

# Eliminating Gaps

*Eliminating gaps will require the collaboration of all members of a community, not just staff in a school building and students' families.*



**Post-secondary  
Educator**

**Eliminating gaps will require changes in how I think about and work in the following areas:**

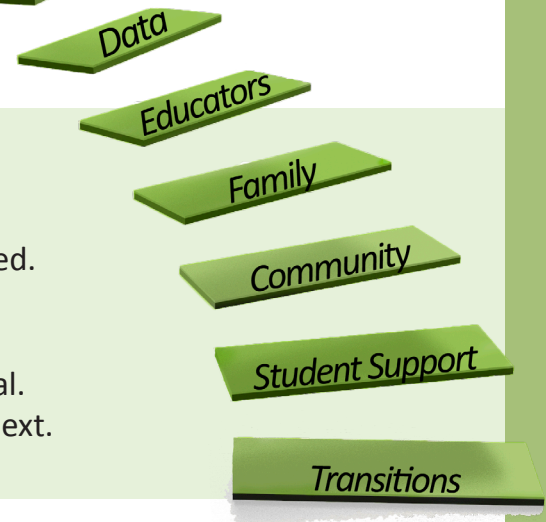
**Data** — what and how data is collected; who sees it and how it is used.

**Educators** — recruitment, hiring, placement, retention, and training.

**Community** — engagement in students' education.

**Student support** — academic, physical, social-emotional, and cultural.

**Transitions** — students' transitions from one academic level to the next.



**As an educator in a post-secondary institution, what I do makes a difference!**

**Data: I need to consider multiple data elements and use data differently.**

- **Academics:** Do I have access to the most important academic information about the students I serve? Do I consider a variety of assessments scores - Washington Language Proficiency Test, SAT/ACT, college entrance exams, High School Proficiency Exams, Advanced Placement Tests, IB exams? Do I know who was served in high school by special education services, 504 plans, English language learning, or gifted and honors programming? Do I look at my students' grades from high school to see patterns? How do I determine which students require remediation or placement in higher level courses?
- **Non-academic:** What other information about my students do I need to know—age, primary language, educational experience (if they are not coming to me directly from high school), does a student have a high school diploma or GED, immigration status, marital status, professional experience? How can I use this information to better serve students in the gaps?

**Educators: I need to become the most effective educator I can be.**

- **Leadership:** Are my beliefs and actions consistent when it comes to the academic performance of students of color at my institution? How do I demonstrate cultural sensitivity in my classroom and on campus? Do my colleagues believe I have “a fire in my gut” for really doing what I know works to close opportunity and access gaps? Do my colleagues believe I really care about equity and social justice? What motivates my passion for an equitable education for all students?
- **Promoting education as a profession:** How can I use my position to promote education as a profession, particularly with students of color I meet who demonstrate promise? How do I help those students get into the appropriate program to develop these skills? How do I connect these students to mentors who can walk with them through the process?
- **Professional development:** How do I get the training I need to be the most effective educator I can be for the students I serve? What opportunities do I have to learn about the culture and language needs of the students in my classes?

# As an educator in a post-secondary institution, what I do makes a difference!

## Community: I need to partner with communities to improve education for all.

- **Building partnerships:** How do I learn about the diverse members of the community in which I teach? How do I partner with community members to bring experts into my classroom who may not have credentials to teach full-time but may have a particular expertise or talent and who could serve as role models for students?
- **Getting feedback:** How do I collaborate with current and former students to attract promising students of color into our college program? How can these students provide feedback about their experiences at my institution? How can I use that feedback to improve my practice?
- **Supporting students:** How do I engage community partners to help me connect and work more effectively with students in the academic setting? How do I engage the community to ensure that students feel “at home” in my classroom and on my campus? Do I know where non-local students can get haircuts, purchase cultural foods, find mentors and be entertained in a culturally relevant environment?

## Student support: I need to recognize and address students’ academic, physical, social-emotional, and cultural needs.

- **Connecting students:** Has my institution done an asset map of my community to determine the resources available to students— for example: housing, clothing, food, tutoring, transportation, social/cultural support groups? Has my institution created a resource guide or a central location for students to get information about these resources? How do I help students learn about and access these resources? How do I know students are taking advantage of these resources?
- **Academic support:** How do I assess student learning in my class? Do I encourage students in my classes to ask questions when they don’t understand something? How do students in my classes get help if they don’t understand something?
- **Cultural support:** How do students in my classes see themselves reflected in classroom activities and materials? How do I engage former students from a particular cultural/language group to help struggling students with whom I am having a difficult time communicating?

## Transitions: I help students make seamless transitions from one academic level to the next.

- **Alignment of curriculum:** How do I align my curriculum with those who are teaching at levels below and above mine? How do I continue this dialogue over time as courses transform? How do I use my courses to prepare students for life after college?
- **Assessing students:** How do I assess my students’ levels of knowledge so I am able to provide lessons at a level that meets the needs of all students? How do I ensure that each student meets the learning targets of my classes and is prepared for the next level?



**For more information about  
addressing opportunity gaps:**

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