

AHEAD OF THE CURVE

STATE SUCCESS IN THE DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE

BY DAVID ALTSTADT



DECEMBER 2012



Achieving the Dream, Inc. is a national nonprofit that is dedicated to helping more community college students, particularly low-income students and students of color, stay in school and earn a college certificate or degree. Evidence-based, student-centered, and built on the values of equity and excellence, Achieving the Dream is closing achievement gaps and accelerating student success nationwide by: 1) guiding evidence-based institutional change; 2) influencing public policy; 3) generating knowledge; and 4) engaging the public. Conceived as an initiative in 2004 by Lumina Foundation and seven founding partner organizations, today Achieving the Dream leads the nation's most comprehensive non-governmental reform network for student success in higher education history. With nearly 200 colleges, 100 coaches and advisors, and 15 state policy teams—working throughout 32 states and the District of Columbia—Achieving the Dream helps 3.75 million community college students have a better chance of realizing greater economic opportunity and achieving their dreams.

WWW.ACHIEVINGTHEDREAM.ORG



JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

Jobs for the Future works with our partners to design and drive adoption of education and career pathways leading from college readiness to career advancement for those struggling to succeed in today's economy.

WWW.JFF.ORG



**DEVELOPMENTAL
EDUCATION
INITIATIVE**
Accelerating Achievement

The Developmental Education Initiative consists of 15 Achieving the Dream community colleges that are building on demonstrated results to scale up developmental education innovations at their institutions. Six states are committed to further advancement of their Achieving the Dream state policy work in the developmental education realm. Managed by MDC with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Lumina Foundation, the initiative aims to expand groundbreaking remedial education programs that experts say are key to dramatically boosting the college completion rates of low-income students and students of color. The innovations developed by the colleges and states participating in the Developmental Education Initiative will help community colleges understand what programs are effective in helping students needing developmental education succeed and how to deliver these results to even more students.

WWW.DEIONLINE.ORG



MDC's mission is to help organizations and communities close the gaps that separate people from opportunity. It has been publishing research and developing programs in education, government policy, workforce development, and asset building for more than 40 years. MDC was the managing partner of Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count for six years and was responsible for its incubation as a national nonprofit.

WWW.MDCINC.ORG

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Altstadt, the principal of David Altstadt Consulting LLC, conducts research and analysis of education and skills development systems in order to advance evidence-based policies and practices that are effective at preparing low-skilled adults for family-sustaining careers. Altstadt has written about innovations in adult and postsecondary education, welfare, workforce development, apprenticeship, financial aid, and labor market information systems. He has written a number of publications for JFF, most recently *How States Can Accelerate Community College Innovation by Supporting Faculty Leadership*. He holds a Master of Arts in liberal studies with a concentration in social and public policy from Georgetown University and a Bachelor of Science in journalism from Ohio University.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to thank the following individuals who contributed information to this report: Sharon Morrissey, senior vice president and chief academic officer for the North Carolina Community College System; Braden J. Hosch, director of policy & research and interim director of academic affairs for Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education; Cynthia Ferrell, associate director of student success initiatives for University of Texas at Austin; Susan Wood, vice chancellor for academic services & research for the Virginia Community College System; Julie Alexander, vice chancellor for academic and student affairs for the Division of Florida Colleges; and Ron Abrams, president of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges. As always, special thanks to Lara K. Couturier, Richard Kazis, and Marc S. Miller of Jobs for the Future for their guidance and editorial feedback on this project.

AHEAD OF THE CURVE: STATE SUCCESS IN THE DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE

A policy report based on
state case studies and data captured by
the Developmental Education Initiative
State Policy Framework Self-Assessment Tool

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
Summary of Findings	4
DATA-DRIVEN IMPROVEMENT	9
Incorporating Student Success Data in Accountability Systems and Funding Formulas	10
Aligning Data Systems	12
Making Data Accessible and Transparent	12
Using Student Success Data to Spark Reform	12
COMMITMENT TO INNOVATION	15
Seeding College Innovations and Evaluating Results	16
Building Consensus Toward Statewide Reforms	17
Supporting Campus-level Implementation of Innovations	18
Emerging Policy Action on Student Supports	19
POLICY SUPPORTS	20
Finance Policy Supports	20
Rewarding Colleges for Improved Performance	21
Improving College Access and Success Through Financial Aid Policies	23
Policy Supports for Aligning Expectations with K-12	24
Assessment and Placement Policy Supports	26
STAYING AHEAD OF THE CURVE	29
Policies Under Discussion or in Process Toward Adoption, as of 2011	29
The Focus of Future Energy: Priorities for Adopting or Implementing in 2013	30
The Path Forward	30
APPENDIX	33
ENDNOTES	42
REFERENCES	43

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building on their work through *Achieving the Dream*, six states and 15 community colleges joined the Developmental Education Initiative in 2009 to take on one of higher education's most daunting challenges: improving the success of students who enter community college academically underprepared. The states and Jobs for the Future, which manages the state policy effort for both initiatives, developed the ambitious, evidence-based DEI State Policy Framework to guide large-scale, multifaceted reforms in how community colleges remediate the academic deficiencies of underprepared students.

Three years later, Connecticut, Florida, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Virginia have made significant progress in adopting the DEI policy recommendations, thereby augmenting, accelerating, and spreading developmental education systems change across their community colleges. The Developmental Education Initiative is winding down, yet these states will continue their policy efforts to improve student success through participation in the Postsecondary State Policy Network, which includes states in *Achieving the Dream*, *Completion by Design*, and the Student Success Center Network.

The DEI State Policy Framework targets five policy levers for state action: data and performance measurement; developmental education innovation and redesign; aligned expectations with K-12; assessment and placement; and finance. Within those five policy levers, JFF and the DEI states selected 55 distinct priorities, representing collective thinking on the most promising steps that states could take to improve college success for students placing into developmental education as of the outset of DEI. Additionally, a three-part strategy—data-driven improvement, commitment to innovation, and policy supports—establishes the intended goals of state action on the five policy levers.

Through an analysis of aggregated state responses on the DEI *Self-Assessment Tool*, *Ahead of the Curve* reports on which policy priorities have gained significant traction and which have lagged behind, documenting the degree and rate of policy change collectively accomplished by states from the start of *Achieving the Dream* to the end of the Developmental Education Initiative.

CASE STUDIES

Six case studies in *Ahead of the Curve*—one for each state participating in the Developmental Education Initiative—highlight noteworthy state action across the DEI framework's policy levers.

FINDINGS: OVERARCHING

The DEI states have adopted or made progress on a significant share of policies since the start of *Achieving the Dream*, a moment when most of these states began focusing on student success in new, more deliberate ways. In 2004-05, states had adopted only one-third of the recommended policies; by 2011, they had adopted 57 percent of them, and another 24 percent were under consideration.

Policymaking activity rose dramatically during the DEI years. Between 2009 and 2011, DEI states substantially increased their commitment to policy change, making steady progress in implementing some policies and actively considering others in spite of the economic downturn.

OVERARCHING EXAMPLE

HOW NORTH CAROLINA'S SUCCESSNC FRAMEWORK IS DRIVING COMPREHENSIVE REFORM OF DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

The North Carolina Community College System launched SuccessNC in 2010 to provide an umbrella for its wide-ranging student success efforts.

FINDINGS: DATA-DRIVEN IMPROVEMENT

All DEI states have enhanced their data capacity, key to diagnosing barriers to success and developing effective solutions for developmental education students. States have built robust data systems; established appropriate metrics to gauge student success; conducted data analyses that compare performance across student populations, colleges, and states; and shared student success data with key stakeholders to facilitate continuous improvement.

DATA-DRIVEN IMPROVEMENT CASE STUDY

CONNECTICUT: HOW ANALYTIC TOOLS CAN HELP COLLEGES MAKE DATA-DRIVEN IMPROVEMENTS

Connecticut has made significant strides in pulling together a vast array of educational and employment data and in building the capacity of community colleges to use this data to guide efforts to improve student success.

FINDINGS: COMMITMENT TO INNOVATION

DEI states have embarked on large-scale redesigns of developmental education. In collaboration with their colleges, states are in the process of designing or implementing evidence-based reforms in the delivery and content of developmental courses.

COMMITMENT TO INNOVATION CASE STUDIES

TEXAS: HOW FUNDING AND CONSENSUS BUILDING CAN SEED COLLEGE INNOVATIONS

The Texas Association of Community Colleges embarked on an ambitious engagement process by conducting a campus listening tour and forming faculty leadership teams to recommend changes to developmental education, leading to all 50 community colleges signing on to the New Mathways initiative.

VIRGINIA: HOW ENGAGING COLLEGE STAKEHOLDERS CAN PRODUCE SYSTEM-WIDE REFORM

Virginia brought together administrators and faculty to craft an overhaul of all developmental education courses offered at all 23 community colleges in the system.

FINDINGS: POLICY SUPPORTS

Several DEI states are pursuing financing strategies that reward institutions for persistence and completion. Several states are considering changes to their state funding formulas to encourage institutions to focus on improving student performance, not just increasing enrollment.

DEI states have taken steps to improve protocols for assessing college readiness and placing underprepared students in remedial courses.

DEI states have made significant strides in strengthening ties between K-12 and postsecondary systems in an effort to reduce the need for developmental education among recent high school graduates, spurred in part by the 2010 release of the Common Core State Standards.

POLICY SUPPORTS CASE STUDIES

OHIO: HOW FUNDING CAN DRIVE COLLEGES TO FOCUS ON STUDENT SUCCESS

In 2011, Ohio crafted a funding scheme that awards a small but growing portion of its funding to the community colleges based on the number of students who achieve “success points” as they progress and complete.

FLORIDA: HOW STREAMLINING COLLEGE-READINESS STANDARDS AND PLACEMENT PRACTICES CAN IMPROVE STUDENT SUCCESS

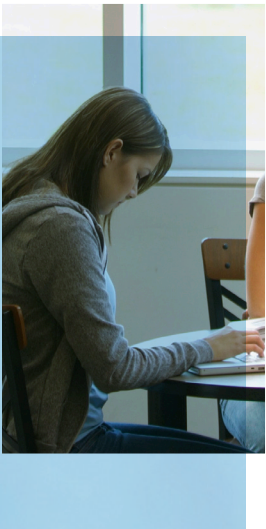
Florida has developed a customized exam called the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (P.E.R.T.), which simultaneously helps high school students determine if they are college ready and helps colleges determine student placement.

STAYING AHEAD OF THE CURVE

The DEI policy achievements are all the more noteworthy because they occurred during tough budgetary times and in the midst of significant research breakthroughs in community college best practices. As the nation fell into a deep recession, all six DEI states forged ahead with major reforms, while working tirelessly to sustain higher education service and quality.

Looking ahead, the DEI states have set priorities for further action even as the Developmental Education Initiative comes to a close. Strikingly, all six states have set their sights on further implementing and refining many of the same policies. Overall, these priorities target enhancing the use of important data about student outcomes, encouraging institutions to be innovative and test new strategies to improve student outcomes, and focusing on the sustainability of innovations through long-term planning and professional development for faculty.

There is a long road ahead for those focused on improving the success of underprepared students. Thanks in part to the resources, attention, and cross-state collaboration of the Developmental Education Initiative, however, colleges and systems in Connecticut, Florida, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Virginia are on an evidence-based, data-driven path toward achieving significant gains in student success rates.



INTRODUCTION

BUILDING ON THEIR WORK THROUGH ACHIEVING THE DREAM, SIX STATES AND 15 COMMUNITY COLLEGES JOINED THE DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE IN 2009 TO TAKE ON ONE OF HIGHER EDUCATION'S MOST DAUNTING CHALLENGES: IMPROVING THE SUCCESS OF STUDENTS WHO ENTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMICALLY UNDERPREPARED. ARMED WITH DATA ILLUMINATING THE HIGH FAILURE RATES OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN REMEDIAL MATH AND ENGLISH COURSES, THE COLLEGES FOCUSED ON SCALING-UP INNOVATIONS THAT HELP STUDENTS MOVE THROUGH THE COLLEGES FASTER AND MORE SUCCESSFULLY. THE SIX DEI STATES AND JOBS FOR THE FUTURE, WHICH HAS MANAGED THE DEI STATE POLICY EFFORT, CO-DEVELOPED AN AMBITIOUS, EVIDENCE-BASED STATE POLICY FRAMEWORK TO GUIDE LARGE-SCALE, MULTIFACETED REFORMS IN HOW COMMUNITY COLLEGES REMEDIATE THE ACADEMIC DEFICIENCIES OF UNDERPREPARED STUDENTS.

Three years later, with the Developmental Education Initiative winding down, Connecticut, Florida, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Virginia have made significant progress in adopting the DEI policy recommendations and, as a result, have augmented, accelerated, and spread developmental education systems change across their community colleges. These states will continue their policy efforts to improve student success through participation in the Postsecondary State Policy Network, which includes states in Achieving the Dream, Completion by Design, and the Student Success Center Network.

The DEI State Policy Framework targets five policy levers for state action: data and performance measurement; developmental education innovation and redesign; aligned expectations with K-12; assessment and placement; and finance. Within those five policy levers, JFF and the DEI states selected 55 distinct, important policy priorities through research and consultation with national experts, which effectively serve as recommendations (*see the Appendix for a full listing of the policy priorities*). These policy recommendations represent collective thinking in 2009 on the most promising steps that states could take to improve college success for students placing into developmental education as of the outset of DEI. Additionally, they articulate a three-part strategy—data-driven improvement, commitment to innovation, and policy supports—to establish the intended goals of state action on the five policy levers (*see Figure 1 on page 2*).






FIGURE 1.
DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE STATE POLICY FRAMEWORK AND STRATEGY



Each state tracked its progress in adopting DEI policy priorities through the DEI *Self-Assessment Tool*, which JFF developed in collaboration with the DEI state policy teams. States used the tool to record the status of policy adoption during their three years in the Developmental Education Initiative (2009, 2010, and 2011) benchmarked against their first year of participation in Achieving the Dream (either 2004 or 2005).¹ Each year, they noted whether their state had adopted a given policy recommendation or was actively considering its adoption (i.e., under discussion or adoption in process). In addition, states specified their priorities for two future years.

