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CONTENTS

- 1 Achieving the Dream States: Six States Join
- 2 Interview: Developmental Education Data from Achieving the Dream Colleges
- 5 Accelerating Remedial Math Education: Policy Challenges and Strategies
- 5 State Policy Developments: What's New in Achieving the Dream States
- 10 Resources

This newsletter is published by Jobs for the Future for Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count, a national initiative to help more community college students succeed (earn degrees, earn certificates, or transfer to other institutions to continue their studies). The initiative is particularly concerned about student groups that have faced the most significant barriers to success, including low-income students and students of color. See www.achievingthedream.org for more on the initiative and www.jff.org for more on Jobs for the Future.



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In this Issue

Welcome to the July 2007 issue of *Achieving Success*. This issue features:

- An introduction to the lead organizations in the six new Achieving the Dream states—Arkansas, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Michigan, Oklahoma, and South Carolina.
- An interview with Thomas Bailey, director of the Community College Research Center at Teachers College, Columbia University. Dr. Bailey discusses analyses of four-year longitudinal data from Achieving the Dream Round I colleges about developmental education students and their difficulties completing developmental sequences and succeeding in college-level programs. He talks about the implications of this dramatic data for institutions and state policymakers concerned with helping students succeed.
- A preview of a forthcoming Jobs for the Future brief on the ways in which state policy can support or constrain programmatic innovation in developmental education, drawing on the experience of Housatonic Community College in Connecticut, Mt. Empire Community College in Virginia, and the Community College of Denver. Each school has attempted to accelerate the delivery of developmental education; state policy has shaped each effort, sometimes in surprising ways.
- Updates from Achieving the Dream states—policy activities, publications, conferences.
- Reports and other resources on community college student success.

As always, we ask you to help us expand the readership of *Achieving Success*. Send emails for potential (free) subscribers to our editor, Radha Roy Biswas, rrbiswas@jff.org.

ACHIEVING THE DREAM STATES

Six States Join

Achieving the Dream has added twenty-four colleges in eight states to the initiative, which now includes eighty-two colleges in fifteen states. Six states have joined the initiative: Arkansas, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Michigan, Oklahoma, and South Carolina. The lead organizations for state policy efforts in these states are the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, the University of Hawaii Community College System, the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education, the Michigan Association of Community Colleges, the Oklahoma State Regents for

Higher Education, and the South Carolina Technical College System. These organizations are responsible for identifying and pursuing a policy agenda to strengthen state efforts to support community college student success. They join organizations in the other Achieving the Dream that play similar roles. A kickoff state policy meeting for teams from the new states will be held in July. For more information, including the names of the new colleges and the new funders for their efforts to improve student success, go to www.achievingthedream.org.

Developmental Education Data from Achieving the Dream Colleges: The Implications for Practice and Policy



Dr. Thomas Bailey

Dr. Thomas Bailey, *George and Abby O'Neil Professor of Economics and Education and Director of the Community College Research Center at Teachers College, Columbia University*, is a preeminent researcher of and advocate for the role of community colleges in higher education. Bailey and colleagues at CCRC recently analyzed four years of longitudinal data from the Round I Achieving the Dream colleges, focusing on trends in the progress of developmental education students through their developmental courses and into the credit programs of their colleges.

The data point to the challenges most colleges face—particularly those with high proportions of low-income and less-college-ready students—in trying to help all students persist in and complete credential programs. Bailey discusses the findings from this analysis. He goes further, proposing ways that colleges and states can move beyond acknowledging the challenge to taking steps to improve the quality of developmental education courses and sequences.

Can you summarize existing research on developmental education and its role in helping students succeed in college?

Almost all the research indicates that taking developmental education has two counter-acting effects, one positive and one negative. On the one hand, students come in with a need for stronger academic skills, and while the research is mixed, it tends to confirm that the effect of developmental education is usually positive. Three or four different studies have different findings: some show positive benefits for math but not English, and some, the opposite. We need more research, but it appears that developmental education can be helpful in terms of persistence, completing college courses, and completing degrees. At the same time, there is the discouragement effect: students enter college and are essentially told they need to

spend time back in high school.

Developmental education can lengthen the time to a degree, and it uses up vital financial aid without students making the progress they should. The results are reflected in high rates of non-completion.

