

Breakout Room: REAL Transparency & True Affordability

2024 STUDENT SUCCESS SUMMIT

#REALTALK

Real Data | Real Action | Real Results



Breakout Room Facilitators



Kemmoree Duncombe
Director of Financial Aid
Kirtland Community College



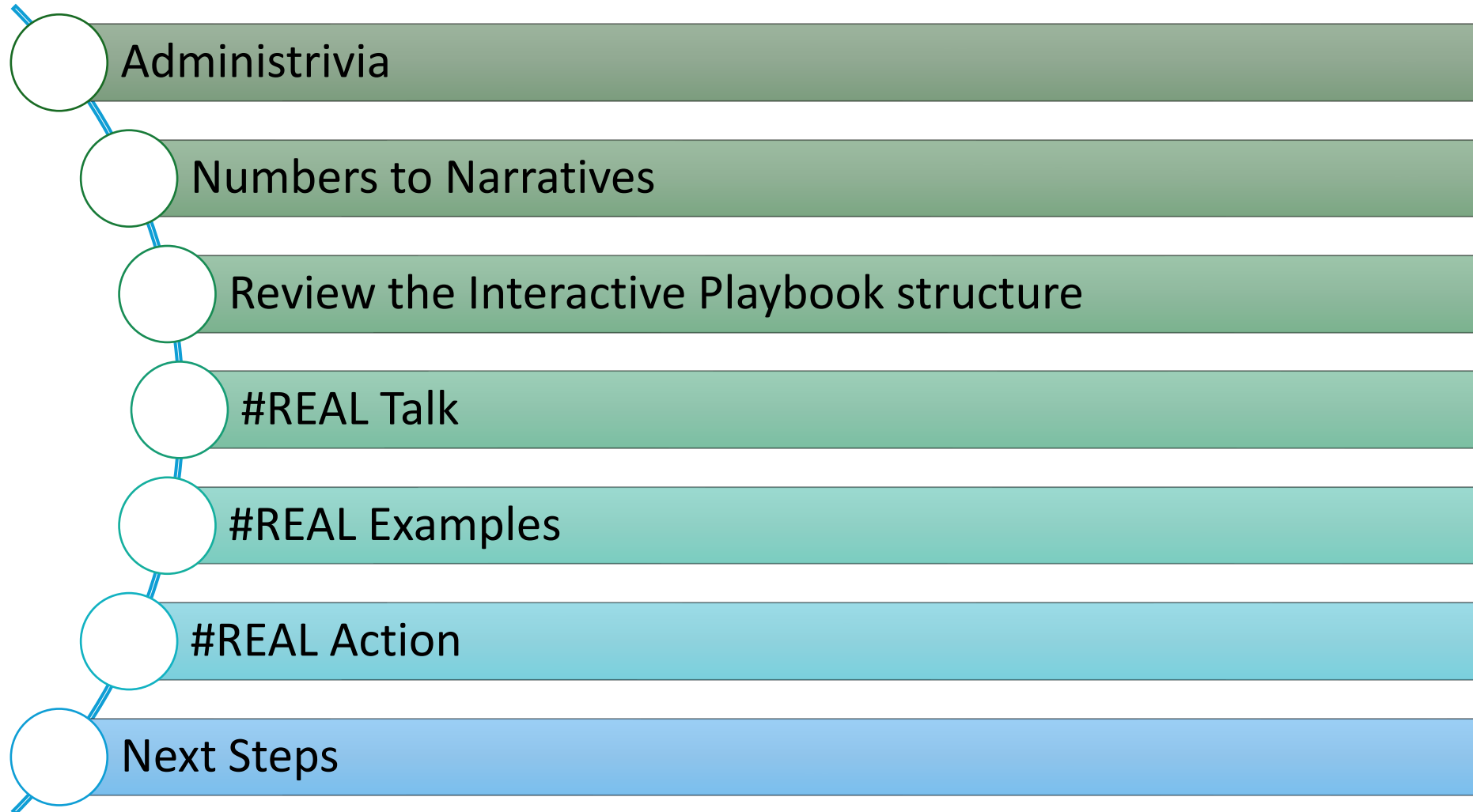
Katie Witkowski
Director of Government External
Affairs
Michigan Community College



