



TRANSITION POINTS

The Education Strategy Group Newsletter

The American Rescue Plan: Key Opportunities for Strategic and Innovative Stimulus Spending

As education leaders grapple with the most effective ways to spend their American Rescue Plan funds, they face a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reimagine education systems to better serve all students and accelerate an equitable economic recovery. To this end, Education Strategy Group is doubling down on providing K-12 and higher education leaders with support, resources, and tools to help reverse college enrollment declines and scale quality pathways into the workforce, for both traditional age students and adults. We're excited to share more on this work in the coming weeks.



We are pleased to announce that we are hosting a webinar next month in partnership with SHEEO and ACCT focused on strategic use of stimulus resources:

Leveraging Stimulus Funds to Support Adult Learners: Thursday, June 10 at 1:00 p.m. ET

As employers ramp up hiring, colleges have a unique opportunity to help drive the economic recovery by scaling programs that prepare students for good jobs. This is particularly important for displaced workers looking to upskill. With significant new higher education stimulus funding flowing to institutions, and new federal guidance that allows those funds, including student aid dollars, to support adult learners in short-term programs, colleges have a unique opportunity to accelerate their work. This webinar will highlight innovative institutional and state policies and practices to better target and support adult learners looking to reskill or enrolling in higher education for the first time. Hear from **Dr. Sue Ellspermann**, President of Ivy Tech Community College in Indiana and **Gregory Haile, J.D.**, President of Broward College in Florida about strategies they are using at their institutions. [Register here.](#)

ESG has also just published a [new blog post](#) on ways that leaders can use stimulus funds to seize the summer and keep students on track for postsecondary access and success.

States, districts, and higher education institutions cannot miss this [tremendous opportunity](#) to innovate for the benefit of students and our economy. Stay tuned for more throughout the summer.

Stimulus Planning? Check Out Key Resources from Our Partners

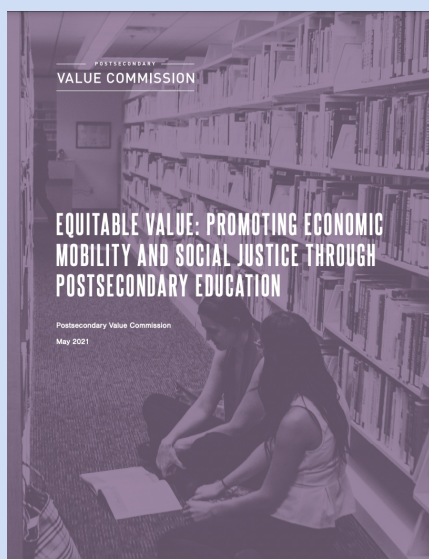
The influx of funding from the American Rescue Plan means significant strategic planning by states, districts, institutions, and other education leaders. Some of these great resources from our partner organizations can help:

- Following its [recommendations](#) on the areas that schools should prioritize for federal COVID relief funds, *Chiefs for Change* has released a [workbook](#) to help systems plan for and allocate their share of the funds. The workbook includes information on the various

types of funding and provides guidance for how to organize and receive funds, select initiatives, and identify partners. It also contains self-populating graphs, charts, and other tools to communicate how the aid will be used to address students' social, emotional, and academic needs.

- **Data Quality Campaign** released an [infographic](#) detailing the ways in which state and local governments can use federal funding for investment in improved education data. The resource identifies federal funding streams that are flexible, specify data as an allowable activity, or are allocated specifically for data, and provides details on the amount of funding most likely to be used for these purposes, where possible.
- The [Restart and Recovery Framework](#), released last year by **CCSSO**, was developed to guide leaders through planning for school reopenings, including guidance on how states can leverage federal funding and a decision-making framework. Specific subtopics include considerations for [academics](#), [state policies and actions](#), and more.

Equitable Value: Promoting Economic Mobility and Social Justice through Postsecondary Education



The [Postsecondary Value Commission](#)—a group of 30 diverse education leaders formed to propose a definition of postsecondary value, develop a way to measure that value, and urge action to improve value and make it more equitable—recently released its final report: [Equitable Value: Promoting Economic Mobility and Social Justice through Postsecondary Education](#). The report finds that there is varying economic value in postsecondary certificates and degrees, depending on, primarily, where students go to college and what those institutions do to support them. The Commission's work offers three equity-centered tools to identify, measure, and address inequities in access, completion, and post-college outcomes: a definition of postsecondary value, guided by five core principles; a framework outlining the value-add that postsecondary education can provide to students and society; and an action

agenda outlining policies and practices to address systemic barriers that prevent students from reaping equitable returns from postsecondary education and achieving economic and social mobility.