Achieving the Dream colleges submit common data on students for tracking and analysis. What are the highlights of your recent analysis of this data, particularly in terms of what it says about developmental education students?

Every Achieving the Dream college submits student data to our database. The database tracks students over time, starting with the cohort from the fall of 2002. The database has two important advantages: it offers longitudinal tracking, and it is built upon student unit records. These are the fundamental building blocks for Achieving the Dream analyses.

The database has a wealth of data about developmental education. It lets us know if students are referred to developmental courses and whether they take developmental education after being referred. It follows students through different levels of developmental education and tracks their progress into college programs and first college-level math and English gatekeeper courses.

The findings are straightforward. The majority of students we track are referred into developmental education. And many who start in developmental education never get out. Developmental education is a key obstacle to improving student success in community colleges, even as it is critical to success for many underprepared students.

Let me illustrate the magnitude of the problem with some data. This is from the cohort that entered college in the fall of 2002 and has been tracked for four years. (In general, outcomes look better the further out we go, but that means students are taking longer to complete.)

Progress of Developmental Education Students Achieving the Dream Database, 2002 Cohort

Student progress

Entering students	100%
Referred to developmental education	80%
If referred, attempted at least one course	83%
If referred, completed at least one course	67%
If referred, completed one gatekeeper course	35%
If referred, completed any credential in four years	8.5%

Among students in the database, eight out of ten incoming students were referred to some developmental course. (This is a very high percentage, reflecting the selection criteria for colleges in Achieving the Dream: participating colleges all have a high proportion of low-income and/or minority enrollment.) Among the referred, 83 percent attempted at least one developmental education course within four years. Of those referred to any developmental course, 67 percent completed at least one course. Only about a third of students referred to developmental education completed a college-level gatekeeper in algebra or English within four years.

Looking at it cumulatively, of those referred to any developmental education course, only 8.5 percent completed any credential within four years, versus 18 percent for those who did not start out in developmental education.

Are there important differences between the experiences of students who need remediation in math, in English, or both? Is there any evidence on the prospects of those who start at lower levels of developmental education compared with those with less remedial need?

Math is the most problematic. More students are referred to developmental math than to English, and students have lower rates of completion in math courses and sequences. Seventy-two percent of the 2002 cohort were referred into developmental math. Of those, only 22 percent completed their course sequence. Of that successful 22 percent, fewer than half—only 42 percent—attempted a college-level math course. That means that fewer than 7 percent of students referred to developmental math in this cohort even attempted a college-level math course!

Students who come in at lower levels are less likely to succeed than those at higher levels. Our data show that of those who were referred to all three developmental education courses—math, reading, and writing—49 percent attempted, and 34 percent completed, at least one math and English course. By contrast, of those who were referred in just one subject, 75 percent attempted and 49 percent completed. Most significantly, of those who started off at the lowest levels of developmental education—three levels below—only 18 percent attempted and 17 percent completed.

What lessons do you draw from the research on developmental education for institutions trying to improve student success?

Obviously, this is a very difficult challenge for our institutions. Most colleges do not have clear idea of the outcomes for their students who start in developmental education courses: they don't know how many succeed or fail at each level. So getting a better handle on these trends is critical. As the Achieving the Dream model would argue, we need to find the data points about student progress or lack of it, and then understand why students are dropping out and not completing. We need to talk more with students and understand their motivations and challenges.

There is evidence that some interventions and strategies can work, such as learning communities, supplemental instruction, and supports of different kinds. We need to track these interventions and examine them as they are used. Research shows that these programs have positive effects—but not in every case, and the effects are not very large. There is a lot we still don't know about what works.

One thing we know should be done is to require assessment of student academic need.

On most campuses, there continues to be a debate on whether developmental education should be a specialized and separate department or dispersed in different academic departments, as is common. Although there is limited empirical evidence, specialized developmental programs are believed to be more effective. Integration within academic departments runs the risk of developmental education being a “poor step-child” within the department. In the end, rather than argue over the structure, colleges should make sure they facilitate regular collaboration and communication across faculty who are teaching developmental courses and those teaching in college-credit programs.

How do you think states can help support better developmental education outcomes?

