

DCCCD Retention Best Practice Submission Form

Across the district there are many successful practices that contribute to the retention of students. As the district begins to develop a greater emphasis on its retention strategy, all locations are asked to identify and submit information about successful retention programs and activities. Please complete the following information on selected practices.

College/Location: Cedar Valley College

The Retention Best Practice is primarily supported by what college/location area:

Instruction___ Student Services: X Administrative___

Combination of areas: (Please list)

Contact Person: (Include contact information)

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Retention Best Practice Title:

Cedar Valley Achievers

Retention Best Practice Area of Focus:

Math___ STEM___ Honors College___ Other Student Services Advising & Counseling_____

Retention Best Practice Executive Summary: approximately 50 words (Please use additional pages for a detailed description)

The CVA program is Cedar Valley's first-year experience for students. This experience includes case management by an assigned advisor or faculty counselor, referrals to other services and academic resources, and enrollment in HDEV 1300.

Please describe the evaluation measures utilized to support this initiative as a best practice.

The CVA program is Cedar Valley's first-year experience for students, a concept supported by research that connects it with positive student outcomes. It is an adaptation of the "Student Success Plan," developed at Sinclair Community College, which has won five national awards, including the 2004 Educause Excellence in Information Technology Solutions, 2005 National Council for Student Development Exemplary Practice, the 2005 National NCSD Terry O'Banion Shared Journey award, 2005 Macromedia Higher Education Innovations award and the 2006 MetLife Foundation Best Practice in Retention award. The developmental, intrusive approach to academic advising is based on the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) and Council on Advancement of Standards (CAS) relatively new standards and guidelines.

Internal research on student persistence and success from semester to semester was conducted for 2007-08. Further data analysis is being planned as part of the Uniform Recruitment and Retention Report to THECB, which is due December 1, 2008.

Please submit this form to Dr. Sharon L. Blackman, DCCCD Educational Affairs by October 24, 2008

Provide a summary of the results, including data (such as trend lines over time) to show how it impacted retention and is a best practice.

Since it was initiated in Spring, 2007, students who have participated in the Cedar Valley Achievers program have higher rates of retention from Fall to Spring semester than the average rate of retention for the college. In Fall, 2007, 360 first time in college students were involved and in Spring, 2008, 422 students were served. The persistence from Fall, 2007 to Spring, 2008 for the CVA students was 57% while it was 52% for all other Cedar Valley College students. Currently (Fall, 2008), there are 457 Cedar Valley Achiever students.

What would be needed to replicate the practice at other DCCCD colleges?

Cedar Valley College is willing to share the standardized processes and methodology it has developed and piloted. Further development and staffing will occur through the CVC Title III grant, including upgrading of the Student Success Plan software to allow for a college-wide early alert system.

Cost to implement this practice (financial and human):

The CVA program is designed to be replicated with minimal costs involved using existing staff and new processes. Costs include training, data management and storage, and adequate staffing. The number of staff members a college has available determines how many students may be served each semester. The Student Success Plan software is available for purchase from Sinclair Community College and is being used by 12 other colleges and districts (including Austin Community College), but other systems may be used to manage and track the advising and counseling process and student data.

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