Through an analysis of aggregated state responses on the DEI *Self-Assessment Tool*, *Ahead of the Curve* reports which policy priorities have gained significant traction and which have lagged behind. The intention of this analysis is to document the degree and rate of policy change *collectively accomplished* by states from the start of Achieving the Dream to the end of the Developmental Education Initiative. Therefore, the overall performance of individual states is neither reported nor compared. (See the Appendix for a yearly reporting of combined state progress on DEI’s policy priorities, described in the question format of the DEI *Self-Assessment Tool*.) *Ahead of the Curve* brings the *Self-Assessment Tool* data to life through six primary case studies—one for each state participating in DEI—to highlight noteworthy state action across the DEI framework’s five policy levers. These state case studies, together with findings from the *Self-Assessment Tool*, are interwoven into three report sections organized by DEI’s three-part strategy: data-driven improvement, commitment to innovation, and policy supports (see Table 1). The North Carolina case study appears later in this introduction as an overarching example of states’ efforts to undertake and scale major developmental education reforms.

TABLE 1.
DEI STATE POLICY FRAMEWORK AND ORGANIZING STRUCTURE FOR AHEAD OF THE CURVE

STRATEGY	POLICY LEVERS DESCRIBED UNDER EACH STRATEGY
Data-driven Improvement: Make institutional performance more transparent through the regular collection, analysis, and dissemination of a consistent set of indicators	 DATA AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT
Commitment to Innovation: Incent and support the development, testing, and scaling up of effective delivery models of developmental education	 DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INNOVATION/REDESIGN
Policy Supports: Strengthen overarching assistance for underprepared students	 ALIGNED EXPECTATIONS WITH K-12
	 ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT
	 FINANCE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

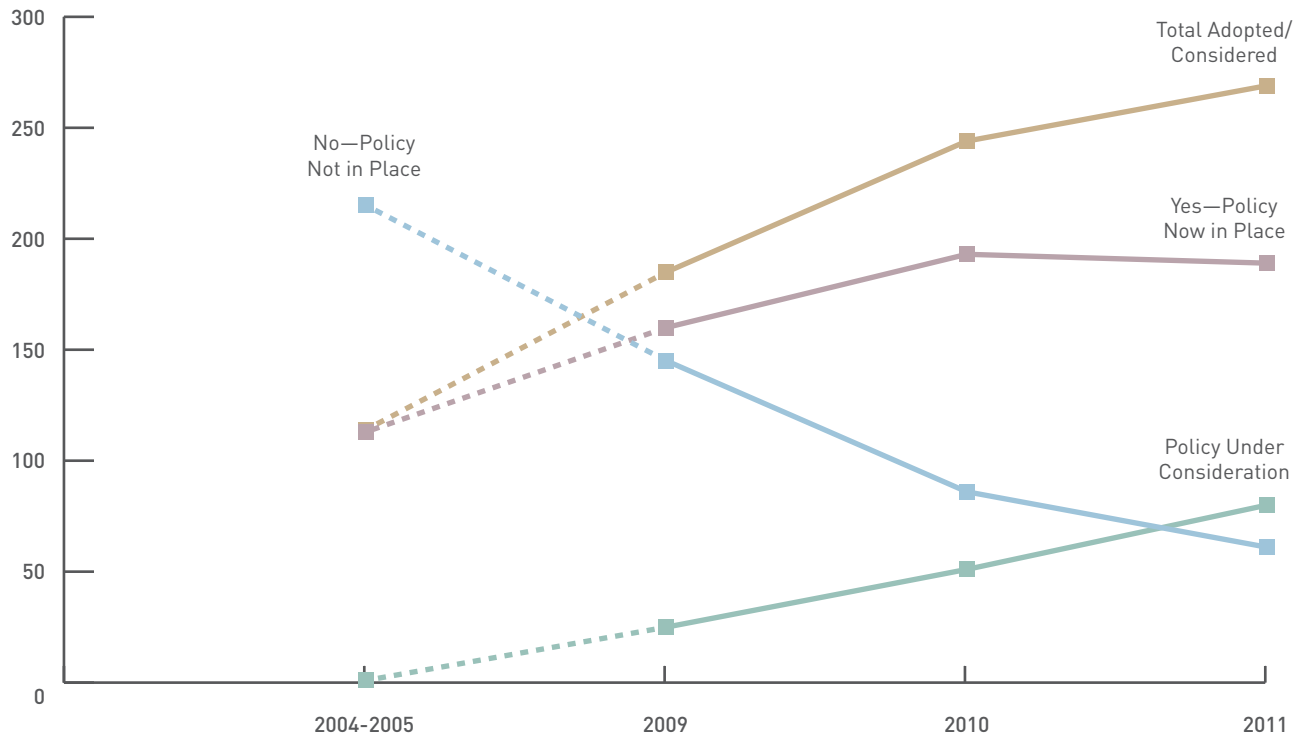
> **The DEI states have adopted or made progress on a significant share of policies since the start of Achieving the Dream**, a moment when most of these states began to focus on student success in new and more deliberate ways. In 2004-05, states had adopted only one-third of the policy recommendations; by 2011, they had adopted 57 percent of the recommended policies, and another 24 percent were under consideration (see *Table 2 and Figure 2*).

TABLE 2.
POLICY CHANGES TRACKED THROUGH THE DEI SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

	2004/05		2009		2011		PERCENTAGE CHANGE: 2004/05-2011
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
No—Policy Not in Place	215	65%	145	44%	61	18%	72% decrease in 'No' answers— Policies Not in Place
Yes—Policy in Place	113	34%	160	48%	189	57%	67% increase in 'Yes' answers— Policies in Place
Policy Under Consideration (Under Discussion or in Process)	1	>1%	25	8%	80	24%	N/A
Total Adopted or Considered	114	35%	185	56%	269	82%	136% increase

N: 330 = 55 possible policy indicators times 6 states

FIGURE 2.
NUMBER OF POLICY CHANGES TRACKED IN SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL



N= 330 Total Policy Indicators

- > **Policymaking activity has risen dramatically during the DEI years.** Between 2009 and 2011, DEI states substantially increased their commitment to policy change, which is illustrated by their steady progress in implementing some policies and their active consideration of others. This suggests that, although the Developmental Education Initiative is winding down, states remain committed to increasing student success through policymaking aligned with the DEI framework.
- > **All DEI states have enhanced their data capacity,** a key building block for diagnosing barriers to success and developing effective solutions for developmental education students. States have built robust data systems; established appropriate metrics to gauge student success; conducted data analysis that compares performance across student populations, colleges, and states; and shared student success data with key stakeholders to facilitate continuous improvement. For example, Connecticut invested in analytic tools and professional development to help colleges make better use of data and inform their decisions on institutional policies and program strategies.
- > **DEI states have embarked on large-scale redesigns of developmental education.** In collaboration with college stakeholders, states are in the process of designing or implementing evidence-based reforms in the delivery and content of developmental courses. These reforms include modularizing courses, integrating curricula, and establishing distinct remedial tracks for students majoring in different academic degree fields. For example, Virginia has implemented a sequence of math modules, an integrated reading and writing curriculum, and a new assessment and placement protocol across all 23 of its community colleges. Virginia's reforms also enable students who are near college ready to co-enroll in college-level courses. Texas has convened a team of math faculty to build statewide consensus on tailoring the developmental math curriculum to what students need to know for their chosen academic fields. North Carolina and Florida also have redesigned remedial courses and sequences.
- > **Several DEI states are pursuing financing strategies that reward institutions for persistence and completion.** Several states are considering changes to their state funding formulas to encourage institutions to focus on improving student performance, not just increasing enrollment. Notably, Ohio now allocates a portion of its community college funding based on how many students persist through remedial courses and their first year of for-credit courses and attain degrees and certificates.
- > **DEI states have taken steps to improve protocols for assessing college readiness and placing underprepared students** in remedial courses. For example, Florida has overhauled both the academic standards and tests it uses to assess whether high school youth and incoming college students are prepared for college-level coursework—providing a critical input into a multitude of college-readiness reforms at K-12 and postsecondary levels.
- > **DEI states have made significant strides in strengthening ties between K-12 and postsecondary systems** in an effort to reduce the need for developmental education among recent high school graduates. Spurred on by the 2010 release of the Common Core State Standards, all of the states have embarked on defining and aligning expectations for college readiness, whether or not they have signed on to the Common Core. In addition, a majority of states are working toward assessing and remediating college-readiness deficiencies prior to high school graduation. For example, stemming from a cross-sector collaboration in Virginia focused on reducing the need for remediation, the Department of Education has established a capstone course to help academically underprepared twelfth graders get ready for college.

These policy achievements are all the more noteworthy because they occurred during tough budgetary times and in the midst of significant research breakthroughs in community college best practices. As the nation fell into a deep recession, all six DEI states forged ahead with major reforms, even as they worked tirelessly to sustain higher education service and quality as budgets were tightened, human resource capacity was cut back, and morale was challenged.

Research on what works in community colleges has accelerated since the start of Achieving the Dream in 2004. The ever-expanding research base has challenged states and colleges to change mindsets and sometimes even reverse course on policy reforms. Policy recommendations that were considered state of the art at the beginning of DEI in 2009 have been challenged, pushing states to rethink and revise their approaches on such issues as the delivery of developmental education, the use of cut scores, and the structure of financial aid. That these states have adapted to emerging research points to the extraordinary and continuing efforts of DEI states.

Each of the six states has drawn on multiple levers of the DEI State Policy Framework to achieve developmental education systems change. *Ahead of the Curve* opens with a case study that showcases North Carolina's cohesive vision and organizing framework for pulling together not only its DEI policy priorities but also several other state initiatives for the common purpose of improving student success. North Carolina's effort to align competing demands and multiple policy priorities with a central goal of improving student success serves as a compelling example of comprehensive state-level reforms pursued by DEI states.

CASE STUDY

HOW NORTH CAROLINA'S SUCCESSNC FRAMEWORK IS DRIVING COMPREHENSIVE REFORM OF DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

The North Carolina Community College System launched SuccessNC in 2010 to provide an umbrella for its wide-ranging student success efforts toward achieving the goal of doubling the number of credential completers in 10 years.² Although focused initially on meeting this 2020 target, SuccessNC was not conceived as a strategic plan that would wrap up at a defined end date or once a specific list of tasks and objectives had been accomplished. Rather, according to Sharon Morrissey, NCCCS' senior vice president and chief academic officer, SuccessNC is envisioned as a "living, changing, evolving, guiding initiative" for organizing statewide action, capable of increasing student access and success while improving the quality of community college programs. SuccessNC has helped the system to target resources from many initiatives and maximize the impact on developmental education reform.

KEY STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES OF SUCCESSNC

NCCCS employs varying tactics and activities to achieve SuccessNC's three overarching objectives:

- > Improve Student Success;
- > Increase Student Access; and
- > Ensure Program Excellence.

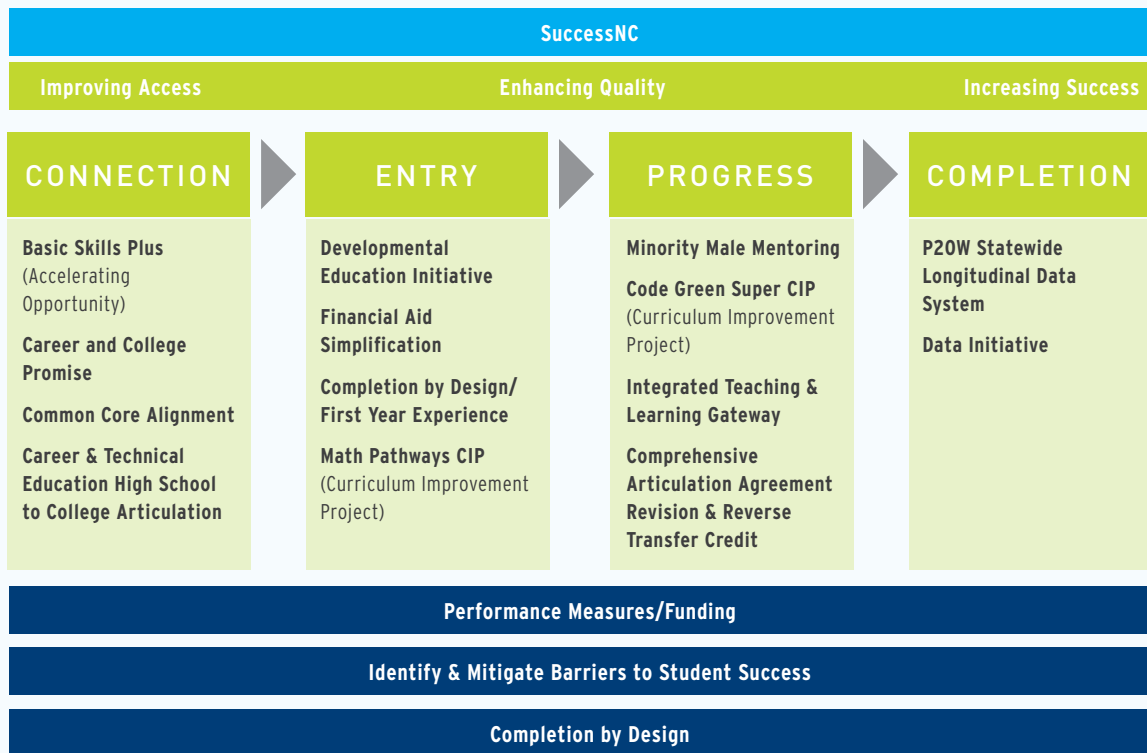
In 2010, NCCCS President Scott Ralls led a 58-college listening tour to identify college-level best practices and facilitate their replication. More than 200 college-selected strategies were documented, and many are now cataloged on SuccessNC's website. NCCCS invited college representatives to share their best practices at a system-wide conference in fall 2012.

NCCCS also established two standing committees to guide SuccessNC objectives around policy development and data. The Innovations Committee sought to design policy incentives, evaluate current policies, and remove barriers to institutional innovation in order to facilitate change, enhance innovation, and enhance systematic operation. Meanwhile, the Performance Measures Committee is working toward meaningful statewide community college performance measures aligned with student success. It recommended performance measures that were adopted by the General Assembly in 2012. A Performance Funding Committee will next recommend a model to connect those measures to outcomes-based funding.