States have the ability to develop data systems that track students from secondary into postsecondary institutions. Colleges, individually, do not. But only a handful of states have developed such systems. In states

Policymakers and the public don't understand the extent of the need, but the need is real. And they don't understand that there is no alternative. Solving the developmental education challenge is the number one issue for community colleges, for better or worse.

with good data systems, institutions are in much better position to understand the barriers that students face and to design solutions.

States can also provide resources for and promote different kinds of research. In Washington and Florida, state offices have done research that is helpful to their state's institutions.

States can promote better alignment between community colleges and high schools and better understanding of high school students and their strengths and needs—through middle colleges, dual enrollment policies, and early college high schools. States can provide funding for some of these partnerships.

States can play an important convening role. They can bring together those colleges that are experimenting with new approaches to learn from one another.

States can also play a role in defining and promoting college readiness to young people early, so they can make the right decisions about courses to take and effort to put into school. We don't yet have a very good sense of what it means to be college ready. Some states have common placement-test cut scores across their institutions; others have no policy, just chaos.

Picking the cut score is critical. Set it too high and too many students get referred to developmental education, including some who could succeed right away in college courses. Set it too low and too many students are allowed to enroll in courses that they are unlikely to pass, given their academic readiness.

All things considered, it would be best for states to promote greater eligibility for college courses through lower cut scores for placement, provided that were coupled with adequate academic supports to help struggling students succeed. Students could then move more quickly, but they would have access to support when they needed it.

States should look for ways to provide greater flexibility to colleges in how they structure and deliver developmental education. For many institutions attempting to accelerate developmental education, a

number of policies built around a semester framework—financial aid, funding, enrollment—act as barriers. There needs to be as much flexibility as possible around these policies in order to design strategies for students with different levels of remedial need. But flexibility must be monitored and studied carefully so that we can learn more about what works and what doesn't for which students.

Some have argued for state policies that would limit the ability of those who need remediation in math or English to avoid taking or delaying enrollment in courses they need. Do you have an opinion about states specifying these kinds of behavioral mandates?

We are getting a sense from Achieving the Dream that structure is often beneficial to community college students. You may not want to give students too much choice. Typically, given a choice, students will not elect to take a developmental education course. So there is a conceptual argument, if not much of an empirical one yet, for giving very clear guidance to students and pushing them toward the help they need earlier rather than later. Basically, if students are judged to be in need of help, they should be required to get that help.

Some colleges and states want to keep the extent of their developmental education programs under the radar—for fear of a political backlash. How would you respond to this strategy?

Transparency is important. We have to be able to talk about the problem, its dimensions, and possible solutions. But we have to be honest and analytical and sophisticated in our approach to the problem, the options, and the data.

Since we don't have good data, and we don't know what works and what doesn't to help students who need remediation, this makes for a difficult public conversation. Policymakers and the public don't understand the extent of the need, but the need is real. And they don't understand that there is no alternative. Solving the developmental education challenge is the number one issue for community colleges, for better or worse. Helping underprepared students succeed and achieve their goals is the community college's job. There is no way around it.

Some colleges have begun experimenting with alternative delivery and design approaches for remedial math that allow students the option of pacing their own learning or accelerating their advancement through developmental math coursework. However, state and system policies can shape the expansion and institutionalization of these innovations.

Accelerating Remedial Math Education: Policy Challenges and Strategies

Remedial education has emerged as a top priority in nearly every Achieving the Dream institution and as one of the main policy focuses for Achieving the Dream states.

As some Achieving the Dream institutions have dug into this problem, they have been attracted to alternative ways to structure and deliver developmental education content. Students who are assessed as unready for college-level work come in at various levels of preparedness. Some need minimal remediation; others must move through multiple developmental education courses. Students who need only limited remediation can get discouraged at having to spend a semester's worth of time and resources in a remedial course when they might be able to progress much faster. Those who see three levels to climb might get frustrated that they will never advance to college courses.

In response, some colleges have begun experimenting with alternative delivery and design approaches for remedial math. These typically allow students the option of pacing their own learning or accelerating their advancement through developmental math coursework. However, institutions often encounter and are limited by policies—around enrollment, financial aid, funding, data systems, and accountability—that

reinforce the traditional design and delivery of developmental education and that make flexible delivery difficult to arrange.

