

**Case Study Report
Anne Arundel Community College Site Partnership
Teacher Preparation
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Introduction

Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) has demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing its region's teacher shortage by enhancing its teacher preparation programs, including advocating at the state and national levels for expanding the Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT). Guided by a President Martha Smith who is passionate about improving teacher education in community colleges, AACC began enhancing elements of its teacher education initiatives several years ago, and these early activities set the stage for the awarding of the CCTI grant.

Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) is one of sixteen public community colleges in the state of Maryland, a state where one in two college-bound high school graduates enrolls in a community college. In recent years, two-thirds of the state's growth in new full-time freshmen has occurred in community colleges, and projections suggest the colleges will continue to grow by 20,000 students over the next decade. Similar to community colleges nationally, Maryland community colleges endorse open admission and affordable tuition, offering full-time instruction at half the cost of four-year universities and a fraction of the cost of private institutions. Student access is enhanced because of the Maryland community college system's extensive workforce training initiatives. Community colleges are major providers of workforce training for all of Maryland's citizens, evidenced by the fact that one in fourteen employed workers enroll in a community college for specialized training. In areas such as nursing and education, Maryland's community colleges play a crucial role by preparing over half of all nurses in the state. Similarly, half of all teachers started their education at a community college.

AACC is located in Anne Arundel County which is located on the Chesapeake Bay between Baltimore, Maryland and Washington, D. C. It was established on January 2, 1961 by the county board of education, opening its doors in September 1961 to 270 students in late-afternoon and evening courses in temporary quarters at Severna Park High School. Retiring Hood College President, Andrew G. Truxal, was selected to become the college's first president, and his influence was considerable. Major events in the college's chronology are linked to Truxal, including his leadership in laying the groundwork for the college's main campus and curriculum. In September 1967 the college moved to the 165-acre plot that it currently occupies, receiving full accreditation from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education in April 1968. Growth in enrollments, curriculum offerings, and facilities continued throughout the years under the helm of Presidents Robert P. Ludlum, Justus D. Sundermann, and Thomas E. Florestano. In August 1994, Martha A. Smith became AACC's fifth president. The college catalog offers the following observation about Dr. Smith's "student-first" philosophy for the college:

Her first message to faculty and staff declared student success came first. She shared a vision that the college would be among the first in the nation to meet the call for higher expectations, to rethink the way we educate our students—to respond to the challenges of a global economy and to make our students among the best prepared citizens and workers in the world.

The College's strong emphasis on students and student success is further evidenced in its slogan: *Students First!*

The vision established for AACC is that it is a premier learning community whose students and graduates are among the best prepared anywhere in the world. The College's philosophy and mission statement emphasize teaching to enhance individual well being:

With teaching as its central mission, Anne Arundel Community College strives to embody the basic convictions of the American democratic ideal: that individuals be given full opportunity to discover and develop their talents, energy and interests, to pursue their unique potentials and to achieve an intellectually, culturally and economically satisfying relationship with society. Such opportunity should be easily available and readily accessible to all Anne Arundel County residents.

AACC identifies itself as a fully accredited public, comprehensive community college offering credit programs leading to associate degrees and certificates or a wide array of noncredit courses leading to various forms of credentialing and letters of recognition. Areas of study range from Arts and Sciences to Engineering to Web Technology. Day, evening and weekend classes meet at various locations, including the main Arnold campus, the Glen Burnie Town Center, and the Fort Meade Army Education Center. Beginning fall 2003 the College's newest facility opened at Arundel Mills, a large shopping complex on the west end of Arundel County. Classes are also held at ten area county middle and high schools and at nearly 100 additional locations throughout the county. In 2003, the college enrolled a record 57,169 credit and noncredit students in 2,693 credit and noncredit courses.