SuccessNC's work extends well beyond its committee work and outreach activities. It currently encompasses 16 distinct NCCCS initiatives, including the Developmental Education Initiative, Accelerating Opportunity, and

Completion by Design. Previously, NCCCS had conducted these activities on parallel tracks or even in isolation, making it difficult to articulate their value and potential impact on a broader, more strategic objective. After witnessing a presentation by Mark Milliron, formerly of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Morrissey said she realized that Completion by Design’s Preventing Loss, Creating Momentum Framework provided a workable model for organizing these initiatives toward the goal of completion (see *Figure 3*).

FIGURE 3.
STUDENT SUCCESS FRAMEWORK



Source: North Carolina Community College System

In doing so, NCCCS has fit initiatives under the connection, entry, progress, and completion points along the framework—the Developmental Education Initiative is one of four initiatives classified under “entry.” Using the framework has enabled the system office to more clearly identify unmet priorities, while providing a rationale for determining which new projects and grants to pursue.

SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUCCESSNC AND THE DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE

Although SuccessNC provides a unifying purpose for these initiatives, NCCCS has maintained their separate operations and structures. The relationship between SuccessNC and the varying initiatives is symbiotic—with each reinforcing and informing the other.

At the heart of North Carolina’s DEI efforts, NCCCS is implementing a system-wide redesign of developmental math and English, while making changes in how colleges determine the academic readiness of students. These reforms, as well as others fitting under the banner of SuccessNC, have contributed to a cohesive approach to reaching DEI policy priorities, while contributing to the completion goals of SuccessNC and informing its overarching policy and data development.

NCCCS is unveiling a new remedial math curriculum that replaces traditional, semester-long courses with modules. In February 2012, the NCCCS Curriculum Review Committee approved eight new developmental math modules,

which have been placed in the Combined Course Library for all colleges. The new curriculum reduces the credit hours required to complete the developmental math sequence by one-third, compared to the previous sequence. More than 90 percent of North Carolina's colleges will implement the new math modules by spring 2013; all will implement by fall 2013.

NCCCS is undertaking a similar effort to reimagine delivery of developmental English. The Curriculum Review Committee approved four new combined developmental reading and English courses in October 2012. Seven colleges will pilot and test the eight-week courses in spring 2013.

The redesign was informed by a deep analysis of data—a major objective of the Developmental Education Initiative and Achieving the Dream—as well as by college experiences shared during the SuccessNC listening tour. According to a data analysis conducted by the Community College Research Center, only 8 percent of North Carolina community college students placed at the lowest levels of developmental math eventually complete a gateway course. A primary reason for the attrition is that students do not actually enroll in the course or reenroll in subsequent remedial courses (Bailey 2010). College leaders bolstered this finding during the SuccessNC listening tours, noting that traditional, 16-week remedial courses are either too long for students who only need to refresh specific math skills or wholly ineffective for students scoring at the very lowest levels in math (NCCCS 2011). This quantitative and qualitative information made clear a need for change.

NCCCS convened community college presidents, administrators, and faculty in leading the developmental math redesign efforts (Altstadt 2012). Moreover, NCCCS has reported on and used the DEI performance measures to inform SuccessNC strategies, while it incorporates DEI data-analysis objectives within SuccessNC's data initiative and the overall work of the performance measures committee. As a result, North Carolina's State Board of Community Colleges recently adopted eight student success measures; among them is one similar to the DEI intermediate measure of earning 24 or more credits in year 1. The committee is developing a new performance-funding model that would incorporate these measures.

Lastly, through the Developmental Education Initiative, NCCCS is having an impact on college placement practices. The college system is developing a new placement test and diagnostic tool while exploring how to measure college readiness through multiple measures. One approach would consider the grade point average of a high school student in determining whether he or she needs to take the diagnostic assessment. The Developmental Education Initiative also has sparked a discussion within the college system about allowing students who test near college ready to co-enroll in a developmental module instead of requiring it as a prerequisite. Through another SuccessNC initiative stemming from North Carolina's implementation of national Common Core State Standards, NCCCS is ensuring that these DEI-envisioned reforms align with other assessments and standards across secondary and postsecondary sectors.



DATA-DRIVEN IMPROVEMENT

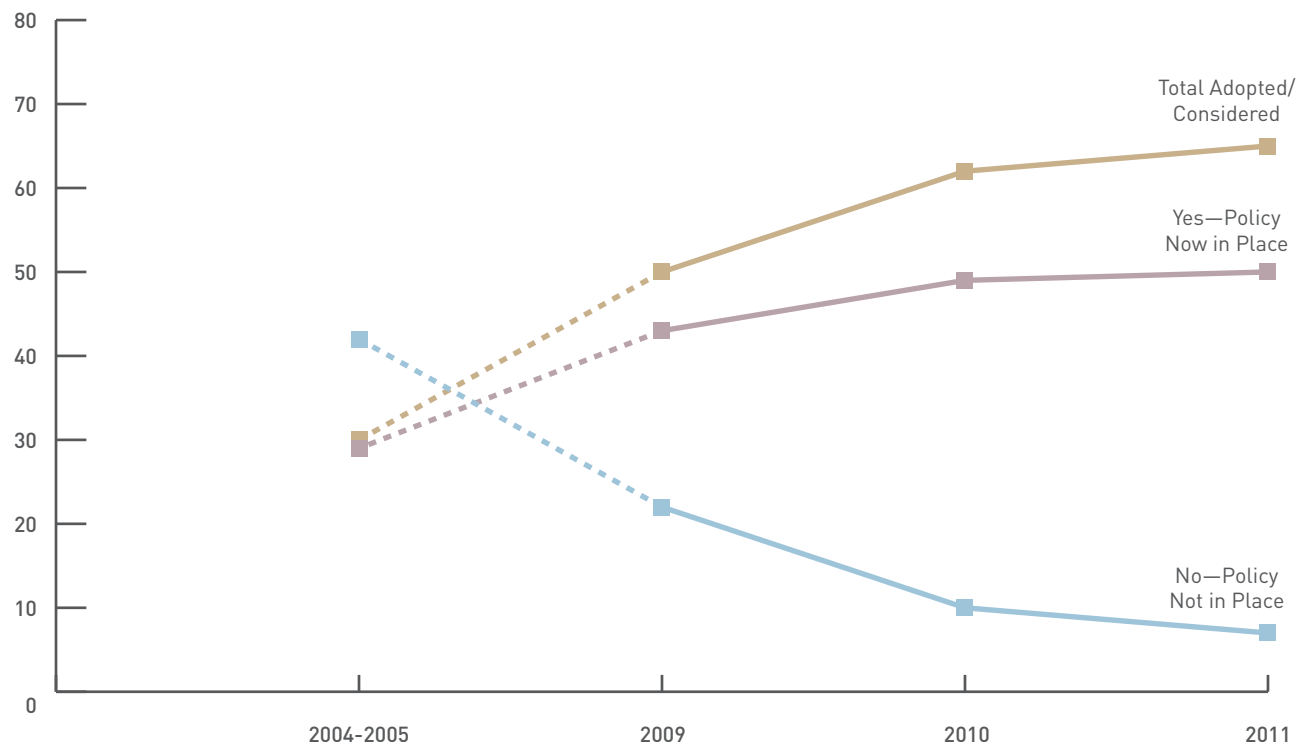
ENCOURAGING INNOVATION BY MAKING INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE MORE TRANSPARENT THROUGH THE REGULAR COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND DISSEMINATION OF A CONSISTENT SET OF INDICATORS.

Building upon the culture of evidence championed by Achieving the Dream, the Developmental Education Initiative considered the use of data on student performance a key building block for improving the outcomes of developmental education students. The DEI State Policy Framework called on states to adopt 12 policy priorities that support: robust data systems; appropriate performance goals for student success in developmental education; vigorous data analysis that compares performance across student populations, colleges, and states; and the dissemination of student success data with key stakeholders to facilitate continuous improvement.

As evidence of their commitment to data-driven decisions, every DEI state has made tremendous progress since 2004 in implementing the recommended policy changes to data use and performance measurement. By 2011, states either had put into place or were actively considering the adoption of a combined 90 percent of data-related policies in the DEI framework. So far, nine of the policy recommendations—75 percent—have been adopted in a majority of DEI states, including five that have taken hold in at least five states.

Among the highlights, DEI states have made the greatest progress in implementing two data priorities for developmental education students: disaggregated data results and intermediate measures of success. In 2004, only one of the six DEI states was able to disaggregate higher education data for the purposes of comparing educational outcomes between distinct subgroups of developmental education students (e.g., gender, race, income). Additionally, only one state at the start of Achieving the Dream was tracking students' achievement of intermediate educational milestones en route to graduation. By 2011, five states were reporting disaggregated data and intermediate performance measures.

FIGURE 4.
DATA AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT POLICY CHANGE



N=72 Total Policy Indicators

DEI STATE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DATA AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

1. Require that the state's governing authority for community colleges (hereafter "state") sets clear targets and goals for completion (such as credential, degree, or transfer) for developmental education students.
2. Enhance the capacity of community college data system to disaggregate developmental education outcomes by subgroups and report on them at least annually (examples of subgroups include gender, race, income, proportion of a cohort that complete a sequence, take gatekeeper math or English courses, etc.).
3. Link the state's community college data system to the K-12 data system.
4. Link the state's community college data system to the four-year college data system.
5. Link the state's community college data system to the adult education data system.
6. Link the state's community college data system to the workforce data system.
7. Include placement scores in the state's community college data system.
8. Include in the state's performance measures a set of intermediate measures that identify key academic achievement points or predictors of long-term success.
9. Enhance the community college data system's reports to allow for comparisons among peer institutions as defined by size, student characteristics, etc., (can be in- or out-of-state) in order to identify institutions that are achieving the best results with high-priority student subgroups.
10. Disseminate data/reports on student outcomes to a variety of stakeholders at least annually (e.g., trustees, parents, college leaders, faculty, policymakers, business leaders).
11. Report on intermediate measures that identify key academic achievement points or predictors of long-term success at least annually.
12. Enhance capacity of the state's community college data system to compare the persistence and completion of those who participate in developmental education to those who test into, but do not enroll in, developmental education.

INCORPORATING STUDENT SUCCESS DATA IN ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS AND FUNDING FORMULAS

The use of intermediate measures grew out of cutting-edge research on student success and policies undertaken in Washington State. The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges worked closely with the Community College Research Center at Columbia University to identify "achievement points" (e.g., the completion of college-level math and the first 15 credits of a degree program) that provide particularly strong indications of whether a student would eventually obtain a credential. In 2008, Washington began rewarding colleges that help students reach these achievement points through a new performance funding system, the Student Achievement Initiative.³ Subsequently, several other states collaborating in the Achieving the Dream Cross-State Data Work Group, managed by Jobs for the Future as a part of the state policy effort, adapted the achievement points model in crafting a set of eight intermediate measures they agreed to collect and analyze (see *box on the Cross-State Data Work Group on page 11*).

As recommended in the DEI State Policy Framework, several states have established intermediate measures to assess institutional performance and support funding decisions. Florida, North Carolina, and Texas have incorporated or adapted several of the workgroup's recommended intermediate measures into their performance

systems. Ohio has taken this a step further, allocating state formula funds to community colleges based in part on how well their students do in persisting through six “success points,” including three adapted from the intermediate measures (see *the Ohio Case Study on page 22*). Ohio officials hope that the new performance-based funding system will change the culture among legislators and colleges toward increasing student success, not just enrollment.

The DEI framework also recommends that states adopt clear targets and goals for college completion. States have made steady progress toward achieving this priority. At the start of Achieving the Dream, only Virginia had established completion targets. Since then, two other states have set similar goals, while two other states have reported progress toward doing so.

CROSS-STATE DATA WORK GROUP: ESTABLISHING COMMON MEASURES TO DRIVE INNOVATION

A signature accomplishment of the policy reform efforts of Achieving the Dream was the convening of the Cross-State Data Work Group of data experts from 12 Achieving the Dream states, including six involved in the Developmental Education Initiative. Managed by Jobs for the Future, the workgroup started meeting in 2006 to develop, test, and pilot a better way to measure community college performance. It considered performance measurement to be a crucial input for developing and sustaining policies, programs, and supports to help more students succeed.

Early on, the workgroup identified a common set of college completion indicators and designed a set of shorter-term milestones to measure student progress toward completion. The group selected points validated by researchers to increase or decrease the likelihood that students eventually earn a credential:

INTERMEDIATE MEASURES

- > Persisted fall to spring in year 1
- > Passed 80 percent or more of attempted credit hours in year 1
- > Earned 24 or more credit hours in year 1
- > Persisted fall to fall in years 2 and 3
- > Passed developmental math sequence by year 2
- > Passed gatekeeper English or higher by year 3
- > Passed gatekeeper math or higher by year 3
- > Achieved the two-year hour milestone

FINAL MEASURES

- > Award of less than an Associate’s degree without transfer
- > Award of an Associate’s degree or higher without transfer
- > Award of less than an Associate’s degree and transfer
- > Award of an Associate’s degree or higher and transfer
- > Transferred without an award
- > Total success rate (calculated from the other final measures)

States in the workgroup agreed to collect and publicly release data on these final and intermediate measures from their community colleges. JFF published the state performance data in a 2012 report. The report also contained disaggregated data from five states in order to compare performance of students by their level of college readiness; the approach used developmental education placement test scores and placement results to group students by their levels of need. The workgroup felt that disaggregating data by remedial need, when coupled with results from intermediate milestones, would give states and institutions a much better sense of which students are dropping off the path toward a credential—and at which points.

ALIGNING DATA SYSTEMS

The DEI framework included several policy recommendations that build on the nationwide effort to align disparate data systems in order to track the educational outcomes of students from K-12 through college. So far, four of the DEI states have aligned their community college data systems to four-year universities and to adult education. Florida and Texas stand out for having connected their community college data systems to workforce and K-12 data as well. All of the remaining states report steady progress toward linking their community college data systems across remaining sectors.

MAKING DATA ACCESSIBLE AND TRANSPARENT

In accordance with DEI data policy priorities, states have stepped up their commitment to disseminating data on student outcomes and institutional performance. All of the DEI states now disseminate findings on student outcomes to a variety of stakeholders each year, up from just two states at the start of Achieving the Dream. Additionally, a majority of DEI states now produce reports that enable valuable comparisons of student performance among peer institutions or among student groups.

