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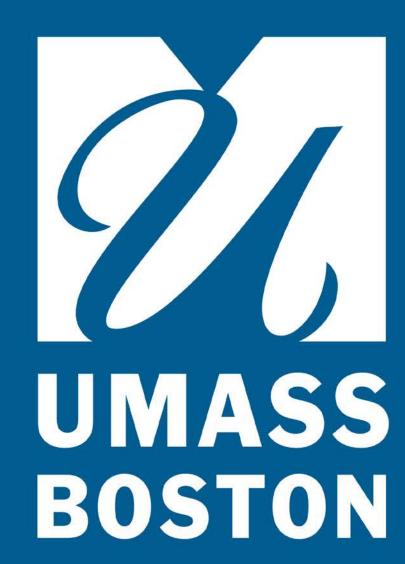
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NECC Early College Program: Third-Year Outcomes

Jack Leonard, Leadership in Education UMB; Ellen Grondine, Northern Essex Community College; Amesbury High School; Haverhill High School

Summary/Abstract

Five-year longitudinal community-based program evaluation reports annually on outcomes for early college program between MA community college and 2 high schools (suburban; urban) for academically average students, grades 10-12.

Mixed methodology uses surveys, interviews and quantitative student data to illuminate program design, measure student outcomes, investigate changes in teaching practice and examine effective leadership practices.

Three-year results show impressive credit accumulation and improved college readiness skills in students. Strong support mechanisms promote student success. Program is now being replicated in other communities.

Goals and Objectives

- 1. More students will earn college credit before high school graduation.
- 2. More students will take AP courses at the high school.
- 3. All students must succeed, since failure would only reinforce the perception that some students are not cut out for college.
- 4. More students will attend college after graduation.
- 5. Fewer students will need remedial coursework when they attend college.
- 6. More students will complete a college certificate or degree within four years of graduating from high school.

Approaches and Methods

Community-based research, using concurrent mixed methods for five-year, longitudinal program evaluation.

Research Questions:

- 1. Are the EC students truly average?
- 2. Are the EC college courses truly rigorous?
- 3. What are the outcomes for the EC students?
- 4. To what extent has the EC program made students more college-ready?
- 5. How has the program changed teaching practice and expectations?
- 6. How does student support change for an early college program?
- 7. What funding mechanism will provide sustainability?
- 3. What leadership characteristics support early college partnerships?

Sample Population:

- 1. Suburban high school (600 students) & urban high school (1600 students).
- 2. MA community college (NECC).
- 3. Academically average students (report cards in B C range) begin taking regular college courses in grade 10.
- 4. Opportunity to earn as many as 45 credits by graduation.

Data Sources & Instruments:

- 1. Student demographic and assessment data.
- 2. Student surveys/interviews.
- 3. Parent focus group interviews.
- 4. Teacher/leader interviews.
- 5. Classroom observations.
- 6. Course material analysis.

Results/Impact

Course Rigor:

- 1. Instructors for most courses are regular college faculty.
- 2. Students use authentic college textbooks, syllabi, assignments, and assessments.
- 3. Students receive college IDs and full access to Blackboard and campus facilities.

Third-Year Outcomes:

- 1. 105 students have successfully completed 1268 credits or 423 courses
- 2. 1st cohort graduated in 2012, averaging 7 college courses/student.
- 3. 23/32 students in 1st graduating class went on to post-secondary education (70% to 4-year colleges).
- 4. 17 graduating seniors had completed freshmen English writing course.

College Readiness Skills:

- 1. "The progress in their writing alone is unbelievable." English teacher.
- 2. Students still study only 1 hour/day.
- 3. "It makes you realize how important the future is." –student.

Teachers report new gains in co-teaching methodologies, better understanding of college readiness skills.

Shared responsibility splits costs between high school, college and families.

Parent contribution enables increased

student support mechanisms.

Entrepreneurial skills in K-12 leadership prove essential for successful partnering.

Conclusion/Next Steps

Conclusions: Best practices include....

- 1. Strong student support from faculty and guidance.
- 2. Learning community model with integrated curriculum and co-teaching.
- 3. College Success skills class, reinforced annually.
- 4. College readiness is a shared construct; parents gain as well as students.

Next Steps:

- 1. Program evaluation will continue through 2014.
- 2. The model will be shared and implemented in other communities.

References and Resources

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Additional Partnerships, Information and/or Contacts

The NECC Early College model is now being replicated in other high schools, including:

- Haverhill MA
- North Andover MA
- Salem NH

Roy Hamond, Amesbury High School. Bernie Sanders, Haverhill High School.