Brenae Smith
Associate Director
HCM Strategists



Agenda







Numbers to Narratives

During the 2022-2023 academic year:

- **15,249** African American students graduated from Michigan high schools.
- **1,668** of these students enrolled in a Michigan community college (**10.9%**).
- **4,282** enrolled in a four-year institution (**28%**).
- **72% of Black learners** receive Federal pell grant funds, compared with 34% of white students.
- Nearly **35% of Black learners** report food insecurity, compared with 18% of white students.
- Although Black learners comprise **14% of high school graduates**, they account for just 7% of enrollments among public four-year institutions and 11% among community colleges.
- Black learners have completion rates **24 percentage points** below their white peers



In order to LEVEL UP, we have to Get REAL with:

-  Real Transparency and True Affordability
-  Ensured Success through Shared Ownership
-  Academic and Social Supports that Create a Sense of Belonging
-  Learner-Centered Teaching Practices for Black Learners



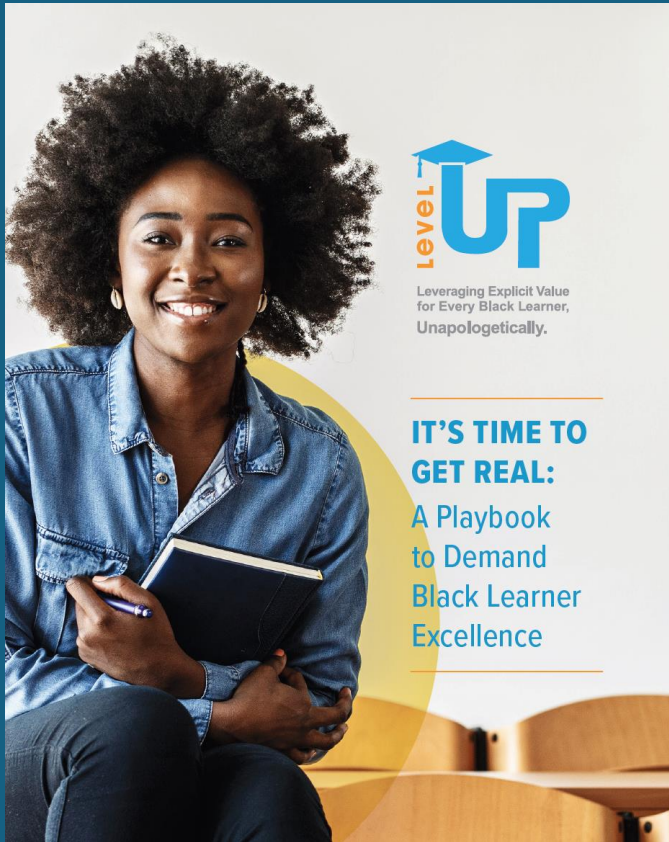
In order to **LEVEL UP**, key leaders are compelled to **GET REAL** with:



REAL Transparency and True Affordability

We must focus not only on increasing need-based aid, but also on making more visible the bottom-line cost students will pay, based on a realistic assessment of what students can reasonably afford.





Leveraging Explicit Value
for Every Black Learner,
Unapologetically.

IT'S TIME TO GET REAL:

