

FLORIDA

COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK



LOCAL COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Guide to the phases and focus of each stage of LCAN development

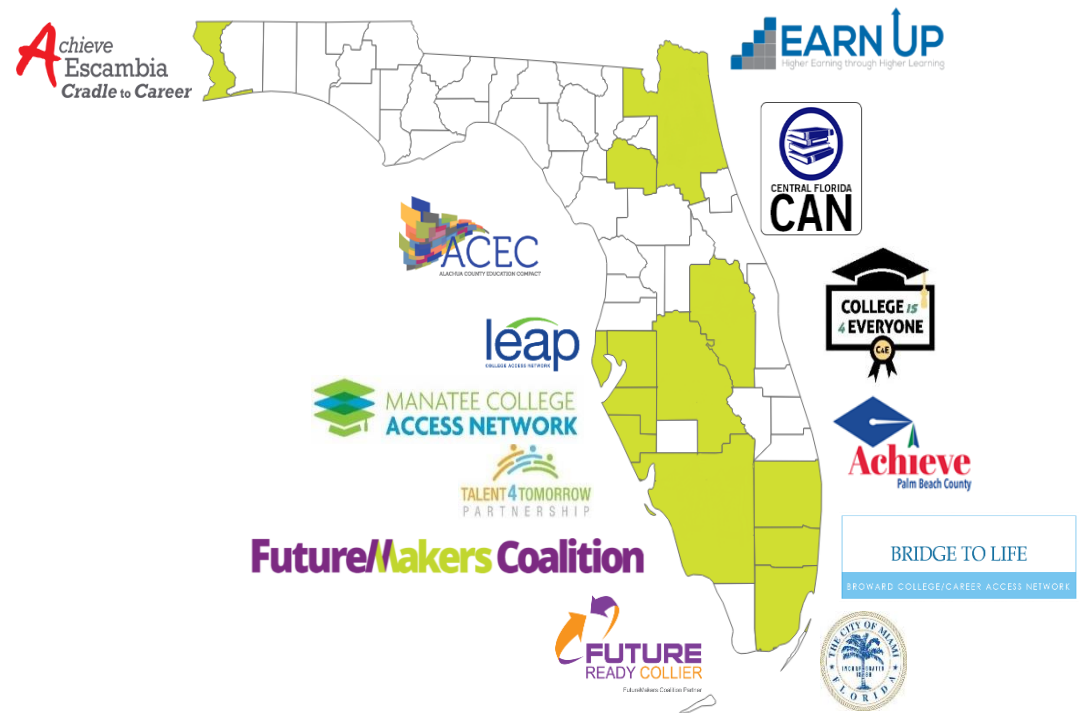


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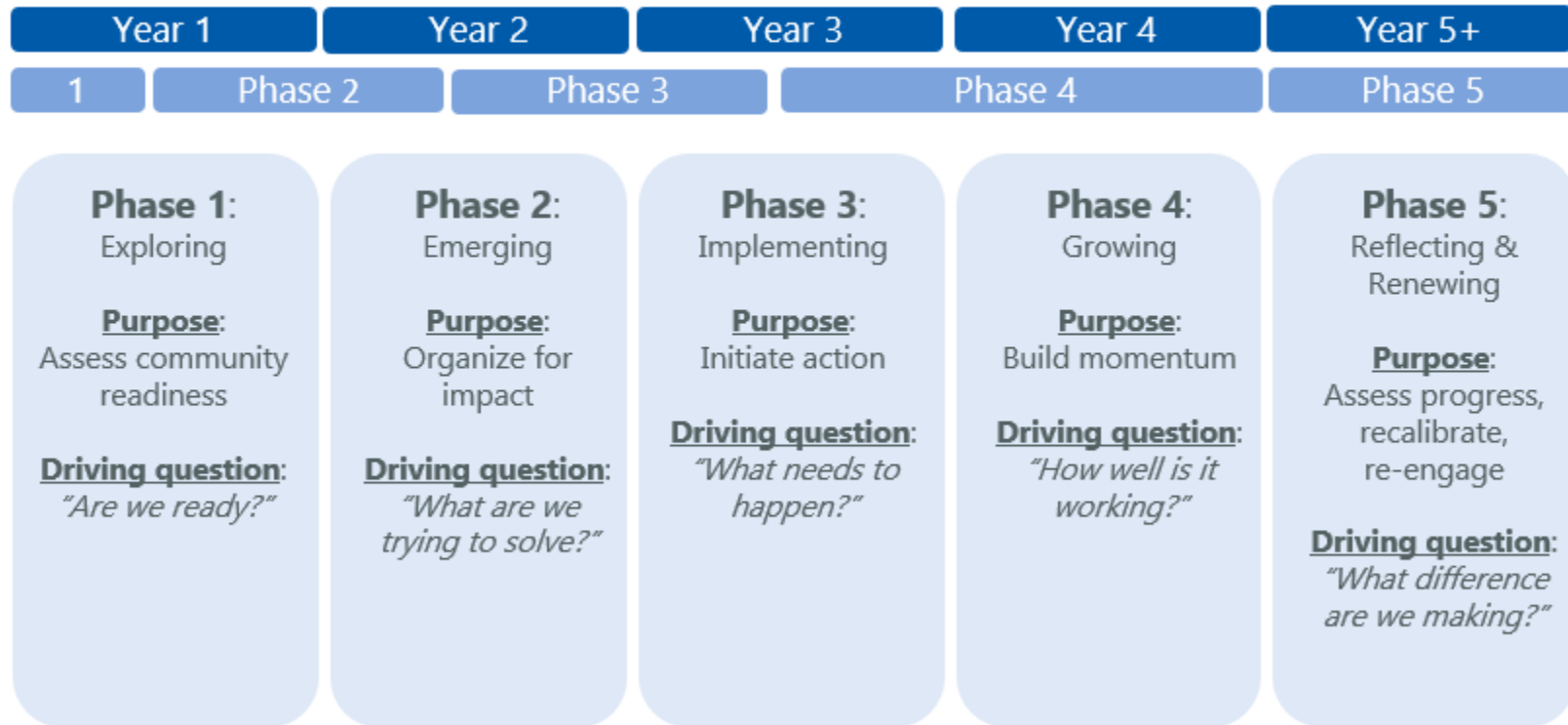
Forming a local college access network (LCAN) to help underserved students access and complete a postsecondary education requires community-wide commitment. The early stages of forming an LCAN are unique to each community, reflecting the local context that includes the level of readiness the community demonstrates, as well as how aligned community leaders are currently. In communities with deep relationships and trust among leaders, the early stages can often progress at a steady pace. For communities where taking a collaborative approach is new, the early stages can require more time for those relationships to form and deepen.

Still, communities often ask: "How long does it take to get an LCAN up and running?" With a sense of urgency and mission to tackle college access and success, partners can get impatient, often wanting to accelerate the pace of the work. But as the saying goes, "Change happens at the speed of trust." Communities who do not invest early in the deep conversations among leaders to truly understand the complex challenges of creating system-wide change often have to play catch-up later.

This timeline can help you plan and manage expectations among your partners, recognizing that each community's unique context will impact the time needed at each phase of LCAN development.



LCAN Implementation At-A-Glance



Frequently Used Terms

Asset mapping: The process of capturing a community's strengths and resources among local organizations that support student success.

Backbone organization: The organization providing convening, organizational and fiscal agent support to the network.

Barriers to attainment: Logistical and system obstacles that can keep students from completing a credential (e.g. transportation, broadband access, complicated financial aid paperwork, implicit bias in how procedures affect a segment of students).

Champion: A community leader who is a strong supporter of the network and who draws other leaders to the table through their participation.

C-level leader: C-level refers to senior level leaders in an organization (e.g. chief executive officer, chief operations officer).