Because of Maryland's funding of community college education, students attending AACC have the opportunity to enroll in a particularly extensive array of credit and noncredit courses. In addition, AACC offers a number of credit/noncredit share classes. Students have the option to take a credit class enrolled as a noncredit student. Each semester over 100 credit classes are cross-listed allowing those not interested in academic credit the opportunity to enroll in credit courses typically not found in continuing education offerings. AACC has taken advantage of the practice by the state of Maryland to fund credit and noncredit courses at the same rate to create a uniquely integrated curriculum that blurs the lines between traditional college divisions. All school divisions in the college participate in offering credit/noncredit classes which have been well received by the community. According to AACC officials, the college's emphasis on credit/noncredit share, lifelong learning, and community education classes does not diminish the importance of the transfer curriculum. Transfer is a prominent and successful function of the college as evidenced by the fact that AACC's transfer students earn a higher average first-year GPA than the average Maryland community college transfer students.

Receiving accolades for various areas of study, particularly its workforce training programs, AACC has been the recipient of numerous awards in recent years. These recognitions include the 2001 Community College of the Year for Distinguished Performance by the National Alliance of Business, the National Council for Continuing Education and Training 2002 Exemplary Program Award in Workforce Development for its Northrop Grumman Training Project, and the Maryland State Department of Education Outstanding Postsecondary Career and Technology Education (CTE) Program Award for its Physical Therapist Assistant Program. A national and state award was received in the area of teacher preparation, the specific career-technical area identified for the CCTI project. These two awards are the Maryland Association of Higher Education 2001 Distinguished Program Award and the National Council for Continuing Education and Training 1999 Exemplary Program Award in Workforce Development. Both awards recognized the Teacher Technology Training (T3) Project.

The CCTI Partnership

Besides AACC, the lead institution in the CCTI project, the Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) is a primary partner in CCTI. When characterizing past partnerships involving AACC and AACPS, the message from educational leaders is consistently positive, so positive in fact that AACPS “didn’t blink an eye” concerning its decision to be a partner in CCTI. As the 5th largest school system in Maryland and the 41st largest school system in the nation, AACPS serves a diverse population of students that spans urban, suburban and rural portions of the county. AACPS is the third largest employer in the county with about 10,500 employees and approximately 5,250 teachers. Over 75,000 K-12 students are enrolled in 116 public school facilities, including 77 elementary schools, 19 middle schools, 12 high schools, 2 centers of applied technology, 3 special education centers, 1 alternative high school, 1 middle school learning center, and 1 center for emotionally impaired students. Several schools in the AACPS district have been recognized for excellence, including 5 elementary schools receiving National Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence awards and a middle and high school attaining the Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence.

For the future, AACPS has identified three primary goals centered on academic achievement, safe and orderly environments, and community collaboration. Specifically, AACPS has indicated a commitment to:

Accelerate achievement for all students and minimize the achievement disparities among all groups of students; create a safe learning environment that promotes accelerated achievement; and, establish community partnerships to promote accelerated achievement in a welcoming school environment.

In 2002, AACPS graduated 4,461 students, and, of these, 76% attended both four and two-year colleges and universities; 11% went into apprenticeships; 4% attended business, technical and trade schools; 5% went into the military; and 6% began working and attending college part-time.

For over 15 years, AACC and AACPS have had a strong partnership focused on CTE-related initiatives. Leaders from each academic institution meet regularly and on-going communication occurs between the offices of instruction, student services, administration, and planning and

research. Through the tech prep program, over 20 secondary CTE programs have been sequenced and articulated into a corresponding program at AACC under the umbrella of tech prep. Teams of secondary and postsecondary educators annually update program articulation agreements, and these updated agreements are forwarded to all AACC and AACPS staff who advise and counsel students. County guidance counselors attend annual program updates at AACC, and high school students regularly visit the campus through organized outreach activities. Interestingly, Maryland guidelines do not consider teacher preparation curricula to count as a legitimate tech prep curriculum because the sequence of courses is not as extensive or advanced as state guidelines call for. However, teacher education courses do qualify for federal Perkins (CTE) funding.

