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ANDREA VASQUEZ  
SUSAN SCRIVENER

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# HOW TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT ADVISING SERVICES IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

## Lessons from Two Decades of Research and Technical Assistance

**T**his brief shares lessons for community college leaders and administrators on how to best design and implement advising services. Colleges commonly provide advising, counseling, or coaching to support students as they strive to succeed. Although the terms “advising,” “counseling,” and “coaching” can describe different types of support provided by different types of staff, this brief focuses on the array of “situations in which an institutional representative gives insight or direction to a college student about an academic, social, or personal matter. The nature of this direction might be to inform, suggest, counsel, discipline, coach, mentor, or even teach.”<sup>1</sup> For ease of reference, this brief uses the term advising for this type of support.

Advisers at community colleges commonly have very large caseloads, making it difficult for them to provide regular substantial support to students. To provide more support, some colleges enhance their typical services, often by reducing adviser caseloads and providing students with more comprehensive, frequent guidance. Research has found that enhanced advising can improve students’ academic outcomes, such as increasing semester-to-semester retention and average credits earned.<sup>2</sup> Some of the most successful community college interventions studied make advising an integral part of their efforts.<sup>3</sup> The evidence suggests that enhanced advising can be a useful tool to help students and may be a critical ingredient in programs that provide multiple forms of support, which can yield more substantial changes in students’ outcomes.

During its two decades of work in the postsecondary education sphere, MDRC — a non-profit education and social policy research organization — has evaluated many programs

that include advising to help improve community college students' outcomes. Its work includes designing advising interventions and providing technical assistance and operational support to colleges implementing advising services.<sup>4</sup> Through this extensive collaboration with multiple states, colleges, program directors, advisers, and funders, MDRC staff members have learned important lessons on how to design and implement advising services, which are outlined in this brief.

Specifically, this overview shares lessons for community college leaders and administrators committed to designing, building, managing, and continuously supporting enhanced advising services. Most, if not all, community colleges provide advising services. The lessons are intended for schools that want to redesign or enhance these services — as stand-alone services or as part of multifaceted interventions — to improve support for students. Some of these lessons align with guidance provided by others, such as the Community College Research Center.<sup>5</sup>

Many of the recommendations in this brief require resources that exceed the costs of typical community college advising. When designed and implemented well, enhanced advising — if it increases retention in college — can at least partly pay for itself through increased revenue. All else equal, if more students return to college, colleges receive more in tuition payments, and if funding is tied to enrollment, they may receive higher state or local government appropriations. Some states have performance-based funding, which rewards colleges for each student who achieves a specific outcome, such as earning a certain number of credits or, eventually, graduating. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the increased need for student support services is coupled with college administrators' needs to make smart investment decisions with reduced funding. The lessons in this brief may provide guidance on making valuable investments in student success.

The following sections outline MDRC's lessons on designing and implementing enhanced advising services. The lessons span MDRC's postsecondary work, but the brief includes illustrations and examples from several specific interventions. At the end of this brief, you will find a summary checklist.

## **DESIGN YOUR ENHANCED ADVISING MODEL**

- **Make advising frequent and holistic.**

College students face a variety of obstacles, not only academic hurdles, but challenges in their personal lives and the lives of their communities. Some of the most effective student support programs studied by MDRC have adopted holistic advising models that address a wide range of topics. These efforts to provide support, as seen in Box 1, set expectations that advisers and students will meet once or twice every month. They are among the most effective student support programs MDRC studied.

Advisers who meet with students regularly and develop trusting relationships can help them overcome surmountable challenges. Providing holistic support means going beyond the academic needs of a student. Building a connection of trust and helping address a range of hurdles that can get in

### BOX 1

#### HOLISTIC ADVISING

The City University of New York's (CUNY's) Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) provides an array of services to students, including holistic advising. MDRC's evaluation of CUNY ASAP, which used a randomized controlled design, found that advisers were trained to focus on a wide variety of topics. In addition to covering the gamut of academically related topics, including getting acclimated to college, choosing classes, and picking a major, ASAP advisers helped students with soft skills, such as study habits and time management; how best to balance home, work, and school demands; and extracurricular activities and campus life. A survey of program group students, who were eligible for ASAP, and control group students, who were eligible for the colleges' standard advising and other services, illustrates this outcome. Program group students who saw an adviser reported discussing an average of eight topics with advisers, compared with five topics for control group students.