A new policy brief from Jobs for the Future take a close look at the efforts of Housatonic Community College, an Achieving the Dream college in Connecticut that is trying to provide an alternative to traditional remedial math instruction. The college is piloting a self-paced, modularized, competency-based open entry and exit developmental math course. The issue brief describes the program model and how state and system policies either support or constrain program expansion and institutionalization. The brief also looks at Mountain Empire Community College in Virginia and Community College of Denver, two colleges that have attempted similar alternative models for delivering remedial math program. Their experiences illustrate how state policies can serve as enablers or impediments in designing institutional innovations for student success.

For more information, contact Radha Biswas, Jobs for the Future, rrbiswas@jff.org.

STATE POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

What's New in Achieving the Dream States

CONNECTICUT

In-state tuition policy for undocumented students vetoed: Governor Jodi Rell vetoed legislation that would have allowed students who finish four years of high school in the state, and who lack the legal right to be in the United States, to pay in-state tuition rates at Connecticut public colleges and universities. Ten states have passed such measures. Gov. Rell said that she did not want “to

encourage individuals to circumvent federal immigration laws.” She added: “I understand these students are not responsible for their undocumented status, having come to the United States with their parents. The fact remains, however, that these students and their parents are here illegally and neither sympathy nor good intentions can ameliorate that fact.”

www.nytimes.com/2007/06/27/myregion/27veto.html?_r=1&oref=slogin.

Taskforce looking at test scores and alignment

policies: A system-wide taskforce of college deans is working on aligning placement standards across Connecticut's 12 community colleges. The group is looking at research used in North Carolina to inform planning for implementing a statewide policy. Recommendations should be submitted in the fall; the process will then be broadened to engage faculty. Placement standards for English should be completed by the end of the fall semester.

System-level data initiative gets a boost: All 12 of the Connecticut Community College System's institutional research directors have signed off on a functional design for the development of an institutional research data mart at the system level. The process has been effective in getting IR leads talking about common definitions. Once completed, the data mart will migrate flat files from the colleges into a longitudinal database that will include enrollment, graduation, CCSSE, and National Student Clearinghouse data with linkages to U.S. Department of Labor data.

PK-16 Council formed: A formal PK-16 Council had been created as part of the state's National Governors Association Honors State initiative. Members include chancellors of the higher education systems, the commissioners of education and higher education, members of the education committees in the state legislature, and business, workforce development, and agency leaders. The council is charged three tasks: developing a common definition of college readiness in order to align secondary curriculum with first year of college; developing an integrated data system to share appropriate data across sectors; and increasing public outreach by customizing the "Know How 2 Go" campaign for Connecticut. *For more information on Know How 2 Go, see: www.KnowHow2GO.org.*

Recent meetings on developmental education and Achieving the Dream progress: In May, the system office brought together developmental education instructors and credit faculty in order to identify challenges and best practices across the state in developmental education. In June, the Office of the Chancellor hosted an Achieving the Dream Forum at Norwalk Community College to enable the three Achieving the Dream

colleges—Norwalk, Housatonic, and Capital—to share information about their experiences and progress.

FLORIDA

Department to promote rigor of dual enrollment courses: In April, the Florida Department of Education hosted a meeting to provide guidance and assistance to community college administrators working with their local school districts on dual enrollment agreements. In February, the Community College Council of Presidents had approved a Statement of Standards for Dual Enrollment/Early College to be incorporated into the Guidelines and Procedures Manual. The Statement of Standards was initiated as a tool for communicating the Florida Community College System's commitment to ensure that dual enrollment/early college high school courses are consistent with all postsecondary course accreditation standards and academic requirements. It also defines dual enrollment/early college and summarizes the role of each community college in ensuring academic rigor. The standards detail measurable criteria in the following areas: student eligibility, faculty credentials, curriculum, environment, assessment, and strategic planning. Community colleges and school districts must incorporate standards into their local inter-institutional articulation agreements in order to comply with annual reporting requirements.