AACC leaders identify tech prep as a primary stimulus to enhanced relationships with AACPS, with instructional partnerships operating since November 1991 when the local tech prep program began. They also attribute tech prep with the successful acquisition of grants, the creation of new curriculum, an increase in CTE enrollment, and enhanced collaborations between administrators, teachers, and counselors. These accomplishments are not surprising when one recognizes that a Tech Prep Local Labor Market Team has operated continuously for 13 years, meeting monthly with representatives of AACC, AACPS and local business and industry. This team had provided a venue for new career-technical education (CTE) initiatives, enhancing joint strategies for student success. The Tech Prep Local Labor Market Team is co-chaired by an AACC and AACPS representative, with support from the executive leadership of each institution.

In addition, AACPS is committed to partnerships with six Maryland universities to offer 33 Professional Development Schools (PDS) in elementary, middle and high schools throughout the county. Six of the PDSs are in the beginning phases. Higher education institutions involved in the PDSs are Towson University, Goucher College, University of Maryland Baltimore County, College of Notre Dame, Loyola University, and Salisbury University. Anne Arundel Community College has no direct connection to any PDS beyond the fact that some interns were formerly AACC students.

In a related effort, the Arundel Mills facility of AACC has become the headquarters for a new University Consortium, a partnership between AACC and several four-year colleges and universities. This formal consortium connects associate degree programs in areas identified as most needed by the community with related bachelor and graduate degree programs from member institutions. Three baccalaureate institutions within the University Consortium offer degrees in teacher education, the CTE field emphasized in this CCTI project. The University of Maryland University College (UMUC) was mentioned by several AACC spokespersons as a particularly active and user-friendly partner supporter of teacher education programs in the University Consortium.

Another key partner, Daily Discoveries, represents the private sector. This fully accredited child care center is owned and operated by a local family in Anne Arundel County. The center is accredited by the National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and licensed by the Maryland Department of Human Resources Child Care Administration. All staff members in charge of a group of children at Daily Discoveries have participated in the Maryland

Child Care Credential program. Per state guidelines, children at the center are actively involved in a minimum of 15 minutes of pre-reading or reading instruction as well as numerous other learning activities. Explaining why Daily Discoveries wanted to partner with AACC for CCTI, an administrator explained that “the child care field needs a career ladder.” She foresees that CCTI can help reduce staff turnover by creating opportunities for employees to pursue further education and training. She explained, “A lot of people in child care want to move into teacher education. If our staff wants to someday teach in the schools, we want to help them with that transition.” For her, the CCTI project provides a valuable step on a much needed career ladder, a step that would undoubtedly be quite difficult to take without the partnership with AACC.

The CCTI Initiative

AACC’s commitment to the CCTI project evolves from a sincere conviction to be the state’s leading higher education institution to address Maryland’s teacher shortage. According to AACC President Martha Smith, the college is making an “extraordinary commitment to the teacher shortage.” Similar to many regional workforce issues, AACC views its mission as being the primary provider of well-trained technical and professional employees. According to Smith, “responsiveness to the community” defines AACC’s past, present, and future, and her leadership on the teacher shortage issue extends beyond the Arundel County region to service on state boards such as the Governor’s Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and national boards including the American Association of Community Colleges (another well known organization holding the acronym of AACC).

A highly confident and charismatic leader, President Smith is a vocal advocate for the college’s teacher preparation initiatives. She is a “cheerleader” for the CCTI initiative in particular, speaking about the project’s potential benefits on the local and state levels and her personal commitment to eliminate barriers that could encumber AACC staff from meeting the goals of CCTI. Speaking knowledgeably of the critical issues facing K-12 schools and AACC’s potential roles in addressing those issues, President Smith acknowledges that AACC’s teacher preparation programs need to grow and change. To begin, they need to expand to address critical shortages in secondary math, science, English, and the foreign languages (particularly Spanish), and in special education (K-12).

