

INSIGHTS

ON EQUITY AND OUTCOMES

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Advancing Practitioner Understandings of Equity in Illinois Community Colleges

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Equity-minded leadership is critical to closing equity gaps for historically marginalized student populations within higher education systems (Malcom-Piquex & Bensimon, 2017). Pathways to Results (PTR) is an outcomes-focused, equity-guided process to improve student transition to and through postsecondary education and into employment. PTR began with six pilot sites in 2009 and has since expanded to over 100 projects throughout the Illinois community college system. Built on the foundational work of the Center on Urban Education at the University of Southern California, PTR supports community college practitioners in understanding obstacles to student success and implementing changes in both policy and practice toward advancing equitable outcomes (Office of Community College Research and Leadership, 2019).

The Illinois Context

Illinois is home to the nation's first community college, Joliet Junior College. The public community college system in the state is comprised of 48 community colleges that serve nearly one million students each year (Illinois Community College Board, 2017). Higher education literature has called on community college practitioners to adopt an equity-based agenda that meets the academic and social needs of their diverse populations (Bensimon 2005; Boggs & McPhail, 2016). Given existing gaps in educational attainment, advancing racial equity in completion rates for students in community colleges should be a priority

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HIGHLIGHTS



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