

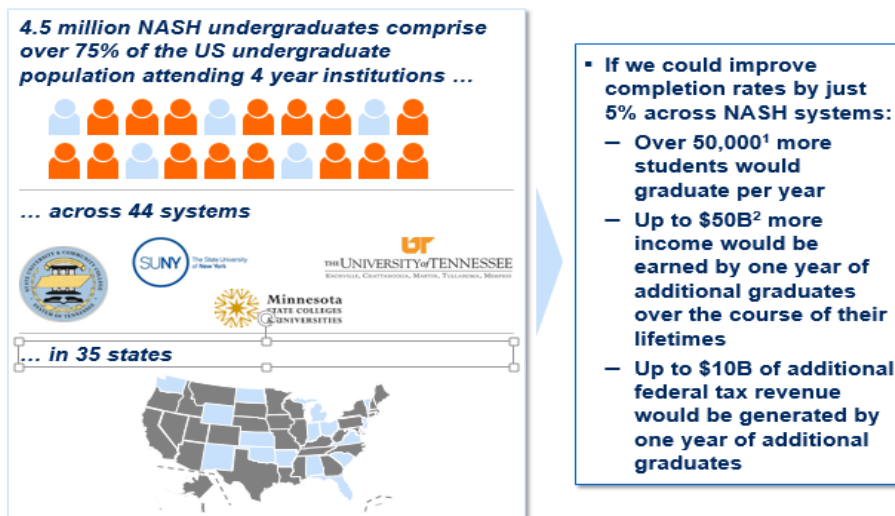
Taking Student Success to Scale (TS³): Overview

Increasing college attainment and closing equity gaps are nationwide priorities. Exemplars of student success have emerged across higher education institutions, systems, and states; yet, national completion rates continue to rise only slightly, and equity gaps continue to widen. This lack of progress can be attributed, in part, to lessons and best practices remaining unshared within and across campuses and systems. Further, the types of data and analysis that can help us overcome those challenges are disconnected and of varied quality and robustness. Plainly put, we have yet to unlock the power of scale and scope. So, how do you get your best stuff to the students who need it the most? We at the National Association of System Heads (NASH) and our membership believe we hold the key.

There have been previous efforts across systems to improve student outcomes, but nothing even remotely close to the scale that NASH could achieve. Encompassing over 75 percent of the U.S. undergraduate student body in four-year institutions of great diversity, our member systems and campuses have the scale, influence, and desire to impact college completion in unprecedented ways. A number of our systems have both two-year and four-year institutions, and all are actively working with community colleges to ensure that the pathway to a four-year degree is clear and effective.

EXHIBIT 1

While other organizations are making headway on completion, NASH has the scale for unprecedented impact



A firm commitment to identifying and implementing successful attainment initiatives across NASH systems could affect 4.5 million students across 44 systems in 35 states. Most of these systems have significant populations of underrepresented minority and low-income students. NASH is uniquely positioned as a forum for information-sharing and collective problem solving, and can be the vehicle by which we can improve attainment rates for all students at an unprecedented scale. In fact, NASH has a proven record of leveraging a network-based approach, having co-led the Access to Success network, and having developed system communities for Chief Academic Officers, Decision Analytics

staff and Federal Relations personnel, all of which have expressed a desire to help further promote the adoption and diffusion of the intervention strategies that makeup TS³.

Such a collective and collaborative approach is essential to the success of TS³, which is designed to scale proven intervention strategies based on:

- a) A unified vision of what we will achieve;
- b) Commitment to targeted strategies that are proven to work;
- c) The capacity to measure and assess progress;
- d) An integrated, customizable approaches to improving student outcomes;
- e) A “playbook” of high-quality, proven interventions that can be mapped to specific student needs; and
- f) Institutional leadership and a focus on implementation.

Based on the collective wisdom of our member system heads and chief academic officers, as well as research, three interventions have been identified as a starting point for a holistic and collective approach. These interventions are:

1) Guided Pathways Using Predictive Analytics

A prominent barrier to student success, particularly among underrepresented, low-income, and first-generation students, is a lack of information. Predictive analytics and data-mining techniques have proven to be powerful methods of empowering and informing students. The focus of this initiative is on implementing predictive analytics across multiple systems, strengthening the data infrastructure needed to leverage these tools, and implementing the policy, curricular advances, and academic support programs needed to enable the successful use of predictive analytics

2) Redesigning the Math Pathway

More students arrive at college underprepared than ever before, particularly at the community college level. The need for developmental math education presents a major obstacle to completion for many incoming students at both the two- and four-year levels. The pathway for students placing into credit-bearing math courses is also problematic for many, leading to fewer completing STEM majors than needed. Recently, innovative approaches to redesigning developmental and entry-level math courses have been developed, incorporating elements that include disaggregated pathways with targeted curricula for specific audiences; co-remediation rather than pre-remediation; focus on problem-solving rather than skill building; and new teaching methodologies. Many of these approaches would have value in the calculus sequence as well. Lessons from Quantways/Statways (Carnegie Foundation) and New Mathways (Charles A. Dana Center/Texas) are among the options that could be implemented.