To address local teacher preparation needs, a centerpiece of the CCTI initiative is the Academy of Teaching Professions (Teaching Academy), which is a joint effort developed in 2000 between AACC and AACPS. The Teaching Academy is designed as an “academic completer” program wherein high school coursework is aligned and sequenced with AACC’s teacher education program. Utilizing a “grow our own philosophy,” advanced high school students (juniors or seniors) are encouraged to participate in formal learning experiences that introduce them to teaching and lead them into courses for students majoring in education at AACC or elsewhere. Five high schools (Arundel, Broadneck, Chesapeake, Northeast, and North County) offer the Teaching Academy, with three schools reporting active enrollments totaling about 90 students. Already, AACPS provides a healthy commitment of resources to the Teaching Academy, including student internships, teacher salaries, classroom space, instructional materials, and technical support. In addition to the instructional component of the Teaching Academy, contributions from AACPS are administrative in-kind services such as professional development

and employer services from the Assistant Superintendent, the Director of Career and Vocational Education, the Director of Human Resources, the Director of the Secondary Schools, and from numerous school principals.

AACC's commitment to the Teaching Academy includes holding a teacher career day program and an early childhood development career day program, providing admissions information to high school students, presenting workshops and in-services for teachers, hosting the Partners in Education Program, and providing further support through the tech prep office. CCTI funds enable further personnel support for the Teaching Academy, including the employment of a part-time resource teacher who is a retired teacher from the area to work with high school classroom teachers 20 hours per week. Further, enhancements are made to high school counseling services to provide students with current information about the teaching profession.

AACC's Education Department offers both an Associate of Arts in Teaching (A.A.T.) degree and an Associate of Applied Sciences (A.A.S.) degree. These degree programs are designed to ensure graduates have a broad, general education, a firm grounding in the best practices of education, and a strong competency in the area of content knowledge. The Department offers reading courses required for all pre-service and in-service teachers by the Maryland State Department of Education. All courses provided by the Childcare Training Department are closely aligned with the outcomes, indicators and sample assessment tasks proposed and accepted by the Consortium of Maryland Early Childhood Faculty and Administration, and meet standards and regulations set forth by the Maryland State Department of Human Resources – Child Care Administration for pre-service training and continued training. This training is required for all Maryland providers for licensing, registration, and re-licensing.

AACC's teacher preparation programs are consistent with emerging standards for early childhood professional preparation and are aligned with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) standards for early childhood professional development, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards for early childhood education, and the AAT model for the State of Maryland. All classes provide the necessary documentation for providers participating in the Maryland Child Care Credential program, a voluntary program that recognizes childcare providers who go beyond the requirements of State licensing and registration regulations and meet specific education and experience requirements. Participants in this program receive bonuses from the state each time they reach one of the six credential levels.

The AACC Early Childhood Education Program meets the National Standards for Early Childhood Education and Services by integrating knowledge, skills, and practices required for careers in early childhood education, and services; providing analysis of career paths within early childhood education and services; and demonstrating professional practices and standards related to working with children. The program also offers students the opportunity to complete the training necessary to meet the state's requirements for a 90 Clock Hour Certificate for occupation in a childcare center. Students must meet academic requirements of an average grade of "B" or better in three child development classes, and they must have excellent attendance. The child development students who are Early Childhood Completers must finish either an internship or a work experience in a childcare center. In addition, paraprofessionals are being

developed to meet the outcome standards legislated in No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Maryland state-established criteria.

A newly formed initiative of AACC that is being enhanced by CCTI is the Teacher Education and Child Care (TEACH) Institute. Patterned after AACC's Hospitality, Culinary Arts, and Tourism Institute that brings together credit and noncredit programs and services into a "one-stop shop" format, the TEACH Institute is formulating a multi-faceted approach to addressing the region's teacher shortage. Degree and letter of recognition programs being awarded via TEACH are: the Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) in elementary education, the Associate of Applied Sciences (AAS) in early childhood development option, and the early childhood development letter of recognition. Reflecting its one-stop shop concept, the college's brochure on the TEACH Institute specifies:

The TEACH Institute offers one place to go, one number to call for future teachers or child care professionals, or for those already in the field who would like to improve their professional skills.

