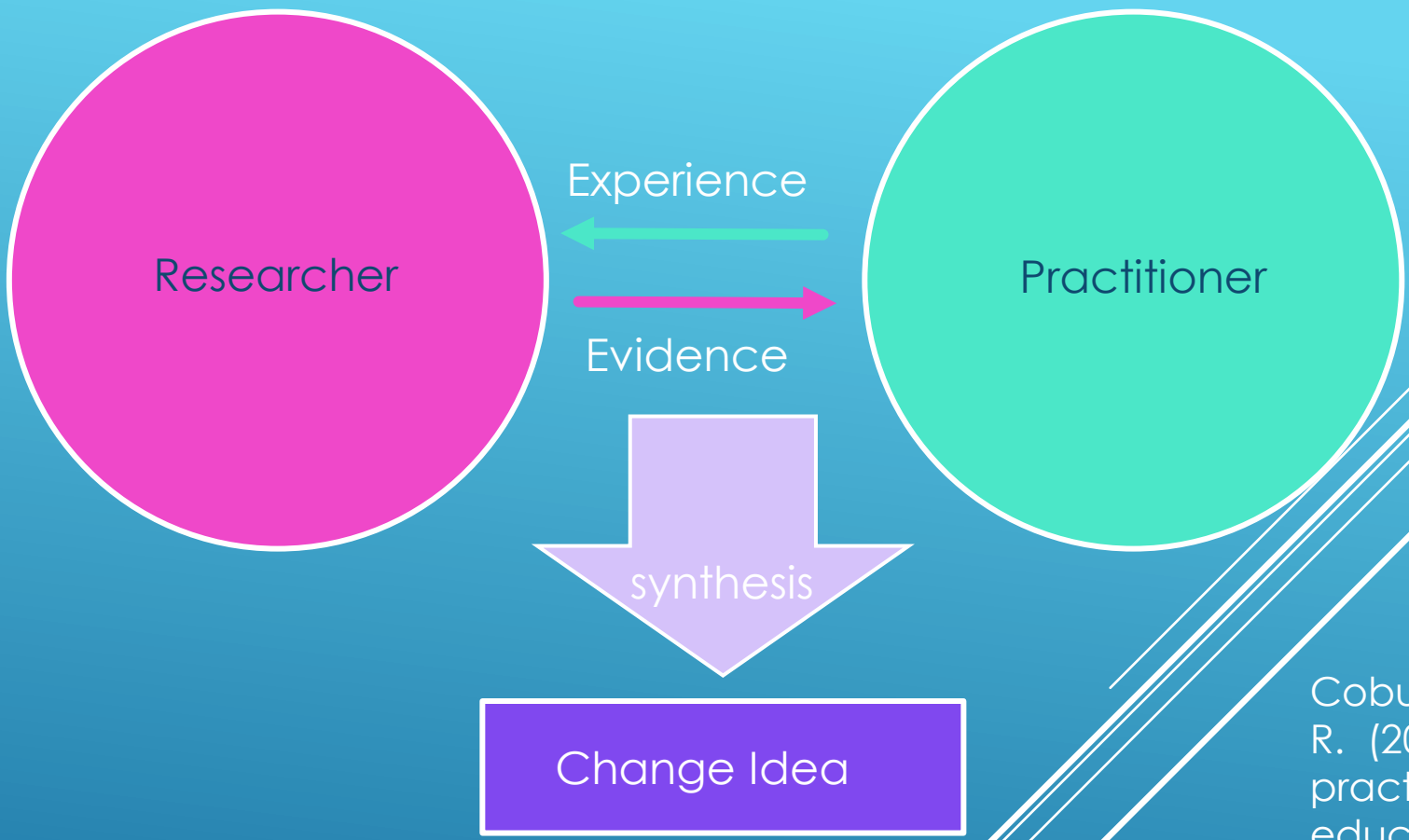
# Scholar Practitioner Model

“The term scholar practitioner expresses an ideal of professional excellence **grounded in theory and research**, informed by **experiential knowledge**, and motivated by personal values, political commitments, and ethical conduct. Scholar practitioners are committed to the well-being of clients and colleagues, to **learning new ways of being effective**, and to conceptualizing their work **in relation to broader organizational, community, political, and cultural contexts**. Scholar practitioners explicitly reflect on and assess the impact of their work. Their professional activities and the knowledge they develop are **based on collaborative and relational learning through active exchange within communities of practice and scholarship.**”