For more information on MDRC's evaluation of CUNY ASAP, visit <https://www.mdrc.org/project/evaluation-accelerated-study-associate-programs-asap-developmental-education-students#overview>.

the way of success is crucial to this model. Detroit Promise Path — a program that provides students support services and a scholarship to offset the cost of attendance not covered by financial aid — is one example of a successful program that has adopted this holistic model of advising, which it calls “coaching.”<sup>6</sup> As Wytrice Harris, a former coach and current manager at Detroit Promise Path, notes: “Every coaching session that a coach has is so much more than [just about the academics]. And usually the things that are hindering a student have way more to do with nonacademic factors than academic factors.” Harris is one of four staff members interviewed for this brief who work on one of two active MDRC projects involving programs with strong advising components. Their opinions and experiences with leading and implementing advising services are included to further illustrate the projects' lessons.

- **Provide structure for consistency across advisers while leaving room for flexibility.**

As you define how your team will conduct advising, create a model with a balance of structure and flexibility. Setting clear expectations about the goals of advising and the specific steps that staff should take to get there can help advisers standardize the support provided to students and improve efficiency. Student outreach modes and frequency, advising topics to be covered, and rules on how to take and store advising meeting notes are examples of practices that can benefit from standard policies. Allowing for flexibility in the work of advisers will be equally important. For example, giving advisers a calendar of topics to follow is helpful, as is empowering them to respond to unique and urgent student needs at the expense of following written guidance.

- **Create small caseloads.**

Assigning caseloads will make it possible for students to meet regularly with the same person and build trust. Over time, advisers and students will get to know one another and create strong relationships that may open the door to discussing a wider range of topics. Creating caseloads can also foster a stronger sense of accountability among staff members as they build bonds with individual students and follow their college trajectories.

Hire enough advising staff members to keep caseloads small. The fewer students advisers support, the more time they have for holistic, frequent, and proactive advising. As an example, colleges taking part in one of MDRC's most recent projects, Scaling Up College Completion Efforts for Student Success (SUCCESS), committed to hiring enough staff members to keep caseloads smaller than 150 students. SUCCESS is an initiative to build financially sustainable student support programs to improve graduation rates. The program coordinator of the SUCCESS program at Passaic County Community College believes that personal relationships are central to effective advising, and caseload size can have an impact on these relationships: "If you have too many students, you'll just become like a teller. It's just transactional, and it will not be holistic."

Advising teams, especially when understaffed, can either create caseloads with a target student population, such as incoming students only, or opt to have students meet with a rotating cast of advisers. While working without caseloads can make it easier for staff members and students to find time to connect, it can also limit the extent to which conversations from one advising session can help improve future sessions. Assigning caseloads can ultimately help staff members deliver a higher level of holistic advising and form meaningful connections with students. Delivering this caseload model may certainly take a greater level of commitment and resources than other approaches. However, doing so could help amplify the impact of advising on student success.

- **Be proactive about student outreach.**

Getting students to participate in advising and other support services is a significant challenge. It can be especially difficult to engage students who could benefit the most from these programs, because they are more likely to face competing responsibilities outside of school and have greater limits on their time and availability. Active, frequent, and varied outreach to students can be an effective way to increase their engagement. Advising teams that use proactive student outreach send information and requests for action on a regular schedule, using emails, text messages, phone calls, and physical mail, with messages that are easy to understand and act upon. Empower your advising staff to communicate with students proactively by giving them access to tools, as shown in Box 2, that make it easier to communicate with students frequently and through a variety of channels.

## BOX 2

### BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE AND STUDENT MESSAGING

Some student support service programs have successfully applied insights from the field of behavioral science to improve student engagement through outreach. MDRC's Center for Applied Behavioral Science (CABS) has developed a number of tools to help social services program staff make their communications as effective as possible. The SIMPLER framework, which lays out seven behavioral messaging strategies, is one such tool, developed to summarize key behavioral concepts that frame and help address some of the common behavioral barriers to action that stop program recipients from engaging. Visit <https://www.mdrc.org/webinar/using-behavioral-science-improve-student-outreach> for a recorded webinar on how the SIMPLER framework can be applied to improve student messaging strategies.

- **Continue to reach out to unresponsive students.**

As the momentum of the start of each semester fades, reaching out to students who appear unresponsive will remain important. Seemingly less-motivated students may need the most help and often do not have anyone besides their advisers encouraging them to stay engaged in school. Greg Handel, vice president of education and talent for the Detroit Regional Chamber, explains: “Where the Detroit Promise really looks to make an impact is on the margin of students who we don’t see and are not actively engaging with their campus coaches. Our coaches have found that it’s easier to be engaged with students who are coming to them. The more responsive students are, the more likely they are going to remain enrolled anyway.”