Through the one-stop shop concept, AACC hopes to assist new students to navigate their way through the complex and confusing morass of information, agencies, and organizations related to teacher preparation. Viewing all types of students as potential participants, including "high schoolers, career changers, and others", the TEACH Institute has already stimulated a dramatic increase in enrollment in AACC's education-related programs and courses. According to Dr. Andrew Meyer, Vice President for Learning and Project 4
3Director of the CCTI project, AACC has experienced a significant enrollment increase when [the college] combined credit and noncredit under one roof.

For "high schoolers" in particular, Ms. Colleen Eisenbeiser, Director of the TEACH Institute, is involving educators from AACPS schools in developing a sequential curriculum that will link the high school-level Teach Academy to AACC's TEACH Institute. Plans for the new comprehensive curriculum call for credit programs and noncredit professional development courses, possibly awarding dual credit. The implementation of dual credit will not be effortless, however. Local articulation agreements associated with Tech Prep utilize a deferred credit model wherein students do not receive college credits earned in high-school Tech Prep-related courses until they have completed six academic credit hours at AACC, with a grade of "C" or better. AACC leaders acknowledge the present lack of a "logical flow to the education curriculum from high school to AACC to the university", and they express a desire to create a new curriculum that will show "kids a pathway with ending points, exiting points" and that rewards them with college credits during high school. Officials describe their approach to curriculum development as both measured and strategic, requiring one or two years to find appropriate alignments and avoid overlaps required to build a sequential pathway from high school to the community college and university.

Instruction for the various teacher education and early childhood development programs is held at the College's Arnold campus, Glen Burnie Town Center and at AACC's new Arundel Mills Center. AACC at Arundel Mills is the home of the newly formed TEACH Institute. Student support is offered for education students, including such functions as counseling, advising and

retention, financial services, testing and tutoring, and admissions. Among the counseling staff, the college is able to provide a dedicated advisement coordinator through CCTI funds to ensure that students are aware of transfer, certification, employment opportunities and enrollment processes. The Tech Prep Specialist works closely with high school graduates to facilitate their transition to college and familiarize them with the articulation process.

To meet the instructional needs of Anne Arundel County residents, the AACC University Consortium was established in spring 2003. AACC sought out 4-year colleges and universities interested in offering baccalaureate degrees that link with associate degrees as well as graduate and certification programs of study. To date, four colleges and universities have joined the University Consortium and offer programs at the Arundel Mills and Arnold college locations. Two of the AACC University Consortium partner institutions offer educational programs including baccalaureate and graduate degrees as well as certification programs.

Organization and Governance

The CCTI Project Team designated to provide oversight over the project represents instruction, student services and leadership from AACC, AACPS, and the early childhood education provider, Daily Discoveries. Building on existing relationships between all partners, team members were selected based on their knowledge of the program area, level of student interaction, and ability to ensure the success of the initiative. A core project team of ten has been established and a regular meeting schedule is set. Project team members are responsible for a particular component of the initiative that encompasses instructional re-alignment, comprehensive student services, and professional development.

Both AACC and AACPS earmark resources to support the CCTI initiative. At AACC, the Vice President for Learning, the Dean for Community Education and Extended Learning, the Director of the Teacher Education and Childcare Institute, the Director of Business/Education Partnerships, and the Director of Career and Retention Services are highly engaged in the project. Required space for administration, teaching and support services is being provided by AACC at no cost to the project.

In the initial phase of CCTI, no postsecondary Perkins funds are allocated to the College's education program. However, the tech prep program has allocated \$420 for a half-day staff development program for AACC and AACPS enrollment, advising and guidance staff on tech prep programs, career clusters and program articulation. A paraprofessional cohort program has been submitted and approved as a Workforce Investment Act (WIA) fundable program, and the Child Care Training Department has two programs funded by state and local government agencies that provide training for early childhood educators and caregivers at a reduced cost. The BEST (Behavioral and Emotional Support Training) program is funded by the Anne Arundel County Local Management Board to develop and offer courses pertaining to behavioral and emotional issues that affect children. The Infant/Toddler program, funded by the Maryland State Department of Human Resources—Child Care Administration, provides courses pertaining to the education and care of infants and toddlers, as well as the mentoring of qualified providers.