In reflecting on the Commission's findings and next steps for this work, ESG's Tiffani Williams authored a blog post proposing the use of the predictive measures identified in the report to build a set of "Career Momentum Metrics" that capture key decision and intervention points on a student's trajectory. Read the full post [here](#).

The New Skills Ready Network Spring Convening

Earlier in May, the six local-state partnerships of the [New Skills ready network](#)—**Boston, Columbus, Dallas, Denver, Indianapolis, and Nashville**—came together virtually to share progress, swap strategies, and collectively address common challenges in their work to develop equitable, demand-driven career pathways and related policy solutions in their cities. Each site brought a cross-sector team of leaders representing K-12, higher education, advocacy and support



organizations, workforce development organizations, and more. Teams had the opportunity to engage in workshops on communications and data best practices before diving into full-group sessions focused on strategies to center and operationalize equity in pathways development work, ways to integrate high-quality advising, opportunities to engage employers in the work, and more. Over the course of three days, grantee partners were exposed to promising practices and new approaches to career readiness work, and given the time and space to explore these ideas with one another and across sites. Initiative sponsor JPMorgan Chase and lead partners ESG and AdvanceCTE hope to bring together the full New Skills ready network in person for the next convening this fall.

Also this month, AdvanceCTE, in partnership with ESG, released a new New Skills policy brief offering strategies and best practices for designing strong statewide policies that remove barriers for participation in early postsecondary education opportunities in career pathways. Check out [Intentional Acts of Dual Enrollment: State Strategies for Scaling Early Postsecondary Opportunities in Career Pathways](#) to learn more.

State Spotlight: Indiana Launches “Bridging the Gap”

This week, the Indiana Department of Education, Indiana Commission for Higher Education, and Ivy Tech Community College announced a [new “Bridging the Gap” initiative](#) to help prepare 2021 high school graduates for success in college. The initiative is designed to reach graduating Indiana students who were met with an educational disruption due to COVID-19, including fewer opportunities to prepare for college entrance assessments and other college preparations.

Through the new program, eligible students will be invited to take online, individualized college preparation modules at Ivy Tech Community College with an Ivy Tech instructor. Students will take a pre-assessment that individualizes the course content for them, and can work at their own pace in completing the identified college readiness skills. Additionally, participants will enroll in a student success course to prepare for successful entry into higher education, with direct advising support. Upon successful completion of the modules and success course, students will earn college credit, an exemption to place directly into credit-bearing coursework at Ivy Tech and the opportunity to earn up to \$300 in financial incentives for completing the program components.

As part of work to prevent a “Lost COVID Cohort,” generously supported by the Joyce Foundation, ESG has been pleased to provide strategic guidance and technical assistance to Indiana’s Commission for Higher Education in the development of this summer bridge program. Learn more about the [full range of recommended strategies](#) for keeping students on track to postsecondary enrollment and success on our website.

ESG Highlights: Meet Our Newest Team Members

ESG is thrilled to have welcomed several new staff members in recent weeks! Get to know two of them below.

Christine Barrow, Director

Christine joined ESG to design, lead, and support efforts focused on increasing the postsecondary attainment of credentials of value. She has over 20 years of experience creating the programs and strategic partnerships that transform learner paths to the workforce. Prior to joining ESG, Christine served as an accomplished postsecondary leader at Prince George’s Community College. During her tenure as Dean of the Division of Sciences, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM),



she led key institutional elements of Guided Pathways implementation, credit/non-credit organizational and credential alignment, and student success program development. [Learn more about Christine.](#)



Jhenai Chandler, Associate Director

Jhenai joined ESG to support its postsecondary transitions portfolio. Her career spans across both state community college and university systems, beginning in academic advising and multiple leadership roles in public policy, academic and student affairs. Prior to ESG, she served as Director of the Florida-Caribbean Louis Stokes Regional Center of Excellence, an NSF-funded research collaborative to enhance STEM success among underrepresented populations. In this role, she led mixed-methods research and designed faculty training at community colleges and HBCUs to help them develop and model growth

mindsets in STEM fields. [Learn more about Jhenai.](#)



Education Strategy Group (ESG) works with America's education, business, and civic leaders to expand economic opportunity and mobility by increasing educational attainment. We are driven by the conviction that a robust education system aligned with workforce demands leads to a stronger, more equitable society.

[Contact us](#) to learn more and work together