Go Higher Alignment taskforce: Florida's Go Higher Task Force, established earlier this year by Commissioner John Winn, is charged with reviewing the movement of students through the education pipeline and increasing alignment between sectors. The taskforce is comprised of school district superintendents, community colleges presidents, and state Department of Education staff representing K-12, community colleges, and universities. *For more information, see: www.fldoe.org/cc/gohigher.*

Student success conference: Florida's 2007 Connections Conference, the third in a series, brought together 100 individuals from 20 community colleges in May. Sponsored by Achieving the Dream, the conference featured Dr. Irving McPhail of the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering as keynote speaker. Achieving the Dream and

other Florida colleges had opportunities to share strategies to help increase student success.

NEW MEXICO

New Secretary of Higher Education: Governor Bill Richardson has appointed Dr. Reed Dasenbrock, Provost of the University of New Mexico, as the state's new Secretary of Higher Education. The Higher Education Department is the lead organization for Achieving the Dream in the state. The previous secretary, Dr. Beverlee McClure, had been a community college president; Dasenbrock's career has been in four-year, public, higher education. He spent 20 years at New Mexico State University before taking on the role of chief academic officer at the University of New Mexico. Dr. McClure has taken a new position as president and CEO of the Association of Commerce and Industry in New Mexico.

Funding for need-based aid increased: The state legislature added \$48 million to the funding of the College Affordability Act for need-based grant aid. The New Mexico legislature passed and Governor Richardson signed four bills during the 2007 legislative session expanding eligibility for the College Affordability Grant to tribal college students. The eight-semester limit on aid eligibility was removed, benefiting part-time students. The Higher Education Department is advocating for making 100 percent of the investment immediately available for grant aid.

NORTH CAROLINA

Community College System looks to legislature for more counseling staff: NCCCS has asked the state legislature to fund a counselor for each campus, building on last year's successful request for a financial aid staffer for each campus and for the system office. A request for specific funding to support additional Achieving the Dream colleges was unsuccessful, although the legislature did appropriate \$630,000 for continuing a minority-male mentoring initiative.

Funding for piloting modularized programs: The North Carolina system office has asked for \$500,000 in order to develop and pilot modularized occupational curricula. NCCCS is charged with creating an RFP to solicit a

college to take the lead on developing at least one fully developed modularized course series and identifying issues in the system's administrative code, policies, and processes that either hinder or assist the development of modularized components.

Personnel changes and the search for new system president: The Presidential Search Committee looking for a successor to N.C. Community College System President Martin Lancaster is enlisting the help of the public to determine the skills needed by the system's next leader. By the end of July, the committee will have hosted three public hearings across North Carolina. Lancaster will retire in May 2008 after a decade at the helm of the nation's third-largest community college system, and Fred Williams, executive vice president and chief operating officer, will retire in September, making this a period of transition across North Carolina's community colleges. In addition, Dr. Edward H. Wilson, Jr., has just retired from the presidency of Wayne Community College, and Durham Tech President Phail Wynn has moved to Duke University. Over the next year, eight community colleges in North Carolina will conduct presidential searches.

New policy team members: North Carolina's Achieving the Dream state policy team is expanding to include representatives of important constituencies. New members include Norma Turnage, member of the Community College System State Board from Rocky Mount; Elizabeth Sasser, education policy advisor to Governor Mike Easley; and J.B. Buxton, Deputy Superintendent for Public Instruction.

OHIO

State restructures higher education governance: In May, Governor Ted Strickland signed H.B. 2, which makes the chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents an appointee of the governor, transfers powers of the Board of Regents to the chancellor, makes the board an advisory body to the chancellor, and requires the chancellor to make recommendations to the General Assembly and the governor for improvements to higher education. The governor appointed Eric Fingerhut, long-time member of the Ohio Senate who also served in the U.S. House of Representatives, as chancellor.

