



Equity Plan Development & Implementation through the ILEA Initiative

March 16, 2023

Agenda for Today

- Overview of PCC & the ILEA Initiative
- Program Model
- Equity Plan Development
 - Process
 - Principles
 - Timeline
- Lessons Learned

Partnership for College Completion



Mission

The Partnership for College Completion champions policies, practices and systems that increase college completion and eliminate degree completion disparities for low-income, first generation, and students of color in Illinois – particularly Black and Latinx students.

Vision

PCC envisions a state where equitable opportunities to access and complete a college education lead to greater degree attainment, racial equity and socioeconomic mobility for Illinoisans.

Our Work

PCC advances solutions that address historic inequities in our higher education system.



Public Policy

We advocate for bold equity-centered policies that improve college access and affordability and address structural barriers to persistence and completion.



College and University Partnerships

We partner with Illinois colleges and universities to provide support as they develop and deploy equity-centered strategies on campus.



Research and Data

We use data and research to advance both transformational equity change on college and universities campuses and through state policy efforts in Illinois.

The Illinois Equity in Attainment Initiative

- An initiative that brings together a diverse group of 25 Illinois colleges and universities, launched in late 2018
- Public commitment by institutions to eliminate racial & socioeconomic inequities in degree completion outcomes
- Led by Presidents & senior leadership team
- Focus on institutionalizing equity efforts
- Sharing disaggregated data over time
- Working within a community of practice
- Evolving supports from PCC



