

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Graduation Initiative 2025 (GI 2025) has contributed to increasing graduation rates systemwide, yet equity gaps persist. Specifically, Black student enrollment and persistence continues to decline precipitously in the CSU. The Black Student Success workgroup's process included, among other efforts, a systemwide review of resources, two-day retreat and facilitated listening sessions with representation from all 23 universities. The report concludes that if the system aspires to be a national leader in supporting Black student success, it requires the CSU and its 23 universities to think broadly and act boldly in a collective manner to lead institutional change.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The workgroup articulated 13 recommendations to catalyze the cultural change urgently needed to advance Black student success. Recommendations are categorized in three strategic areas:

Strategies to Directly Support Black Student Success

Supporting Black students begins with supporting academic preparation and a college-going mindset at the earliest stages of the academic journey. Recommendations include the creation of systemwide plans regarding early outreach, enrollment and student retention. Creating welcoming and affirming spaces once students arrive on campus is also a key strategy in supporting Black student success.

Strategies to Support Faculty and Staff

Faculty and staff play an important role in Black student success. Recommendations to support them in this effort include: development of inclusive and culturally relevant curriculum and training; prioritizing and standardizing Black faculty and staff recruitment; investing in faculty and staff support services; and allocating resources to support Black faculty scholarly work and professional development interests.

Strategies for Systemwide Infrastructure to Support Black Student Success

In addition to university-level strategies, the report also includes systemwide recommendations including: the development of an enrollment marketing plan for Black students; a systemwide structure to leverage data-driven practices; systemwide policies for unprofessional conduct; the creation of a Central Office for the Advancement of Black Excellence; and the convening of a systemwide advisory group to advance this work moving forward.

CALL TO ACTION: SYSTEMWIDE COMMITMENT TO BLACK STUDENT SUCCESS

Advancing Black student success in the CSU requires that the system re-evaluate and, when necessary, reimagine long-held assumptions around student success. Stated simply and clearly, a one-size-fits-all approach to student success does not work. The CSU community must disrupt policies and procedures that inhibit rather than support the progress of Black students in the CSU. These recommendations are designed to be actionable and presume sufficient resources to provide for sound and sustainable programmatic implementation that will affect systemwide cultural change.