Momentum At Scale

STRONG START
TO FINISH

Table Of Contents

About Strong Start to Finish

There is a persistent problem among colleges and universities for students placed in developmental courses like math and English. They are not completing the courses and, in most cases, should not be taking them in the first place. While developmental education outcomes are deeply troubling for state and institutional leaders and practitioners, for low-income students, students of color and returning adults who see college as a path to something greater, our collective failure to adequately support their success is a heavy burden to bear.

This is why we exist.

Who We Are. [Strong Start to Finish](#) is a network of like-minded individuals and organizations from the policy, research, and practice spaces who've come together for one reason – to help all students, not just the select few, find success in postsecondary education. As experts in this space, we leverage and elevate the talent that surrounds us by pooling together some of the best and brightest in our fields to establish practices that work. Because we've been there – teaching on campus, serving on leadership boards, and working in the field – we know how to create the change we want to see for these students.

What We Do. We connect higher education systems and institutions with proven tools, quality technical assistance and financial and human capital resources to give every student the best start on the path toward their degree. Our work focuses on those who are at the highest risk of failure, including low-income students, students of color, and returning adults—based on the challenges that come from taking first-year developmental courses.

Pooling this level of expertise takes a commitment from everyone involved, and it is our charge to bring leaders to the table, create shared knowledge, and work with individuals to turn learnings into action. We work with the higher education community that wants to bring these proven practices to their campuses by connecting them with the resources that will work best and the experts they need.

Why We Are Different. We believe in the possibility and power of change at scale. By aligning best practices, sound system and state policy, and networking our knowledge we can impact more students, in more places, in a shorter duration, than working alone.

We are impatient and dedicated. We know that by working together we are creating a ripple effect and leveraging momentum that will ultimately increase success for all students and give them a strong start to a meaningful postsecondary credential.

Change at this level can only come from practices that are scalable and can work for institutions big and small. And while the work we're doing is not new, our efforts to identify and expand best practices that can be implemented at any institution of any size are truly first of their kind. Our holistic approach is meant to improve the whole system. We are here to bring together individuals to share ideas, move the needle and foster change at scale.

The Solutions Network

Our Commitment To Growing A Network

SSTF works to grow a network so that systems will implement actionable, evidence-based policy and practice about student entry to and success in their initial year of college at scale. We engage leaders, practitioners and partners in a network of value focused on working at scale by undertaking the following key initiatives:

Develop a highly collaborative network. The Solutions Network depends on the cooperation and support of nationally recognized education organizations and university-based institutes. The network will utilize 2015's *Core Principles for Transforming Remediation within a Comprehensive Student Success Strategy* as its principle document to frame the mission of the network, as well as the resources and services to be provided.

Support asset development, refinement and innovation. The Solutions Network provides resources and convenings to revisit and/or co-create tools that have a direct impact on scaling best practices around developmental education. Network activities focused on asset development include a revision of the *Core Principles for Transforming Remediation*, developing new informational pieces that align with the Institutional Transformation Assessment (ITA) and examining opportunities to package services to maximize network provider capacity.

Serve as a responsive concierge to network intermediary partners. As a network, we believe that our organizations working together will be able to positively impact many more students and institutions than we would working separately. The vision of the Solutions Network is to create a dedicated space for the sharing and development of new knowledge and tools to inform best practices and improve the scalability of successful developmental reform efforts.

The Solutions Network currently works with Gates Foundation Frontier Set institutions and select Jobs for the Future Success Centers to cohort like institutions and their needs as identified through the ITA. In turn, the network will respond by packaging relevant services, guided by 2020's *Core Principles for Transforming Remediation within a Comprehensive Student Success Strategy*, from network partners. The network will track both requests and provided services and resources to better understand developmental education demand and capacity.

What the Solutions Network Does for Intermediaries and How We Do It

Traditional developmental education systems have been in place for decades, and the task of reinventing these systems is challenging for institutions. Drawing from the expertise of our Solutions Network partners, SSTF supports change at institutions served by Intermediaries for Scale, the Frontier Set and Jobs for the Future in very specific ways.