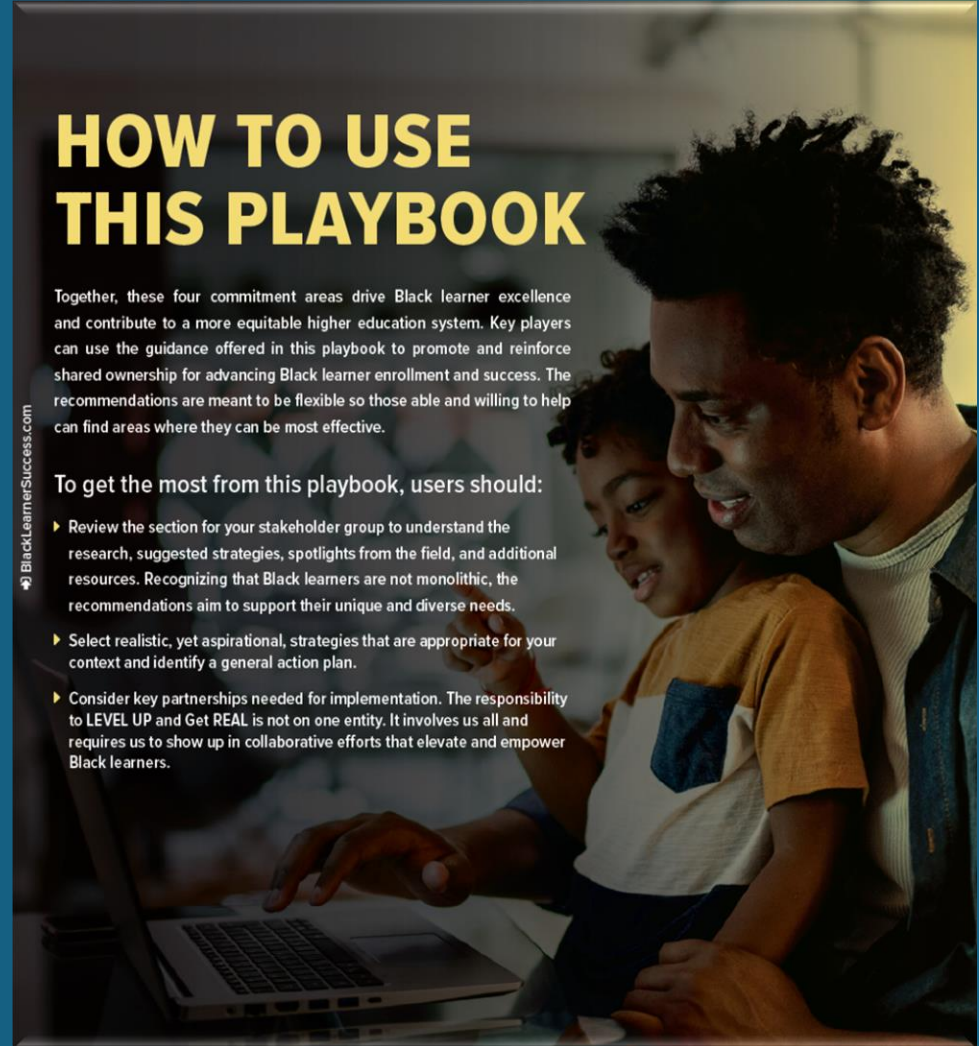
A Playbook
to Demand
Black Learner
Excellence

HOW TO USE THIS PLAYBOOK

Together, these four commitment areas drive Black learner excellence and contribute to a more equitable higher education system. Key players can use the guidance offered in this playbook to promote and reinforce shared ownership for advancing Black learner enrollment and success. The recommendations are meant to be flexible so those able and willing to help can find areas where they can be most effective.

To get the most from this playbook, users should:

- ▶ Review the section for your stakeholder group to understand the research, suggested strategies, spotlights from the field, and additional resources. Recognizing that Black learners are not monolithic, the recommendations aim to support their unique and diverse needs.
- ▶ Select realistic, yet aspirational, strategies that are appropriate for your context and identify a general action plan.
- ▶ Consider key partnerships needed for implementation. The responsibility to LEVEL UP and Get REAL is not on one entity. It involves us all and requires us to show up in collaborative efforts that elevate and empower Black learners.