While keeping these students on advisers’ caseloads does require spending additional resources, doing so can benefit students with the highest level of need. Consider defining levels of student need and engagement to help advisers triage their outreach efforts, dedicating less time to students showing self-sufficiency and focusing on high-need students.

- **Provide students incentives to meet with their advisers.**

Maximizing student engagement can be challenging if staff members rely on students being intrinsically motivated to seek help. Creating incentives connected to positive behavior, such as seeing advisers on a regular basis, can be a powerful way to increase the number of students who build the habit of taking advantage of advising services. Incentives can be financial, such as cash rewards, book vouchers, and transportation benefits. They can also reward specific actions (positive incentives) or require action to avoid a loss (negative incentives). They can help students get over the hurdle of meeting with their advisers for the first time.

If you have the resources to offer positive incentives, choose one that will interest your students and also help cover their important needs. As you design your plan, include incentives that encourage students to engage with their advisers. Be sure to include financial aid staff members in your early conversations as they will be able to guide you away from decisions that may have a negative impact on students' financial aid packages. Take a cautious view of negative incentives to motivate students to meet with advisers, such as holds on registration, as these can have unintended consequences. One of the three colleges that participated in the study of the iPASS intervention — an initiative that provides technology tools and data about students' academic performance to advisers and students — inadvertently made it difficult for students to register for classes when they placed a hold on registration for students who had yet to meet with their advisers. The mechanics of the hold, combined with the registration window for seven-week courses that began midsemester made it so that some students were unable to meet with their advisers in time to remove the hold and register for courses.<sup>7</sup> Be sure to examine all possible effects of your incentives, including potential unintended consequences. (For an example of a program that uses incentives, see Box 3.)

### BOX 3 INCENTIVES

The nine community colleges participating in MDRC's [SUCCESS](#) program provide \$50 monthly financial incentives to program group students who meet with their advisers (called “coaches” at some colleges) twice every month. Surveys and focus groups with SUCCESS students showed that the monthly incentives piqued students' interest in the program and helped them cover the cost of things like books and food. The help and support that the program coaches provided, however, ultimately encouraged them to continue being active participants of the program.

To read more about the SUCCESS program, visit [www.mdrc.org/project/scaling-college-completion-efforts-student-success-success#overview](http://www.mdrc.org/project/scaling-college-completion-efforts-student-success-success#overview).

- **Provide targeted holistic and proactive advising services for as many semesters as possible.**

Find ways to extend holistic and proactive student advising for as many semesters as possible. Enhanced advising can improve student outcomes, so extending this service over as many semesters as possible can amplify its impact. To mitigate some of the costs of extending services, programs can lower engagement expectations in later semesters as some students show signs of success. For example, in the ASAP Ohio Demonstration at three community colleges in the state — based closely on the CUNY ASAP model — students were required to meet with their advisers twice each month during their first semester in the program. Beginning in the second semester and extending through the end of the three-year program, advisers “triaged” students, sorting them into low-, medium-, and high-need groups. Students in the high-need group were required to continue meeting with their

advisers twice a month. Students in the medium- and low-need groups were often expected to meet with their advisers at least once per month. This allowed advisers to spend more time with students who might benefit from more support.<sup>8</sup>

## **STRUCTURE YOUR TEAM**

- **Commit to your vision of enhanced advising.**

The success of any new program or initiative often hinges on the steadfast commitment of a leader willing to advocate for it. If you are a senior staff member, you may not have a very active role in the ongoing implementation of enhanced advising. However, you can help your program endure by becoming its constant leader and champion.

- **Identify and empower a coordinator to manage the advising program.**

A full-time advising coordinator can set standards and expectations, provide needed ongoing support to advisers, and advocate for program needs. Someone with experience or interest in technology and data can also supervise the integration of technology and the use of data. A position like this is especially helpful when advisers have limited time to do anything but tend to the needs of the students on their caseloads.

