



## California Guided Pathways

February 15, 2016

### Greetings Pathways trailblazers!

Two weeks ago we completed a successful and sold out IEPI Pathways workshop for Southern California. Interest in the workshop was at an all time high across the state, so we even [livestreamed](#) it. You can visit [www.3cm mediasolutions.org/events/IEPI/](http://www.3cm mediasolutions.org/events/IEPI/) to view Davis Jenkins's keynote address and panel presentations on the four pillars of the college GPS (Guided Pathways System):

- clarifying the path
- helping students enter a path
- keeping students on the path
- and ensuring the students are learning.

We also had presentations on how to go about discussing and implementing the college GPS at our colleges while being mindful of the particular cultures of our individual colleges and an intersegmental & system panel with representatives from the CSU and UC systems that highlighted the communication challenges in ensuring a smooth transition of our students to the universities to get the bachelor's degrees our students desire and California so desperately needs to strengthen our economy.



I have more things to say about the two IEPI Pathways workshops but I want to remind you first about the deadline of **February 28** to get your [applications](#) in to become part of the [California Guided Pathways Project](#).

[Two webinars over CCCConfer](#) will be held on February 15 and 16 to answer questions about the application. With the recent announcement of the \$150 million one-time funds in the Governor's proposed budget for guided pathways, the number one question

colleges have is how does it fit in with the California Guided Pathways Project? The answer has two parts:

1. **Difference between the two:** The California Guided Pathways Initiative will help 15-20 colleges implement an integrated, institution-wide approach to student achievement by creating structured educational experiences that support each student from point of entry to attainment of high-quality postsecondary credentials and careers. It has a clearly defined model, timeframe, and terms of participation, and is being managed by national experts and a California-based advisory committee.

The proposed \$150 million is for one-time grants to colleges to integrate recent state investments and redesign academic pathways in a way that promotes better course taking decisions and increase the number of students who earn a certificate or degree. The Chancellor's Office and the Board of Governors will be responsible for statewide implementation of the grant program. Full details on the state program will be known in late June when the state budget has been finalized.

2. **Participating in both:** The proposed state program complements the California Guided Pathways project. Colleges will be able to participate in both initiatives and the Chancellor encourages colleges to consider applying to both. Colleges that are selected to participate in the California Guided Pathways Project will be well poised to continue this work with funding provided through the state budget. In addition, colleges participating in the California Guided Pathways Project will be able to commence work sooner and benefit from a robust set of technical assistance and support designed especially for that initiative.

The February 15th webinar is at 2:00PM to 2:45PM at (888) 886-3951 with PIN: 953012 ([click here for the link](#)). The February 16 webinar is at 4:30PM to 5:15PM at (888) 886-3951 with PIN: 305457 ([click here for the link](#)).



Benefits of becoming part of the CA Guided Pathways Project include: improvement of your enrollment numbers, a significant increase in your college completion rates, and closing the equity gaps on your campus. As Mt. SAC Academic Senate President **Jeffrey Archibald** noted at the IEPI Pathways Workshop, although the application with the pathways readiness self-assessment can seem a bit daunting, the process of filling it out as a college is valuable because it gets the college to re-evaluate how it presents itself to the students.

*Is my college ready for today's California community college students?  
Does my college have the commitment and ability to make the needed changes in its system to become ready for today's students?*



I'll close this letter with two important points (among many!) from **Davis Jenkins's** presentations. The students in the interviews he showed thought the problems they had figuring out how to navigate the college system was because of them not being smart enough. They had been messaged so many times in high school that they weren't smart enough or ready for the universities that they had internalized it and were ready to give up their only chance to improve their own and their family's lives. Plenty of national research makes the compelling case that the problem is us—our confusing system—not the students. We have a moral and ethical obligation to move away from the cafeteria-style model that is failing our students. As Davis noted, we in California have a powerful faculty role and a supportive diverse legislature to make the needed changes to the state's higher education system. The nation is counting on us!



The second point is the need to build into the college GPS room for the students to explore and learn how to succeed in college. Research shows that students who are very sure what they want to major in when they start college are wrong. The best choices come from having a basic hunch of the general area they want to go into and trying out several things first to find out what they're good at and what they have a passion for. No first-time college student is truly ready for college. Academically, they may be prepared but there's more to succeeding than academic preparation. Davis showed research from

Tennessee that students who failed college level math and the surrounding math success co-requisite course ran the entire range of ACT math scores. Furthermore, those students were failing all the other courses too (“gym, lunch, getting to the parking lot, everything”). We need to create communities of experts at our colleges to guide our students along the way. And that clear path is all the way to completion of a bachelor’s degree!





With much warmth and collegiality,  
Sonya

Sonya Christian

President, Bakersfield College

Follow my blog at: <https://sonyachristianblog.com>

Twitter: [@sonyachristian](https://twitter.com/sonyachristian)

BAKERSFIELD  
COLLEGE

[BC Pathways  
Summit Archive](#)

