



The Weiss Institute

The Weiss Institute, a partnership between Say Yes to Education and America's Promise Alliance, will expand the capacity of communities to make it possible for all young people to earn a college degree or other postsecondary credential. Inspired by philanthropist George Weiss, who founded the nonprofit organization Say Yes to Education 30 years ago, the Institute builds on the work of Say Yes and of America's Promise Alliance, the nation's largest network dedicated to improving the lives of children and youth. Collectively, these organizations have five decades of experience and knowledge in helping communities come together to best support young people, preschool to career, on the path to adult success.

Often, communities take a short-term, single-issue approach to a challenge that requires nothing less than long-term, community-wide structural and cultural change. The Weiss Institute will provide tools and expertise to support communities in their efforts to:

- Identify and leverage their strengths
- Build trust and civic infrastructure, along with processes for collaborative governance
- Establish incentives to drive sustainable collaboration
- Eliminate or reduce predictable barriers to academic achievement
- Close the equity gap in education
- Break the cycles of intergenerational poverty
- Prepare young people for meaningful careers, lifelong learning and civic engagement
- Build a college-going culture and increase postsecondary degree attainment
- Improve community vitality and economic development.

The Weiss Institute will bring together the best thinking, latest research and community-tested strategies for the benefit of communities seeking to help more students get on a path to adult success. An applied research and technical assistance center, the Institute will:

- Commission research to advance the understanding of how communities can most effectively support young people
- Organize and lead convenings around the country where participants can learn about best practices from partner organizations and each other
- Lead site visits to communities engaging in best practice
- Provide fee-for-service technical assistance to help communities create and implement strategies locally
- Increase awareness and encourage adoption of strategies that work.





About The Partners

The Weiss Institute will have two operating partners – Say Yes to Education and America’s Promise Alliance.



Say Yes to Education partners with communities to boost postsecondary participation and success. At the heart of the Say Yes strategy is a powerful incentive for families and communities: the prospect of a college scholarship, whether to an in-state public institution or the more than 100 private colleges and universities in the Say Yes National Higher Education Compact. Say Yes helps communities build sustainable systems and structures that enable all young people to earn a college degree or other postsecondary credential. The organization’s support services, and ultimately scholarships, are currently available to more than 130,000 public school students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12.



America’s Promise Alliance unites more than 400 national organizations and thousands of community leaders, all dedicated to improving the lives of children and youth. Its research institute, the Center for Promise at Boston University, is dedicated to understanding what young people need to thrive and how to create the conditions of success for all young people. The Center is well known for its research on collaborative community initiatives. General Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret.) is the organization’s founding chair; Alma J. Powell is the group’s current chair.

The Institute will also benefit from the expertise and experience of the following partners: American Institutes for Research, Cross & Joftus, Partnership for Deliberate Excellence, National Equity Project, Schaffer Consulting, and Schoolhouse Partners.