ILLINOIS EQUITY
IN ATTAINMENT

ILEA Core Beliefs

Colleges are responsible for graduating

all of their degree-seeking students

All college students can graduate

with the right information, tools, and supports

Racial and socioeconomic completion inequities are unacceptable

and should be eliminated with urgency

Solutions and resources exist to address disparities

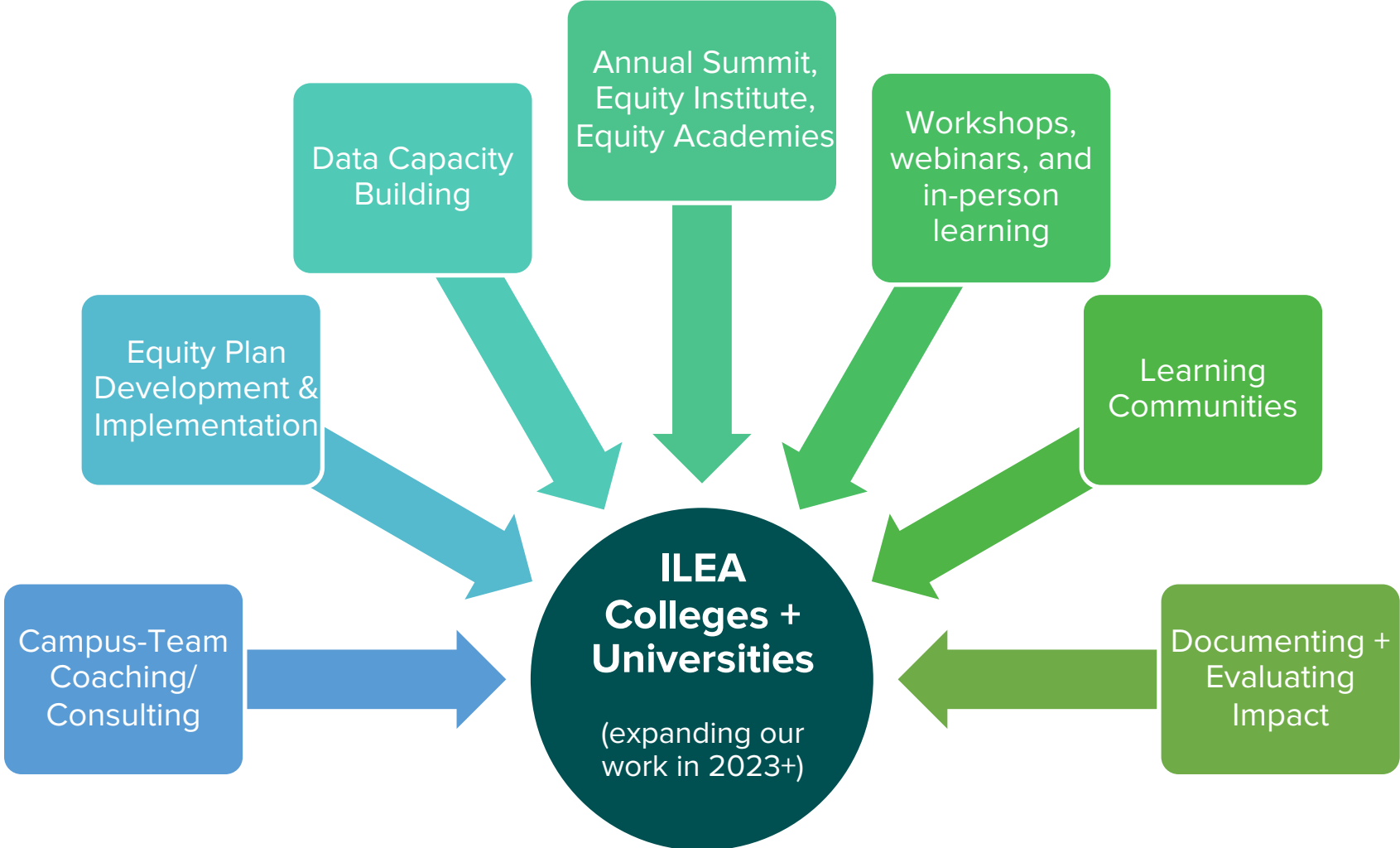
in higher education outcomes

The actions that colleges take or fail to take can determine a student's ultimate trajectory in college