McClintock (2004)



# Research Practice Partnership



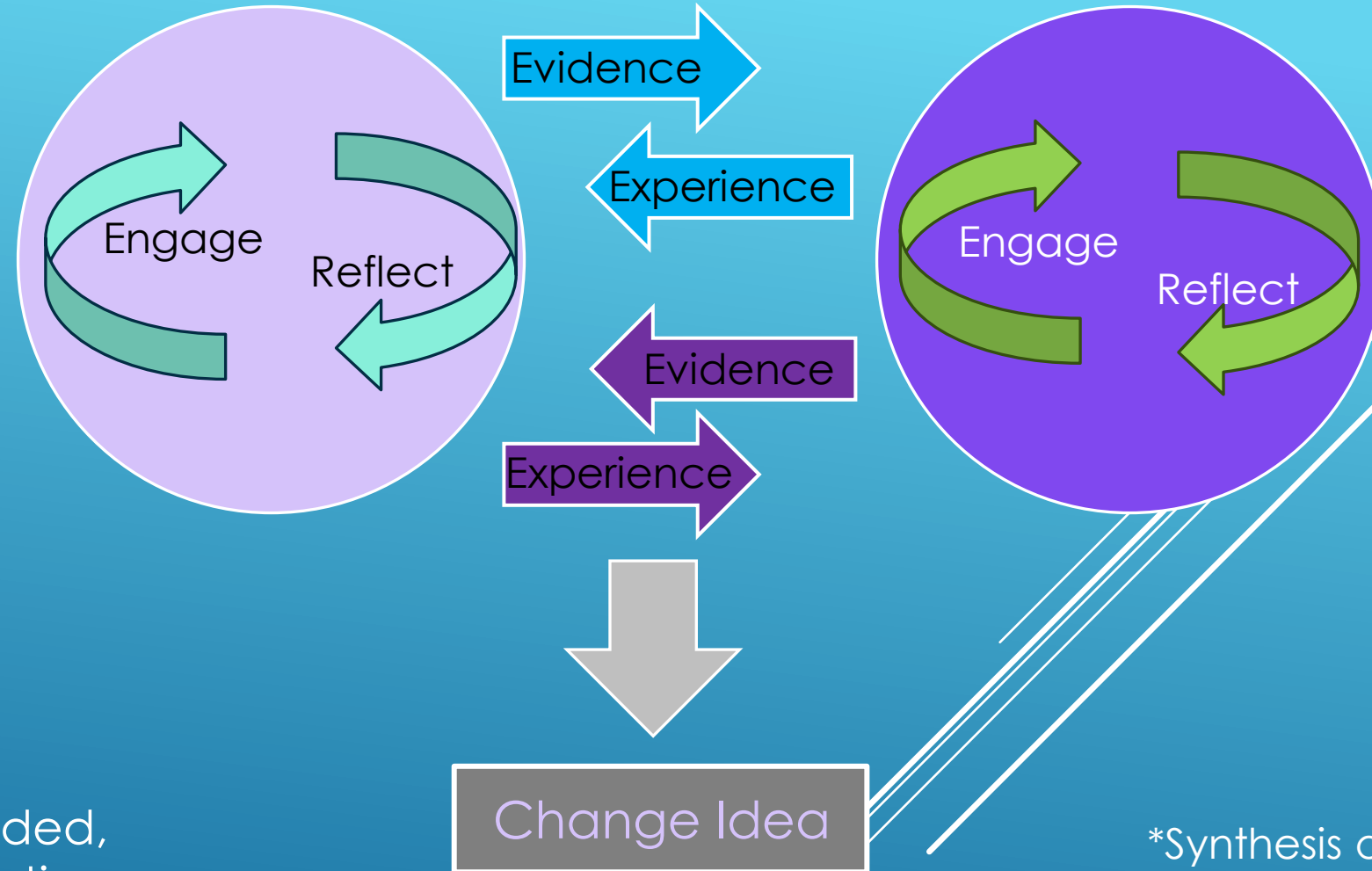
Long term, open-ended, mutualistic collaborations between researchers and practitioners designed to address issues of practice

Coburn, C. E. , & Penuel, W. R. (2016). Research–practice partnerships in education: Outcomes, dynamics, and open questions. **Educational Researcher**, 45(1), 48–54.