- **Hire full-time advisers.**

There are many advantages to having a team of full-time staff members. Full-time employment status can confer respect and strengthen relationships with offices on campus that can help advisers connect students to resources. At some institutions, things like university email addresses and access to institutional data systems are reserved for full-time staff members. Staffing can be complicated when resources are limited, and hiring or reassigning full-time employees can have a significant impact on program spending. Part-time staff members can certainly provide assistance, but relying on an advising team of part-time employees can pose a variety of challenges to advisers and to students. Often, part-time staff members have less time and flexibility to meet, have fewer or weaker connections to resources on campus, and may be more likely to leave their jobs for positions with better pay and benefits. Dr. Dawn Norman, the senior adviser of the SUCCESS program and assistant dean of advisement and retention at Passaic County Community College, agrees that hiring a team of full-time advisers is important for creating an effective program: “If you have several part-time people who are committed, you can still get the job done. But in higher ed, and so many other industries that say ‘do more with less,’ ... what you can do with less is, in most cases, less... Particularly when you’re talking about the effectiveness of one-on-one contact. You can’t substitute that, and you need full-time staff to be able to do that more effectively.”

- **Hire advisers that your students will be able to relate to.**

As you build the advising team, consider hiring staff members who have things in common with your target population. Students may have an easier time connecting with advisers who share their backgrounds and can empathize with their own lives and challenges. Feeling a sense of comfort, acceptance, and belonging can help students feel at ease to share and seek help.

## **TRAIN YOUR TEAM MEMBERS AND PROVIDE THEM WITH TOOLS**

- **Be clear and detailed when training your team.**

The training and support provided to advising staff could make a significant difference in the way that your program serves students. Once you have a clear mission and vision for advising at your college, digging into the details of how advisers will be set up for success can help your team start with momentum. As you train your team, make sure that all members understand what their roles are in making the advising program a success. Setting individual or group goals on things like the number of advising sessions conducted or outreach messages sent to students each week can help advising teams stay motivated. Consider creating guiding documents and templates that might help your team members meet their goals. (For examples, see Box 4.)

### **BOX 4**

#### **TRAINING TOOLS**

As part of their work with MDRC through the College Promise Success Initiative, program staff members at Flint Promise created a communications plan to help advisers, called “coaches,” schedule conversations on a variety of topics. The plan, which can be found on page 10 of the project report [linked here](#), includes discussion topics, suggested timing for each topic, and suggested modes for communicating about the topic. Tools like this communications plan can help advisers organize and coordinate their communications with minimal effort.

To read more about MDRC’s College Promise Success Initiative, visit <https://www.mdrc.org/project/college-promise-success-initiative#overview>.

Review any standard training provided to advising staff at your institution and confirm whether it will be enough to equip your team to support students with a wide variety of needs. Consider adding training that makes advisers aware of the culture, history, and experiences of your target student population, as it could help foster empathy and meaningful connections. During the early years of operation, staff members at the Detroit Promise Path program were surprised at the prevalence of mental health and developmental education needs. Program leadership has since made efforts to



train staff members on how to refer students to experts and resources on campus. They also include training on how to handle emergency situations with students.

- **Encourage and empower advisers to use data.**

Of the many technological tools available to student support staff members, you should strongly consider investing in a data tracking or management information system that will allow your team to easily record, share, and analyze student engagement data and metrics relevant to the goals of your program. Student engagement data — logging which students are meeting with their advisers, how frequently they meet, and which students receive and respond to outreach from advising staff — recorded on a management information system can be used productively. These data can help advising staff members easily identify and track high- and low-need students, build an outreach strategy that focuses on the students with the highest level of need, share information about student progress with other advising staff, and assess the effectiveness of different outreach strategies. These data can also help an advising coordinator monitor advisers' progress and provide better feedback and support.

Recording and sharing data can easily come to seem like a compliance exercise used only in periodic program monitoring. Creating a culture of data use that encourages advisers to record and use data on a daily basis could help your team members make the most of the time they spend supporting students. Picking a user-friendly management information system and creating opportunities to frequently explore the data being collected with your team will make it more likely that data will become a tool to increase efficiency. As a coach, Wytrice Harris made daily data use central to her coaching strategy: “It was very informative . . . to be able to see who I didn't [meet with] and then to be able to do targeted outreach to those who I didn't hit.... I need to look at that every day.... That way I'm trying to get more and more students to get a coaching session.”

- **Grant advisers access to institutional data.**

Access to institutional databases with information on students' academic profiles can be another powerful tool to advising staff members. Being able to easily access information such as student grades and class schedules can provide advisers with important context to personalize student support, and decisions that you make early on about the status of your team (fulltime versus part-time) could have an impact on the level of data that your institution may make visible to your team. Program staff members without access to databases can ask their students to share this information on a regular basis, an exercise that can be a productive learning opportunity for students and result in advisers providing better support.