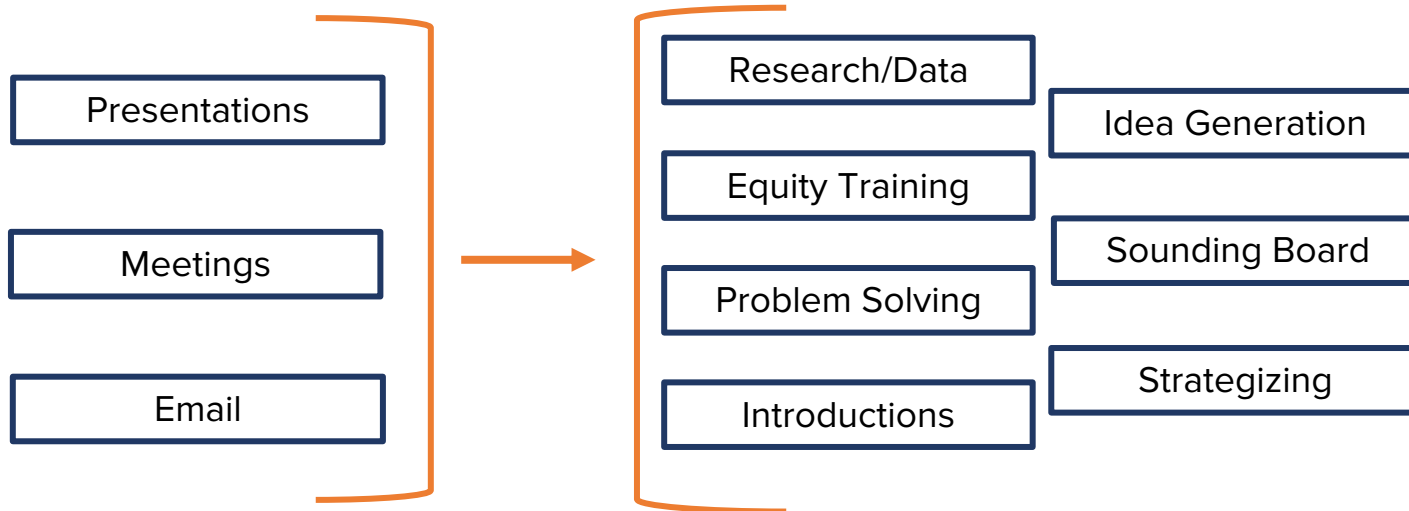
Model of Support &

PCC Supports for ILEA Institutions



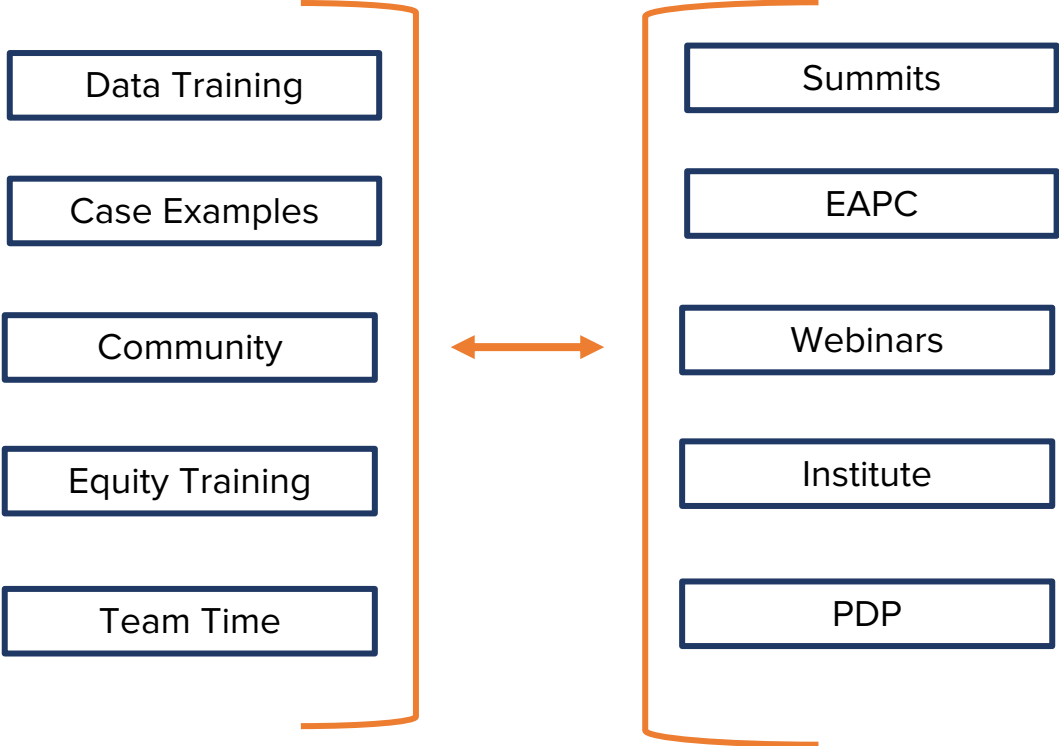
Where Does Coaching Support Happen?

Targeted resources to aid ILEA partners in eliminating disparities in degree completion on their campus.



How Does Coaching Inform Supports?

Connect ILEA partners to existing/develop new content, programs, connections, and other resources that are aligned with their needs.



What Makes Coaching Possible?

1

Build and maintain relationships with ILEA partners, researchers, and university and college practitioners – understand the context of local and national efforts.

2

Develop understanding of each ILEA partner's institutional culture and context.

3

Develop expertise on higher education **D. E. I.** matters, with emphasis on the **“E”**.

The background features a blurred image of several rolled-up diplomas tied with red ribbons, arranged in a row. A large, dark blue diagonal shape covers the left side of the image, with a bright blue diagonal stripe and an orange diagonal stripe intersecting it.