Coburn & Penuel (2016)

# Scholar Practitioner Partnership

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Long term, open-ended, mutualistic collaborations between **sets of scholar-practitioners** designed to address **both** issues of practice **and issues of professional growth**

\*Synthesis of RPP and SPM



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# Holistic Wellness Improvement Community

HOME

DISCUSSION FORUM & GROUP EMAIL

DOCUMENTS & FILES

CONTACT US

## Welcome to the CAHSS Holistic Wellness Improvement Community in support of student success!

**A Message from the Dean's Office:** The Office of the Dean is committed to supporting this key domain of student success for the College and the University. For more information about how holistic wellness is identified within the College's Student Success Plan, [please click here.](#)

Rectangular Ship



Our Fall Meetup welcomed our partners from Health & Wellness Services. Donations from CAHSS faculty and staff were collected for the CSUMB Basic Needs Initiative (shown below):



### Upcoming Events & Opportunities

**Spring Meetup**  
Wednesday, March 4  
2-4 pm  
504-1005  
Dean's Suite  
Conference Room

Our Holistic Wellness Improvement Community focuses on establishing and engaging campus partnerships to support the whole student.

Our partners include the CARE team from Student Affairs (coordinators of services for distressed students), the Personal Growth & Counseling Center, the Campus Health Center, Student Disability Resources, "Exercise is Medicine", Suicide Prevention, and many others.



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# Timely Degree Acquisition Improvement Community

Our latest improvement community focuses on supporting timely degree attainment through equity-minded partnerships

Our partners include Academic Advising, the Cooperative Learning Center (tutoring), Institutional Assessment & Research, the Office of Inclusive Excellence, the First Year Seminar, and the Otter Cross-Cultural Center



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# Results within Improvement Communities

Both Improvement Communities have been well-attended. We have had a great deal of interest from additional campus partners and have decided to open the communities to any faculty member, regardless of their college, and have invited them to join as well.

In response to a conversation in the fall meet-up, Holistic Wellness has identified a signature pilot project currently being proposed for Fall 2020 involving the conversion of a space in the new CAHSS building to serve students in a collaborative “Clinic without Walls” effort that brings Counseling referrals and service to students where they are.

The improvement community is currently working on determining assessment metrics for the pilot



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# Results beyond CAHSS

Our first two Improvement Communities also expanded collaboration *among* our partners.

The Timely Degree Acquisition Improvement Community collaborates within and across university units (e.g., Academic Advising, First-Year Seminar, Tutoring, Registrar, and Academic Departments). Each unit brings its own experiences and knowledge to the table when considering how to eliminate equity gaps in degree attainment. The community creates a structure for coordination of common efforts often being done inside of academic 'silos'.

Through collaborative discussions with Tutoring and Academic Advising, we're planning pilots to reduce equity gaps in course completion (as identified through the CSU Graduation Initiative dashboard), and are developing efforts aimed at improving enrollment management and scheduling for general education courses in written and oral communication.



# Conclusions

We are still underway and gaining momentum. In Fall 2020 we will launch our remaining improvement communities.

The first two years of planning and CAHSS Improvement Communities illustrates the value of Improvement Science techniques. We continue to apply this lens and methods to:

Develop Driver Diagrams that distill and organize our previous collaborative work toward clear aims

Deploy Improvement Communities as a method for building and sustaining collaborations with multiple partners toward shared aims



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# References

Bryk, A. S., Gomez, L. M., Grunow, A., & LeMahieu, P. (2015). *Learning to improve: How America's schools can get better at getting better*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Coburn, C. E. & Penuel, W. R. (2016). Research–practice partnerships in education: Outcomes, dynamics, and open questions. *Educational Researcher*, 45(1), 48–54.

McClintock, C. (2004). The scholar-practitioner model. In A. DiStefano, K. E. Rudestam, & R. J. Silverman (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of distributed learning* (pp. 393-396). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.



# Citation and Abstract

Drummond, A. J. & Grobman, K. H. (2020, April). Using improvement science to bolster the implementation of a college-based student success plan. Poster presented at the Summit on Improvement in Education of the Carnegie Foundation, San Francisco, CA.

We detail an effort in the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences at California State University, Monterey Bay to address the accountability metrics of CSU's Graduation Initiative 2025. Following two years of work with faculty and staff to co-create college-specific student success goals, we report on the establishment and use of improvement communities to 1) identify and implement change ideas, 2) gain and strengthen faculty buy-in, and 3) ensure continuous quality improvement for this work. This poster will be of interest to those working to incorporate improvement science into student success implementation efforts within higher education's shared governance model.

