FLORIDA COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK

LCANs are NOT another task force

Local College Access Networks (LCANs) are strategic alliances that help transform how communities support more students in accessing and succeeding in postsecondary education and career. For those who are new to this work, they may mistake the network for just another task force or committee. LCANs operate in very different ways from what you may be used to. This primer can help you understand how you can participate in a dynamic approach that seeks to removes barriers for all students.

	Task Force Approach	LCAN Approach
Ownership:	• Problem or opportunity is usually "owned" by a single organization. • Organization's leader(s) assigns a goal/objective and due date.	• Participating multi-sector community leaders and stakeholders share ownership of the problem or opportunity. • Leadership team defines the goal and the timeline, understanding that both may change to reflect new learnings. • Backbone organization coordinates and convenes but does not drive the work.
Purpose:	• Determines an approach to tackle a problem and recommends and/or delivers the solution to senior leadership of the organization.	• Takes a system approach to a complex, community-wide challenge to achieve better results than organizations can achieve on their own. • Is not a direct service provider; an LCAN aligns the activities of multiple players.
Priority:	• Demonstrates action.	• Balances results-orientation with building a community culture of valued and trusted relationships that fosters transformational change.
Duration:	• One and done program that ends when results are delivered.	• Multi-year framework supports broader transformational community change. • Quick wins are used to build momentum in the interim.
Participant role:	• Provides input. • Represents and advocates for what's best for their organization. • Assigned to participate.	• Shares in decision-making. • Represents their organization while advocating for what's best for students, that may require a change in their organization's process. • Participation is voluntary, though some sectors are encouraged to provide leadership presence.
Measurements are used:	• As an accountability tool, often with "winners" and "losers".	• To facilitate strategic learning, so the community can continue to evolve better practices and approaches towards goals.
Viewpoint:	• Looks for "what's wrong" that needs fixing.	• Looks for community strengths to leverage, while identifying gaps / barriers that the community can mobilize to address.
Network Connectivity is:	• Usually local and internal to the group, so effort is expended figuring things out.	• Part of a statewide and national movement so they can learn from others, accelerating progress.
Involvement of population served:	• May or may not have a voice at the table.	• Actively engages the voice of the student to inform the work.

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