



Rural Pathways Project Institute 3
March 11-13, 2026
Omni William Penn Hotel – Pittsburgh, PA
Advancing DEEP K12 Pathways

AGENDA

Meeting Objectives:

- Learn about the Community College Research Center (CCRC)'s DEEP dual enrollment research and practices
- Collaborate with your team to apply the CCRC research and applied examples to your region's context
- Interact with institutions and K12 partners who have developed field leading models of K12-community college collaboration
- Investigate evolved models for your current K12 partnerships
- Develop an action plan for future K12-community college collaboration in your region

Wednesday, March 11th

- 9:30am - 12:30pm** **Orientation for Implementation Coaches, Partners and NCH Team (breakfast at 9:00)**
Monongahela (17th Floor)
- 12:30 - 1:30pm** **College Team Leads/Coach Prep Meeting (Lunch Provided)**
Only for the Identified College Leads and Project Coaches
Monongahela
- 1:30 - 2:00pm** **Ballroom Doors Open/Snacks Provided**
Please see the sign outside of Grand Ballroom to find your team table. Name badges and college materials will be on your table.
Grand Ballroom (17th Floor)

2:00 - 2:15pm

Welcome and Institute Overview

*Chris Baldwin, Senior Fellow, NCH
Gretchen Schmidt, Senior Fellow, NCH*

Grand Ballroom

2:15 - 2:45pm

What I Learned while Supporting this Work

Abner Oakes, K12 Subject Matter Expert, NCH

Grand Ballroom

Abner Oakes has over 30 years of experience working at multiple levels in K12 education. For the last 5 years, he has supported the rural pathways project as our K12 subject matter expert. He will explore his introduction to this work and how collaborating with community colleges has changed his views on how best to structure cross-sector partnerships.

2:45 - 4:00pm

A Regional Partnership that has Transformed the College Going Culture

*Simon Canalez, Superintendent, Brawley Union High School District (CA)
Blas Guerrero, Executive Liaison for Higher Education Initiatives
AMISTAD Associates: Vice President, Educational Partnerships, Services and Programs*

Monica Hernandez-Castillo, School Counselor, Holtville High School (CA)

Fernanda Mass, Counselor, Imperial High School (CA)

Victor Torres, Associate Dean of Workforce Development and Non-Traditional Instruction, Imperial Valley College (CA) and NCH Rural Pathways Coach

Moderator: Rob Johnstone, Founder and President, NCH and Rural Pathways Coach

Grand Ballroom

Imperial Valley College was the co-winner of the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence in 2023. One of the many field leading practices that contributed to their Aspen Prize win was their deep and impactful partnerships with the K12 districts in their region. The panelists will discuss the decade-long collaborative journey that has resulted in a college-going culture in the region where the majority of students who graduate high school enroll in higher education. They will discuss the student experience but also how human and fiscal resources are shared across sectors.

4:00 - 4:15pm

Table Discussion

Grand Ballroom

4:15 - 4:30pm

A Quick Refresher on DEEP Pathways

John Fink, Senior Research Associate and Program Lead, Community College Research Center (CCRC)

Davis Jenkins, Senior Research Scholar, Community College Research Center (CCRC)

Grand Ballroom

John and Davis will build on the presentation from the institute preview webinar and set the stage for how the work at the institute is grounded in CCRC's qualitative and quantitative research on those factors that contribute to successful dual enrollment partnerships.

4:30 - 4:45pm

Transition to Team Time

4:45 - 6:00pm

**Team Time #1 – Exploring the High School/
Community College Enrollment and Matriculation
Data**

See page 9 the agenda to find your team room assignment

6:00 - 7:00pm

Opening Reception

HOSTED BAR AND HORS D'OEUVRES

7:00pm

Dinner on your own

Thursday, March 12th

8:00 - 8:45am

Breakfast
Grand Ballroom

8:45 - 10:00am

The Injustice of Place: Uncovering the Legacy of Poverty in America

Luke Shaeffer, Hermann and Amalie Kohn Professor of Social Policy and Social Justice Professor of Public Policy, University of Michigan

