

## **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: **Richland**

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)

**Tara Thompson**  
**Academic Advisor II**  
**972-238-6328**

Retention Best Practice Title: ***BACK ON TRACK! Suspension-to-Probation Program***

Retention Best Practice Area of Focus:

Math\_\_\_\_ STEM\_\_\_\_ Honors College\_\_\_\_ Other students in academic difficulty

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

**Richland students who are in academic difficulty, including those on dismissal, suspension, and Probation II are required to participate in a program called, "Get Back on Track!". These students may take no more than two courses per semester and are advised and registered through specially trained academic advisors who help them develop a plan to return to good academic standing.**

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

**The program began in 2001. The number of students who are able to earn a 2.0 GPA each semester they participate in the program are tracked. Between 50-70% of the *Back on Track!* participants achieve a 2.0 GPA when participating in the program. Prior to the implementation of this program, only 20 - 40 percent earned a 2.0 GPA.**

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.

**Between 50 – 70% of the *Back on Track!* participants have achieved a 2.0 GPA each long semester since 2001. These success rates hold for all participating students regardless of ethnicity and gender.**

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

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

The *Back on Track!* Program has been presented to other DCCCD advisors on two occasions; however more detailed training would be necessary to ensure the policies of the program were being closely followed. In addition, each college would have to staff their advising program so that advisors would have time in their schedules to work with the students assigned to them and have time to work with their students' instructors. Currently there are 179 students in the *Back on Track!* Program and four full-time academic advisors spend approximately 40% of their time on this initiative.

Cost to implement this practice (financial and human):

The major cost is in staffing as suspension advisors spend a considerable amount of time with these students and in working closely with these students' instructors. A secondary cost might be the amount of professional training for advisors who serve in this capacity. Richland's suspension advisors, in particular Tara Thompson and Susie Brown, would be available to work with other DCCCD advisors who wanted to implement a similar approach.

**Additional Information:**

The mission of the *Back on Track! Program* is to encourage and support our students' persistence in course work and graduation from Richland through intervention. This intervention is designed to assist student's recognition of the obstacles interrupting their academic progress and achievement by offering success strategies, individual meetings with advisors, academic consulting, and additional academic resources. Suspension students are required to meet with their assigned advisor on a regular basis during the program. After the initial meeting with a suspension advisor, an "AV" registration block is placed on each student's records. This block impacts registration and keeps the student from adding/dropping courses after the initial registration takes place. The "AV" block also assures that the student works directly with the student's assigned advisor and not with general advisors in the Center.

Suspension advisors coach students about success strategies such as making use of their instructors' office hours and track student's attendance and participation throughout the semester by working with the student's instructors. These advisors help students to turn their academic record around. Students are introduced to services and programs that they were unaware of or are directed to services and programs that they were aware of but didn't use. These include Richland's Center for Tutoring and Learning Connections, library (LRC), Career Services Office, and various other support services. Most students in the *Back on Track!* Program are required to enroll in a student success course (HDEV 0092 or HDEV 1300).

For additional information go to [www.rlc.dcccd.edu/ADMISSNS/suspension.htm](http://www.rlc.dcccd.edu/ADMISSNS/suspension.htm)

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