

# Unlocking the Potential: A Guide to Using the Postsecondary to Prosperity Dashboard

The California Postsecondary to Prosperity Dashboard braids together multiple data sources to create an interactive, user-friendly portal with visualizations on the state of opportunity across California. Policymakers, educational institutions, policy advocacy and community-based organizations, and employers can use the Dashboard data to spark meaningful conversations and urge further exploration into the factors shaping the presented information. We share suggestions to leverage the dashboard below.

## Step 1 Explore and Question the Data

### **Policymakers:**

- Dive into your region's data. Identify disparities and gaps in comparison to other regions and the state. Explore what is causing these disparities to occur.
- Formulate strategies to address and alleviate these disparities.

### **Educational institutions:**

- Start by analyzing your own institutional data to gain a comprehensive understanding of your students and staff, including faculty and administration.
  - Identify where your students come from and the areas where they are underrepresented
  - Evaluate your students' post-graduation outcomes, such as who hires them or where they go for further education.
  - Additionally, assess the demographics and living conditions of your staff. Analyze factors like income, commute lengths, and educational attainment.
- Compare your findings with the Dashboard's regional, county, and population analyses. Identify disparities and areas of equity. Strive to gain deeper insights into the causes of these disparities and equitable outcomes.

### **Policy advocacy & community-based organizations:**

- Analyze the data specific to the communities you serve. Identify disparities and gaps that exist within these communities.
- Assess the impact of the support provided to these communities and evaluate whether it is reflected in the data.
- Engage in a dialogue with community members to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences and perspectives. Connect their lived realities to the data presented in the Dashboard.
- Utilize the insights gained from the data to inform advocacy efforts and drive change. Identify areas where tailored interventions and policies can address the identified disparities

and promote equitable outcomes within the communities you serve.

### **Employers:**

- To identify regions/counties of interest, consider your business operations, customer base, and employee demographics, including their residential locations.
- Explore the Dashboard's analyses for these regions and populations and reflect on the following questions:
  - What disparities are evident?
  - What aspects appear equitable in these regions?
  - How does this comparison align with your understanding of the areas where you conduct business, where your customers reside, and where your employees live?
- Evaluate how these regions compare to others and reflect on how this comparison influences your business strategies. How does regional educational attainment and workforce readiness impact decisions such as staff recruitment and location choices?
- Specifically, regarding your employees, examine the impact of postsecondary access on their professional development and training. Consider if issues of access influence your business activities and operational decisions.

### **Journalists:**

- Leverage the Dashboard to better understand the regions, communities, and institutions you cover. Align the data with your reporting findings to enhance your understanding. Use the data to corroborate the information you gather during interviews and to illustrate the disparities between groups or regions.
- Allow the analyses presented in the Dashboard to serve as a starting place for fact-gathering and vetting story ideas.

## Step 2 Gather More Data and Put It in Context

- Be inclusive in gathering further information to gain a comprehensive understanding of the underlying causes and potential solutions. In addition to engaging with experts and stakeholders typically involved, prioritize reaching out to community members directly impacted.

## Step 3 Solve the Problem and Reassess the Data

- Collaborate with your community to identify, develop, and validate solutions.
- Implement the chosen solution(s).
- Return to Step 1 and analyze data for subsequent periods to assess progress and refine approaches as needed.