Governor's tuition freeze proposal passed by legis-

lature: The Ohio legislature passed Governor Strickland's two-year budget almost unanimously, including a measure for the state to increase direct instructional aid to public colleges and universities by 5 percent if they agree not to raise tuition for next school year. The state has agreed to put in another 2 percent in 2009 if the schools keep tuition increases to 3 percent or less. The call for a tuition freeze in exchange for \$180 million in additional aid comes after an average raise of 9 percent a year since 1996. That had made Ohio tuition rates nearly 50 percent higher than the national average. Board of Regents Chancellor Eric Fingerhut believes that Ohio is likely to see a dramatic increase in community college enrollments as a result of the tuition freeze. *For more information, go to: <http://pilot.regents.state.oh.us/news/headlines.php>*

PENNSYLVANIA

Progress on credit transfer policy: Under legislation passed last year, Pennsylvania's community colleges and state system universities are to come to agreement on a set of 30 credits that a student can transfer from institution to institution. The deadline of establishing those initial 30 credits was June 30, and more than 1,000 courses were approved to have met equivalency standards. Each institution participating in the process must have at least 30 credits (or 10 courses) submitted and approved by that deadline. Once this process is complete, the community colleges hope that work will continue to allow for an additional 30 credits – for a total of 60 credits – to easily transfer among institutions. The seamless transfer of the associate's degree to the university system is the goal of the Commission for Community Colleges even though the legislation approved last year fell short of that goal.

Student success forum planned for October: The Achieving the Dream Student Success conference is scheduled for October 12, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Association of Community Colleges. Faculty and administrators from all 14 community colleges in the state will be invited to share their challenges, strategies, and success.

TEXAS

Governor's veto strains relations with community colleges: Near the end of the legislative session, Governor Rick Perry surprised the community college community by vetoing one year of the group health insurance premium payment from the state to community colleges for their faculty and administrators (a loss of revenue of \$154 million). In his explanation of the veto the governor accused the community colleges of falsifying appropriations requests by padding enrollments. At a time when the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has called on community colleges to bear the greatest load in helping the state meet its higher education goals, the governor has dealt a blow to these institutions and created a firestorm that could hurt the state's Closing the Gap initiative.

Incentive funding passes for four-year institutions—but not community colleges:

The state has been engaged in a debate on higher education incentive funding for about a year. Governor Rick Perry called for spending up to \$350 million on incentives for colleges to graduate more students. The Senate offered much less—\$75 million. Under the governor's proposal, each public four-year school, community college, and health-related institution would have received an incentive payment for each student who graduated. Schools would also get extra money for graduating students who are from low-income families or who are otherwise considered at risk, as well as for students majoring in such crucial fields as math and science. The legislature has appropriated \$100 million for this new approach to funding—but community colleges and medical institutions were left out.

Developmental education formula committee meets this summer:

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's Formula Advisory Committee will begin deliberations this summer. Two issues are of importance to Achieving the Dream: review of the formula rates for developmental education courses; and the hope of revising formulas to reimburse colleges that offer accelerated developmental education course sequences.

VIRGINIA

State agrees to fund transfer grants for community college students: In its most recent legislative session, the Virginia General Assembly passed SB 749/HB 1681, establishing a transfer grant program that will make a four-year college degree more affordable for a number of community college students. Students are eligible for a transfer grant upon completion of their Associate's degree if they maintain a 3.0 grade point average and meet financial aid requirements. The funds will be available to students whose families have an expected family contribution of \$8,000 or less, as determined by filling out federal financial aid forms. The \$1,000 grant will go toward the student's tuition expenses at a four-year college or university. Those students who pursue a degree in a nursing, teacher education, or STEM (science, technology, engineering, or math) program are eligible to receive an additional \$1,000. The Virginia Community College System is working with the State Council for Higher Education in to draft guidelines for distribution in the fall. Combined with the transfer agreements that VCCS developed with universities last year, this policy gives considerable momentum to efforts in improving alignment between the two systems.

Expanded role for VCCS under discussion: Preliminary discussions between the chancellor and the governor are taking place to expand the role of VCCS to include adult education and GED programs. Governor Kaine has articulated his interest in restructuring workforce development in the commonwealth and has targeted the VCCS as a major contributor in his new vision. The result could be significant changes in how workforce development programs and services are offered.

Study on college readiness to be released: As part of a National Governors Association *Redesigning the American High School* Honor States grant, the VCCS has prepared a report on the academic weaknesses and remediation needs of Virginia high school students. The parameters as outlined by the grant for the study were to identify: the number of high school graduates enrolled in developmental education courses at the community colleges and four-year institu-

tions; the primary subject areas; methods used by higher education for determining need for developmental education; and strategies for addressing the weaknesses before high school graduation. The study will be published this summer. Results will be distributed to school divisions and institutions of higher education to inform consideration of additional collaboration, policy decisions, or program adjustments.