This strategy, however, is less than ideal, since it only yields information on students who are motivated enough to bring the information to their advisers. The more data sources advisers have access to, the easier it will be to use it to improve their reach and level of support. See Box 5 for an example of a data strategy designed to enhance advising that uses multiple data sources.

**BOX 5**  
**LEVERAGING DATA**

California State University, Fresno, one of the three colleges in MDRC's [iPASS study](#), sought to bring together some of its data and data tools to improve advising. Through the iPASS intervention, it devised a multistep plan to train its students on an academic planning technology called MyDegreePlan, distribute more early-alert surveys to faculty, and increase student outreach by utilizing peer mentors. The plan also required students to meet with advisers to address early alerts, build academic plans, and map out success strategies. This new approach resulted in, among other things, an increase in the number of students who met with an adviser.

To read more about the iPASS study, visit [https://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/iPASS\\_Interim\\_Report.pdf](https://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/iPASS_Interim_Report.pdf).

Data can be a powerful tool, but advising programs should not rely on it exclusively. Programs should also consider how different uses of data may introduce bias into program delivery decisions. The experience and context of student situations and stories of struggle and success are an invaluable complement to quantitative data, and programs should strive to make the most of this combination of information to improve student services.

**WORK WITH YOUR TEAM TO CONTINUALLY IMPROVE HOW STUDENTS ARE SUPPORTED**

- **Coordinators and advisers should meet regularly to take stock of student engagement and progress.**

Setting an expectation that your coordinator and advisers will meet on a regular basis to review program data can help your team make the most of your data. Program engagement data can paint a clear and commonly understood picture of how a program is performing. This can clear the way for regular team meetings to move beyond program updates to substantive discussions about challenges that need to be addressed. Coordinators, advisers, and coaches at some colleges participating in SUCCESS began their programs with weekly meetings, which became valuable times to discuss ideas for improving program recruitment and retention, and asking senior advisers on the project for necessary resources.

- **Take the time to reflect on your program and opportunities for improvement.**

Teams should also consider using their recorded data and the knowledge and experiences of advisers to more deeply evaluate programs and identify opportunities to improve. Convening teams of advis-

ers, coordinators, and other program stakeholders to review and discuss your program and progress toward goals can help everyone on the team take ownership of program improvement and can result in a wider variety of ideas than leaving the data analysis to a narrower group.

Finding time to reflect and think about program improvement can be difficult, as most advising staff members usually deal with large caseloads. Setting aside extended and dedicated time to consider how your program might change to increase its impact should be a priority. Summer months, when your team may have fewer students to tend to, might be an opportune time to gather your team members together for program improvement activities.

The LA College Promise team made behavioral science insights the focus of the program improvement workshop described in Box 6. Taking this specific point of view to evaluate opportunities for improvement helped staff members think creatively and examine the program from a different vantage point. When convening your team for program improvement conversations, think about using strategies and tools to examine your program from a different angle.

#### **BOX 6**

#### **PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AND PROCESS MAPS**

At the end of the second year of implementation, the Los Angeles Community College District brought together the nine community colleges implementing the Los Angeles College Promise program to participate in a day-long program improvement workshop designed by MDRC. Before the workshop, Promise coaches from seven colleges partnered with MDRC staff to create process maps, visual diagrams that outlined every step of participating in the program from a student's perspective. These maps were used by MDRC during focus groups conducted with students. Coaches, program leaders from each campus, district leadership, and students all joined together for a day to examine the program by using the process maps and student feedback to pinpoint barriers to program and student success and come up with ways to remove the barriers.

To read more about Los Angeles College Promise and its work with MDRC, visit <https://www.mdrc.org/publication/improving-programs-using-students-voices>.

Making decisions about program delivery changes can be seen as the work of program and campus leadership, but including direct input from front-line advising staff members and students whenever possible will help center improvements around the most important and affected stakeholders of your program.

## **PLAN FOR YOUR TEAM TO CHANGE AND YOUR PROGRAM TO GROW**

- **Plan to hire and train new staff members.**

As your program grows and you are able to extend support to more students, factor in the need to hire and train additional staff members. Creating guiding documents and training plans to share the mission and advising philosophy of your team can help make new staff members' onboarding a smooth process. If your program has limited resources, it will be important to find ways to help advisers be more efficient.

- **Create cohorts of students.**

If the number of students that your program reaches grows faster than the size of your advising team, think about ways to enable advising staff members to increase the number of students that they support without sacrificing the quality of advising. One strategy to consider is creating student cohorts and engaging students in group activities that complement or partially replace one-on-one advising meetings. Bringing students together can have the added benefit of fostering a sense of community and belonging. Another helpful strategy mentioned earlier in this brief is categorizing students and the intensity of support provided by levels of need.

