



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Doing What MATTERS™

FOR JOBS AND THE ECONOMY



Tips for Encouraging K–12 Districts and Four-Year Universities to Join Cal-PASS Plus

Initiatives aiming to prepare all students for success in higher education, including career and technical education (CTE) grants focused on improving pipelines between K-12 and higher education, require access to data on outcomes at each stage of a student's journey. So, too, do efforts to build more coherent pathways between two- and four-year colleges. Cal-PASS Plus provides this access.

Cal-PASS Plus is a data system that connects student performance information from California K-12 districts, community colleges, and four-year universities. With the development of the CTE LaunchBoard—which brings together academic data, employment outcomes, and labor market information—Cal-PASS Plus also enables educators to see how their students fare once they enter the workplace. This guide explains how California community college leaders and practitioners can reach out to K-12 districts and to their four-year university partners to ensure that they participate in this statewide data system, thereby strengthening access to information for all involved.

What is Cal-PASS Plus?

Cal-PASS Plus is California's free, actionable system of data that connects student performance from pre-K through grade 12 to college and university. All California community colleges are automatically members of Cal-PASS Plus, whereas participation by K-12 districts and partner universities is voluntarily. Cal-PASS Plus data, coupled with data from the CTE LaunchBoard, can be used to inform efforts to align programs and curricula, identify scalable best practices, close the achievement gap, and ensure students' successful transitions from K-12 through college and university and into the workplace.

Cal-PASS Plus is made possible through leadership and funding from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. Since 2013, Cal-PASS Plus has been managed by San Joaquin Delta College and the nonprofit Educational Results Partnership, in close partnership with San Joaquin County Office of Education.

What Does Participation Mean?

Cal-PASS Plus members, under a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for data sharing, can utilize the data system to help them understand and improve student performance and success across the education pipeline. They can, for example,

- download data for research,
- run queries on specific cohorts, course work, and student populations, and
- view student progress along K-16 feeder patterns, including disaggregated data on characteristics such as ethnicity and gender.

Joining Cal-PASS Plus allows education institutions to share information with each other in a safe and secure manner. Data are displayed in a way that ensures student privacy while still enabling educators to understand how well their students perform, both in school and in the workplace.

Why is Participation by all Segments of Education Important?

Many of the CTE LaunchBoard metrics, including, for example, “alignment” metrics in the Program Snapshot tab and a number of the Common Metrics used for grant reporting, rely on understanding student progression from K-12 to college and from two-year colleges to four-year universities—student-level information that is drawn from



the Cal-PASS Plus dataset. If K-12 districts and four-year university partners are not members of Cal-PASS Plus, their student-level information cannot be included in the CTE LaunchBoard. Furthermore, the ability to share comparable information about student outcomes, as students move between K-12, community college, and university systems, can be an enormous support for such efforts as aligning curricula, supporting articulation agreements, and designing dual enrollment opportunities. For K-12 districts, the ability to see such outcomes as college-going rates, developmental education assessments, and degree or certificate attainment can be a powerful tool for joint action with higher education partners. Similarly, for four-year institutions, a better understanding of students' pathways before students embark on their bachelor's degrees can yield clues on how to work with K-12 and community college partners to streamline college access and success.

How Do I Find Out Whether My K-12 District and Four-Year University Partners Are in Cal-PASS Plus?

Visit the “Join” tab of the Cal-PASS Plus website and email the listed contacts to get up-to-date information on whether your partners are members of Cal-PASS Plus and whether their data uploads are current.

Who Should I Contact at K-12 Districts or Universities about Joining Cal-PASS Plus?

If the district or university is not a member of Cal-PASS Plus, a two-pronged strategy may help. First, identify someone who would be interested in accessing the kinds of data available in Cal-PASS Plus, such as someone you are working with on a grant or a project. Next, work with that person to prepare a request for the institution's leadership. In K-12 districts, such requests would usually go to the superintendent, whereas at a university the chancellor generally makes such a decision.

If the district or university is a Cal-PASS Plus member but has not uploaded its data, reach out to the program contact associated with the membership. You can request information on program contacts on the [Cal-PASS Plus website](#).

How Can I Encourage K-12 Districts To Participate in Cal-PASS Plus?

Below are answers to common questions that K-12 districts have about joining Cal-PASS Plus. In addition to having these talking points to share, you can also download a flyer that spells out the benefits of participation.

Is It Difficult for K-12 Districts to Join?

While California community college data are automatically uploaded to Cal-PASS Plus, K-12 districts need to join Cal-PASS Plus and manually upload their information each year. This process has been streamlined, so K-12 districts may need to be alerted that data uploads will require minimal effort. Here is what they need to do:

- *Join:* After filling out a web form that provides the name of key contact people at the district, a fully populated MOU will be emailed to the contact person, who ensures that the MOU is signed and

returned to Cal-PASS Plus. This only needs to be done once.

- *Upload:* Data can be uploaded by dragging and dropping three files that districts already submit to the California Department of Education: the end-of-year Cal-PADS file, plus test vendor files for CAHSEE and STAR.

How does Cal-PASS Plus Benefit K-12 Districts

Cal-PASS Plus has built out a number of new resources that address priority K-12 issues. These resources include:

- Secure, password-protected student-level reports that allow K-12 educators to see which colleges their students attended, how many students were assigned to remedial coursework after enrolling in higher education, and students' success in college.
- Labor market information covering projected job openings, high-demand fields, and unemployment rates at the county and regional levels.
- Robust datasets available for download for internal research and custom analyses.
- Specialized tools, visuals, and dashboards to support conversations about such key topics as career and technical education outcomes, foster youth success, and student access to financial aid.

How Can I Encourage Four-Year Universities to Participate?

This section covers similar questions that four-year universities may have about joining Cal-PASS Plus. In addition to having these talking points to share,



you can also download a flyer that details the benefits of participation.

Is It Difficult for Universities to Join?

Four-year universities need to join Cal-PASS Plus and manually upload their information at the end of each academic year. Here is what they need to do:

- *Join:* After filling out a web form that provides the name of key contact people at the university, a fully populated MOU will be emailed to the contact person, who ensures that the MOU is signed and returned to Cal-PASS Plus. This only needs to be done once.
- *Upload:* Data can be uploaded by filling out the university data layout, which contains student, course, and award information, then selecting the files from a local hard drive and clicking “Submit Files.”

How Does Cal-Pass Plus Benefit Universities?

Cal-PASS Plus can provide information on:

- Which K–12 districts and community colleges each university’s students attended.
- The numbers of students from individual K–12 districts who went on to attend specific California Community Colleges, California State Universities, and Universities of California.
- A regional education-to-workplace pipeline that shows projected college readiness for K–12 students, community college outcomes, university outcomes, and labor market data, such as high-growth job fields.
- Complete datasets for member K–12 districts and community colleges that can be used for research.

Where Can I Find Out More?

Visit Cal-PASS Plus (www.calpassplus.org) for more information and to view sample data.

Visit the LaunchBoard section of the Doing What MATTERS website to get a copy of this guide or one-page flyers that can be used to recruit K–12 district and university partners.