WASHINGTON

High school completion bill moving forward: A high school completion bill is moving through the Washington legislature. The bill would create a pilot program at selected community and technical colleges to allow students under 21 who have completed graduation requirements, except the Certificate of Academic Achievement, to enroll at no charge at a two-year college and work at the same time to complete their high school requirements.

Financial aid bills make progress: The legislature has allocated \$23 million to Opportunity Grants that improve educational access and support for low-income adults to progress further and faster along high-demand career pathways. Student may receive Opportunity Grant funding for up to 45 credits. The grants include funds for tuition and mandatory fees, as well up to \$1,000 per academic year for educational supplies. The colleges will received up to \$1,500 for each full-time equivalent student enrolled in the Opportunity Grant program, to be used for individualized support services. Additionally, the state's need-based grant program received an additional \$1 million to expand the program to serve part-time students taking at least three quarter credits.

Student achievement initiative advances: The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges has launched a statewide initiative to develop an incentive system that rewards community and technical colleges for improving student achievement. The initiative is a response to one of the board's 10-year systems goals: "Achieve increased educational attainment for all residents across the state." The colleges will be measured on the number of students who earn credit toward degrees and certificates, regardless of their skill level at entry. The initiative is being developed by a system-

wide taskforce made up of members, trustees, presidents, college administrators, faculty, and state board members and staff. The board has sought expert advice on funding models, measurements, and keys to long-term stability from higher education experts across the country, including the Community College Research Center.

Study on impact of enrollment status on student success: In earlier research, the state board had found that part-time enrollment status appeared to be the most salient predictor of failure to complete an award or degree, outweighing developmental education status and other likely predictors. In winter 2006-07, the board conducted exploratory research on the impact of part-time/full-time attendance, focusing particularly on younger

students who generally have more malleable personal circumstances than older students. The research explored why different subgroups of younger students are opting to go to the community college on a part-time basis, as well as the likely impact of different incentives, information, or requirements on enrollment behavior.

Administrators conference focuses on data: The Association of Washington Community and Technical College Administrators Summer Conference, *Faces Behind the Numbers: Using Data To Tell Our Stories*, will be held July 18-19. Kay McClenney, director of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, will be the keynote speaker. The conference will include an Achieving the Dream College panel.

RESOURCES

Student Success and Developmental Education

Assessing the effectiveness of remediation: A Community College Research Center working, *Remediation in the Community College: An Evaluator's Perspective*, provides a framework for evaluation of remedial education programs. Based on previous literature, Henry Levin and Juan Carlos Calcagno review and identify elements of successful interventions, present a number of approaches to remediation that make use of these elements, discuss alternative research designs for systematic evaluation, and enumerate basic data requirements.
<http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Publication.asp?UID=522>

Do student success courses actually help community college students succeed? This Community College Research Center issue brief (#36) summarizes findings from an in-depth study on the relationship between enrollment in student success courses and successful outcomes, including credential completion, persistence, and transfer. Using a large dataset on Florida community college students, researchers used statistical models to see if student success courses still appear to be related to positive outcomes even after controlling for student characteristics and other factors that might also influence the

relative success of students who take such courses.
<http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Publication.asp?UID=531>

Report identifies retention programs as key for low income student success: *Demography Is Not Destiny: Increasing the Graduation Rates of Low-Income College Students at Large Public Universities*, a new report from the Pell Institute prepared for the Lumina Foundation for Education, has found that colleges and universities that design and implement student retention programs tailored to address the challenges of low-income students can be effective in improving college graduation rates—without narrowing access. The study identifies retention strategies that help some institutions succeed beyond all predictors. It points to the importance of college level data in driving better outcomes. Some effective strategies identified include: enhancing the first-year orientation experience; promoting student involvement and closely monitoring progress through advising, supplemental instruction and individualized support; developing an institutional culture that promotes success; emphasizing the teaching mission and rewarding faculty for supporting it.
www.pellinstitute.org