Grand Ballroom

*Luke is one of the authors of *The Injustice of Place: Uncovering Poverty in America*. He and his colleagues – known for tackling key mysteries about poverty in America – turned their attention to the country’s poorest places. Based on a fresh, data-driven approach, they discovered that America’s most disadvantaged communities are not the big cities that get the most notice. Instead, nearly all are rural, revealing a hidden landscape of American rural poverty. Little, if any, attention has been paid to these places or to the people who make their lives there. The author will highlight the research from the book and share lessons about how rural communities can work to actively break the cycle of poverty in their region.*

10:00 - 10:15am

Table Discussion
Grand Ballroom

10:15 – 10:30am

BREAK

10:30am - 12:15pm

Scaling and Sustaining Purposeful Dual Enrollment Workshop

John Fink, Senior Research Associate and Program Lead, Community College Research Center (CCRC)

Davis Jenkins, Senior Research Scholar, Community College Research Center (CCRC)

Grand Ballroom

John and Davis will lead a working session on integrating DEEP practices into existing dual enrollment partnerships. This session will also include a section on financing models for dual enrollment.

12:15 - 1:15pm

Lunch
Grand Ballroom

1:15 - 1:30pm

Transition to Breakout Sessions

1:30 - 2:30pm

Breakout Sessions #1

1. Investing Human and Fiscal Resources into K12 Partnerships

Meghan Eggleston, Dean of Student Services, Patrick and Henry Community College (VA)

Colin Ferguson, Assistant Vice President of Workforce & Technical Programs, Patrick and Henry Community College (VA)

Chris Wikstrom, Vice President of Instruction & Student Services, Patrick and Henry Community College (VA)

Monongahela (17th Floor)

2. *Developing Model CTE Dual Enrollment Pathways Starting with Health Care*

David Richman, Assistant Director of College Credit Plus, Marion Technical College (OH)

Jennifer Pollard, College and Career Counselor, Delaware Hayes High School (OH)

Allegheny (17th Floor)

3. *From Birth to College Completion – An Approach to College-Going that Starts with a Piggy Bank*

Stacey Sivley, Dean of Academic Affairs, Wallace State Community College (AL)

Lauren Wilson, Director of Dual Enrollment, Wallace State Community College (AL)

Conference Center A (Conference Level)

4. *Leveraging State and Local Policies to Deepen K12 to Community College Pathways*

Rosa Berreles-Acosta, Executive Director for Dual Credit and High School Partnerships, Temple College (TX)

Susan Guzmán-Treviño, Provost/Vice President, Academic Affairs and Student Services, Temple College (TX)

Conference Center B (Conference Level)

5. *People Matter: Cultivating Partnerships that Make a Difference for Dual Credit Students*

Londa Carriveau, Director of Educational Partnerships, McLennan Community College (TX)

Chad Eggleston, Vice President, Instruction & Student Engagement, McLennan Community College (TX)

Riverboat (Wm Penn Level)

6. *A State and Local Approach for Expanding CTE Pathways that Lead to Living Wages*

Leah Barrett, President Northeast Community College (NE)

Katie Graham, Administrator/State Director, Office of Career, Technical & Adult Education (NE)

Sternwheeler (Wm Penn Level)

7. *CollegeLift: Postsecondary Access for All Through Early Intervention & Holistic Support*

Ana Damaris Ortiz-Ortiz, Director, College Lift, Forsyth Technical Community College (NC)

Tamara Williams, Chief Academic Officer of Student Academic Success, Forsyth Technical Community College (NC)

Three Rivers (Wm Penn Level)

8. DEEP in Action: Relationships, Rural Partnerships, and the Long Work of Building Pathways

Kristina Berger, Director, UM Bitterroot College (MT)
Jennifer Courtney, Principal, Big Sky High School (MT)
Grace Gardner, Associate Dean, Missoula College (MT)
Jordan Patterson, Dual Enrollment & Distance Learning Program Director, Missoula College (MT)

Frick (Conference Level)

9. Using Labor Market Data to Align Dual Enrollment Pathways to Living Wage Jobs (for K12 partners)

Rob Johnstone, Founder and President, NCII

Grand Ballroom

2:30 - 2:45pm

Transition to Team Time

Snacks Provided

2:45 – 3:45pm

Team Time #2 – Aligning your Partnerships with the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnership (NACEP) Program Standards