ILEA Equity Plans &

After 1+ year of organizing, planning, and level setting around equity, 22 ILEA colleges and universities & published equity plans that aim to **eliminate disparities in degree completion by race and Pell-status** (



ILEA Equity Plan



Equity Plan Contents

- 1 Endorsement at Highest Levels
- 2 Who We Are, Clarity of Purpose
- 3 Where We are Today
- 4 Future Vision & Goals
- 5 Institutional Strategies
- 6 Evaluation Plan
- 7 Budget Implications

- National Scan
- Clear & Concise
- Local Customization
- 1 Among Many Plans + Equity Must be Integrated Into All
- Public-Facing

ILEA Equity Plan Development Process



Learning in Community

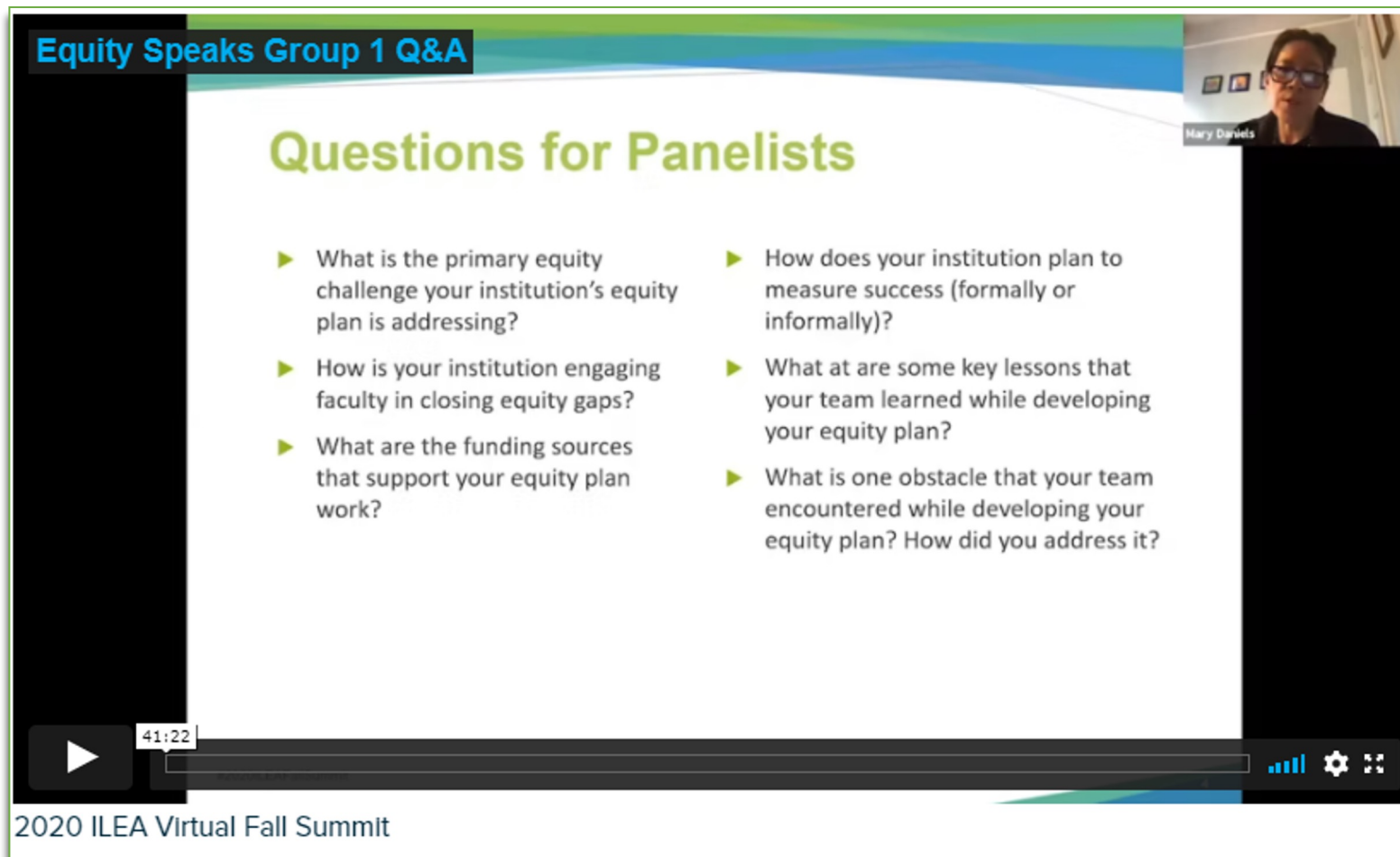
Equity Speaks Group 1 Q&A

Questions for Panelists

- ▶ What is the primary equity challenge your institution's equity plan is addressing?
- ▶ How is your institution engaging faculty in closing equity gaps?
- ▶ What are the funding sources that support your equity plan work?
- ▶ How does your institution plan to measure success (formally or informally)?
- ▶ What are some key lessons that your team learned while developing your equity plan?
- ▶ What is one obstacle that your team encountered while developing your equity plan? How did you address it?

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2020 ILEA Virtual Fall Summit



Annual Evaluation & Reflection

At the conclusion of each academic year, each institution submits a reflection assessing progress made during the academic year and what adjustments will be made to the plan.

- An assessment of the impact of each strategy based on an evaluation plan within the Equity Plan (strategy & institutional level)
- A detailed description of next steps for each strategy (created, changed, scaled, or discontinued based on the team's assessment & data)





What We Are Learning: &

**About Equity Work & &
Equity Plans &**

Equity Plan Strategies

- **Student Access and Onboarding:** Student enrollment, orientation and first-year experiences
- **Credit Accumulation:** Reaching 15/30 credits within the first term/year
- **Hiring and Professional Development:** Staff and faculty training on diversity, inclusion, equity, and integrating equity into daily work
- **Student Supports and Resources:** Retaining students, ensuring students persist year to year, and complete credentials
- **Transition Opportunities:** Setting students up for transfer or employment

Successes: Year 1-2 of Implementation

- **Bypassing developmental education (coreq, self-placement) & embedded tutoring** for developmental math courses yielding academic gains for Latinx and Black students
- **(Re)opening cultural centers** for use by campus community