Transfer and Alignment

Study finds low rates of transfer for Latino students: *An Examination of Latino/Transfer Students in California's Postsecondary Institutions*, prepared by the Chicano Studies Research Center at UCLA, finds that Latino students make up the overwhelming majority of students who start at California community colleges and fail to transfer to four-year institutions. The report notes that the rates of transfer are significantly below what they should be, based on students' stated goals. Of every 100 first-time Latino students, 75 enter California's community colleges. But of these, only about seven transfer—six to Cal State campuses and one to a University of California campus.

www.chicano.ucla.edu/press/briefs/documents/LPIB_16.pdf

Two forthcoming studies will examine impact of community colleges on transfer outcomes: Two papers presented at the 2007 meeting of the American Educational Research Association and highlighted by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (April 11) offered different ways of looking at the question: How do community colleges impact students' attainment of four-year degrees?

Michael Kurlaender and Bridget Terry Long have examined 1,700 Ohio community college students who indicated that they planned to earn four-year degrees. The authors conclude that, controlling for certain factors, the students starting in community colleges were 14 percent less likely to earn a Bachelor's degree within six years than were comparable students who had begun in four-year institutions.

Tationa Melguizo and her colleagues have examined 641 students who entered community college in 1992 and later transferred to four-year institutions as juniors. The transfer students were just as likely to complete a Bachelor's degree, and earned just as many credits, as similar students who had begun college at four-year institutions.

The larger conclusion from the two forthcoming studies is that too few community-college students manage to transfer to four-year institutions in the first place. State

governments, community colleges, and four-year institutions should devote more resources to helping students transfer successfully.

Financing

Thinking Outside the Box: Policy Strategies for Readiness, Access, and Success: As part of WICHE's project, Changing Direction: Integrating Higher Education Financial Aid and Financing Policy, supported by Lumina Foundation for Education, this resource discusses policy alignment around readiness, access, and success and examines them in the light of four policy tools: finance, regulation, accountability, and governance.
www.wiche.edu/Policy/Changing_direction/documents/ThinkingOutsideTheBox.pdf

New resource on community college finance: The Ford Foundation's Community College Bridges to Opportunity initiative sponsored a webinar in June for state and local leaders on issues in community college finance, built around a toolkit authored by Brett Visger. The toolkit includes financial challenges facing community college, tools for financial analysis, current and emerging state policy trends and innovation, and advocacy tools and guidelines for community college finance. It is designed to help state leaders link finance policy with educational goals. *The toolkit is available at www.communitycollegcentral.org/financetoolkit/index.html. To hear the webinar, go to: www.communitycollegcentral.org.*

Policy Developments in Other States

Innovative developmental education improvement strategy in California: The California Community Colleges Board of Governors, working with college administrators and faculty, has launched an important initiative to address the challenge of remedial education. Coordinated by the community college faculty senate, this effort is gathering steam. An assessment tool highlighting 29 promising practices in developmental education, based on an extensive literature review, is being distributed to all 109 campuses for use in assessing weaknesses and planning improvements. A \$33 million investment is included in the state budget to fund efforts by each college

to examine its current approaches in light of best research available and to develop and implement campus action plans. This is an effort for states to watch and learn from in the coming years.

www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/06/22/EDGKOP3GP81.DTL&hw=Burdman&sn=001&sc=1000

New performance funding measures OK'd in Arkansas: The Arkansas legislature passed the Arkansas Productivity Enhancement for Undergraduate Higher Education Act (HB 2325). This act aims to improve retention and graduation rates at public colleges and universities by providing a means to distribute incentive funding to institutions for improving retention and graduation rates. The incentive funding will not affect existing base funding. The act identifies two clear indicators for measuring institutional

performance: the retention rates of first-year to second-year students; and graduation rates of students in certificate or degree programs. A two-year college is eligible for incentive funding if its retention and graduation rates are three percent higher than the institutional baseline.

www.arkleg.state.ar.us/ftp/root/bills/2007/public/HB2325.pdf

Changes in Mississippi community college funding: Recent legislation in Mississippi will fundamentally change the way the state funds two-year colleges. State funding for two-year colleges will increase until they are receiving a per-student funding amount that is roughly equivalent to what K-12 schools receive. This new funding approach will be phased in over three years.

<http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2007/html/history/SB/SB2364.htm>

ACHIEVING SUCCESS:

STATE POLICY NEWSLETTER

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