We serve as a conduit to experts in the field most prepared to provide higher education institutions with specific, tailored recommendations to increase first-year student success and achieve developmental education reform at scale through structured engagements.

For each engagement, SSTF helps refine the needs identification among cohorted institutions using our menu of services as a guide and leverages the expertise of network partners to identify the opportunities for improvement that will have the biggest impact on the institution's student population. Our customized, evidence-based approach may include any or all of the following:

- We partner these experts with institutions in roles fitting the needs of the institution that fall into the following key topic areas:

    - <u>Alignment:</u> The degree to which developmental education content is mapped to college-level coursework.

    - <u>Placement:</u> The institution uses multiple measures for accurate student placement.

    - <u>Embedded Student Supports:</u> The institution embeds students' academic and non-academic supports into developmental education instructional delivery and curriculum.

    - <u>Faculty and Staff Supports:</u> The institution provides faculty and staff with regular, high-quality professional learning opportunities that meet their needs and help improve their practices.

    - <u>Acceleration:</u> The institution implements processes that maximize the probability of expediting students' progress through developmental education to college-level courses.

    - <u>Integration:</u> The institution integrates developmental education solutions and associated supports to propel students into college coursework in intended program of study.

    - <u>Measures and Outcomes:</u> The institution has clear goals and defined measurable outcomes for Developmental Education, with a focus on equity.

    - <u>Refinement:</u> The institution routinely assesses its reform efforts and uses insights to refine reform activities.

    - <u>Scaling:</u> Activities including change management and multiple reform efforts are aligned to emphasize change at scale.

- Coordinate with institutional leaders to identify and promote opportunities to encourage cross-site engagement, learning, and discussion.

- Monitor activity of the institution to measure impact on student success and refine our recommendations as necessary.

Solutions Network Partners

Strong Start to Finish - Solutions Network Partners

Our efforts depend on the cooperation and support of nationally recognized education organizations and university-based institutes.

Achieving the Dream (ATD)

ATD is the leading college network championing evidence-based institutional improvement to help community colleges improve outcomes for low-income students and students of color who dream of achieving their goals for academic success and economic opportunity. The ATD network includes over 277 colleges in 44 states and the District of Columbia.

achievingthedream.org

SSTF Primary Contact: Ryan Kelsey

ASA Research

At ASA, we believe research — particularly in our fields of higher education and workforce — is essential for expanding opportunity, improving economic mobility, and contributing to personal and social well-being. We are committed to furthering the interests of the education community and to supporting the success of all students.

www.asa-research.com

SSTF Primary Contact: Sue Cleary

Association of College and University Educators (ACUE)

ACUE's mission is student success through quality instruction. ACUE prepares faculty in effective teaching practices. ACUE-credentialed faculty are better prepared to engage in and enhance student success efforts. Services include planning, academic, and research support. Evidence indicates student achievement improves and inequities diminish among students taught by ACUE-credentialed faculty.

www.acue.org

SSTF Primary Contact: Jonathan Gyurko

Association for Institutional Research (AIR)

The Association for Institutional Research is a global association that empowers higher education professionals at all levels to utilize data, analytics, information, and evidence to make decisions and take actions that benefit students and institutions and improve higher education.

airweb.org

SSTF Primary Contact: Leah Ross

Bruce Vandal Consulting LLC (BVC)

Bruce Vandal Consulting LLC increases student success and achieves greater equity in higher education by working with national, state, system, institutional and faculty leaders to design, implement and scale reforms that ensure all students can achieve their academic, career and life goals through postsecondary education.

www.brucevandal.com

SSTF Primary Contact: Bruce Vandal

Carnegie Math Pathways / WestEd

Our mission is to empower ALL students to reach their college and career goals by transforming their mathematics learning experience. The evidence-based Carnegie Math Pathways program is committed to helping faculty and administrative leaders.

www.carnegiemathpathways.org

SSTF Primary Contact: Karon Klipple

Charles A. Dana Center

The Dana Center develops and scales effective math innovations to support educators, administrators, and policymakers in creating seamless transitions throughout K-12 and higher education for all students, especially those who are underserved. All students have equitable access to rigorous math education to succeed on pathways leading to upward social and economic mobility.

