

## **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:

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

Instruction  X       Student Services  X       Administrative      

Combination of areas: (Please list)

Contact Person: (Include contact information)

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Retention Best Practice Title: **Bridge to Success (Emerging Best Practice)**

Retention Best Practice Area of Focus:

Math  X       STEM            Honors College            Other                                    

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

A student retention and success data analysis was conducted for students taking developmental math courses at North Lake College. We discovered that only about 400 out of 1700 students were successful each semester. We created learning communities for them; as long as they are taking a computer-based or lecture developmental math class, they can take an additional block of 2-3 classes with the same students. The instructors work together to provide common assignments and integrate their subjects. Students get both instructional (math tutoring) and peer support for success.

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

We will use both qualitative and quantitative data gathered throughout the project. Qualitative data includes individual and group interviews with both students and instructors, instructors' working plans, and preparations to integrate subject matter. We will also have exit interview with both groups. Quantitative data includes surveys of both students and instructors, student grades, and whether or not they continue enrollment the next semester.

**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.**

In the fall of 2008, have one Bridge to Success block of 19 students currently taking 12 hours. We made adjustments for the spring 2009 semester to allow for developmental math lecture students into this program. We had restricted them to computer-based developmental math because we wanted them all in the same class but discovered that this had narrowed our pool of students.

Preliminary results indicate a high attendance rate, student satisfaction with the learning arrangement, and great instructor collaboration. More quantitative results will be available in January 2009, after they have completed the fall semester and moved on to the spring semester.

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

Instructors are developing models for future blocks to use so that they will not have to create everything. We have four different ways of integrating subjects because we had four blocks working all summer long, but only one of the blocks made. This shortfall happened due to our restriction of having only computer-based developmental math students as our target group. This restriction has been lifted for the spring of 2009 to include lecture-based courses.

After at least one year of implementation, we can roll it out as an option to better support students struggling with getting through developmental math courses. This same concept can be adopted to include developmental math and writing as needed. Research shows that students need to feel a connection to someone at the college to succeed, even if it is a student support group. The chances of student success increases in relation to the student support around him/her and the extent they feel connected to the college.

**Cost to implement this practice (financial and human):**

- One full-time Bridge to Success Coordinator (Learning Communities Coordinator) would be ideal, but a current retention specialist at the campus can start this program. **(position TBD)**
- Overview of the program and organizational meetings are needed to ensure adherence to the model. **(to be conducted by the coordinator)**
- Initial cost for instructors to prepare models for use in the integrated learning community is needed. **(\$23 per hour, maximum of \$500 per semester per instructor)**
- Additional compensation for instructor participants to meet and coordinate is needed. **(\$23 per hour, maximum of \$500 per semester per instructor – already included)**
- Advising, Instructional Deans, and Student Support Services would need to coordinate to develop the blocks, advertise and fill them, and provide student support services.
- Research and Evaluation would need to collect data and present it to all involved.

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