In 2004, Florida was the only DEI state that had the capability in its community college data system to compare the persistence and completion of students who participate in developmental education to those who test into, but do not enroll in, remedial courses—providing critical input into the effectiveness of developmental education interventions. Three additional states now produce reports comparing educational outcomes of academically underprepared students, and the policy is under review in another state.

Among state actions taken to make data more transparent and accessible, Florida recently rolled out an interactive online platform: the Student Success Dashboard enables users to conduct custom data queries. Once a DEI priority, dashboards have since been deemed by other DEI states to be too expensive to construct. They have focused on disseminating and analyzing data in lower-cost ways. North Carolina is revamping its annual Critical Success Factors report to focus on several measures that are particularly meaningful to policymakers and the public regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of both the system and individual institutions.

Borrowing from an earlier initiative of the Florida College System, the Virginia Community College System produces regular Student Success Snapshots, which spotlight student achievement within a particular initiative, academic area, or demographic. The system also reports annually on developmental education, with system- and college-level data on student performance—from placement to enrollment in developmental education, to entrance into the college-level English or mathematics, to attaining a credential or transferring to a four-year university. Meanwhile, Connecticut has invested in analytic tools and professional development to enhance the ability of colleges to conduct their own data queries and analyses of student success (see *Connecticut Case Study on page 13*).

USING STUDENT SUCCESS DATA TO SPARK REFORM

In several states, the publication of student success data has initiated calls for reform, particularly of developmental education.

In Florida, evidence that a large proportion of students who passed the high school assessment test subsequently failed the college placement test led college administrators and state policymakers to take a harder look at the alignment of K-12 and college standards and the delivery of developmental education. This resulted in a new round of college-readiness reforms (see *the Florida case study on page 28*).

CASE STUDY

CONNECTICUT: HOW ANALYTIC TOOLS CAN HELP COLLEGES MAKE DATA-DRIVEN IMPROVEMENTS

Connecticut has made significant strides in pulling together a vast array of educational and employment data and in building the capacity of community colleges to use these data to guide efforts to improve student success. The state board of regents is overseeing the development of a data warehouse containing information on community college and state university students (e.g., courses taken, grades, completions, admissions, transfers, financial aid) and courses (e.g., meeting times, department instructors, enrollment), as well as faculty course loads, finances, and campus-based research. Additionally, Connecticut has strengthened ties to K-12 and workforce data systems to track students from high school, through college years, and into work. This was made possible by a new state law that requires high schools to use a unique identifier on student transcripts, as well as an interagency agreement reached by the state labor department and board of regents to track students' employment outcomes through Unemployment Insurance wage records.

With data alignment well underway, Achieving the Dream and the Developmental Education Initiative provided a key impetus for Connecticut to enhance the use and analysis of data in driving policy decisions and innovations, in particular for developmental education. The state board of regents committed resources for purchasing a business intelligence tool, developed by Argus, to enable more efficient analysis of data. State higher education officials have used the tool to examine the performance of at-risk students, to identify institutions and interventions having the greatest impact on student success, and to inform state legislators as they work through postsecondary reforms and budget decisions.

Without the business intelligence tool, officials say, they could not have responded promptly to lawmakers' requests for information; mining through the data warehouse would have taken months of research. In spring 2012, for example, a Democratic state senator was preparing to introduce legislation that would bar colleges from offering any remedial courses. Officials from the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities provided data that helped shape the enacted measure, which has preserved access to developmental education for some students (College Readiness and Completion 2012). Starting in fall 2014, colleges will be permitted to enroll only the most underprepared students in developmental education for up to one semester. Colleges must funnel the majority of other students directly into college-level courses supplemented with extra academic supports.

The state board of regents is now focused on helping community colleges analyze data with the business intelligence tool in order to inform educational practices and strategies. The state is training institutional research staff to construct meaningful data queries to measure student success and program outcomes, make comparisons with other colleges, and set benchmarks for improving performance. Through the training, state officials expect that institutional research staff will gain much-needed expertise in developing additional tools for sharing high-level data with end-users (e.g., administrators, faculty, students).

The Virginia Community College System embarked on a major redesign of remedial math and English after examining data showing that few students were prepared for college-level academic work and that the conventional structures, content, and instruction of developmental education were a major contributor to low completion rates (see *the Virginia case study on page 18*) (Jenkins, Jaggars, & Roksa 2009). The system office convened college faculty and administrators to craft the developmental education reforms: the use of data in those discussions was critical in turning classroom anecdotes into evidence worthy of guiding state policy and programmatic reforms.

Other states have stepped up efforts to share student success data with faculty in a variety of venues, such as annual peer-learning conferences and curriculum committees. Doing so has helped increase faculty understanding of students' experiences and outcomes, faculty demand for data, and faculty support for the urgent need for reforms.

Texas college officials have sought to enhance the collection and dissemination of student success data to inform policies proposed in and enacted by the state legislature. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has formally adopted into its college accountability system four of the intermediate measures recommended by the Cross-State Data Work Group.⁴ In addition, Texas has set clear targets for developmental education success, started disaggregating data to compare outcomes for students enrolled in traditional and redesigned developmental education courses, and publicly reported state and institutional progress toward developmental education success. In the last legislative session, success data also informed lawmakers' work on college-readiness assessments and strategies.





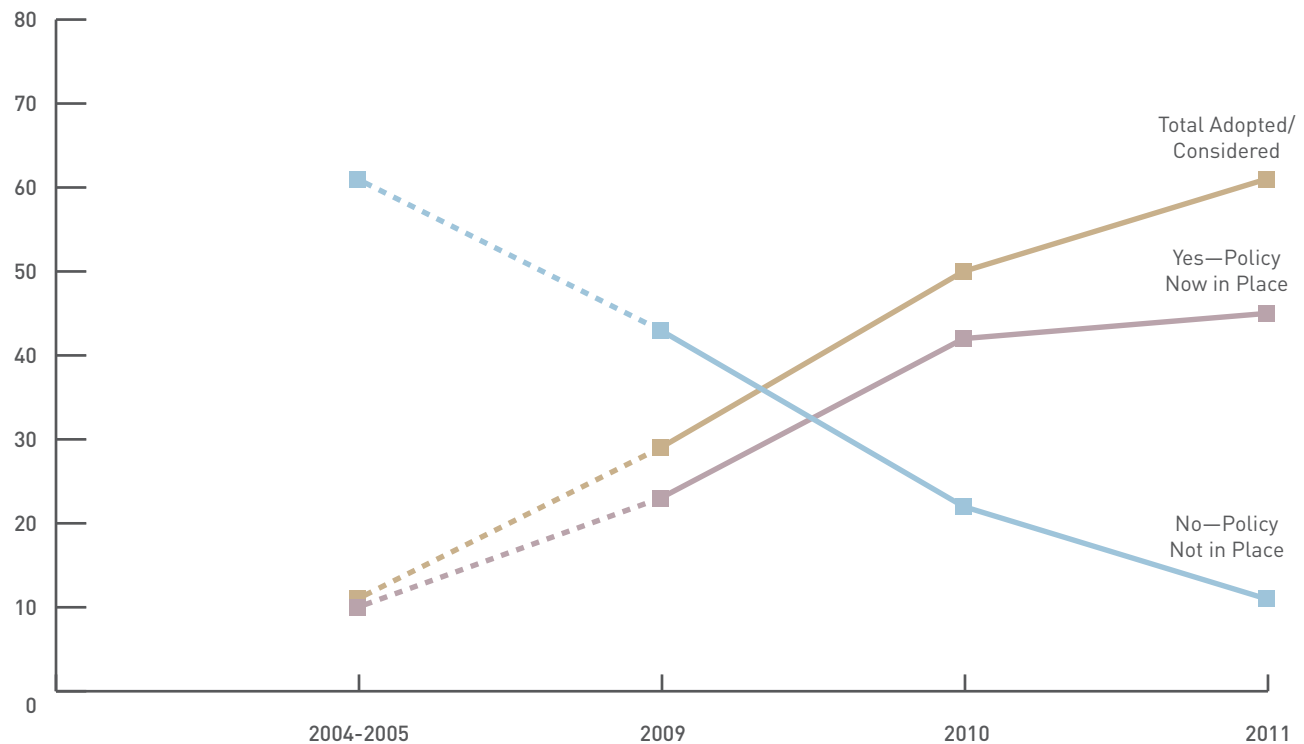
COMMITMENT TO INNOVATION

INCENTING AND SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT, TESTING, AND SCALING UP OF EFFECTIVE DELIVERY MODELS OF DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION.

The Developmental Education Initiative championed the notion that developmental education must undergo significant, non-incremental change in order to achieve greater persistence and completion among underprepared students. In this drive toward the large-scale redesign of remedial courses and sequences, the initiative recognized the important role that state-level actors play in incentivizing innovation and engaging college partners in supporting and informing reform efforts. The DEI State Policy Framework encouraged states to adopt 12 policies that promote innovation in the delivery of remedial courses, changes to academic and nonacademic supports, sharing of best practices, and research on innovation outcomes (see Figure 5).

Similar to the data policy lever, each of the six DEI states has made significant progress since 2004 in implementing developmental education innovation and redesign policies recommended by the DEI framework. Seven of the innovation/redesign priorities—58 percent—are now in place in a majority of DEI states, including four recommended policies that have taken hold in five or more states.

FIGURE 5.
DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INNOVATION AND REDESIGN POLICY CHANGE



N=72 Total Policy Indicators

DEI STATE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INNOVATION AND REDESIGN

1. Establish a workgroup or task force focused on developing innovations for developmental education.
2. Provide funding to encourage institutions to be innovative and test new strategies to improve outcomes for developmental studies.
3. Provide other incentives/resources, aside from funding, to encourage institutions to be innovative and test new strategies to improve outcomes for developmental students (e.g., data analysis, competitive awards).
4. Incent institutions to develop plans for improving student outcomes in developmental education.
5. Take concrete action to move away from systems based on traditional, semester-length courses to allow for proficiency-based innovations, such as self-paced options or modularization of developmental education courses.
6. Disseminate the best available research on innovations' impacts on student outcomes through conferences, etc.
7. Collect and analyze data on student outcomes for new in-state programs, practices, or strategies (e.g., a specialized study of a college's pilot of modularization).
8. Support professional development activities that help faculty transition to new curricula, structures, and delivery models (e.g., modularization).
9. Develop a plan for sustaining innovations that research shows are working.
10. Incent colleges to provide orientation for students entering developmental education.
11. Incent colleges to provide academic advising for students entering developmental education.
12. Incent creation of clear, directed pathways to graduation, such as time-to-degree contracts, encouragement of full-time status, and/or degree mapping/educational plans.

SEEDING COLLEGE INNOVATIONS AND EVALUATING RESULTS

As recommended in the DEI framework, during the DEI years most states have awarded funds and created other incentives to encourage institutions to be innovative and test new strategies for improving outcomes among developmental students. In 2004, none of the states had funded college pilots, but five were making such investments by 2011. A majority of states have begun to evaluate their piloted programs and share results and lessons learned with other colleges. For example, in 2009 the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board awarded \$7 million to five colleges to try out different ways of delivering remedial courses, seeking to identify—and, eventually scale up—the most effective strategies for reducing the time students spend in developmental education. Texas community colleges have experimented with accelerated and modularized courses, intensive refresher courses, early assessments, and pretesting/retesting strategies.

BUILDING CONSENSUS TOWARD STATEWIDE REFORMS

All six DEI states have taken concrete steps to bring particular developmental education innovations to scale statewide. At the start of Achieving the Dream, only one state had formed a workgroup or task force of college stakeholders to spearhead statewide reforms of developmental education; by 2011, all six states had convened such groups. Three states—North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia—stand out for their consensus-building processes as well as their pursuit of innovative delivery models for remedial instruction (see *the North Carolina case study, page 6, the Texas case study, below, and the Virginia case study, page 18*).

CASE STUDY

TEXAS: HOW FUNDING AND CONSENSUS BUILDING CAN SEED COLLEGE INNOVATIONS

Building upon its campus-specific innovations, Texas convened faculty and institutional research staff from each of the state's 50 community colleges to build consensus for reforming developmental education.⁵ The Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC), which has coordinated the state's DEI policy efforts, embarked on the ambitious engagement process by conducting a listening tour of campuses in 2010, hosting a statewide gathering of math faculty in 2011, and subsequently forming six leadership teams to study and recommend changes to be enacted through legislation or adopted by colleges.

The leadership teams are comprised of faculty and staff representing each community college. The teams are examining how to improve the curriculum and delivery of remedial math and English and supports available to underprepared students, as well as how to scale up their recommended strategies and incorporate data in decision making and performance measurement. Many of the innovations and insights under discussion stem from the experiences of colleges involved in Achieving the Dream and the Developmental Education Initiative, as well as the research of Dr. Uri Treisman of the University of Texas at Austin's Dana Center.

Comprising nearly 150 math faculty members, the developmental math leadership team is exploring how to tailor math curricula to what students need to know for their chosen academic fields. Math is typically a major obstacle to student completion; the hope is that aligning math curricula with student needs will reduce unnecessary obstacles and help more students to complete.

Branded as "New Mathways," the proposal seeks to replace the conventional, one-size-fits-all remedial math curriculum with differing course sequences. One sequence targets students majoring in STEM disciplines that require mastery of more advanced math concepts (e.g., precalculus). Another pathway is for students who need statistics in order to pursue their social sciences field. A third is for the large share of liberal arts students who face fewer math requirements for their majors or careers.

After reaching consensus through the leadership team, TACC received the endorsement of the Mathways concept by all 50 community college presidents. The colleges have agreed to contribute funding to hire the Dana Center to design the pathways in collaboration with faculty members involved in the leadership team initiative. Considering that colleges enjoy significant local autonomy in Texas, TACC officials say some of the program elements will need legislative action, while others will hinge on the decisions of individual colleges to pursue implementation. TACC officials expect that faculty involved in the leadership team initiative will help persuade their colleges to take action.