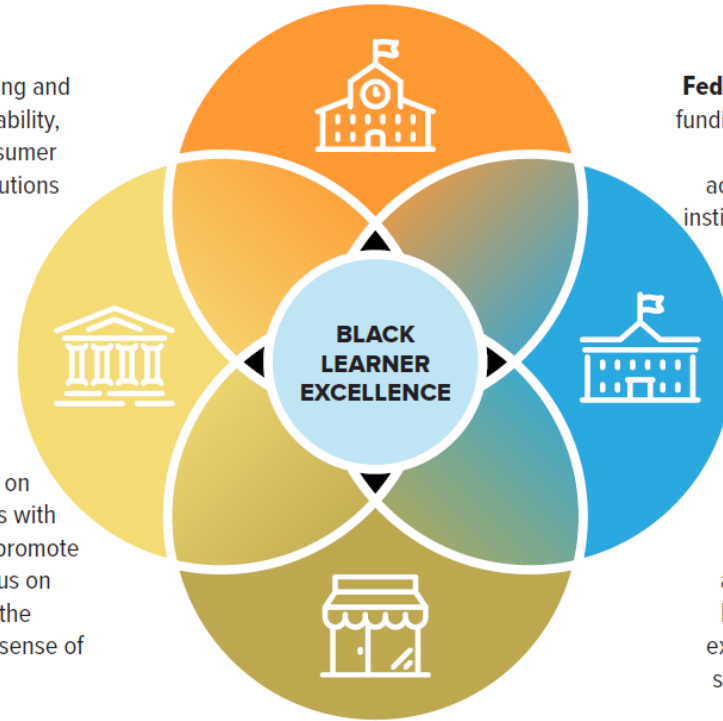
How to Use the Playbook



State policymakers have law-making and budget authority to bolster accountability, affordability, transparency, and consumer protection, and they subsidize institutions where most Black learners enroll.



Higher Education Institutions are on the front lines serving Black learners with campus policies and practices that promote access and success, including a focus on increasing transparency, improving the value proposition, and cultivating a sense of belonging.



Federal policymakers have authority and funding to address affordability, strengthen data and delivery systems, oversee accreditation, and incentivize states and institutions to bolster foundational policies and target support to Black learners.



Community and business leaders are invaluable partners to advocate for Black learner excellence, provide work experiences, connect learners to human services, and foster community through mentorship.

Real Transparency and True Affordability

Target institutional aid as need-based grants offered to students who would benefit the most from additional grant aid.

Create a commitment of affordability or promise program for students from low-income backgrounds.

Develop and promote creative solutions to address students' basic needs (such as housing and food) and unexpected financial emergencies.⁷

Ensure financial aid award letters and other consumer information materials are clear and concise.



Real Transparency and True Affordability

Offer individualized financial aid counseling and digital financial literacy resources.¹²

Institutions can develop inspirational messaging targeted to Black learners that includes interactive tools that allow exploring of economic returns.



