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Warm Hand-Offs Framework: K-16 Ecosystems of Support

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Authors

Lewis, Ebony E

Hurt, Alexandria

Field-Ridley, Omar

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WARM HAND-OFFS FRAMEWORK

K-16 ECOSYSTEMS OF SUPPORT

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Authors & Contributors

Ebony E. Lewis, Ed.D.

Chief Strategy Officer

Inclusive Excellence

University of California, Davis

Alexandria Hurtt, Ph.D.

Research Fellow

California Education Lab

School of Education

University of California, Davis

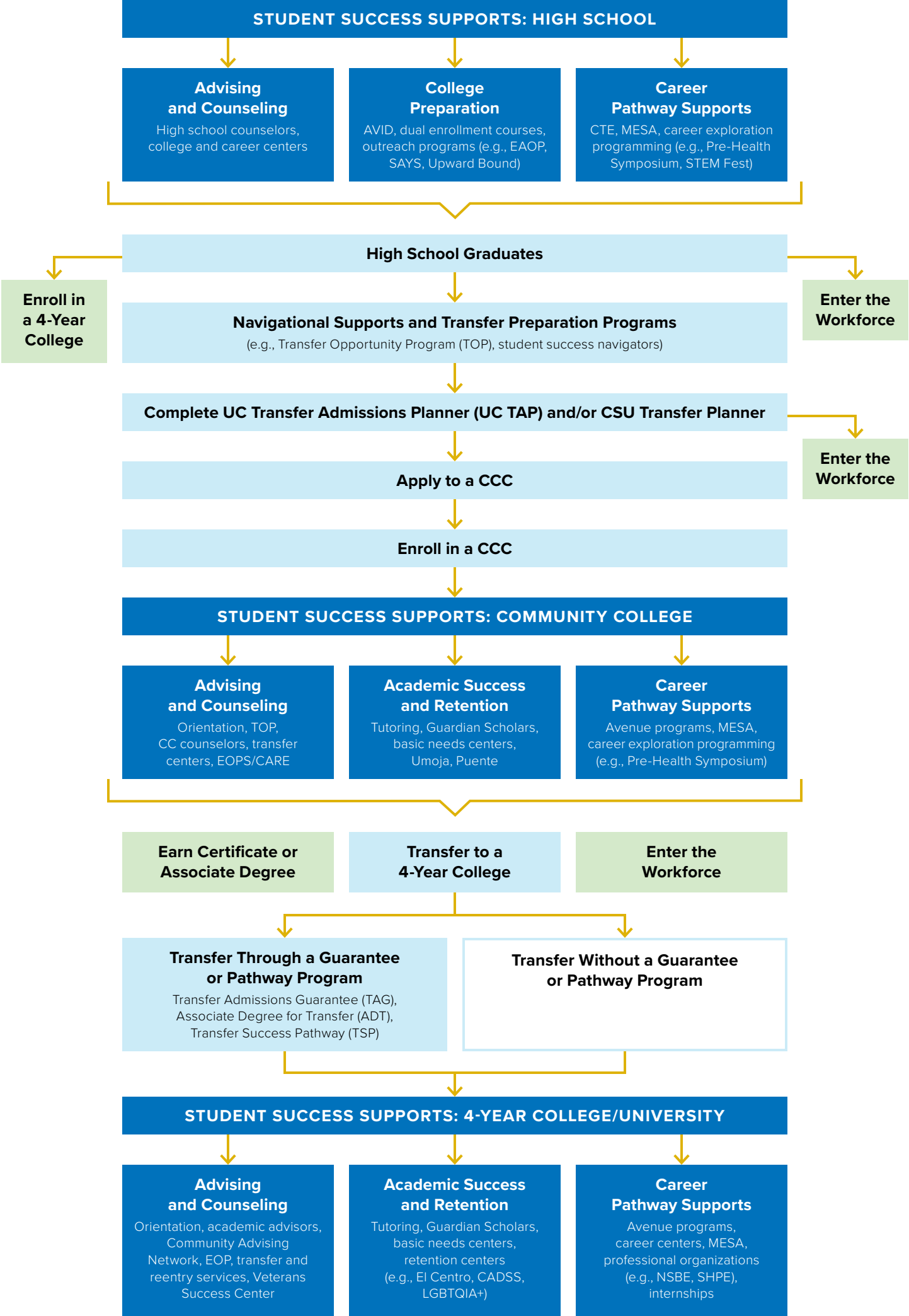
Omar Field-Ridley, M.Ed.

Director of Education Services

Folsom Cordova Unified School District

Warm Hand-Offs Framework

K-16 ECOSYSTEM OF SUPPORT



The examples of programs and centers listed are intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive. Additionally, support services may be named or organized differently across institutions. For the purposes of this document, services are grouped in one area, although in practice many supports intersect and often span multiple areas.

Overview

The *Warm Hand-Offs Framework* aims to support students, schools, and educational partners by spotlighting navigational supports to help students throughout their educational journey as they transition from K-12 to community college and/or a 4-year college or university.

Audience

For students and their families, the framework is intended to be used as a guide to understand available resources and key points of transition.

For schools and educational partners, the framework not only emphasizes how systems are interrelated and connected, but also highlights opportunities to fill unintended gaps to support a smooth transition and ensure students find solid footing at each point along their educational journey.