https://www.utdanacenter.org/

SSTF Primary Contact: Martha Ellis

Complete College America (CCA)

Complete College America is a bold national advocate for dramatically increasing college completion rates and closing equity gaps by working with states, systems, institutions, and partners to scale highly effective structural reforms and promote policies that improve student success.

https://completecollege.org/

SSTF Primary Contact: Dhanfu Elston

Community College Research Center (CCRC)

The mission of the Community College Research Center (CCRC) is to produce research that helps community colleges expand access to higher education and promote success for all students. We are particularly focused on increasing social mobility and promoting equity for students who are underrepresented in higher education, including low-income students, students of color, and first-generation college students.

https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/

SSTF Primary Contact: Tom Brock

John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education (Gardner Institute)

The John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education is a non-profit organization dedicated to partnering with colleges, universities, philanthropic organizations, educators, and other entities to increase institutional responsibility for improving outcomes associated with teaching, learning, retention, and completion. Through its efforts, the Institute will strive to advance higher education's larger goal of achieving equity and social justice.

www.jngi.org

SSTF Primary Contacts: John Gardner & Drew Koch

Motivate Lab

Our mission is to improve peoples' lives through rigorous motivation research. Motivate Lab was founded to accommodate the burgeoning demands for rigorous motivation research and supports from partners interested in leveraging the power of learning mindsets to improve academic outcomes, particularly for students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds.

https://motivatelab.org/

SSTF Primary Contact: Chris Hulleman

National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition

Building upon its history of excellence as the founder and leader of the first-year experience movement, the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition serves education professionals by supporting and advancing efforts to improve student learning and transitions into and through higher education.

www.sc.edu/fye

SSTF Primary Contact: Jennifer Keup

Phase Two Advisory

Phase Two Advisory weaves research, strategy, and project management to help practitioners identify the best way to move from idea to action. We have deep expertise in the design and implementation of onboarding and holistic student services redesign, process mapping foregrounding the student experience, workshop facilitation, and implementation research.

http://www.phasetwoadvisory.com/

SSTF Primary Contact: Melinda Karp

Sova

We help higher education leaders meet their goals through improved collaboration between stakeholder groups, accelerated progress on key initiatives, and clear-eyed attention to business planning. Our distinctive approach to change management combined with strategic attention to resource allocation set Sova apart at a critical time in higher education's evolution.

www.sovasolutions.org

SSTF Primary Contacts: Alison Kadlec & Paul Markham

Student Ready Strategies

Our Mission is to partner, plan and problem-solve with colleges and universities as they evolve to ensure the success of diverse students with complex lives...Institution by institution, toward a student-ready world.

http://studentreadystrategies.com

SSTF Primary Contact: Vanessa Keadle

The Ada Center

The Ada Center helps higher education institutions strengthen success and equity goals through improved use of student success technology and associated business practices. We further that mission in two ways: (1) working directly with institutions and education systems (2) developing open-access research and resources for the field.

theadacenter.org

SSTF Primary Contact: Sarah Zauner

Partners

The following organizations serve in these capacities:

Core Partners

Achieving the Dream™

COMPLETE COLLEGE AMERICA

The University of Texas at Austin
Charles A. Dana Center

CARNEGIE MATH PATHWAYS
WestEd

EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES

SOVA

Research & Service Partners

ACUE
Association of College and University Educators

The Ada Center

air
ASSOCIATION FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

ASA research
Know the facts. Act with insight.