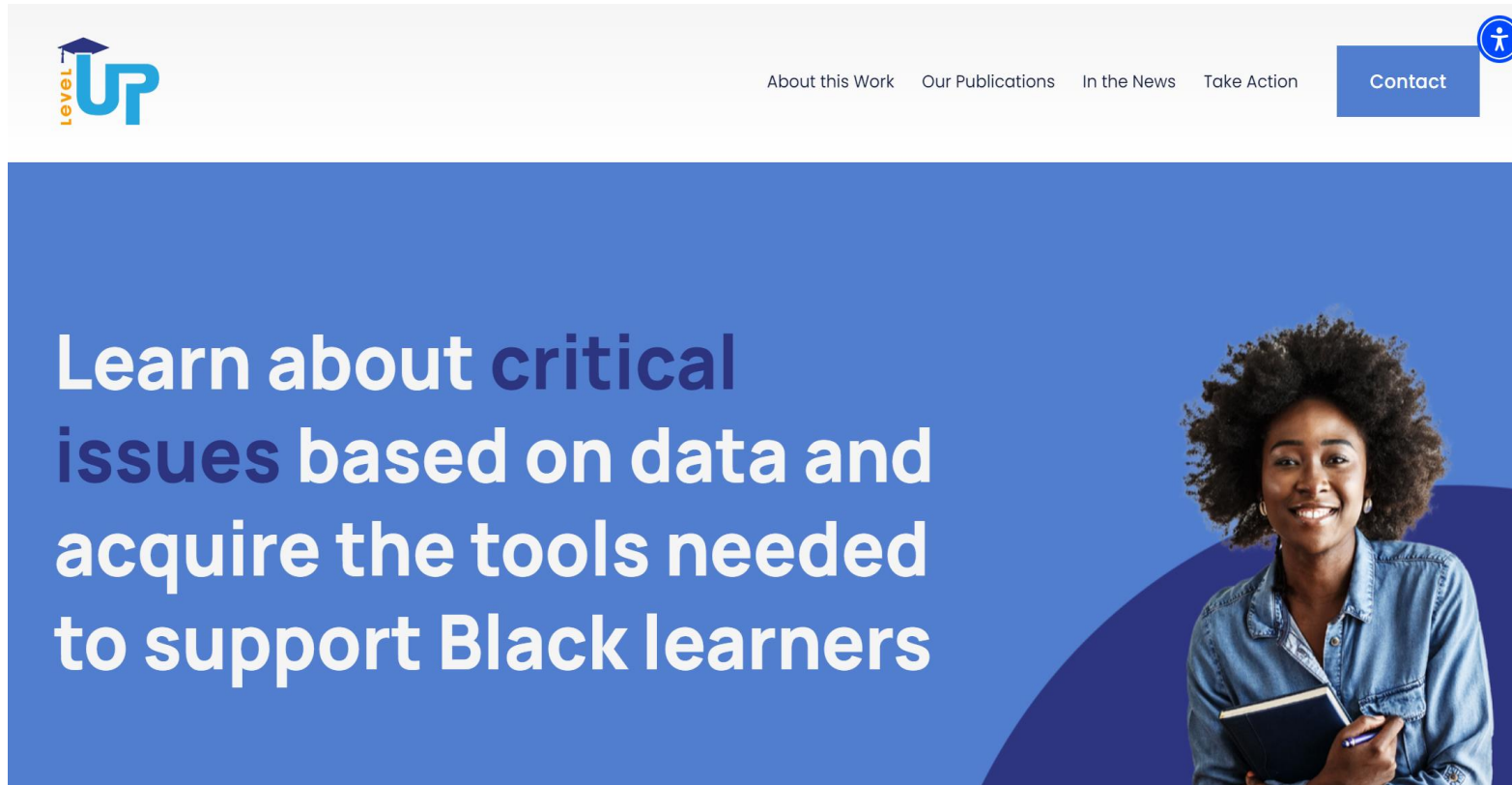
Real Transparency and True Affordability

AFFORDABILITY SPOTLIGHTS

- ▶ **Compton College** takes a data-driven, student-informed, [comprehensive approach to basic needs](#). Black learners comprise 24% of the college's student body.¹⁵ Compton's basic needs efforts include partnering with a community development organization to address housing, streamlining processes to access resources, and hiring a basic needs director.
- ▶ **University of Maryland, Baltimore County** has [focused on increasing enrollment](#) of Black learners for decades and offers targeted scholarships. Black learners account for 24% of the institution's enrollment.¹⁶
- ▶ **The University of Texas System** created a [data dashboard on educational and career outcomes](#) for specific student groups. SeekUT was one of the first systems in higher education to launch an online resource to provide salary and debt statistics of actual students by degree major, providing transparency and helping students make informed decisions about their educational careers.¹⁷



Explore the Interactive Playbook Online



[blacklearnersuccess.com/
level-up-overview](https://blacklearnersuccess.com/level-up-overview)



Elbow Partners/Aisle Mates



Institutional Action

What are the common challenges colleges have with being transparent about costs of postsecondary education and what could be done to combat these challenges?

What is communicated to students, staff, faculty, and the community at large when an institution centers real affordability and transparency?

How can institutions improve communication with students and families regarding basic need supports, available scholarships, and how to calculate the true cost of attendance?



5-minute Large Group Share Out



Elbow Partners/Aisle Mates



Individual Action

What actions can be taken to ensure that the information that is provided to students is clear and transparent?