CASE STUDY

VIRGINIA: HOW ENGAGING COLLEGE STAKEHOLDERS CAN PRODUCE SYSTEM-WIDE REFORMS

Virginia brought together administrators and faculty from several community colleges to craft a system-wide overhaul of developmental education. Virginia has introduced a sequence of math modules, an integrated reading and writing curriculum, and a new assessment and placement protocol across all 23 of its community colleges, with the aim of tailoring the time and topics of remediation to the specific skill gaps and educational goals of individual students (Asera 2011). The reforms also enable students who are almost college ready to co-enroll in college-level courses. Although the Virginia Community College System initiated and supported the multiyear reform effort, the resulting large-scale redesigns of developmental math and English curricula have been conceived and championed by committees consisting of faculty as well as a range of campus-based administrators (Altstadt 2012).

In January 2012, Virginia's community colleges replaced traditional semester-long remedial math courses with a series of nine, single-unit modules, each of which focuses on a specific content area. Virginia followed Florida's lead in developing a customized diagnostic and placement exam to determine whether entering students require developmental mathematics and, if so, at which level of intervention (see *the Florida case study on page 28*). As a result, students only enroll in modules they need, as determined by the placement test and the requirements of their academic fields. While students interested in a STEM field must demonstrate mastery of the entire sequence, other areas of study require only some of the modules. Modularization also enables students to repeat a class without waiting a full semester.

By spring 2013, the colleges will offer a remedial English curriculum with three new courses that integrate academic reading and composition, much like college-level English courses. Based on placement scores, students with the greatest need for remediation will enroll in an intensive, six- to eight-credit course. Other students in the middle range will take a three- to four-credit course, and students close to college-level placement will take a two- to four-credit bridge course at the same time that they enroll in college-level English composition. Each of these three courses can lead directly to college-level English. College system officials expect the integrated structure will ensure that most students can complete developmental English requirements within a year.

SEE THESE DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE REPORTS:

Asera, Rose. 2011. *Innovation at Scale: How Virginia Community Colleges Are Collaborating to Improve Developmental Education and Increase Student Success*. Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future.

Mills, Kay. 2010. *Altered State: How the Virginia Community College System has Used Achieving the Dream to Improve Student Success*. Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future.

SUPPORTING CAMPUS-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATIONS

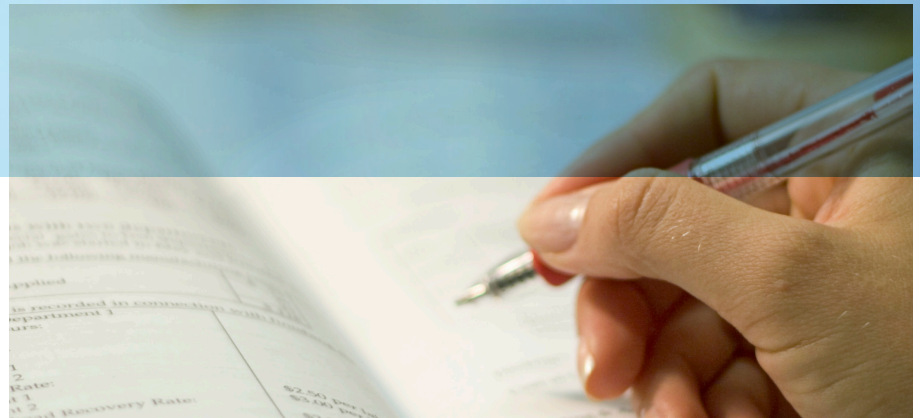
Although colleges have historically been responsible for providing professional development to their faculty, all of the DEI states have taken an active role in the endeavor, as recommended in the DEI State Policy Framework. Since the start of Achieving the Dream, the number of states engaged in professional development has increased from two to six, out of recognition that statewide policy reforms would be less likely to produce intended improvements in student outcomes unless efforts were made to help faculty transition to new curricula, structures, and delivery models. In Virginia, the math and English redesign teams spawned a curriculum committee—consisting solely of faculty from each college—to create a curriculum guide for the new sequence of developmental math modules. The system office is assembling individuals, including faculty, to support on-campus implementation.

EMERGING POLICY ACTION ON STUDENT SUPPORTS

States have been slower to incent colleges into offering better supports for students newly enrolled in developmental education. Colleges—which usually enjoy autonomy in decisions about student supports—typically provide general orientation sessions for incoming students and make counseling available upon request. Out of recognition that remedial students need more guidance on how developmental education can affect their educational goals, Achieving the Dream, the Developmental Education Initiative, Completion by Design, and other recent initiatives have urged colleges and state higher education agencies to rethink approaches to student supports.

Colleges are increasingly turning to their states for resources and ideas for making improvements. Therefore, addressing the critical need for effective student supports has become a growing state policy priority. Since the start of the Developmental Education Initiative, Connecticut, Florida, and Texas reported discussions on how to incent colleges into providing orientation sessions tailored to developmental education students. Connecticut and Florida are similarly discussing how to incent colleges into increasing access to academic advising specifically for developmental education students. Incentives could range from financial supports for added advisors to financial rewards via a performance-based funding system.

Texas has taken a step beyond incenting college action. Since 2003, Texas has required by state law and higher education board regulation that colleges help underprepared students develop an individualized plan on how to become ready for freshman-level academic coursework. The plan guides students on the remedial courses and non-developmental courses to take. Legislation passed in 2012 in Florida (HB 7135) requires students in the Florida College System to declare a program of interest and a transfer institution once they have reached 30 credit hours, and requires the colleges to advise the students on their choices. Though HB 7135 is not focused on developmental education students, many hope the state can leverage this legislation to improve advising capacity overall.



FN AE AP POLICY SUPPORTS

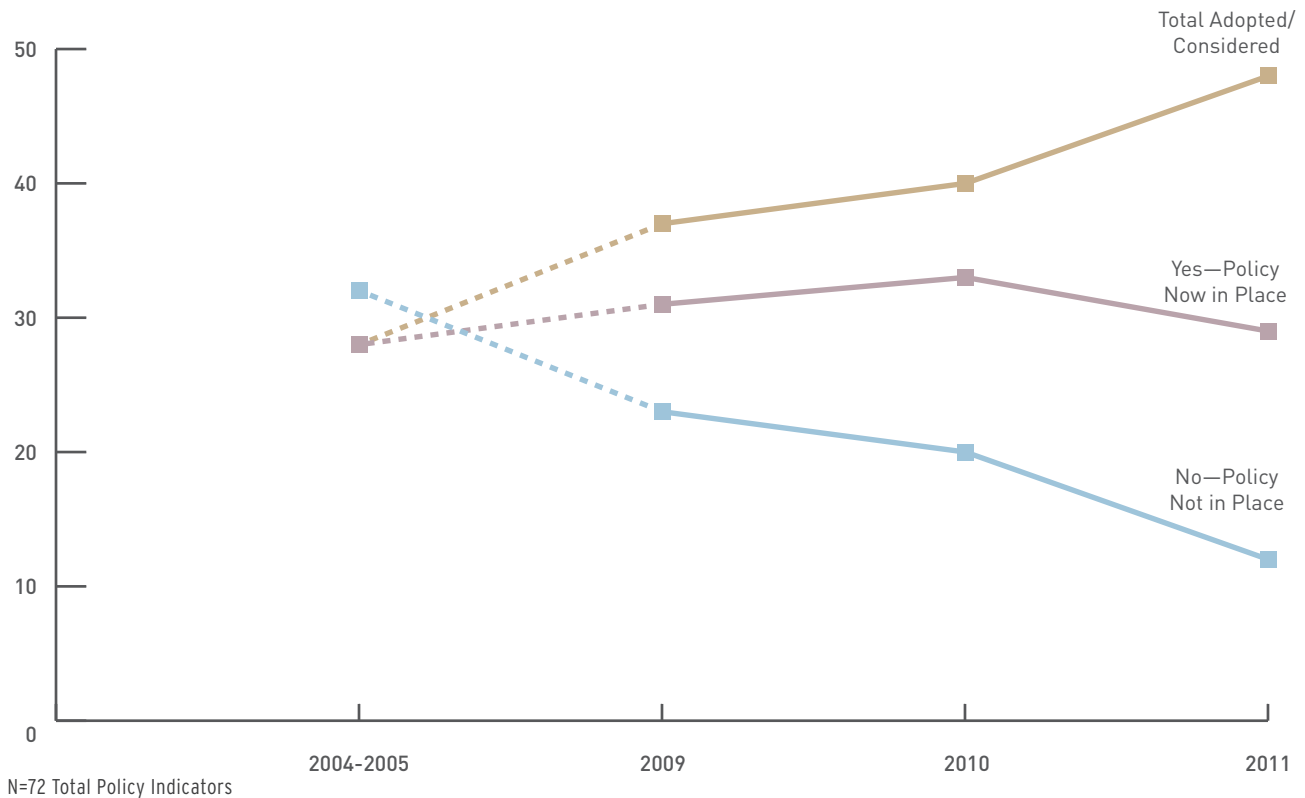
PROVIDING OVERARCHING ASSISTANCE FOR UNDERPREPARED STUDENTS AND FACILITATING THE IMPLEMENTATION AND SCALING UP OF PROMISING MODELS AND PRACTICES.

Recognizing that revamped remedial courses alone cannot turn around low completion rates, the Developmental Education Initiative also sought state adoption of policies to reduce the need for developmental education while strengthening financial support for students who do enroll. States have made some progress in aligning college-readiness efforts with K-12 and enhancing their college entrance processes, improving financial aid, and rewarding colleges that improve student success. However, efforts in these areas have lagged compared to actions on data and innovation/redesign strategies.

FINANCE POLICY SUPPORTS

FN The DEI framework encouraged states to adopt 10 finance-related policies that strengthen access to financial aid for remedial students, ensure equitable funding for developmental education, and reward colleges and students for improved performance. Upon entering Achieving the Dream, DEI states reported having several of the recommended policies already in place, but they have been slow to adopt additional priorities. They have begun adopting more of these interventions in the past year (see *Figure 6*).

FIGURE 6.
FINANCE POLICY CHANGE



DEI STATE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FINANCE

1. Fund developmental courses at the same level as gatekeeper, college-level courses in the same discipline.
2. Adopt a state performance funding system that specifically rewards institutions for student progression through developmental education and into college-level coursework in a timely manner.
3. Adopt a state performance funding system that specifically rewards institutions for persistence and retention of developmental education students after completing a developmental education sequence (e.g., achievement points along the way to graduation).
4. Adopt a state performance funding system that specifically rewards institutions for improved completion rates of developmental education students.
5. Attempt to increase the uptake of federal financial aid (e.g., support for financial aid staff, system-wide protocols for supporting student applications).
6. Expand state financial aid to provide support in addition to tuition and fees.
7. Ensure the state's need-based aid program is supportive of developmental education students (e.g., students can use state aid to pay for developmental education courses, part-time students are eligible for aid, and the state allows them to exceed the federal 150 percent of time-to-degree limit).
8. Reward student progress and completion through the state's need-based aid program (e.g., aid is structured in multiple disbursements that are tied to persistence; incentives encourage students to increase enrollment intensity (from part- to full-time); transfer scholarships hold down costs for years 3 and 4).
9. Conduct research on the effect of financial aid receipt on persistence and completion.
10. Give guidance to institutions for interpreting federal financial aid requirements in ways that allow non-course-based strategies.

REWARDING COLLEGES FOR IMPROVED PERFORMANCE

Historically, states have allocated resources to community colleges based on the number of enrolled students—providing little or no incentive to focus on improving completion rates. Since 2004, many of the DEI states have sought to make funding more results-driven.

The DEI states are active participants in a nationwide trend toward enacting new models of performance-based funding for two- and four-year institutions. In past decades, states experimented with performance funding but abandoned most of these efforts after encountering resistance and failing to produce intended results (Dougherty et al. 2011). In the last few years, however, Washington and Tennessee have led a renewed interest by states in designing new models of performance-based funding that emphasize student persistence as well as completion (Quintero 2012). A 2012 analysis by JFF found that nearly all of the 15 states participating in Achieving the Dream or the Developmental Education Initiative—including all six of the DEI states—either have adopted or are pursuing these new funding models (see *Table 3 on page 22*) (Altstadt et al. 2012).

**TABLE 3.
TREND TOWARD PERFORMANCE-BASED FUNDING SYSTEMS IN ACHIEVING THE DREAM AND
DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE STATES**

PERFORMANCE-BASED FORMULA ADOPTED	PERFORMANCE-BASED FORMULA UNDER REVISION	PERFORMANCE-BASED FORMULA UNDER CONSIDERATION
Hawaii	Indiana	Connecticut
Massachusetts	North Carolina	Florida ⁶
Ohio	Oklahoma	Texas
Washington		Virginia
Arkansas		

CASE STUDY

OHIO: HOW FUNDING CAN DRIVE COLLEGES TO FOCUS ON STUDENT SUCCESS

In 2011, Ohio crafted a funding scheme that awards a small but growing portion of its funding to its community colleges based on the number of students who achieve Success Points, an incentive structure modeled after Washington’s Student Achievement Initiative (the system acknowledges the community colleges’ historic mission to expand access and prepare academically-deficient students by preserving a large share of community colleges’ funding based on enrollment). The Ohio Association of Community Colleges convened a committee of community college leaders to propose an initial set of funding principles and, later in the process, the specific elements of the Success Points framework (OACC 2010).

Community colleges earn points when students:

- > Complete a first developmental education course;
- > Complete a developmental math or English course and subsequently enroll in a college-level math or English course at any public college or university;
- > Earn their first 15 and 30 semester credit hours of college-level coursework at the community college;
- > Earn an Associate’s degree from the community college; and
- > Transfer to a four-year college after completing at least 15 semester credit hours.

A campus earns one point for each student achieving a particular element of success, with the exception of the developmental education components, which are weighted by two-thirds, for a maximum possible award of two points per student. Success Points are aggregated for each campus and for all campuses, and the available funds are allocated in proportion to each campus’ share of the total. Success Points accounted for 5 percent of community college funding in Fiscal Year 2011, rose to 7.5 percent in FY2012, 10 percent in FY2013, and will be capped at 20 percent in FY2015.

Ohio has taken a number of steps to implement the new policy gradually and with predictability. Institutions receive funds based on a three-year average of their performance. In addition, a stop-loss provision caps the amount of funding a low-performing school can lose during the initial years of implementation. For FY2013, institutions will receive at least 96 percent of the previous year’s allocation.