The CCTI project is emphasizing staff development during the initial phase. Beginning in September 2003, professional development was held to introduce AACPS's Academy of Teaching Professions to AACC's AAT program, and AACPS's Early Childhood Education teachers to AACC's Early Childhood Development and the AAT program. AACC faculty and AACPS teachers were involved in this curriculum alignment activity. Also in September, early childhood providers throughout the Anne Arundel County and faculty and staff from the TEACH Institute were briefed on the CCTI initiative and the Teacher Education and Childcare (TEACH) Institute. A third activity that took place in September was a professional development activity between AACC counseling, advising, retention staff and the AACPS guidance personnel, focusing on student transition strategies from secondary to postsecondary. Finally, an open house was held in October, launching the TEACH Institute and informing interested parties of AACC's commitment to the teaching professions through collaborations with AACPS and other partners.

To reduce the need for remediation, between January and May 2004, students who have indicated an interest or who have enrolled in the Academy of Teaching Professions at four high schools (Arundel, Chesapeake, Northeast, and North County) will be identified and briefed on the benefits of participating in pre-testing using Accuplacer. Prior to administration of the Accuplacer, a meeting with students and parents will be held at AACC to inform them of the CCTI project, opportunities in teacher education, explanation of the Accuplacer, along with questions and answers. Students to be encouraged to enroll in the Teaching Academy are those who are "academically solid in core course work"; however, recognition is given to students who may not be top students. For these students, AACC officials recognize they need to remediate "academic deficiencies and find ways to beef up students' high school academic work", though strategies for accomplishing this goal are not well developed. Parents will also be informed and their permission will be requested to pre-test for the Teaching Academy using Accuplacer. Test results will be shared by college staff and high school guidance counselors with the student, and high school guidance counselors will work with the secondary students to schedule requisite coursework to ensure postsecondary preparation. A new role of high school counselors will be to inform students about the academic requirements and rigor of the teaching profession.

In reviewing CCTI plans for remediation, an AACC official expressed concern about the Accuplacer exam being relied upon too heavily for assessing the college readiness of high school students at only the 10th grade level. He stated, "We need to work out the logistical pieces so this makes sense, so it helps predict success. I hope we won't put all our weight on this [Accuplacer test]. We're not sure what will happen with low performance, and what impact it will have. [That's why] we have our college's placement and assessment director actively involved in the planning process."

To increase enrollment and persistence the Academy of Teaching Professions program enrollment is being targeted for a 10% increase over 2003-04, the first year of the project. This goal will be accomplished by hiring a college advisement/recruitment coordinator and a part-time AACPS resource teacher who will pursue expansion of the Teaching Academy beyond the initial three high schools; developing outreach, marketing and promotion activities that do a better job of explaining the Teaching Academy to students, teachers, and parents; and initiating

recruitment, holding discussions with high school administrators, and confirming their commitment.

AACC leaders also speculated about creation of an Online Teaching Academy wherein the first education foundations course would be put online to increase access and enhance relationships to high schools. Similar to Teaching Academy courses offered in the high schools, the online course would be targeted at high school students at the 11th and 12th grade level. Later, the online course might be expanded to other target audiences that have difficulty accessing campus classes, such as single parents and full-time workers.

Student persistence will be addressed through enhancements to academic and career-related counseling and other student support services between September 2003 and January 2004. During this period, the newly hired college advisement/recruitment coordinator and part-time AACPS resource teacher will meet with currently enrolled education students at AACC to develop appropriate educational plans to ensure their success in the program, including advising students on relevant support services, career counseling, academic program planning, and monitoring students' progress.