How can you personally support students in understanding the long-term benefits and costs of their education?

What steps can you take to advocate for and support institutional/departmental policies that promote real transparency and true affordability?



5-minute Large Group Share Out



IMPACT ON BLACK LEARNERS

As a result of Real Transparency and True Affordability, Black learners will:

- ▶ Have early awareness of the potential value of earning a credential, anticipated return on investment, true costs, and available financial support.
- ▶ Gain knowledge of outcomes and experiences of other Black learners to inform enrollment-related decisions.
- ▶ Receive a clear, customized financial aid award that fills financial gaps.
- ▶ Expand financial literacy skills and receive personalized student financial counseling.



REAL Action

Podcast

- [#EquityAvengers Podcast](#)

YouTube

- [DEI is Everyone's Job on Campus- Dr. Curry](#)

Engage

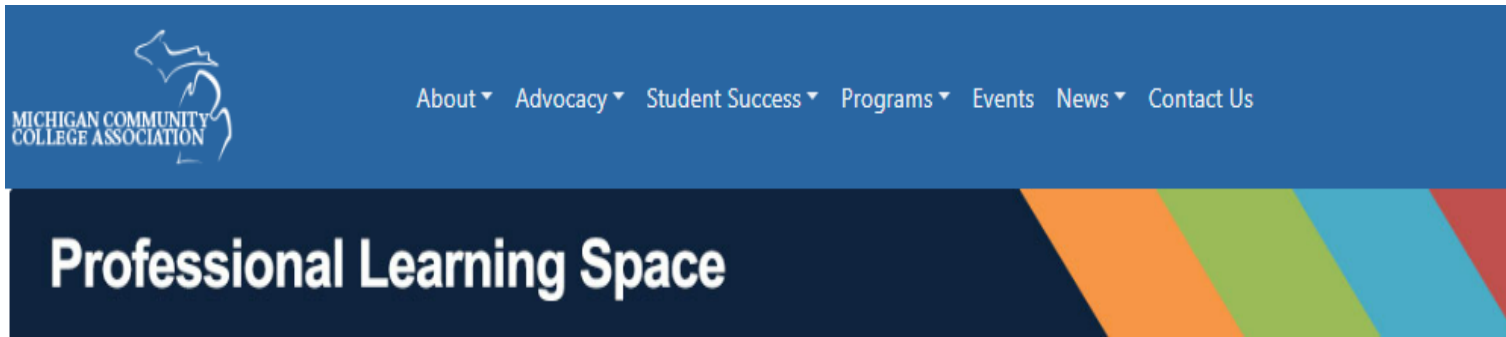
- [Join an Affinity/Alliance Group](#)
- Collaborate with your DEIB Office and/or other campus colleagues to center equity in your work

Self-Paced Learning

- [Harvard University Implicit Bias Test](#)
- [Five Essential Competencies of Effective DE&I Leaders](#)
- [MCCA Professional Learning Space](#)



21-Day Professional Learning Space Challenge



Welcome to the professional learning space! As a Student Success Advocate, you'll find a wealth of resources and tailored lessons aimed at addressing the key areas that matter most to community college professionals. Our diverse modules cover a wide range of subjects, providing you with valuable knowledge and effective strategies to meet your students' unique needs. Feel free to explore any module that aligns with your learning goals and interests. Remember to complete all the lessons within each module to earn your well-deserved certificate of completion.

Module 1: Gateway Course Success

Module 2: Transfer

Module 3: Student Basic Needs

Module 4: Career Exploration

Module 5: Data Discovery



<https://bit.ly/3MpvX2s>





#REALTALK

Real Data | Real Action | Real Results

What's Next?

Team Time

Reception

Dinner on your
Own



Thank You!



Resources

- [Student Success Summit Webpage](#)
- [LevelUp Report](#)
- [LevelUp Playbook](#)
- [MCCA Professional Learning Space](#)
- [College Enrollment Data Dashboard](#)