It is too early to tell what effect Ohio's new funding scheme will have on student achievement. The three-year averages still contain academic years before the implementation of performance-based funding, while the stop-loss provision is a temporary buffer for failure. Considering the gradual implementation of incentives, institutions have yet to fully change their behaviors and practices to achieve the intended goals.

Still, Ohio's funding approach already has spurred community college administrators and faculty to collaborate in recommending improvements to developmental education, with the intent of leveling the playing field for colleges now competing over student performance in remedial courses. The Ohio Association of Community Colleges has worked with member colleges to propose a set of developmental education recommendations, covering both institutional and state policies (OACC 2011). The recommendations include:

- > Provide introductory information to students on placement testing
- > Make student orientation to college mandatory
- > Place students into recommended developmental education courses in the first term
- > Eliminate late registration for developmental education

SEE THIS DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE REPORT:

Altstadt, David, Eric Fingerhut, & Richard Kazis. 2012. *Tying Funding to Community College Outcomes: Models, Tools, and Recommendations for States*. Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future.

IMPROVING COLLEGE ACCESS AND SUCCESS THROUGH FINANCIAL AID POLICIES

The DEI State Policy Framework recommended that states reform financial aid eligibility policies and protocols as yet another approach for leveraging financial structures to improve college persistence and success. Five of the states have long-standing policies that address DEI priorities for expanded coverage (e.g., expenses aside from tuition; developmental education courses) and increased eligibility (part-time students and part-time enrollment that exceeds federal 150 percent time-to-degree limits). Additionally, most states have enacted measures to help colleges handle the influx in student applications for aid.

The system offices in Connecticut and Virginia have embarked on major efforts to centralize financial aid processing. The goal is to remove some of the burden of the processing work from the colleges, freeing financial aid counselors to spend more time with students. Connecticut found that centralizing the processing of aid resulted in increased student uptake. In addition, the states hope that centralized financial aid databases will yield opportunities for rigorous research on issues such as the impact of financial aid on student outcomes and the best approaches for packaging aid. Several other states are pursuing ways to evaluate the impact of financial aid on student persistence and completion.

Following a similar logic as that underlying performance-based funding for colleges, the DEI framework encouraged states to enact financial aid programs that give students incentives to continue their studies. Such programs are often referred to as performance-based scholarships. Interest in this policy lever has grown since MDRC began evaluating several pilots and found evidence that performance-based scholarships motivate students to stay in school.

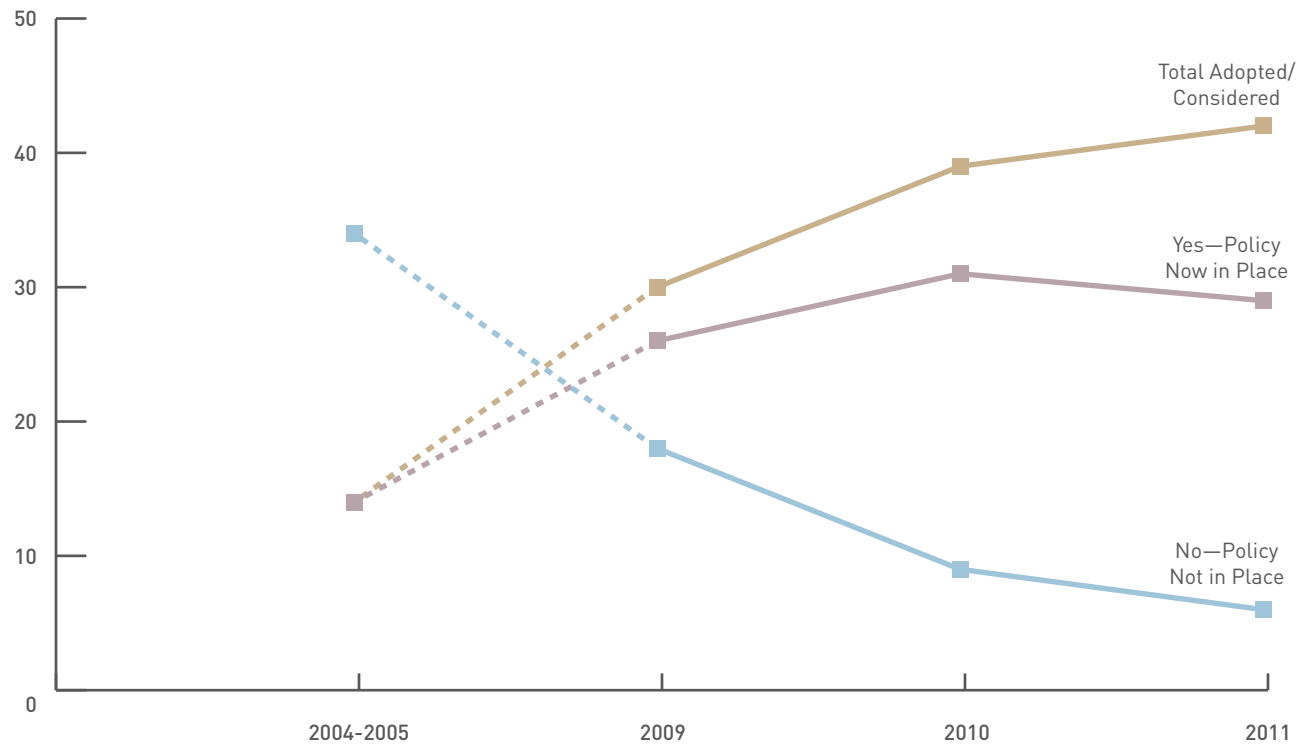
The first program MDRC evaluated, at Delgado Community College in New Orleans, Louisiana, provided counseling and \$1,000 for two semesters to working mothers on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families if they enrolled at least half-time and maintained a C average. MDRC found positive outcomes among scholarship recipients, including more courses passed, more credits earned, and higher retention in later semesters (Brock & Richburg-Hayes 2006). MDRC has continued to launch and study similar programs in other states. Although the results from more recent studies suggest modest improvements, MDRC has maintained that “performance-based scholarships can improve some important components of academic success” (Ware & Patel 2012).

Several DEI states are beginning to experiment with performance-based scholarships. Texas has structured its need-based aid program to reward student progress and completion, while Connecticut is discussing whether and how to proceed with a similar policy.

POLICY SUPPORTS FOR ALIGNING EXPECTATIONS WITH K-12

AE In seeking to reduce the need for developmental education among recent high school graduates, the DEI framework recommended eight policies for strengthening community college collaboration with K-12. This includes joint efforts to define and align expectations for college readiness and to assess and remediate academic deficiencies before leaving high school. Although collaboration between K-12 and community colleges has historically been a challenge, the DEI states have made remarkable progress by adopting or actively pursuing nearly 90 percent of the K-12 alignment policy recommendations in the framework.

FIGURE 7.
K-12 ALIGNMENT POLICY CHANGE



N=48 Total Policy Indicators

DEI STATE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALIGNING EXPECTATIONS WITH K-12

1. Clearly define college-readiness standards under statute, rule, or policy.
2. Require that the high school exit test be aligned with college entrance standards and used for college placement, under statute, rule, or policy.
3. Establish as the default a college preparatory curriculum for all high school students seeking a diploma, under statute, rule, or policy.
4. Require that a college-readiness diagnostic test be administered in junior or senior year to high school students, under statute, rule, or policy.
5. Permit students to remediate academic deficiencies before high school graduation, under statute, rule, or policy.
6. Support innovations designed to improve college readiness, such as dual enrollment, summer bridge, or early college high schools, under statute, funding, or other policy supports.
7. Provide feedback reports to high schools regarding the performance of their graduates in college.
8. Incent community colleges to participate in partnerships with K-12 districts to improve college readiness and measure the results of the partnerships.

DEI states have achieved near-universal adoption of college-readiness standards, a function of the remarkable progress of and discussion about the Common Core State Standards during the past few years. At the start of Achieving the Dream, only North Carolina had defined these standards. Now, four more DEI states have defined college-readiness standards and Connecticut is actively working toward such standards (Wilhoit 2012).

Although all six DEI states have provided support to innovative programs that expose high school students to college (such as dual enrollment, summer bridge programs, and early college high schools), they still have much to do to raise awareness of college among high school youth and to raise overall college-readiness levels. Three states have set the college preparatory curriculum as the default, two states have a high school exit test in line with college entrance requirements, and two states have enacted formal policies instructing high schools to give juniors or seniors a college-readiness diagnostic test and to remediate their academic deficiencies before graduation. However, several of the DEI states have reported progress toward these DEI priorities, and this work is likely to intensify as K-12 reform efforts continue across the states.

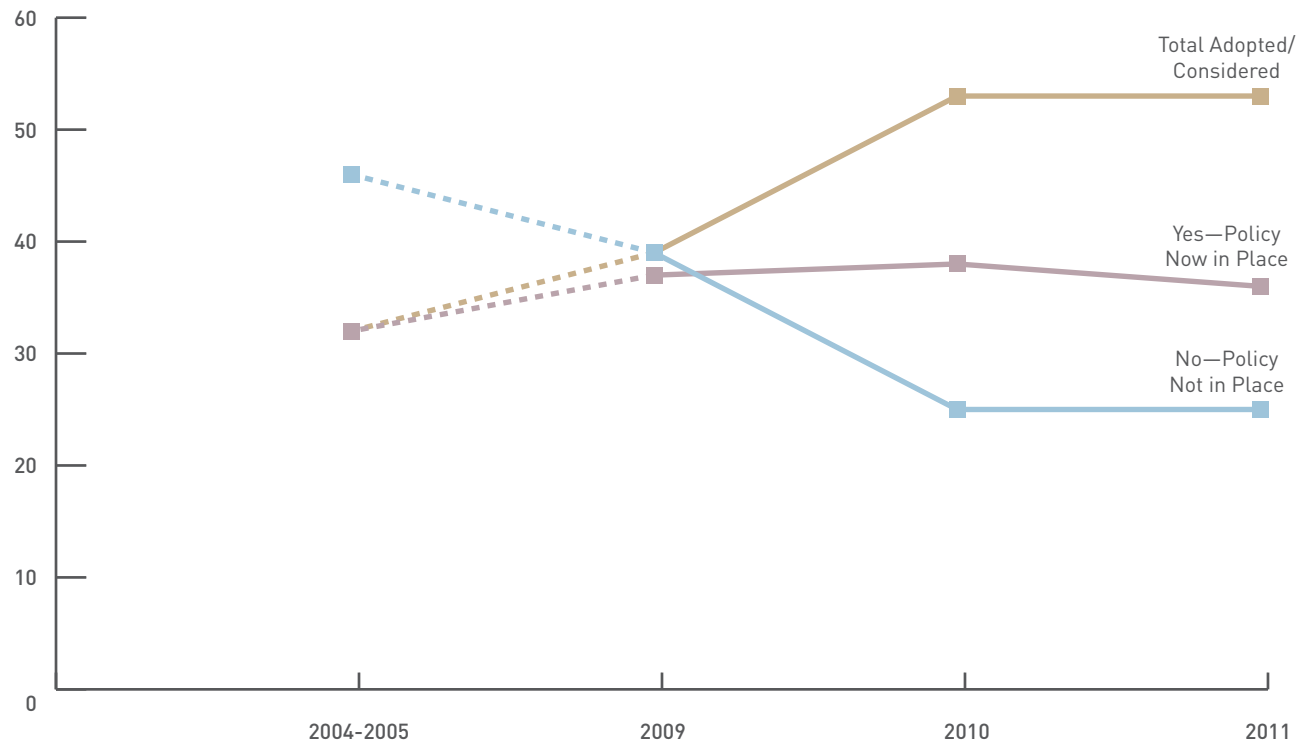
Moreover, to ensure that community colleges actively engage in developing and implementing these strategies, four states have either approved or considered incentives for colleges that participate in partnerships with K-12 districts. For example, in Virginia, the Department of Education has developed a capstone course to help academically underprepared twelfth graders get ready for college; meanwhile, a new state law requires that community colleges establish agreements with local school districts to create educational pathways that enable high school students to earn an Associate's degree or general education certificate concurrently with high school graduation.

ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT POLICY SUPPORTS



Recognizing that where students start their college careers can have a significant impact on their persistence and completion of credentials, the Developmental Education Initiative prodded states into thorny policy discussions about how to assess college readiness accurately and appropriately place students in developmental education. At the onset of the initiative, the DEI State Policy Framework identified a group of 13 policies considered state-of-the-art in improving assessment and placement procedures. Research on assessment has since cast doubt on the tests' effectiveness at placing students properly, and states have wrestled with how to proceed in light of the many questions raised by new evidence (Burdman 2012). These shifts help to explain the lower rate of policy adoption when compared to other policy levers in the DEI framework (see Figure 8).

FIGURE 8.
ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT POLICY CHANGE



N=78 Total Policy Indicators

DEI STATE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT

1. Require under state policy that all entering students take assessment tests for placement into college courses.
2. Specify permissible assessment tests.
3. Incorporate into the state's assessment/placement policy other student performance measures (e.g., high school transcripts, non-cognitive/affective measures such as study skills).
4. Require under state policy that institutions use common cut scores or ranges to assign students to developmental courses.
5. Require under state policy that institutions place students into developmental education based on assessment results.
6. Require under state policy that students placed into developmental education begin developmental courses in the first year of their academic career.
7. Permit under state policy that students can take college-level courses at the same time that they take developmental education courses.
8. Limit under state policy the number of college credits students can take before they complete remediation.
9. Limit under state policy the number of developmental education credits per student that the state will fund.
10. Outline a cut-score floor for students entering developmental education (below which they are directed to Adult Basic Education), under state policy.
11. Permit under the state's assessment/placement policy certain exemptions and some level of local autonomy.
12. Require under state policy that placement/assessment tests be available in advance to students who want to familiarize themselves and prepare for test taking.
13. Direct institutions to offer alternatives to developmental education for students who place near the cut score.

The DEI framework initially recommended that states set limits on the number of college credits students can take before they complete remediation, for example. Now many educators are coming to believe that more students—perhaps even most—should be placed into college-level courses with extra supports as a default, and that limiting college-level course taking may hinder student persistence and completion (Burdman 2012; Scott-Clayton & Rodriguez 2012). Only one DEI state now limits students' credits before completing developmental education.