- **Faculty professional development** for developmental education and in equity-focused teaching & strategy
- **Targeted HR policies** to assess cultural competency among prospective candidates and recruit/hire diverse candidates
- **Success frameworks** created for faculty & staff integrating DEI principles
- **Revamped New Student Orientation** to be more culturally-responsive



Successes: Year 1 of Implementation

- **Implementing a guided pathways model** linking adult students with career opportunities
- **Redesigned advising model** integrates supports holistically across areas
- **Outreach to students** to understand reasons for stop out or D/W courses
- **New course times, modalities, sequences, schedules** to optimize success
- **Gateway course completion, credit completion, credit thresholds**
- **Scaling programs** to hundreds or thousands of students
- **Budgeting for equity impact**

Challenges from Year 1-2

- **Scaling** promising practices
- **Intended impact** not achieved – effectiveness & adequacy
- **Time, effort, choreography required** – to disaggregate and interpret data, to evaluate/revamp systems & processes, to increase student touchpoints
- **Enrollment** declines among Black students & Latinx students
- **Integrating embedded tutoring** in math co-requisite courses
- **Coordination needed across teams** because disparities must be addressed by multiple people/departments/offices
- **Equity plan is a guide** and not an instruction manual

Leadership is Critical

- The *president* is critical to the success of equity priorities
- The *president* needs a strong, effective, aligned leadership team
- The trustees are partners to the president to provide support & leadership
- The scale and momentum in the organization is within the faculty & staff
- **Context:** Resource-constrained and priority-full environment
- Race must be explicitly discussed

Research has found that the support, collaboration, and visible action of senior administrative leaders are among the core elements required for transformational change in higher education. However, it is insufficient on its own.*

**Eckel and Kezar (2002)*

PCC Recommendations in Summary

- Broad campus-level investment to develop, implement, adjust and celebrate
- Big public goals – accountability for reaching them
- Engagement throughout of leadership
- Equity statements as shorthand
- Real, long-term commitment
- Becoming equity-minded practitioners
- Scale is the goal, not programs
- The role of data within the institution
- Process of inquiry, learning organizations
- Leveraging communities of practice for continuous learning, sharing, and disseminating findings





Questions & Discussion