



Los Angeles Southwest College



California State University, Fullerton



Turning Point: Using Cal-PASS Plus to Monitor Student Progress Over Time

Russ Rumberger, Ph.D., has served as a University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) Professor in the Department of Education for more than four decades. During this time, Dr. Rumberger’s work has been dedicated to improving success rates of California’s K-12 students from all walks of life, but especially disadvantaged students at high risk of dropping out.

Now a Professor Emeritus, Dr. Rumberger continues to be a prolific force in educational equity. For the past decade, he has been helping evaluate the highly regarded **Get Focused...Stay Focused™** (GFSF) program. GFSF is a comprehensive curriculum for all types of California students that is “designed to increase students’ high school and college completion and propel successful entry into the workforce with the skills required to succeed.”

GFSF is currently used by 400 high schools throughout California to help all students—from at-risk to those who are on-track—start and stay on educational pathways that match their career and life goals. The process begins with a high school transition course culminating with post-graduate plans for entry-level jobs, training programs, or college.

Educators and students have provided GFSF with well-deserved praise throughout most of its 20-year history. But until recently, the GFSF program lacked data sources that could swiftly quantify and longitudinally monitor student progress through high school and college.



Get Focused...Stay Focused™

PROGRAM IMPACTS



Increased Graduation Rates*



Raised A-G Completion Rates**



Higher ACT and SAT Scores*



Improved Advanced Placement (AP) Performance*



Improved School Attendance*

Source: getfocusedstayfocused.org

* Impacts from Novato Unified School District

** Impacts from Carpinteria High School

Although agencies collect a variety of student-level data that can be used to track student progress through the California K-12 and higher education systems, it is difficult to gain access to these data.

The turning point came three years ago when Dr. Rumberger drew upon his extensive experience with **Cal-PASS Plus** at UCSB. Dr. Rumberger is using data from Cal-PASS Plus to track the progress of high school students in a sample of schools that were randomly assigned to begin the GFSF program in either 2016-17 or 2017-18. These datasets included crucial student attendance data and course performance data, allowing Dr. Rumberger to gain unprecedented visibility into student achievement and program outcomes over time.

“Cal-PASS Plus is a valuable resource supporting useful and timely research on the performance of students and schools in California.”

— **Dr. Russ Rumberger**, Professor Emeritus,
Department of Education, University of California,
Santa Barbara

The evaluation of the GFSF program began three years ago when the first group of schools first started the program. Cal-PASS Plus has provided enrollment, disciplinary, attendance, and course-taking data each year since then as the data become available.

Data can provide powerful insights to both validate and advance student outcomes and career readiness programs. Cal-PASS Plus can help researchers with unique data needs track performance and improve student outcomes from Pre-K through 12th grade, and through college to career. Contact ERP today to learn more.



Data-Informed



Employer-Led



Equity-Focused

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