



Winning Formula: **Institutional innovations + State policy strides =** **Students succeeding in college**

OVERVIEW

The Developmental Education Initiative is devoted to improving developmental (remedial) education at community colleges to increase graduation rates, propel under-prepared students toward rewarding careers, and boost states' economies. This requires synchronized innovation in two important arenas:

- 1** Educators at Developmental Education Initiative community colleges are **pioneering and proving better strategies** that prepare students for college work quickly and efficiently.
- 2** State policy teams coordinated by Jobs For the Future are pushing state community college systems and legislatures to **change outdated and cumbersome rules, funding, and incentive structures** that stand in the way of these innovations. They're also **multiplying the impact of both types of work by spreading strategies** proven at DEI colleges throughout state systems.

AWARENESS AND COORDINATION

Building on the work of Achieving the Dream, DEI is working to show policy teams and front-line innovators how closely their work relates and to draw them together in closer partnership in each state that's part of the initiative: Collaboration will help educators prove new strategies more easily and quickly, producing evidence that policy teams can use to urge states to scale up these new approaches to dramatically improve outcomes for all students who test into developmental education. Each participating state has agreed to:

- 1** A **data-driven improvement process** to create the right conditions for institutional innovation (such as identifying appropriate success indicators, establishing a baseline, and publicly sharing progress toward improvement)
- 2** A **state-level innovation investment strategy** that provides incentives for the development, testing, and scaling up of effective models
- 3** **Policy supports** that facilitate the implementation of new models and encourage the spread of successful practices (for example, removing rigid census dates and seat-time requirements, and rewarding institutions that enable students to succeed)



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR DEI COLLEGES	DEI STATE POLICY PRIORITIES
<p>Demonstrate leadership and institution-wide commitment to the success of underprepared students by developing institution-wide policies and practices that support better outcomes for those students.</p>	<p>Set goals for improved institutional outcomes, use appropriate performance indicators to measure progress, and make progress transparent to key stakeholders.</p>
<p>Increase the number of underprepared students who quickly become ready for credit-bearing courses and revise existing developmental education curricula and/or adopt new teaching methods to address the varying learning styles of developmental education students and maximize opportunities for success, including bypassing or accelerating progress in traditional courses.</p>	<p>Redesign developmental education courses and sequences to help students avoid developmental courses if possible, have easier access to flexible delivery options, and get the academic and non-academic supports they need to move quickly toward proficiency and success in credential programs.</p>
<p>Provide intensive and comprehensive academic and student support services for underprepared students that are implemented in an intentional manner.</p>	<p>Reduce the need for developmental education among incoming students through better alignment of expectations with K-12 systems and accurately assess college readiness, placing students who need developmental education in courses and interventions that maximize their chances of college success.</p>
<p>Increase the impact of effective strategies by scaling them up within the institution, across multiple campuses, and throughout community college systems.</p>	<p>Remove barriers and create incentives for institutions to introduce, test, and scale up innovations that significantly improve results.</p>



THE VIRGINIA EXAMPLE

Virginia's Community College System has what one state administrator called "a laser focus on developmental education," according to the report "Altered State: How the Virginia Community College System Has Used Achieving The Dream to Improve College Success" by Jobs for the Future. Typical of many states, about half of all first-time Virginia community college students need at least one developmental course. Yet developmental education requirements had become an obstacle for too many students rather than a pathway to higher education. Virginia community colleges embraced their "unique mission to help under-prepared students to be successful in college work ... to eliminate barriers and to create structures that support students in achieving their academic goals."

The system established a Developmental Education Task Force as part of a strategic plan to increase the number of students earning credentials by 50% over six years. According to the task force's 2009 report "The Turning Point," the state is committed to reducing the need for developmental education in Virginia, helping students complete developmental requirements in one year or less, and raising the proportion of developmental students who earn an associate's degree or transfer to a four-year college from one in four to one in three. By systematically collecting data through Achieving the Dream and DEI, "we now know things that we did not know, and those things are now policy levers," Chancellor Glenn DuBois says. "You are going to see the [VA State Community College System] develop system-wide policy changes focusing on at-risk students."

Data showed how important college skills instruction – such as information literacy and time management – are to keeping students enrolled. So the task force recommended that each college increase the number of students learning those skills. The systematic gathering of data helped policy advocates secure state-funded financial assistance grants for low-income community college students ready to transfer to four-year colleges.

Such success requires constant collaboration among system leaders, policy advocates, and those working with students on a state's college campuses. The Altered State report commits system leaders to "use regular communications and convenings with college representatives to reinforce the importance of work to improve student success."

Learn more about the Developmental Education Initiative colleges and states at www.deionline.org.

Download the entire Altered State report from Jobs For The Future at <http://tinyurl.com/jffreport>.



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