Collective impact: A framework for taking a multi-sector approach to addressing a complex challenge, with 5 components – common agenda, backbone organization, continuous communication, shared metrics, and mutually reinforcing activities.

Common agenda: The network's plan that includes a postsecondary attainment goal, focus areas and strategic priorities.

Community engagement plan: An intentional effort to bring in the voices of community members to shape the work, particularly those that will benefit from the work.

Community stakeholders: Individuals and leaders of organizations that play a critical role in shaping the plan and the outcomes of the network's work.

Cross-sector / multi-sector: "Sector" refers to the segment of a community (e.g. business, government). "Cross" / "multi" indicates a network that is made up of representatives from many segments in a community (e.g. philanthropy, education, economic development) who are important to the network's focus areas.

Data scan: Looking across measurements of the current progress in student performance to identify where there may be strengths or areas of opportunity for the network to focus their attention.

Frequently Used Terms

Feedback loop: Seeking input along the way to improve an initiative or program, usually from students being served.

1st-Gen: Refers to students who are the first in their family to go to college.

K-12: A term used to represent primary and secondary education, or kindergarten through 12th grade (the last year of high school).

“Make the case”: Providing stakeholders with information and data that helps them see the challenge the network seeks to address and builds their interest and support of the work.

Onboarding: A process to help new partners and participants get to know the work of the network and help them contribute.

Priority areas: Where the network intends to focus its efforts. Typically, a student segment (e.g. first generation) or barrier (e.g. student advising).

Public will-building: Efforts made to encourage community participation and support of the network goal and focus areas.

Scaling: Taking a successful strategy / initiative / program from a test phase to a broader audience to drive more student success.

Shared metrics: Refers to the measurements the network has agreed to use to measure their progress.

Strategic learning: Using measurements to promote learning in what works / doesn't work in the local community. It often refers to trying an approach, measuring whether it worked, and probing what might have made the approach successful (or not) so that the network's efforts can continue to improve student outcomes.

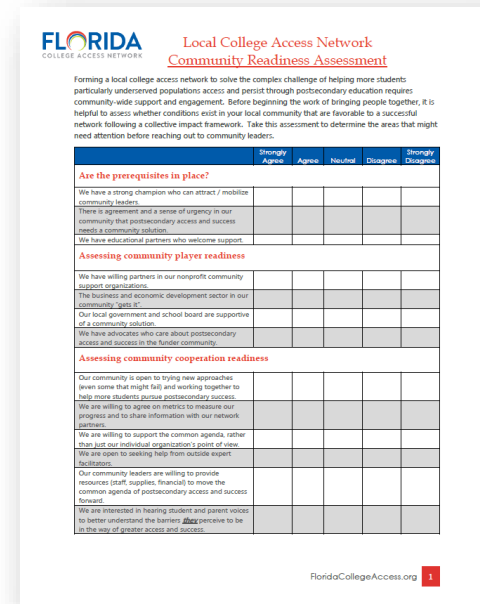
System change: Refers to efforts intended to improve the way an organization or community operates. It often is done through updating outdated processes or procedures that are creating unnecessary challenges for students.

Succession planning: A network's efforts to anticipate leadership change and ensure the work continues. It answers the question, "Who will take over the work if a key leader leaves?"

Work groups: Made up of representatives from multiple sectors, these teams support the focus areas of the common agenda by developing and implementing strategies intended to improve student success as measured by the shared metrics.

Local College Access Network Implementation Timeline

Phase 1	Exploring
Timing	0-6 months
Purpose	Assess community readiness – "Are we ready?"
Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Champion(s) Willing leaders Initial backbone organization
What's happening	<p>Initial conversations among early leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaining agreement there is a problem to solve and a sense of urgency to solve it. Evaluating community readiness. Exploring if collective impact (community-wide, multi-sector) is the right approach. Identifying available resources (time, money, people). Studying other LCAN communities to learn from their experience. Building relationships and trust.
Outcome	Go / no go decision to move forward.