Areas of Support

Student success programs and initiatives are outlined throughout the framework in the following key areas:

- **Counseling and Advising.** These supports aim to help students successfully navigate the transition from K-12 to college and/or community college to a 4-year university in several ways, including academic planning, personal development, and emotional well-being.
- **College Preparation (K-12) or Academic Success & Retention (College).** For K-12 students, programs and initiatives that support college preparation are those that intend to develop students' academic, social, and life skills in high school to both navigate and succeed in higher education. For students already enrolled in college, academic success and retention programs aim to support students in achieving their academic goals through tutoring, mentorships, and community engagement, among other services.
- **Career Pathway Supports.** At the college level, career pathway supports include programs and services that help guide students toward a career of interest in a variety of ways, including career training, clear course sequences, work-based learning, counseling, support services, and credit transfers.

These areas of support are examples intended to highlight the range of people and programs available to facilitate smooth transitions for students between educational systems. As accessing college can be a complex process, information and knowledge about this process is an important factor for success. In this case, research indicates that counselors, teachers, college outreach programs, and broader school and community initiatives, among others, can provide access to critical information about the complexities surrounding college enrollment and offer support to students during this transition.¹

¹ Kurlaender, M., Reed, S., & Hurtt, A. (2019, August). Improving college readiness: A research summary and implications for practice [Report]. Policy Analysis for California Education. <https://edpolicyinca.org/publications/improving-college-readiness-research-summary-and-implications-practice>

The areas outlined in this framework also illustrate the consistency and alignment in the supports that may be available across educational systems as students transition from one system to the next. Additionally, there is often intersection across programs, meaning that while one program may be listed in this framework under *academic success*, there may be elements that also include counseling/advising and career pathway support. For example, academic retention centers, while listed under academic support, also work with institutional partners to provide advising opportunities and career pathway support for students.

Moreover, examples of programs and services are included in each area within the framework to provide greater context into the types of support available. This is not an exhaustive list and names and types of programs and services vary by institution. For example, many colleges/universities may have services to support students with lived experiences in foster care, yet the specific name of those programs may differ. In this case, while UC Davis and Sac State have the Guardian Scholars program, Los Rios Community College District has NextUp.

Similarly, *accessibility services* may be referred to differently at each institution.

Purpose

Developed as part of the Sacramento K-16 Priority Student Populations workgroup² (which includes K-16, community college, and 4-year regional partners) in collaboration with UC Davis, the framework outlines the educational pathways students may pursue and the supports available whether students plan to enroll in a 2-year or 4-year college; transfer; or directly enter the workforce. Overall, each of these areas (advising and counseling; college academic retention initiatives and programs; career pathway supports) help to smooth postsecondary pathways for students, highlighting when a warm hand-off can occur for a student between systems. For examples, see below:

High School Level

At the high school level, three areas of student success supports are outlined: *advising and counseling*; *college preparation*; and *career pathway supports*. Broadly, these help to guide students' decision-making about their educational journey; support skill development through college preparatory coursework and experiences (e.g., dual enrollment); and connect students to people and programs in their fields of interest.

Framework in Action: One key area of support for high school students is programs and opportunities that can prepare students for college, including both the work and the experience more generally. In this case, coursework can play a large role in a students' preparation and one such option for high school students are *dual enrollment* courses—courses that count for both high school and college credit and are typically offered to 11th and 12th grade students. These courses are available in a variety of subjects and industry

² For more information about the Sacramento K-16 Priority Student Populations workgroup, see: <https://sacramentok16.org/workgroups>

areas and, depending on availability and school requirements, may be open to students as early as 9th grade. For example, the [Accelerated College Entrance \(ACE\)](#) program at Sacramento State offers a wide selection of dual enrollment courses through their on-campus (students attend courses at Sac State) and off-campus programs (students can take university-level coursework at their high schools). Moreover, credits earned through ACE can be applied to degree programs at Sacramento State or transferred to other universities. Such exposure to college experiences while in high school can ease students' transition between institutions and support their preparation for college and beyond.

College Level

For students pursuing college (community college and/or 4-year), the areas of support highlighted in the Framework alter slightly to include *academic success and retention* programs, such as Umoja and Puente. In this case, these programs are dedicated to uplifting students and supporting their success in college. Additionally, *advising and counseling* as well as *career pathway supports* are also noted, although at the college level these include additional and/or specialized supports.

Framework in Action: For students intending to transfer, specific supports are also available, including transfer preparation programs and planning tools as well as transfer admissions guarantees as available. For example, the [Transfer Opportunity Program \(TOP\)](#) at UC Davis helps prepare students to transfer to a 4-year college, while guaranteed transfer programs, such as UC's [Transfer Admissions Guarantee \(TAG\)](#) and CSU's [Transfer Success Pathways \(TSP\)](#) programs, ensure there is a place within each university system for students who meet the requirements. Specifically, UC TAG guarantees admission to one of six UC campuses from any California Community College (CCC), while the TSP program offers dual admission for eligible first-time, first-year students enrolling in CCCs who commit to transferring to a CSU campus within three years. In addition, completing a UC Transfer Admissions Planner (UC TAP) helps prospective UC transfer students and their community college counselors and advisors to not only track and plan students' coursework as they prepare to transfer, but the support from counselors and advisors helps students stay on track to graduation. More specifically, UC TAP is a tool that eases the transfer pathway for students by connecting them with counselors and advisors at multiple levels, including from TOP as well as their community college and 4-year institution. In terms of *career pathway* supports, programs like AvenueM³ smooth the transition to regional 4-year colleges, including UC Davis, Sacramento State, and Cal Poly Humboldt.

³ AvenueM is a community college to medical school pathway program that aims to reduce barriers to entry to medical and other healthcare careers. For more information, see: <https://avenuem.ucdavis.edu>.

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