Cradle-to-Career System: Highlights from the Authorizing Legislation

California College Guidance Initiative

Established by [California Assembly Bill 132 (AB 132)](#), California's **Cradle-to-Career System** brings together early education, K-12, higher education, and social service systems to create better futures for California students. It provides data-informed tools to:

— Help students discover and reach their college and career goals.
— Streamline students' transitions from K-12 to higher education and from community colleges through transfer.
— Deliver education and workforce outcome data that can help shape policy and advance educational equity.

Goal: Smooth the Path to College and Career for All California Students

In authorizing the development of the Cradle-to-Career System, AB 132 defines the following objectives as essential:

1. Create a single point of entry for submission of applications for college admissions and financial aid.
2. Identify technological efficiencies that shift burdens from students and families onto institutions that serve them.
3. Strive for clearer and more consistent messaging to students and families regarding educational pathways and the processes required to navigate the transition from K-12 to higher education.
4. Seek opportunities to increase efficiency by de-duplicating efforts.
5. Clarify data standards so that information can be shared efficiently across systems.

AB 132 names the [California College Guidance Initiative (CCGI)](#) as the core of the Cradle-to-Career System's college planning and application tools, which are designed to create smoother transitions from K-12 to higher education.

Implementing the Cradle-to-Career System

AB 132 outlines specific steps that must be taken in order to implement the Cradle-to-Career System and realize its objectives. These include:

1. **Make CCGI's tools and services free to all California school districts serving 6th-12th grade students**, with a goal of full participation by June 30, 2026.
2. Require the California Department of Education to:
   a. Collect and provide all the data elements needed to provide students with personalized accounts informed by their verified academic transcript data on [CaliforniaColleges.edu](#) (the 6th-12th grade online college and career guidance platform that CCGI manages on behalf of the state).
   b. Encourage K-12 districts to work with CCGI to improve the quality of their transcript data, so that students applying to four-year colleges receive proper credit for "a-g" coursework they completed in high school.
3. Designate CaliforniaColleges.edu as the preferred starting point for all applications to California public colleges, along with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and California Dream Act Application (CADAA). This streamlines the process by ensuring:
   a. All applications can be launched and tracked from a single platform.
   b. Components of applications can be pre-populated using data from CaliforniaColleges.edu.
   c. Key data points, including pre-verified "a-g" course data, can be provided to ensure accurate and timely decisions about admissions, placement, and financial aid.
4. Require an annual "Student Experience" audit of the processes and tools (such as application platforms) that students must use to apply for college, financial aid. Its goal will be to identify conflicting information, unnecessary procedural barriers, and user experience problems.

Join Us to Help Close California's College Opportunity Gaps

To learn more about how you can help **bring CCGI tools to every 6th-12th grade student in California**, email **techassistance@CaliforniaColleges.edu** or visit **CAcollegeguidance.org**