

NCLB AND THE PCN

Preparing Students for Postsecondary Education

By Jackie Burniske

While the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) is primarily considered a K–12 law, the Pathways to College Network (PCN) believes that it is important and worthwhile to consider NCLB in the context of P–16 education and, more specifically, in relation to the PCN College Readiness for All Framework for Action (the Pathways Framework).

The core of the Pathways Framework is high expectations for all students. In this context, high expectations mean that school staff and parents must believe all students can be prepared for the postsecondary education of their choice. Surrounding high expectations are four sets of interactive strategies: data usage, academic support and rigor, social support, and P–16 alignment. High expectations and strategies must exist within a context of inclusive leadership, collaborative partnerships, flexible resources, and professional development. This context is fundamental to the success of the Pathways Framework in promoting and achieving change in a school or district.

For the PCN to meet its goal of college readiness for all, we must live in an environment in which we are committed to leaving no child behind. NCLB seeks to hold states, districts, and schools to high standards for all children. It is only when this goal is met that we may say each child is prepared to

embark upon his or her desired academic and professional path.

Available on the Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) website is a research brief, *The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the Pathways to College Network Framework: Mutually Supportive Visions and Complementary Goals*, designed to help practitioners and policymakers understand the connections between NCLB and the Pathways Framework. We invite you to go to <http://ppo.prel.org> to read the complete paper. For more information about the Pathways to College Network, please contact Jackie Burniske.

Jackie Burniske can be contacted at burniskj@prel.org.



The Pathways to College Network (PCN) is a national alliance of organizations, including Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL), committed to using research-based knowledge to improve postsecondary education access and success for the nation's many underserved students, including underrepresented minorities, low-income students, those who are the first in their families to go to college, and students with disabilities.