



## THE MOMENTUM METRICS

# CASE STUDY

## Scaling Support from the Partnership for Los Angeles Schools

### SPOTLIGHT ORGANIZATION



The Partnership for Los Angeles Schools  
Los Angeles, California

### ORGANIZATIONAL REACH

**19** LOS ANGELES  
UNIFIED SCHOOLS  
**14,200** APPROXIMATE  
STUDENTS SERVED

### COLLEGE READINESS TOOL



### MOMENTUM METRICS



### PUTTING THE MOMENTUM METRICS INTO ACTION

- ✓ Communicate about the most predictive indicators of student progress and success.
- ✓ Partner with postsecondary institutions to address gaps.
- ✓ Build capacity of district leaders to review data and plan for improvement.

The Partnership for Los Angeles Schools is an in-district non-profit organization that manages 19 Los Angeles Unified schools serving approximately 14,200 students. As part of their efforts to improve and scale student success, the Partnership has embraced the use of several key Momentum Metrics to inform their work and target student supports. Their work on these metrics includes not only empowering educators and school leaders with data, but equipping students, parents, and families with rich information to support informed postsecondary preparation and decision-making.

### NINTH GRADE GPA



The Partnership believes that students and families should be empowered to understand data on their progress towards being prepared for college as early as Kindergarten. As a result, they have developed a tool called College Compass, which provides updates on a student's progress across a set of grade-specific indicators of college readiness. Teachers and counselors can use this tool to facilitate conversations with families about how their students can continue to prepare to transition to college.

One of the metrics that is tracked and displayed on the College Compass for high school students is GPA. Achieving at least a 3.0 GPA at the end of a student's 9th-grade year is a key indicator that the student is on track to successfully transition into higher education.

The Partnership for LA has also developed a grades monitoring tool for teachers and school leaders, which provides a user-friendly interface to see the directionality of how students are progressing academically. Schools are able to individually and proactively target support to students who fall off track.

### COLLEGE MATCH



In addition to tracking if and where students are enrolling in college, the Partnership has also begun to track their estimated postsecondary completion (EPSC), and then using that information to inform where high school counselors are advising students to attend. In an effort to avoid sending students to colleges where they might not graduate, leaders at the Partnership decided to make college success part of the equation of advising.

To do so, they defined four components of “fit”:

- 1 Where can you get in (e.g. based upon GPA and SAT scores)?
- 2 What characteristics will make you happy (e.g. location, size, programs)?
- 3 Where do you have the best chance of graduating?
- 4 Where do you have the best chance of getting financial aid?

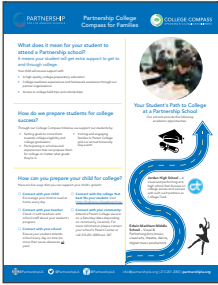
To build awareness, the Partnership started by making a list of higher education institutions, along with the financial aid they provide, the six-year graduation rate for students of color, distance from Los Angeles, and average GPA and SAT scores for admitted students. They then narrowed and categorized that list based on criteria of particular importance to students (e.g. “I want to go to a school close to home”) and provided it to high school counselors. They also mailed the priority list of schools directly to students and families to equip them with easily comparable institution information.

### SEAMLESS ENROLLMENT



In 2019, the Partnership received a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (as part of its To & Through Advising Challenge) to address summer melt, the phenomenon through which students who intend to enroll in higher education do not ultimately show up when the semester begins. Last summer, they launched a pilot called *Project Grad: Get Ready to Achieve Your Dreams* to work with approximately 120 LAUSD students who

#### COLLEGE COMPASS TOOLS



- > 9th Grade College Compass Report
- > College Compass Report for Families
- > On-Track for College Completion Report
- > College Compass Letter
- > Best Fits List for Juniors

were enrolling in the four higher education institutions with the highest historical enrollment of students in the Partnership’s network — two community colleges and two four-year institutions. Modeled after the **Posse Foundation’s near-peer model**, the summer melt pilot included support from two college success advisors, who were hired as part of the Americorps VISTA program.

During the pilot, the Partnership for LA used three primary methods of communication to connect with student participants. First, they held six live Zoom sessions for each of the four institutions, where they brought in staff from the college to speak on a particular topic and share information about campus resources that students could tap into. The goal of these sessions was for students to build their capacity to reach out for support on campus after the program ended. Advisors also regularly reached out directly to each student by texting or calling to check in and offer support in the preparation process. Lastly, the Partnership created an online messaging board that students attending the same college could use to connect. Students were able to ask one another questions, discuss their plans, and start to build relationships with one another.

After the end of the pilot program, Promesa Boyle Heights, which leads an existing summer transition program that provides peer mentors through the first year of college, took on pilot participants and continued to offer support at two of the four institutional partners. The Partnership hopes to take the learnings from this pilot to share with LAUSD to inform the development of future summer melt programming.