What is Achieving the Dream (ATD) and why is it important?

- A large, growing, 10-year old, national reform network helping more community college students succeed
- The most comprehensive, non-governmental reform movement for student success in higher education history
- Student-centered, based on evidence, and committed to excellence and equity
- Over 200 colleges, 15 state policy teams, more than 100 coaches and advisors, and more than 20 investors
- Focused on achievement gaps and operational barriers to success in order to make appropriate changes
- Leads to improved skills, better employability, and economic growth

How is ATD helping to transform institutions?

This is not work done “on the margins” or as a project. ATD addresses fundamental change in how colleges do business and make decisions.

Five principles

- Leadership committed to improving success, not just access
- Use of evidence (data) to make improvements and evaluate results
- Broad stakeholder engagement with shared responsibility for student success
- Systemic institutional improvement (e.g., planning/budgeting, revisions to policies and practices, professional development, evaluation)
- Commitment to improving equity while improving outcomes for all students

Five-step improvement model

- Leadership commits to improving student outcomes and communicates this.
- Faculty and staff review and discuss data, policies, and practices to identify priorities.
- Multiple stakeholders are involved in the work (e.g., policy/practice review).
- College implements solutions, evaluates them, and makes improvements.
- College builds a culture of continuous improvement.
What student data is routinely analyzed and used to inform decisions?

- Completion of developmental education and advancement to credit courses
- Successful completion of gatekeeper courses
- Successful completion of all courses with a “C” or better
- Term-to-term persistence
- Degree and certificate completion

What are the benefits of continuing to participate in Achieving the Dream?

- Assistance with implementation of improvement model that breaks down silos, leverages resources, and encourages broad engagement
- Coaching, guidance, and referrals to resources and other institutions
- Membership in a national learning community which hosts an annual conference (DREAM) focused on successful policies and practices
- Access to a comprehensive web site (achievingthedream.org)
- Help integrating the student success agenda into other core work (e.g., planning, accreditation, performance funding)
- Impact of a national policy agenda that supports student success
- Use of a central database for benchmarking and comparison to other colleges.
- Could see a substantial return on investment (due to increased retention)
- Access to grant opportunities made available only to ATD colleges

What does a successful Achieving the Dream college look like?

- Leaders pay continuous attention to the student success agenda.
- There is shared and enacted vision around student success.
- IR capacity is increasing, and a culture of evidence and inquiry is pervasive.
- There is broad and continuous engagement/collaboration around student success.
- Focus on student success is embedded in the culture and influences policies, procedures, and practices.
- The student success agenda is integrated with other significant core initiatives.
• Planning, budgeting, professional development, and evaluation are aligned with the student success agenda.

How do mature colleges organize to continue the work?

Continuing ATD colleges retain an organizational structure to do the work, although the core team and data team may now be combined into a student success council. This council continues to lead and coordinate data analysis and the change process. In addition, colleges continue to create small strategy teams to assess and recommend improvements. Strategy teams are often comprised of someone from the student success council, along with other faculty/staff.

Ongoing Responsibilities

• Identify existing values, assumptions, structures, and systems at the college that nurture or impede student success.

• Lead the setting and monitoring of priorities, goals, and strategies.

• Ensure that data work is focused on key issues and concerns. Discuss performance on outcomes and gaps across sub-groups. Help engage stakeholders in conversation about outcomes.

• Ensure that work is aligned with core college work and ensure resources are available to support scaling and sustainability.

• Ensure that interventions and strategies are evaluated for effectiveness. Discuss evaluation results and make determinations about what is working or not working.

• Provide leadership for continuously building a culture of inquiry, reflection, and commitment to student success.

Continuing the Work

Re-engage and assess current status

• Annually, evaluate work of the Student Success Council. Re-invigorate and review the purpose of the Council to build commitment. Add additional members (e.g., faculty).

• Analyze the current situation:
  • Review and discuss student cohort data and analyze causes.
• Review and discuss ongoing barriers to student success (e.g., developmental education, financial aid, cumbersome registration process, etc.). Use an inventory.
• Discuss applicability of implementing high impact practices (based on research).

• Review results of annual Principles Assessment and discuss reflection report.

Revise work plan

• Set new priorities (as appropriate), or re-commit to current ones.
• Revise annual work plan based on new learning. Establish expected goals and outcomes. Create strategy teams to address revised plan.
• Discuss work in board, leadership, and department meetings. Engage commitment from others.
• Implement new strategies or continue with successful ones.

Evaluate and scale (or abandon) practices

• Assess effectiveness and scale, if appropriate. Revise or abandon, if not.
• Use both formative (process) and summative (impact) evaluation techniques.
# INVENTORY OF HIGH IMPACT POLICIES AND PRACTICES

This inventory may be used to guide an institutional review of policies and practices.

<table>
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|     |    | Mandate assessment *and* placement
|     |    | Mandate early orientation
|     |    | Mandate early/continuous advising and counseling
|     |    | Stop late registration
|     |    | Offer late-start classes
|     |    | Provide case management and/or success coaches
|     |    | Provide boot camps prior to classes to ensure at-risk students are more ready for college
|     |    | Offer bridge programs for high school students with pre-assessment refresher; intensive workshops (math, reading, writing)
|     |    | Accelerate progress through developmental programs (e.g., course re-design; fast-track math; math modules in emporium structure)
|     |    | Offer contextualized developmental education
|     |    | Require learning lab participation or supplemental instruction for students who need it
|     |    | Implement early alert systems
|     |    | Create educational plans for students with clear, coherent pathways
|     |    | Mandate success course for students in developmental education
|     |    | Link student success course and developmental education in a learning community
|     |    | Offer learning communities for First Time in College (FTIC) students
|     |    | Provide math refresher in orientation *before* assessment
|     |    | Offer math labs
|     |    | Require “reading first” and/or integrate it into other courses
|     |    | Align developmental education and gateway competencies
|     |    | Create a partnership with K-12 to improve college-going activity
|     |    | Establish a team, or council, to coordinate all student success work