Phase 2	Emerging
Timing	6-12 months
Purpose	Organizing for impact – From idea to planning. “What needs to happen?”
Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Champion(s) C-Level leaders representing each sector (K-12, higher education, business, philanthropy, nonprofit, local government) Initial backbone organization Community stakeholders, including LCAN beneficiaries (e.g. students, parents) <i>Recommended:</i> Seasoned consultant facilitator
What’s happening	Assessing strengths / challenges, strategic planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forming cross-sector leadership team to guide the effort. Developing a collective understanding through data scans and stakeholder input of opportunity gaps and barriers to attainment among student populations. Asset mapping – who in the community is currently providing each type of student support/service, where are there gaps in services, and where is there duplication. Creating a community engagement plan. (How will we capture the voice and needs of the student?) Using data to “make the case” in public will-building efforts. Setting an attainment goal that is ambitious and attainable, and identifying priority areas of focus and shared metrics to measure progress.
Outcome	A clearly defined problem, a postsecondary attainment goal and focus areas are identified.

Phase 3	Implementing
Timing	12 months
Purpose	Initiate action – “What needs to happen first, next?”
Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • * Guiding leadership team from each sector (K-12, higher education, business, philanthropy, nonprofit, local government) • Backbone organization with LCAN-dedicated staff • Working group community partners • Champion(s) and C-level leaders step back, playing a less active role. (Some champions move to the guiding leadership team)
What’s happening	<p>Infrastructure is established to support implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External and internal communications mechanisms are in place. • Organizational structure is defined. • Initial fund development is underway. • Operating agreements are understood (“How do we agree to work together?”) • Official, public launch of the network usually happens now. • Work groups devoted to the shared priority areas are established to set team strategies and action steps. • Tracking progress of initiatives is ongoing and teams are demonstrating quick wins. • Public will-building continues. • Relationships and trust deepens.
Outcome	Working group action plans are defined, measurements are refined, progress is tracked and reported out to the community.

* Leaders are typically director level or above, have enough authority to represent their organization at the table, and can get C-suite level buy-in as needed.

Phase 4	Growing
Timing	3 – 5 years
Purpose	Building momentum by leveraging early wins – “How well is it working?”
Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guiding leadership team from each sector (K-12, higher ed, business, philanthropy, nonprofit, local government) Backbone organization with LCAN-dedicated staff Working group community partners Champion(s) and C-level leaders participate in progress “check-ins”
What’s happening	<p>Work groups are actively engaged in testing strategies, scaling viable approaches, and formalizing successful strategies within organizations (system change):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backbone infrastructure is formalized. Progress is measured to facilitate strategic learning. Strategies continue to be improved. Communication inside and outside LCAN drives community engagement (e.g. progress sharing). The LCAN broadens reach through testing of promising approaches and advocacy. Succession planning and onboard processes are established.
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scaling viable approaches Driving system change in institutions who formalize effective strategies Adapting work based on input from continuous student feedback loop Advocating for resources to support students at the community, state and national level

Phase 5	Reflecting / Re-engaging
Timing	5+ years
Purpose	Assess progress, recalibrate, re-engage through new players – “What difference are we making?”
Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champion(s) and C-level leaders step forward, re-activating their commitment • Guiding leadership team from each sector (K-12, higher ed, business, philanthropy, nonprofit, local government) • Backbone organization with LCAN-dedicated staff • Working group community partners • New, fresh voices are added
What’s happening	<p>Take stock – does the plan still serve the community need? Have new needs emerged?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring in fresh perspectives – who might bring new vitality to the table? • How well is the measurement system tracking progress? • Capture success stories and lessons learned. • Where do we want to go from here?
Outcome	Refresh strategic plan, focus areas, and work group participation.

Florida College Access Network is here to help!

We can share resources, data and examples from other Florida LCANs to help you lay a strong foundation for a multi-sector approach. For more information go to: FloridaCollegeAccess.org.

Ready to get started?

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