- **If you connect with students virtually, be careful not to exclude anyone.**

Using video or phone calls instead of (or in addition to) in-person meetings can help your advising team reach more students. Staff members from the SUCCESS program at Passaic County Community College have seen that offering coaching sessions over the phone or through video chats makes it easier for some students to meet, since they do not have to factor in commuting time to and from campus. You should not assume, however, that these methods will work equally well for all students. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the myriad factors that can hamper students' virtual communications that depend on access to devices and the internet. Access to reliable internet connections, lack of personal communication devices, and private spaces in which to have sensitive conversations are important components for making virtual connections safe and secure. Low-income students may have limited access to those resources, so advising staff members should have ways to check in with their students about the efficacy of what may be new modes of communication and advising.

- **Have a plan for absences.**

Finally, your team will likely see personnel changes — both expected and unexpected. It will be important that you and your team are prepared to cover sudden staffing changes. If an adviser leaves the team either temporarily or permanently, you should have a plan to engage the rest of your team or others on campus to look after the needs of the students in that adviser's caseload.

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The lessons and recommendations in this brief are intended to help colleges build their visions to improve their advising services, and, as a result, better support their students. Enhancements to student services nearly always come at a cost to institutions. Institutions, their leaders, and staff members make tremendous efforts on a daily basis to effectively serve students, and the goal of this resource is to help guide these efforts and inform future investments. The evidence-based points in the checklist in Box 7 will help guide you in your work improving your school's advising services.

#### BOX 7

### LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: A CHECKLIST

#### Design your enhanced advising model.

- Make advising frequent and holistic.
- Provide structure for consistency across advisers while allowing some flexibility.
- Set clear expectations about the goals of advising.
- Create small caseloads for advisers.
- Reach out to students actively, frequently, and through various modes of communication.
- Keep unresponsive students on your outreach list.
- Provide incentives to encourage students to engage with their advisers.
- Offer advising support to students for as many semesters as possible.

#### Structure your team.

- Commit yourself to leading your program.
- Appoint a coordinator to manage the advising program.
- Hire full-time advisers.
- Hire advisers who have things in common with your students.

#### Train your team members and provide them with tools.

- Define expectations and roles for everyone on your team.
- Set group and individual goals.
- Train and connect your team to resources and key staff on campus.

(continued)

### BOX 7 (continued)

- Invest in a data-tracking or management information system.
- Encourage and empower advisers to use data.
- Grant advising staff access to institutional databases.

#### **Work with your team to continually improve how students are supported.**

- Have your coordinator and advisers meet regularly to assess program data.
- Convene teams of advisers, coordinators, and other program stakeholders regularly to review and discuss your program model and progress toward goals.
- Use strategies and tools to examine your program from different angles.

#### **Plan for your team to change and your program to grow.**

- Be prepared to hire and train new staff as your program grows.
- Create student cohorts and engage students in group activities to complement or partially replace one-on-one advising meetings.
- If your staff connects with students virtually, be careful to avoid leaving students out.
- Be prepared to cover adviser absences.

## NOTES

- 1** Kuhn (2008).
- 2** See, for example, Barr and Castleman (2017); Bettinger and Baker (2014); Scrivener and Weiss (2009).
- 3** See, for example, Miller, Headlam, Manno, and Cullinan (2020); Scrivener et al. (2015).
- 4** For information on MDRC's postsecondary education projects, see MDRC website: <https://www.mdrc.org/issue/higher-education> (2020).
- 5** See, for example, Karp and Stacey (2013); Klempin, Kalamkarian, Pellegrino, and Barnett (2019).
- 6** To learn more about the effectiveness of Detroit Promise Path, see Ratledge, O'Donoghue, Cullinan, and Camo-Biogradlija (2019).
- 7** Mayer et al. (2019).
- 8** Miller, Headlam, Manno, and Cullinan (2020).

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NEW YORK  
200 Vesey Street, 23rd Flr., New York, NY 10281  
Tel: 212 532 3200

OAKLAND  
475 14th Street, Suite 750, Oakland, CA 94612  
Tel: 510 663 6372

WASHINGTON, DC  
750 17th Street, NW, Suite 501  
Washington, DC 20006

LOS ANGELES  
11965 Venice Boulevard, Suite 402  
Los Angeles, CA 90066