Meanwhile, states have moved forward with streamlining assessment and placement procedures, responding to research showing that placement practices vary dramatically among colleges (Venezia, Bracco, & Nodine 2010). Nearly all DEI states have adopted the DEI policy recommendation to require colleges to administer a state-approved entrance exam and use common cutoff scores to guide their placement decisions. Florida has overhauled the academic standards and tests it uses to assess whether high school youth and incoming college students are prepared for college-level coursework. It has streamlined its placement procedures and spurred stronger alignment between K-12 and postsecondary systems (see *the Florida Case Study on page 28*).

While streamlining testing procedures, several states also have begun deemphasizing the role of these tests in determining whether students place into developmental education. A number of recent studies suggest that existing placement instruments alone are poor predictors of success in college, and that other measures, such as GPA, can work as well, if not better, for determining student placement (Scott-Clayton 2012; Belfield & Crosta 2012; Burdman 2012). North Carolina is considering allowing its colleges to use multiple measures for placement, including GPA. Meanwhile, Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, and Texas are building a diagnostic component into their placement assessments (Virginia's diagnostic is for math only). Rather than face a cut score, students can learn which areas they need to master or which remedial modules they must take. The new assessment under development in Texas will enable college advisors and instructors to review diagnostic test results to determine the best way to address students' deficiencies, rather than automatically enrolling them into a traditional remedial course (Burdman 2012). More state activity is expected in the near future. For example, three DEI states are actively discussing making placement tests available in advance to students who want to prepare for the exam.

CASE STUDY

FLORIDA: HOW STREAMLINING COLLEGE-READINESS STANDARDS AND PLACEMENT PRACTICES CAN IMPROVE STUDENT SUCCESS

Florida has developed a customized exam called the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test, which is based on the state's new competencies for college readiness and K-12 standards (Burdman 2011). Implemented in colleges and high schools statewide in 2011, the P.E.R.T. is now administered to eleventh graders to evaluate how well prepared they are for college-level work. Incoming college freshmen take the P.E.R.T. as a college placement exam, determining their enrollment in either developmental or college-level courses. A companion assessment, the P.E.R.T. Diagnostic, offers even more extensive information about students' academic areas of deficiency to help pinpoint which level of developmental education a student may need.

The new assessments provide critical input into Florida's college-readiness reforms. The state uses P.E.R.T. results to measure the performance of high schools in boosting college readiness. Colleges plan to use P.E.R.T. Diagnostic results to inform instructional changes to developmental education courses.

Programmatic changes are underway as well, initiated variously by educators, the State Board of Education, and the legislature. The K-12 system has raised curriculum content standards in all subjects and added a brush-up course in the senior year to help students avoid developmental courses in college. The postsecondary sector has restructured the developmental education sequence to consist of two levels each of math, reading, and writing at every college. In addition, several colleges are piloting modularized remedial courses tailored to students' specific learning needs to accelerate student progress and reduce costs.

SEE THIS DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE REPORT:

Burdman, Pamela. 2011. *Testing Ground: How Florida Schools and Colleges Are Using a New Assessment to Increase College Readiness*. Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future.

STAYING AHEAD OF THE CURVE







In accordance with DEI policy recommendations, each DEI state has made significant progress toward enacting policies that can improve student outcomes in developmental education, ranging from data use and financing structures to college-readiness standards. As demonstrated by Connecticut’s investment in data analysis, Virginia and Texas’ efforts to redesign remedial math and English, Ohio’s new funding scheme that rewards colleges for student performance, Florida’s focus on diagnosing college readiness, and North Carolina’s coordinated approach to bolstering success, DEI states have broken new ground in promoting what works in developmental education and how best to help underprepared students complete college.

States have made the greatest progress in implementing six policies championed by Achieving the Dream and the Developmental Education Initiative: two that amplify data capabilities; three that redesign developmental education; and one that aligns academic standards with K-12 (see *Table 4*). At the start of Achieving the Dream, no more than one DEI state had adopted any of these policies, but five or more states had enacted them by 2011. These policies map tightly to broader trends in education since Achieving the Dream began in 2004.

POLICIES UNDER DISCUSSION OR IN PROCESS TOWARD ADOPTION, AS OF 2011

Even as the Developmental Education Initiative winds down, states are continuing and expanding their reform efforts. Using the *Self-Assessment Tool*, states identified the policy priorities they are actively considering. Ten policies are under consideration in at least half of all DEI states (see *Table 5 on page 31*). They cross all of the DEI policy levers, with six policies either in finance or assessment/placement—areas, as noted earlier, in which policy approvals have lagged behind. Overall, these policy priorities target improving data and research capacity, enacting

TABLE 4.
SIX DEI POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS THAT GAINED THE GREATEST TRACTION

	<p>Enhance the capacity of the community college data system to disaggregate developmental education outcomes by subgroups and report on them at least annually (examples of subgroups include gender, race, income, proportion of a cohort that complete a sequence, take gatekeeper math or English courses).</p>
	<p>Include in the state’s performance measures a set of intermediate measures that identify key academic achievement points or predictors of long-term success.</p>
	<p>Provide funding to encourage institutions to be innovative and test new strategies to improve outcomes for developmental studies.</p>
	<p>Establish a workgroup or task force focused on developing innovations for developmental education.</p>
	<p>Disseminate the best available research on innovations’ impacts on student outcomes through conferences, etc.</p>
	<p>Clearly define college-readiness standards under statute, rule, or policy.</p>

performance-funding incentives for improvements in developmental education, improving college readiness, increasing student supports, and rethinking assessment policy. For three of the policies (*noted with an asterisk in Table 5 on page 31*), states are charting new territory and attempting to put into place reform measures that no other DEI state has yet enacted.

THE FOCUS OF FUTURE ENERGY: PRIORITIES FOR ADOPTION OR IMPLEMENTATION IN 2013











Looking ahead, states each have prioritized several DEI policies for further action. Strikingly, all six states have set their sights on nine of the same policies (*see Table 6 on page 32*). For the most part, the DEI states are focusing on implementing policies already adopted, which highlights the enormous state-level work that follows enactment of a significant policy, as well as illustrating the need to revisit and refine policies over time. As a case in point, all DEI states except Connecticut have already defined college-readiness standards, yet all six states set college-readiness standards as a priority for 2013. The continued focus on college readiness likely reflects the intensity of the collaboration with K-12 as well as the run-up to the implementation of the Common Core State Standards and assessments (Gewertz 2012).

Other highlights include that all six states plan to focus on continued enhancements to the community college data system, including disaggregating developmental education outcomes, linking to K-12 data systems, and adding placement scores to enable analysis of student outcomes by placement status. States also plan to continue their efforts to provide colleges and other stakeholders with the best available data and research about student outcomes. Moreover, the DEI states will concentrate on strengthening college innovations by seeding and sustaining strategies and by supporting professional development activities for faculty transitioning to new curricula, structures, and delivery models.

THE PATH FORWARD










There is a long road ahead for those focused on improving the success of underprepared students. Thanks in part to the resources, attention, and cross-state collaboration of the Developmental Education Initiative, however, colleges and systems in Connecticut, Florida, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Virginia are on an evidence-based, data-driven path toward achieving significant gains in student success rates. These states have made clear their commitment to continuing to prioritize the recommendations in the DEI State Policy Framework and will continue their policy efforts to improve student success through participation in the Postsecondary State Policy Network, which includes states in Achieving the Dream, Completion by Design, and the Student Success Center Network. The lessons learned, models tested, and best practices of these states are certain to inform the efforts of other states and institutions for years to come.

TABLE 5.
TEN POLICIES UNDER CONSIDERATION IN AT LEAST THREE STATES, AS OF 2011

DEI POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS		IN PLACE	UNDER CONSIDERATION
	Link the state's community college data system to the K-12 data system.	Florida Texas	Connecticut North Carolina Virginia
	Link the state's community college data system to the workforce data system.	Florida Ohio Texas	Connecticut North Carolina Virginia
	Incent colleges to provide orientation for students entering developmental education.	*	Connecticut Florida Texas
	Adopt a state performance funding system that specifically rewards institutions for student progression through developmental education and into college-level coursework in a timely manner.	Ohio	Connecticut Florida North Carolina Virginia Texas
	Adopt a state performance funding system that specifically rewards institutions for persistence and retention of developmental education students after completing a developmental education sequence (e.g., achievement points along the way to graduation).	North Carolina Ohio	Connecticut Virginia Texas
	Adopt a state performance funding system that specifically rewards institutions for improved completion rates of developmental education students.	Ohio	Connecticut Florida North Carolina Virginia Texas
	Conduct research on the effect of financial aid receipt on persistence and completion.	Texas	Connecticut Florida North Carolina Virginia
	Permit students to remediate academic deficiencies before high school graduation, under statute, rule, or policy.	Florida Texas	Connecticut North Carolina Virginia
	Require under state policy that placement/assessment tests be available in advance to students who want to familiarize themselves with and prepare for test taking.	*	North Carolina Virginia Texas
	Direct institutions to offer alternatives to developmental education for students who place near the cut score.	*	Florida North Carolina Virginia Texas

* Policies not yet adopted by any DEI state.

TABLE 6.
NINE DEI POLICIES THAT ALL STATES HAVE SET AS A PRIORITY FOR 2013

	<p>Enhance the capacity of the community college data system to disaggregate developmental education outcomes by subgroups and report on them at least annually (examples of subgroups include gender, race, income, proportion of a cohort that complete a sequence, take gatekeeper math or English courses).</p>
	<p>Link the state's community college data system to the K-12 data system.</p>
	<p>Include placement scores in the state's community college data system.</p>
	<p>Disseminate data/reports on student outcomes to a variety of stakeholders at least annually (e.g., trustees, parents, college leaders, faculty, policymakers, business leaders).</p>
	<p>Provide funding to encourage institutions to be innovative and test new strategies to improve outcomes for developmental studies.</p>
	<p>Disseminate the best available research on innovations' impacts on student outcomes through conferences, etc.</p>
	<p>Support professional development activities that help faculty transition to new curricula, structures, and delivery models (e.g. modularization).</p>
	<p>Develop a plan for sustaining innovations that research shows are working.</p>
	<p>Clearly define college-readiness standards under statute, rule, or policy.</p>



APPENDIX: DEI SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

Below is a year-to-year breakdown on the status of all states in adopting the recommendations of the DEI State Policy Framework, as grouped under the five policy levers and as reported by states to JFF through the DEI Self-Assessment Tool, in its number and question format.

I. DATA AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT	YEAR	NUMBER OF STATES		
		NO	UNDER DISCUSSION/ IN PROCESS	YES
1. Has the state's governing authority for community colleges (hereafter "state") set clear targets and goals for completion (such as credential, degree, or transfer) for developmental education students?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	4	1	1
	2010	2	1	3
	2011	1	2	3
	Priority for 2013			5
2. Does the state's community college data system disaggregate developmental education outcomes by subgroups and report on them at least annually (examples of subgroups include gender, race, income, proportion of a cohort that complete a sequence, take gatekeeper math or English courses, etc.)?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	1	1	4
	2010	1		5
	2011		1	5
	Priority for 2013			6
3. Does the state's community college data system link to the K-12 data system?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	3	1	2
	2010	1	3	2
	2011	1	3	2
	Priority for 2013			6
4. Does the state's community college data system link to the 4-year college data system?	2004-2005	2		4
	2009	1	1	4
	2010		2	4
	2011		2	4
	Priority for 2013			5
5. Does the state's community college data system link to the adult education data system?	2004-2005	2		4
	2009	2		4
	2010	1	1	4
	2011	1	1	4
	Priority for 2013			4
6. Does the state's community college data system link to the workforce data system?	2004-2005	1	1	4
	2009	2	1	3
	2010		3	3
	2011		3	3
	Priority for 2013			5

I. DATA AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT (CONTINUED)	YEAR	NUMBER OF STATES		
		NO	UNDER DISCUSSION/ IN PROCESS	YES
7. Does the state's community college data system include placement scores?	2004-2005	3		3
	2009	1	1	4
	2010	1	1	4
	2011	1		5
	Priority for 2013			6
8. Do the state's performance measures include intermediate measures that identify key academic achievement points or predictors of long-term success?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	2	1	3
	2010	1		5
	2011	1		5
	Priority for 2013			4
9. Do the community college data system's reports allow for comparisons among peer institutions as defined by size, student characteristics, etc., (can be in- or out-of-state) to identify institutions that are achieving the best results with high-priority student subgroups?	2004-2005	3		3
	2009	1		5
	2010		1	5
	2011		1	5
	Priority for 2013			5
10. Does the state disseminate data/reports on student outcomes to a variety of stakeholders at least annually (e.g., trustees, parents, college leaders, faculty, policymakers, business leaders)?	2004-2005	2		4
	2009	1		5
	2010			6
	2011			6
	Priority for 2013			6
11. Does the state report on intermediate measures that identify key academic achievement points or predictors of long-term success at least annually?	2004-2005	4		2
	2009	2		4
	2010	2		4
	2011	1	1	4
	Priority for 2013			5
12. Can the state's community college data system compare the persistence and completion of those who participate in developmental education to those who test into, but do not enroll in, developmental education?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	2		4
	2010	1	1	4
	2011	1	1	4
	Priority for 2013			5

II. DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INNOVATION/REDESIGN	YEAR	NUMBER OF STATES		
		NO	UNDER DISCUSSION/ IN PROCESS	YES
13. Has the state established a workgroup or task force focused on developing innovations for developmental education?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	3	1	2
	2010			6
	2011			6
	Priority for 2013			5
14. Does the state provide funding to encourage institutions to be innovative and test new strategies to improve outcomes for developmental studies?	2004-2005	6		
	2009	2	1	3
	2010	2		4
	2011	1		5
	Priority for 2013			6
15. Aside from funding, does the state provide other incentives/resources to encourage institutions to be innovative and test new strategies to improve outcomes for developmental students (e.g., data analysis, competitive awards)?	2004-2005	5		
	2009	3	1	2
	2010		2	4
	2011		2	4
	Priority for 2013			5
16. Does the state incent institutions to develop plans for improving student outcomes in developmental education?	2004-2005	4		2
	2009	2	1	3
	2010	2		4
	2011	2	1	3
	Priority for 2013			4
17. Has the state taken concrete action to move away from systems based on traditional, semester-length courses, to allow for proficiency-based innovations such as self-paced options or modularization of developmental education courses?	2004-2005	6		
	2009	5		1
	2010	2		4
	2011	1	1	4
	Priority for 2013			5
18. Does the state disseminate the best available research on innovations' impacts on student outcomes through conferences, etc.?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	1		5
	2010			6
	2011			6
	Priority for 2013			6
19. Does the state collect and analyze data on student outcomes for new in-state programs, practices, or strategies (e.g., a specialized study of a college's pilot of modularization)?	2004-2005	6		
	2009	5		1
	2010	2	1	3
	2011	1	1	4
	Priority for 2013			5
20. Does the state support professional development activities that help faculty transition to new curricula, structures, and delivery models (e.g. modularization)?	2004-2005	4		2
	2009	4		2
	2010	1	1	4
	2011			6
	Priority for 2013			6

II. DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INNOVATION/REDESIGN (CONTINUED)	YEAR	NUMBER OF STATES		
		NO	UNDER DISCUSSION/ IN PROCESS	YES
21. Does the state have a plan for sustaining innovations that research shows are working?	2004-2005	6		
	2009	5		1
	2010	2	1	3
	2011	1	2	3
	Priority for 2013			6
22. Does the state incent colleges to provide orientation for students entering developmental education?	2004-2005	6		
	2009	5	1	
	2010	5	1	
	2011	2	4	
	Priority for 2013			3
23. Does the state incent colleges to provide academic advising for students entering developmental education?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	4	1	1
	2010	4	1	1
	2011	2	3	1
	Priority for 2013			3
24. Does the state incent creation of clear, directed pathways to graduation, such as time-to-degree contracts, encouragement of full-time status, and/or degree mapping/educational plans?	2004-2005	3		3
	2009	4		2
	2010	2	1	3
	2011	1	2	3
	Priority for 2013			4

III. ALIGNED EXPECTATIONS WITH K-12	YEAR	NUMBER OF STATES		
		NO	UNDER DISCUSSION/ IN PROCESS	YES
25. Are college-readiness standards clearly defined by statute, rule, or policy?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	2		4
	2010			6
	2011		1	5
	Priority for 2013			6
26. Is a high school exit test, which is aligned with college entrance standards and used for college placement, required by statute, rule, or policy?	2004-2005	6		
	2009	3	1	2
	2010	2	2	2
	2011	2	2	2
	Priority for 2013			3
27. Is a college preparatory curriculum for all high school students seeking a diploma set as the default by statute, rule, or policy?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	3	1	2
	2010	1	2	3
	2011		3	3
	Priority for 2013			4
28. Is a college-readiness diagnostic test, administered in junior or senior year to high school students, required by statute, rule, or policy?	2004-2005	6		
	2009	4	1	1
	2010	3	2	1
	2011	2	2	2
	Priority for 2013			2
29. Is there a statute, rule, or policy enabling students to remediate academic deficiencies before high school graduation?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	3		3
	2010	1	2	3
	2011	1	3	2
	Priority for 2013			3
30. Are innovations designed to improve college readiness, such as dual enrollment, summer bridge, or early college high schools, supported through statute, funding, or other policy supports?	2004-2005	2		4
	2009			6
	2010			6
	2011			6
	Priority for 2013			5
31. Does the state provide feedback reports to high schools regarding the performance of their graduates in college?	2004-2005	3		3
	2009	1		5
	2010			6
	2011			6
	Priority for 2013			5
32. Does the state incent community colleges to participate in partnerships with K-12 districts to improve college readiness and measure the results of the partnerships?	2004-2005	2		4
	2009	2	1	3
	2010	2		4
	2011	1	2	3
	Priority for 2013			4

IV. ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT	YEAR	NUMBER OF STATES		
		NO	UNDER DISCUSSION/ IN PROCESS	YES
33. Does state policy require all entering students to take assessment tests for placement into college courses?	2004-2005	1		5
	2009	1		5
	2010	1		5
	2011	1		5
	Priority for 2013			4
34. Does the state specify permissible assessment tests?	2004-2005	1		5
	2009	1		5
	2010	1		5
	2011	1		5
	Priority for 2013			4
35. Does the state's assessment/placement policy take into account other student performance measures (e.g., high school transcripts, non-cognitive/affective measures such as study skills)?	2004-2005	6		
	2009	4	1	1
	2010	2	2	2
	2011	2	3	1
	Priority for 2013			4
36. Does state policy require institutions to use common cut scores or ranges to assign students to developmental courses?	2004-2005	2		4
	2009			6
	2010			6
	2011			6
	Priority for 2013			4
37. Does state policy require institutions to place students into developmental education based on assessment results?	2004-2005	2		4
	2009	1		5
	2010			6
	2011			6
	Priority for 2013			4
38. Does state policy require that students placed into developmental education begin developmental courses in the first year of their academic career?	2004-2005	6		
	2009	5	1	
	2010	4	2	
	2011	3	3	
	Priority for 2013			2
39. Does state policy allow students to take college-level courses at the same time that they take developmental education courses?	2004-2005			6
	2009			6
	2010		1	5
	2011		1	5
	Priority for 2013			4
40. Does state policy limit the number of college credits students can take before they complete remediation?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	5		1
	2010	4	1	1
	2011	4	1	1
	Priority for 2013			2

IV. ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT (CONTINUED)	YEAR	NUMBER OF STATES		
		NO	UNDER DISCUSSION/ IN PROCESS	YES
41. Does state policy limit the number of developmental education credits per student that the state will fund?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	5		1
	2010	5		1
	2011	5		1
	Priority for 2013			
42. Does state policy outline a cut-score floor for students entering developmental education (below which they are directed to Adult Basic Education)?	2004-2005	6		
	2009	6		
	2010	2	4	
	2011	3	2	1
	Priority for 2013			4
43. Does the state's assessment/placement policy allow for certain exemptions and some level of local autonomy?	2004-2005			6
	2009			6
	2010			6
	2011	1		5
	Priority for 2013			2
44. Does state policy require that placement/assessment tests are available in advance to students who want to familiarize themselves with and prepare for test taking?	2004-2005	6		
	2009	5		1
	2010	4	1	1
	2011	3	3	
	Priority for 2013			1
45. Does state policy direct institutions to offer alternatives to developmental education for students who place near the cut score?	2004-2005	6		
	2009	6		
	2010	2	4	
	2011	2	4	
	Priority for 2013			3

V. FINANCE	YEAR	NUMBER OF STATES		
		NO	UNDER DISCUSSION/ IN PROCESS	YES
46. Does the state fund developmental courses at the same level as (or perhaps even higher than) gatekeeper, college-level courses in the same discipline?	2004-2005			6
	2009			6
	2010			6
	2011			6
	Priority for 2013			5
47. Is there a state performance funding system that specifically rewards institutions for student progression through developmental education and into college-level coursework in a timely manner?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	3	2	1
	2010	3	1	2
	2011		5	1
	Priority for 2013			5
48. Is there a state performance funding system that specifically rewards institutions for persistence and retention of developmental education students after completing a developmental education sequence (e.g., achievement points along the way to graduation)?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	3	2	1
	2010	3	1	2
	2011	1	3	2
	Priority for 2013			4
49. Is there a state performance funding system that specifically rewards institutions for improved completion rates of developmental education students?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	2	2	2
	2010	2	1	3
	2011		5	1
	Priority for 2013			3
50. Is the state trying to increase the uptake of federal financial aid (e.g., support for financial aid staff, system-wide protocols for supporting student applications)?	2004-2005	2		4
	2009	1		5
	2010	1		5
	2011	2		4
	Priority for 2013			4
51. Do state financial aid policies provide support in addition to tuition and fees?	2004-2005	1		5
	2009	1		5
	2010	1		5
	2011	1		5
	Priority for 2013			4
52. Is the state's need-based aid program supportive of developmental education students (e.g., students can use state aid to pay for developmental education courses, part-time students are eligible for aid, and the state allows them to exceed the federal 150% of time-to-degree limit)?	2004-2005	1		5
	2009	1		5
	2010	1		5
	2011	1		5
	Priority for 2013			3
53. Does the state's need-based aid program reward student progress and completion (e.g., aid is structured in multiple disbursements that are tied to persistence; incentives encourage students to increase enrollment intensity (from part- to full-time) transfer scholarships to hold down cost for years 3 and 4)?	2004-2005	4		2
	2009	4		2
	2010	4		2
	2011	4	1	1
	Priority for 2013			1

V. FINANCE (CONTINUED)	YEAR	NUMBER OF STATES		
		NO	UNDER DISCUSSION/ IN PROCESS	YES
54. Does the state conduct research on the effect of financial aid receipt on persistence and completion?	2004-2005	4		2
	2009	3		3
	2010	2	2	2
	2011	1	3	2
	Priority for 2013			5
55. Does the state give guidance to institutions for interpreting federal financial aid requirements in ways that allow non-course-based strategies?	2004-2005	5		1
	2009	5		1
	2010	3	2	1
	2011	2	2	2
	Priority for 2013			3

ENDNOTES

¹ The six DEI states were the first states to join Achieving the Dream. In 2004, Florida, New Mexico, North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia joined the first round of Achieving the Dream. Connecticut and Ohio joined in 2005. In 2009, when Connecticut, Florida, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Virginia concluded their participation in the demonstration phase of Achieving the Dream, they joined the Developmental Education Initiative to continue their work focused on developmental education.

² This is defined as increasing the percentage of students who transfer, complete credentials, or remain continuously enrolled from a six-year baseline of 45 percent for the fall 2004 cohort to a six-year success rate of 59 percent for the fall 2014 cohort.

³ For more information on Washington's Student Achievement Initiative, see www.sbctc.ctc.edu/college/e_studentachievement.aspx.

⁴ Texas has adopted four measures: Persisted fall to fall in years 2 and 3; Passed developmental math sequence by year 2; Passed gatekeeper English or higher by year 3; Passed gatekeeper math or higher by year 3.

⁵ A forthcoming 2012 JFF publication will describe the Texas' leadership team initiative in more detail.

⁶ Since the release of the 2012 JFF report *Tying Funding to Community College Outcomes*, Florida has taken up consideration of a new performance-based funding system, stemming from recommendations of the Higher Education Coordinating Council. Florida has defunded its existing performance-based funding system.

REFERENCES

- Altstadt, David. 2012. *How States Can Accelerate Community College Innovation by Supporting Faculty Leadership*. Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future.
- Altstadt, David, Eric Fingerhut, & Richard Kazis. 2012. *Tying Funding to Community College Outcomes*. Boston, MA: JFF.
- An Act Concerning College Readiness and Completion. Connecticut Pub. L. No 12-40. 2012. Available at <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2012/act/pa/pdf/2012PA-00040-R00SB-00040-PA.pdf>.
- Asera, Rose. 2011. *Innovation at Scale: How Virginia Community Colleges Are Collaborating to Improve Developmental Education and Increase Student Success*. Boston, MA: JFF.
- Bailey, Thomas, Dong Wook Jeong, & Sung-Woo Cho. 2010. "Referral, Enrollment, and Completion in Developmental Education Sequences in Community Colleges." *Economics of Education Review*. Vol. 29.
- Belfield, Clive & Peter Crosta. 2012. *Predicting Success in College: The Importance of Placement Tests and High School Transcripts* (CCRC Working Paper No. 42). New York, NY: Community College Research Center (CCRC), Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Brock, Tom & Lashawn Richburg-Hayes. 2006. *Paying for Persistence: Early Results of a Louisiana Scholarship Program for Low- Income Parents Attending Community College*. New York, NY: MDRC.
- Burdman, Pamela. 2011. *Testing Ground: How Florida Schools and Colleges Are Using a New Assessment to Increase College Readiness*. Boston, MA: JFF.
- Burdman, Pamela. 2012. *Where to Begin? The Evolving Role of Placement Exams for Students Starting College*. Boston, MA: JFF.
- Dougherty, Kevin, Rebecca Natow, Rachel Hare Bork, Sosanya Jones, & Blanca Vega. 2011. *The Politics of Performance Funding in Eight States: Origins, Demise, and Change*. New York, NY: CCRC.
- Gewertz, Catherine. 2012. "Grappling with the Definition of Career Readiness." *Education Week*. June 25.
- Jenkins, Davis, Shanna S. Jaggars, & Josipa Roksa. 2009. *Promoting Gatekeeper Course Success Among Community College Students Needing Remediation: Findings and Recommendations from a Virginia Study*. New York, NY: CCRC.
- Jobs for the Future & the Achieving the Dream Cross-State Data Work Group. 2012. *On the Road to Success: How States Collaborate and Use Data to Improve Student Outcomes*. Boston, MA: JFF.
- Mills, Kay. 2010. *Altered State: How the Virginia Community College System has Used Achieving the Dream to Improve Student Success*. Boston, MA: JFF.
- North Carolina Community College System. 2011. *DEI Update: Rethinking Developmental Math in North Carolina*. Raleigh, NC: Author.
- Ohio Association of Community Colleges. 2011. *Developmental Education Policy Recommendations*. Columbus, OH: Author.
- Ohio Association of Community Colleges. 2010. *Recommendations to Chancellor Fingerhut on the Use of Success Points in the Community College*. Columbus, OH: Author.
- Quinterno, John. 2012. *Making Performance Funding Work for All*. Washington, DC: The Working Poor Families Project.
- Scott-Clayton, Judith. 2012. *Do High-Stakes Placement Exams Predict College Success?* (CCRC Working Paper No. 41). New York, NY: CCRC.
- Scott-Clayton, Judith & Olga Rodriguez. 2012. *Development, Discouragement, or Diversion? New Evidence on the Effects of College Remediation* (NBER Working Paper No. 18328). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Venezia, Andrea, Kathy Reeves Bracco, & Thad Nodine. 2010. *One Shot Deal? Students' Perceptions of Assessment and Course Placement in California's Community Colleges*. San Francisco, CA: WestEd.
- Ware, Michelle & Reshma Patel. 2012. *Does More Money Matter? An Introduction to the Performance-based Scholarship Demonstration in California*. Policy Brief. New York, NY: MDRC.
- Wilhoit, Gene. 2012. "States Raise the Bar with Standards Implementation." *Education Week*. June 22.



JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

TEL 617.728.4446 FAX 617.728.4857 info@jff.org

88 Broad Street, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02110

122 C Street, NW, Suite 650, Washington, DC 20001

WWW.JFF.ORG