BVC
BRUCE VANDAL CONSULTING
COLLEGE SUCCESS STRATEGIES

CCRC COMMUNITY COLLEGE RESEARCH CENTER
TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Gardner Institute
Celebrating 20 Years of Excellence

ML
Motivate Lab

NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER
FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE® AND STUDENTS IN TRANSITION
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

PHASE TWO ADVISORY™

Student-Ready STRATEGIES

Director: Christopher M. Mullin, cmullin@strongstart.org

Senior Project Manager: Molly Sarubbi, msarubbi@strongstart.org
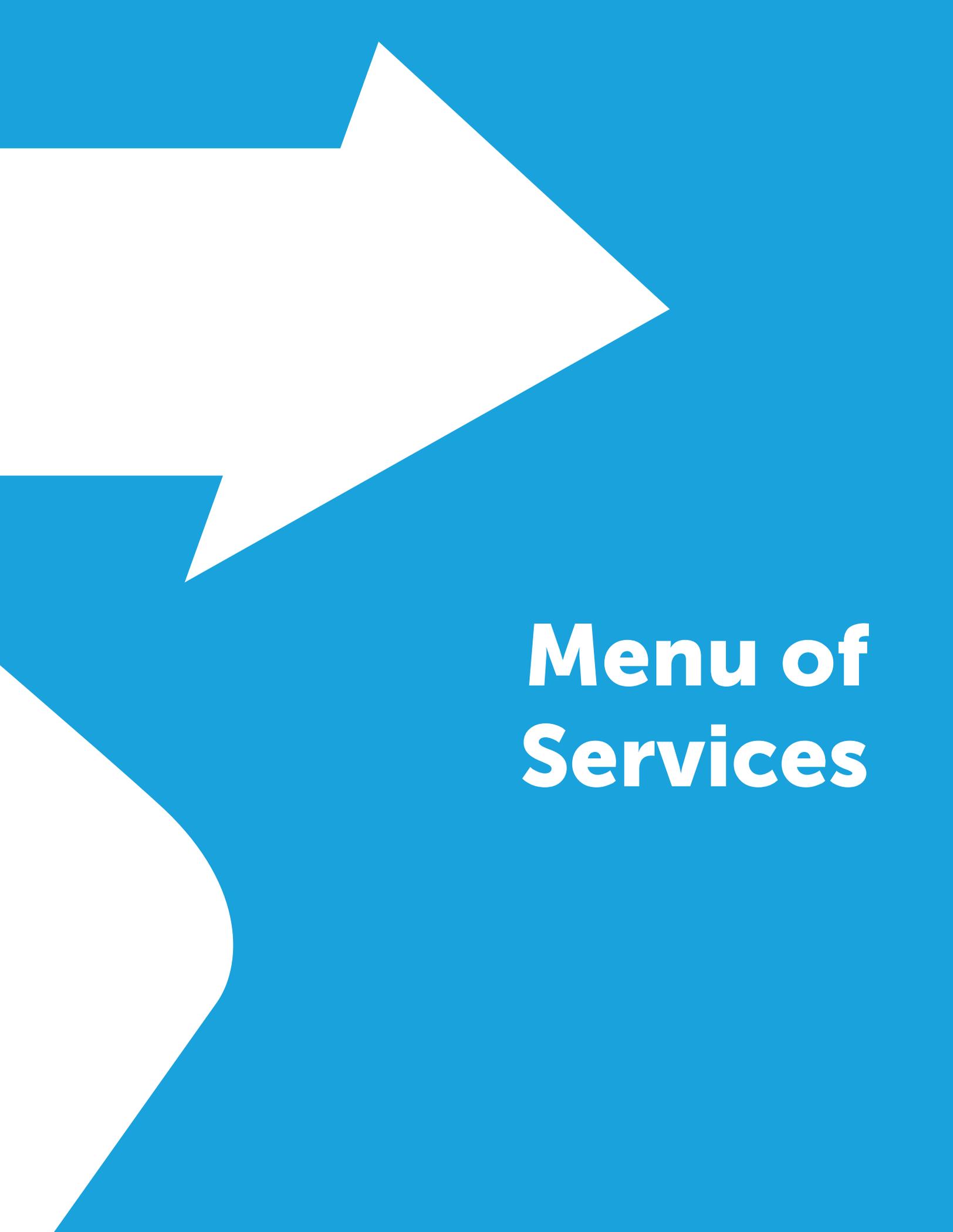
Menu of Services

Solutions Network - Menu of Services
Developmental Education Reform

Strong Start to finish supports change at scale by incubating the development and promoting the dissemination of actionable, evidence-based policy and practice about student entry to and success in their initial year of college to bring equity to education. The SSTF Solutions Network depends on the cooperation and support of nationally recognized education organizations and university-based institutes. The network utilizes 2020's *Core Principles for Transforming Remediation within a Comprehensive Student Success Strategy* as its principle document to frame the mission of the network, as well as the resources and services to be provided. More information about SSTF can be found at: www.strongstart.org.

