

network stories

Bright Futures Education Partnership - Monterey County, Calif.



actions

Bright Futures has made the reduction of systemic racism the primary focus for their partners and their leadership table and engaged community groups with compelling call-to-action presentations revealing inequitable education systems. Their partnership is shifting the majority of time and resources toward improving outcomes through large-scale systems change. This shift is doubling their scope from individual or student cradle-to-career outcomes and broadening the kind of work their partnership is engaging in to include systems measures and outcomes. This impressive expansion with limited backbone size is made possible because of the strong commitment by partners to create change within their own organizations. In order to achieve these results, Bright Futures has organized their partners to pursue future grants intended to reduce systemic racism and shift power to Black and Latinx youth and families.

results

The organizations that make up the Bright Futures Partnership are uplifting the voices of historically marginalized communities by engaging families, youth and grassroots community organizers — with a focus on youth and families of color — and leaders of institutions with the formal authority to make system changes.



By bringing these voices to the table, they have achieved results at the systems level, which include comprehensive plans to transform early childhood systems conceived through the lens of working families, redesigned career pathways at higher education institutions and lowering the barrier of entry to college. Early childhood improvement plans include increased home visits and coordinated child care supply and demand as well as improved child care quality. Bright Futures is also partnering with higher education institutions to increase graduation rates — specifically for students of color — and have developed a toolkit to use in advancing career pathways policies, practices and outcomes. They have lowered the barrier of entry to college by working with city and county governments to provide two years of free community college tuition and supports such as laptops and books for students.

takeaways

Though Bright Futures has worked toward systems change from the onset, the decision to make designing equitable systems their partnership's central focus is leading to efficient results on a broader scale. The partners are shifting their framing, taking the onus of change off of students and families, and shifting instead to systems and system owners. This is creating expanded opportunities for dialog and actions centered in systems transformation.