To improve academic and skill achievement, a clearly sequenced and articulated program of study beginning in high school and continuing into postsecondary education will be finalized during fall 2003. This activity will be accomplished by reviewing existing program of study, aligning course outcome competencies with college entrance requirements, addressing areas of concern related to alignment, revising and identifying the need for new program articulation agreements, and communicating the newly aligned program of study to stakeholders, including high school guidance counselors, AACC advisors, students and parents. Throughout the academic year, professional development activities are planned to enhance instructional strategies based on learning-centered innovations. These activities entail identifying the professional development needs of AACPS teachers and AACC instructors and designing appropriate professional development to introduce a variety of learning-centered approaches, such as learning communities, classroom assessment techniques, project-based learning, service learning, and problem-based learning. Follow-up will be provided, as requested.

To increase the number of degrees and certificates, in early fall 2003 the CCTI project is developing professional development coursework to meet the No Child Left Behind "highly qualified" status. This involves identifying faculty to develop content area courses for middle school teachers, who are not content certified, monitoring course development, marketing new courses to teachers requiring professional development, and offering the courses. In addition, the CCTI project plans to develop online AACC education coursework to increase accessibility to students, particularly provisional teachers, who lack certification, which involves identifying an AACPS/AACC faculty member to teach the course(s), providing AACPS/AACC faculty member access to training on WebCT platform, supporting their efforts to adapt AACPS/AACC course(s) to the online format, and marketing and offering the online course(s).

To improve entry into work or further education, the CCTI project plans to establish a paraprofessional cohort as a pathway to AAT to meet No Child Left Behind “highly qualified” status. To accomplish this goal, AACC plans to recruit teaching assistants who require additional training to meet NCLB regulations, complete a letter of agreement with AACPS, engage the Education Department chair in coordinating with other department chairs the offering of courses within the AAT in a non-traditional accelerated cohort format, and monitor students’ progress.

A second goal associated with improving entry to work or further education is to assist noncredit childcare students to transition to credit courses. This involves assessing credit and noncredit coursework; aligning coursework, as needed; establishing a method of assessing that credit requirements have been met; articulating criteria to acquire credit after successful completion of noncredit coursework and assessment; and awarding credit.

A third strategy that might have a positive impact on employment involves work-based learning. Though speculative at this point, AACC leaders hoped to be able to create non-paid internships as an initial stage of the curriculum for high school students in the Teaching Academy. These exploratory internships would involve placing 10th and 11th grade students into semester-long elective internship course to introduce them to the education profession. A beginning goal would be to place approximately 100 students into AACPS elementary schools.

Finally, AACC plans to develop a seamless program pathway from the AAT/AA degree into a bachelor and graduate degree in education. It is particularly important to AACC to create a 100% transferable teacher education AAT/AA degree that transfers to “every College of Education in every public and private college and university in the state.” Activities associated with this goal include briefing University Consortium members on the CCTI initiative, establishing articulated program pathways, identifying and participating in joint outreach/marketing activities promoting education careers, and exploring the development of joint promotional print materials with University Consortium members.

Collecting and Using Data

AACC has an exceptionally strong reputation for institutional research, including being identified as a model for outcomes assessment. The institutional research office employs six staff, including two senior researchers, two research analysts, and two technicians. A senior researcher is tasked with coordinating the data requirements for the CCTI project, and he expressed confidence in the institution’s ability to produce required data. Moreover, AACC and AACPS have a long history of sharing data between their institutions, including via the local tech prep initiative.

For purposes of CCTI, efforts to collect data have been slow to develop. Both entities (AACC and AACPS) have agreed to collaborate to collect data needed to advance the project though details of the data collection still seemed to be evolving. Initial efforts to collect data specific to the project had been difficult to collect because the timing of the CCTI data request in late summer and early fall. Plus, the data request exceeded expectations of local officials. Due to competing priorities, AACPS had had difficulty collecting needed data at the high school level.

However, this difficulty is being addressed by Ms. Eisenbeiser, who was described as being “immersed” in data collection activities to enhance “coordination at the high school level”. Dr. Meyer spoke confidently that CCTI data would be secured, analyzed and made available to all partners, including staff at AACC, AACPS, or Daily Discoveries, the partner childcare center.