The purpose of this menu is to be a guide for intermediaries to articulate the most pressing needs and desired outcomes related to developmental education reform at their institutions.

How to use this Menu of Services

As an intermediary you have a strong understanding of the needs of the institutions with which you work. You also have diagnostic support elements – like the Institutional Transformation Assessment and the Postsecondary Data Partnership data tool. Together this information serves to help you identify one topic area where an institutions/cohort of institutions needs help. We use the term "Topic Area" as it is synonymous with the indicators on the ITA, PDP and we have also aligned them to the 2020 *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education within a Student Success Strategy: A Statement from the Field.* This was done to make the request for services via this menu seamlessly aligned to existing information you already have.

The first step is to gather the information you have available about the institutions(s) and match that to a Topic Area. For example, if your institution(s) express a need for support in the area of "Placement" you would go to the Placement section of the menu and either by yourself or in consultation with your institution(s) select the distinct, evidence-based "Evidence-based Strategies offered as Services" that are of greatest need as it relates to Placement. Asks should come in only one Topic Area, though there can be multiple services requested within a single Topic Area.

Second step is to submit a completed inquiry form through the RPA portal , identifying an interest to collaborate with Strong Start to Finish on the Topic Area and strategies you and your institutions would find helpful. If you are a SSTF site, please contact your staff liaison to request additional services.

Third, Strong Start to Finish will review submissions and send a request to their network partners who are experts in that particular area to get initial interest in undertaking the work.

The fourth step is a matching process where you, the institutions and the technical assistance providers are given the opportunity to further discuss the need and craft a final proposal or Notice of Ask to the appropriate funding pipeline.

An important note: the Strong Start to Finish menu and method of operation is to first identify the need, then the technical assistance provider. Our experience suggests this allows the institutions to receive the exact support they need.

Key Topic Area (aka ITA rubric indicator)	Desired Outcome	Guiding Question	Evidence-based Strategies offered as Services
Alignment	The degree to which developmental education content is mapped to college-level coursework.	How does the institution ensure that developmental education content is mapped to college-level coursework to prepare all students for success?	1. By aligning or pairing developmental and the appropriate gateway math course content to create a clear pathway. 2. By redesigning course learning outcomes, in developmental and gateway courses to align with each other while scaffolding learning. 3. By creating Course Maps and/or data visualizations that illustrate the alignment between and/or unnecessary complexity associated with developmental and gateway course sequences. 4. By contextualizing course content. 5. By developing a protocol for designing curriculum inclusive of corequisite and prerequisite courses. 6. By transforming student orientation and admission to focus on empowering students to make a purposeful program choice. 7. By developing pre-matriculation experiences to eliminate the need for standalone developmental courses.
Placement	The institution uses multiple measures for accurate student placement.	How does the institution use multiple measures (prior to entry or upon entry) to accurately place students into courses?	1. By eliminating the use of a single placement test score for placing students into developmental education. 2. By developing a multiple measures policy at the institution or system level that prioritizes high school performance. 3. By developing a process by which students who require additional support be placed into gateway courses with support. 4. By creating a multiple measures algorithm based on existing evidence so that prediction is based on sound data and methodology. 5. By embedding prior learning assessment (PLA) in standard intake process for adult students.