See page 9 of agenda to find your team time room assignment

3:45 - 4:00pm

Transition to Breakout Sessions

4:00 - 5:00pm

Breakout Sessions #2

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Grand Ballroom

5:00pm

Dinner on your own

Friday, March 13th

7:30 - 8:30am

CEO and Superintendent Breakfast

Kay McClenney, Senior Fellow, NCII

Sky (17th Floor)

Pick up breakfast in Grand Ballroom

7:30 - 8:30am

Breakfast

Grand Ballroom

8:30 - 9:30am

Creating High Quality Dual Enrollment Partnerships

John Fink, Senior Research Associate and Program Lead, Community College Research Center (CCRC)

Amy Williams, Executive Director, National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP)

Grand Ballroom

Amy Williams will provide an overview of the NACEP standards for Quality Dual Enrollment Partnerships, including examples of how those standards are used in practice. She will also address standards for quality online dual enrollment, which is increasing as delivery mechanism, particularly in rural regions. She and John will then explore how examples from CCRC's DEEP research and NACEP's standards can provide a foundation for reforming existing dual enrollment partnerships.

9:30 - 9:45am

Transition to Team Time

9:45 - 10:45am

Team Session #3 – Identifying and Planning for Next Steps

See page 9 of agenda to find your team time room assignment

10:45 - 11:00am

Break and Transition to Main Room

Snacks provided

11:00 - 11:50am

Elevating the Voices of Students to Guide Dual Enrollment Reforms

Aurely Garcia Tulloch, Research Analyst, Community College Research Center (CCRC)

Grand Ballroom

Aurely leads student-centered engagement efforts that elevate student voice in research and reform. She leads a national student advisory panel and founded [Dual Enrollment Squad](#), a social media community that supports peer connection and resource sharing in dual enrollment programs nationwide. A former dual enrollment student herself, her work connects students' lived experiences to advancing equitable dual enrollment and transfer pathways. She will highlight the experience of the students who she works alongside and provide insight into how K12 schools and community colleges can improve their practices.

11:50 - 12:00pm

Closing Thoughts, Next Steps and Evaluation

| <i>College Name</i> | <i>Grand Ballroom Table Assignment</i> | <i>Implementation Coach</i> | <i>Team Time Room Assignments</i> |
|----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--|
| Bay de Noc | 1 | A. Forgette | Three Rivers |
| Central Carolina | 25 | R. Johnstone | Monongahela |
| Central Texas | 19 | K. Jones | Conference B |
| Colorado Mountain | 17 | H. Lahr | Conference B |
| Columbia Gorge | 26 | R. Johnstone | Monongahela |
| Davidson – Davie | 13 | S. Sutton | Riverboat |
| Edison State | 20 | K. Jones | Conference B |
| Grays Harbor | 11 | O. Lawrence | Sky |
| John Wood | 21 | L. Rittner | Allegheny |
| Kilgore College | 15 | E. Cox Brand | Riverboat |
| Linn-Benton | 9 | E. Bowling | Sky |
| Marion Tech | 5 | A. Buchele | Sternwheeler |
| McLennan | 14 | S. Sutton | Riverboat |
| Missoula | 16 | E. Cox Brand | Riverboat |
| Montcalm | 23 | M. Karp | Allegheny |
| Mountain Gateway | 10 | E. Bowling | Sky |
| North Central State | 24 | M. Karp | Allegheny |
| Northeast Nebraska | 3 | J. Walsh Portillo | Three Rivers |
| Patrick & Henry | 18 | H. Lahr | Conference B |
| Reedley | 4 | J. Walsh Portillo | Three Rivers |
| San Juan | 27 | V. Torres | Monongahela |
| Southwestern Oregon | 22 | L. Rittner | Allegheny |
| Temple | 12 | O. Lawrence | Sky |
| Tillamook Bay | 7 | C. Wikstrom | Sternwheeler |
| UACCB | 6 | A. Buchele | Sternwheeler |
| Washington State - Ohio | 28 | V. Torres | Monongahela |
| West Virginia Northern | 2 | A. Forgette | Three Rivers |
| White Mountains | 8 | C. Wikstrom | Sternwheeler |