3) High Impact Practices for All Students

Despite their proven impact on retention, persistence, and completion, high impact practices are generally only accessible to a small subgroup of high-achieving students. Moreover, they are defined unevenly across campuses, making it difficult to assess their quality. Over the past decade higher education has embraced the use of high-impact educational practices like learning communities, service learning, undergraduate research, and peer mentoring for their significant contributions to learning as well as persistence. As states and state systems consider the ways engaged learning can drive student success, we have the chance to develop a shared national understanding of particular high-impact practices, building them into the higher education infrastructure in ways that ensure consistency and quality

Each of these practices is being scaled up in at least one NASH system with demonstrated improvement for all students, as well as impact on closing equity gaps for underrepresented minority and low-income students. Scaled across the membership of NASH, these interventions will generate an impact greater than the sum of their parts. Each system has committed its resources and efforts to one or two interventions at the start. This will generate communities of interest and expertise that will share knowledge with the broader system community, leading to scaled efforts at unprecedented levels. Ultimately, the goal will be to implement all interventions across all campuses in each of the participating systems.

Potential Impact

This first cohort of systems, including some of the largest public university systems in the country, currently enrolls more than 2.1 million students. More than 33% of these are underrepresented minority students and 40% receive Pell grants. We anticipate that if the initial 19 systems adopt and implement all three interventions, each system will be able to double the number of degrees it awards by 2025. With the implementation of just one strategy, this collective will award more than 350,000 additional bachelor's degrees during this period. With all three components of this holistic strategy, that number could reach over one million additional bachelor's degrees.

The evidence for each of these strategies at both the campus and system levels demonstrates that there is a disproportionately positive effect on low-income and underrepresented minority students. As we build the goals and targets for each of our systems, we will specifically address these targeted populations. Moreover, evidence suggests that each of these interventions reduces credits and time-to-degree, thereby lowering the cost of degree for both institutions and their students.

Collective Approach

There have been many examples of step-change gains toward solving a social problem when organizations come together, in fields ranging from public health to the environment to education.¹ By using common definitions of success, sharing learnings, and building a common infrastructure, collective impact can be an incredibly powerful tool to drive large-scale change.

There are compelling examples of evidence-based student success interventions being taken to scale in NASH systems. It is time to take these pockets of successes and learnings to the next level—it is time to accelerate and amplify the interventions that work by leveraging the power of systems.

The NASH collaboration involves:

- Common definitions of success, built on existing metrics;
- Flexibility in implementation approaches, to accommodate the diversity of campuses and student populations;
- Networked communities of both system and campus representatives;
- Discussions informed by data, which focus on sharing best practices and collectively identifying and overcoming barriers;
- Significant system leadership support;
- Strong interest from a substantive number of campuses in each system, accounting for variability in system size and institutional diversity;
- Designing and customizing solutions that fit within unique campuses and students.

¹ Kania, John and Mark Kramer. "Collective Impact," *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Winter 2011.

While we expect the initial cohort of systems to continue to grow, the list currently includes:

- California State University System
- Colorado State University System
- University of Colorado System
- Connecticut State Colleges & Universities
- University System of Georgia
- University of Hawaii System
- Idaho State Board of Education
- University of Louisiana System
- University System of Maryland
- Minnesota State Colleges & Universities
- State University of New York
- University of North Carolina
- Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education
- Tennessee Board of Regents
- University of Tennessee System
- Texas A&M University System
- The University of Texas System
- University of North Texas System
- West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

The potential for this network extends beyond the opportunity to leverage the power within the systems. Contained within these systems are a set of diverse institutions, some without many peers within their current organizational structure. By developing clusters of similar campuses across these systems, whether by institutional characteristics or by stage of development of a particular intervention, we will create communities dealing with common challenges in similar contexts.

NASH will contribute resources, facilitate decision making about which approaches are “best” to use for what type of campus and objective, promote problem solving around system-level strategies through decision analytics, provide data management and analytic support to assist in measuring impact, and convene campus and system leaders together to develop solutions that address the current gaps and challenges. While NASH will provide the coordination, the real work will be driven at the systems and their respective campuses, which closely face the challenges and opportunities associated with realigning with a focus towards completion. This would use a hub and spokes framework to leverage the power of the systems, and support and empower institutions as they drive progress throughout the network. Given our track record of realigning systems and campuses, and the diverse actors contained within them towards a universal focus on student success, NASH is confident and eager to further this important work, which is critical for public higher education to promote its promise of opportunity. Only through a focus on student success can we continue to make good on promoting social mobility and economic growth.