Embedded Student Supports	The institution embeds students' academic and non-academic supports into developmental education instructional delivery and curriculum.	How does the institution embed academic and non-academic supports into the delivery of developmental education instruction and curriculum to build students' understanding of academic support and student support services?	1. By fostering a productive academic mindset for students, support course and gateway course advisors. 2. By building advising structures to ensure all students register for coursework in sequences provided in program of study. 3. By transforming first-year seminars to focus on empowering students to make a purposeful program choice. 4. By creating a customizable enrollment process that requires all students be provided pre-enrollment advising. 5. By connecting dev ed supports to other student services redesigns (i.e. integrating with Guided Pathways and gateway course redesign).
Faculty & Staff Supports	The institution provides faculty and staff with regular, high-quality professional learning opportunities that meet their needs and help improve their practices.	To what degree does the institution provide professional development to faculty and staff to support improvements in their individual practice related to the effective implementation of the institution's key developmental education policies?	1. By creating a productive faculty mindset—a mindset that includes elements associated with growth mindset, sense of belonging, and purpose/relevance. 2. By implementing strategies to support English as a Second Language learners at scale. 3. By facilitating the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy and advising. 4. By providing professional development and technical assistance to improve faculty use of adaptive courseware and digital learning technologies.
Acceleration	The institution implements processes that maximize the probability of expediting students' progress through developmental education to college-level courses.	How does the institution accelerate student success through developmental education curriculum?	1. By substantially reducing or the number or phasing out developmental education courses. 2. By replacing developmental education courses with intensive pre-matriculation courses/workshops (MathStart). 3. By designing corequisite English courses to be delivered at scale. 4. By designing corequisite math courses to be delivered at scale. 5. By creating structured cohorts. 6. By implementing block scheduling. 7. By implementing accelerated term structures.

Integration	The institution integrates developmental education solutions and associated supports propel students into college coursework in intended program of study.	How does the institution embed academic and non-academic supports into the delivery of developmental education instruction and curriculum to build students' understanding of academic support and student support services?	1. By developing clearly structured academic program maps inclusive of credit-bearing gateway math and English courses. 2. By creating meta-majors for programs of study/academic maps that explicitly include credit-bearing gateway math and English courses. 3. By supporting advisor/faculty in using maps and curricular complexity models to holistically support students. 4. By integrating academic maps as default selectins in the registration process using principle of behavioral economics.
Measurement & Outcomes	The institution has clear goals and defined measurable outcomes for Developmental Education, with a focus on equity.	To what degree does the institution have a strategic plan that specifies Developmental Education goals and measurable outcomes for all student populations, and regularly monitors and reports on progress toward achievement?	1. By providing workshops and follow up technical assistance on how to use finely disaggregated data in continuous teaching and learning improvement efforts. 2. By embedding developmental education reform goals within campus plans, general education reform, reaffirmation of accreditation and other strategic priorities. 3. By implementing a systemwide work plan. 4. By developing a data standard for student entry into gateway course identification. 5. By developing a standard for course completion at grade of "c" or higher. 6. By building capacity of institutional researchers/staff to inform developmental education and gateway course redesign/reform and involve them in strategic decision-making. 7. By regularly and deliberately disaggregating developmental and gateway course data in reports with an emphasis on exposing inequitable outcomes. 8. By disseminating and supporting the application of finely disaggregated data in campus community educational improvement efforts. 9. By developing a metrics framework to conduct needs assessment and support goal setting and monitoring.

Refinement	The institution routinely assesses its reform efforts and uses insights to refine reform activities.	How does the institution use quantitative and qualitative measures to assess its reform efforts and then capitalize on those insights to refine future activities?	1. By collecting and acting on qualitative data about student experiences. 2. By facilitating critical equity conversations and assessments. 3. By conducting program evaluation and providing subsequent workshops to build faculty capacity and focus on equity. 4. By conducting ongoing research and, where appropriate, publication and dissemination of developmental education and gateway course redesign work.
Scaling	The institution has implemented developmental education policies and practices to maximize the probability of academic success for all students.	How committed is the institution to implementing developmental education policies and practices to improve academic success for all students?	1. By offering change management support for scaled transformation. 2. By aligning developmental education reform with other reform initiatives. 3. By deploying regional coordinators to support change at scale. 4. By providing case-making for developmental education reform with a variety of stakeholders. 5. By standardizing training on developmental education reforms.