THE ROLE OF STATE POLICY IN COMPLETION BY DESIGN

In each Completion by Design state, a lead organization is responsible for identifying and advancing a policy agenda that will align with and accelerate institutional change efforts. Jobs for the Future, the Completion by Design national assistance partner for state policy, supports and leverages the work of the state policy lead organizations. JFF helps the state leads develop and implement a completion-focused policy agenda and supports the creation of a state-level continuous improvement network informed by data on student outcomes. JFF engages state policymakers and agency officials, Completion by Design college leaders, representatives from other community colleges in the state, and key stakeholders whose support is critical to policy change. In 2011-12, the work includes:

- Completion-focused policy scans to provide context for the policy agenda in each Completion by Design state
- Support for close collaboration between the college cadres and each state policy lead organization
- Assistance to Completion by Design cadres and state policy lead organizations in developing completion-focused policy workplans for their states, with clearly identified priorities and targets aligned with a common policy framework
- Delivery of state policy and capacity-focused content for Completion by Design meetings, including in-state and cross-state convenings
- Support for convening a statewide advisory board inclusive of public, private, and civic leaders and a statewide learning community comprised of one representative from each college in the state
State policy can support college completion by both facilitating large-scale institutional change and removing obstacles to innovation. As a participant in the Developmental Education Initiative, for example, Virginia recently redesigned all developmental math courses at its 23 community colleges and is now redesigning its reading and writing sequences. Florida developed and released a new assessment that is simultaneously a placement tool for colleges and a college-readiness indicator for high schools and their students. In North Carolina, the system president and his staff conducted a policy listening tour at all of the state’s community colleges to help leaders identify policy barriers to student success.

Jobs for the Future leads the state policy and capacity building efforts for Achieving the Dream, the Developmental Education Initiative, and Completion by Design. In that role, JFF works with a network of 15 states to develop and implement policy priorities that support student success. Guiding JFF’s state policy work is a three-part change strategy:

- Strengthen the capacity of a state to use data on student outcomes to support community college innovation and improved performance
- Create structured opportunities for institutional leaders, faculty, and staff to share their own experiences and access national research on what works when implementing innovations
- Identify and pursue policy changes at the system level (e.g., developmental education program redesign) and legislative level (e.g., performance funding) that set the context for significant and large-scale institutional change

**STATE POLICY STRATEGY**

- **STRENGTHEN STATE DATA CAPACITY TO SUPPORT INNOVATION AND IMPROVE PERFORMANCE**
- **CREATE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND FACULTY TO SUPPORT INNOVATION**
- **IDENTIFY AND PURSUE SYSTEM AND STATE POLICY CHANGES THAT SUPPORT LARGE-SCALE INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE**

**HELP STATES ACCELERATE THE CREATION AND SCALE UP OF SOLUTIONS THAT DRAMATICALLY IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES**
STATE POLICY LEAD ORGANIZATIONS FOR COMPLETION BY DESIGN

- Division of Florida Colleges, Florida Department of Education
- North Carolina Community College System
- Ohio Association of Community Colleges
- Texas High School Project

OVERVIEW: KEY POLICIES FOR COMPLETION BY DESIGN

**CONNECTION**
Interest to Application

- Policies increase student interest in understanding of options for, and connections to college
- Aligned High School and ABE Exit and College Entrance Standards
- Clearly Defined and Broadly Communicated College-Readiness Standards
- Promotion of Early Assessment, Early Remediation, and Early College Opportunities
- Comprehensive College Outreach

**ENTRY**
Enrollment to Completion of Gatekeeper Courses

- Policies facilitate student enrollment, choice of program, and completion of key momentum milestones
- Coherent Assessment and Placement Policies that are consistently applied, including diagnostics
- Early Connection to Programs of Study
- Strong College Orientation and Advising
- Redesign of Developmental Education

**PROGRESS**
Entry into Course of Study to 75% Requirements Completed

- Policies push students to focus their studies and progress efficiently through academic requirements
- Access to Structured Programs and Pathways
- Early Declaration of Academic Majors
- Accelerated Student Progression
- Strong Retention-focused Advising and Interventions

**COMPLETION**
Complete Course of Study to Credential with Labor Market Value

- Policies ensure more students graduate faster and ready for next step in career or further education
- Development of Plans for Graduation/Degree and Job Placement
- Improved Articulation and Transfer
- Reduced Time to Completion

KEY POLICIES SUPPORTING COMPLETION BY DESIGN FRAMEWORK

- Financial Aid / Affordability
- Data System Capacity and Use
- Continuous Improvement Processes
- Political Leadership and Commitment
- Student Engagement and Support Services
## COMPLETION BY DESIGN STATE POLICY CALENDAR: AT A GLANCE

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<th>JUL</th>
<th>AUG</th>
<th>SEP</th>
<th>OCT</th>
<th>NOV</th>
<th>DEC</th>
<th>JAN</th>
<th>FEB</th>
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**BUILD THE TEAM**

- State Policy Kick-Off with State Policy Leads July 25, 2011
- 1st Cadre Retreats and Outreach to Managing Partners and State Leads September 2011
- Identify Key Policies and Develop Interview Protocol for Policy Scans September 2011

**MAKE THE CASE FOR CHANGE**

- Policy Scan Interviews September/October 2011
- Policy Scans Drafted October 2011
- Team Building Conference Calls and Policy Webinars October/November 2011
- 2nd Cadre Retreats with Policy Content November/December 2011

**DEVELOP THE PATHWAY**

- Finalize Policy Scans November/December 2011
- Identify and Convene 1st Advisory Board Meeting Winter 2011-2012
- Draft and Vet Policy Workplan Winter 2011-2012

**CREATE AN ACTION PLAN**

- Frame Policy Implementation Work Winter 2011-2012
- Policy Content at Cross-Cadre Meetings March 26-27, 2012
- Convene 2nd Advisory Board Meeting March/April 2012
- Plan for Meeting of Learning Communities March/April 2012
- Submit Policy Workplans April 30, 2012

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### PUBLICATIONS AND RESOURCES

- Testing Ground: How Florida Schools and Colleges Are Using a New Assessment to Increase College Readiness
- Innovation at Scale: How Virginia Community Colleges Are Collaborating to Improve Developmental Education and Increase Student Success

Please visit [www.achievingthedream.org](http://www.achievingthedream.org) to view our bimonthly newsletter, Achieving Success.

To download these publications and for more about JFF’s state policy work, please scan here or visit [http://www.jff.org/publications](http://www.jff.org/publications).

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