



College and Career Transitions Initiative

LESSONS LEARNED

Site Partnership: **Maricopa Community Colleges**

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As the CCTI project moves forward, it is important to document lessons learned so that those following will be better equipped to develop successful Career Pathways. This "Lessons Learned" section should focus on the knowledge you have gained by this experience and what new strategies could be taken into the future. These lessons should reflect on:

- what was done right
- what could have been done differently
- how the processes and interactions could be improved

... to be more effective in the future.

LESSONS LEARNED		KNOWLEDGE GAINED NEW STRATEGIES FOR FUTURE
1	Curriculum competency alignment across institutions is key to a successful career pathway. However, without total "buy-in" from all stakeholders it does not matter.	The Arizona Department of Education (ADE), Career & Technical Education Division's Education Professions program and the Statewide Associate of Arts in Elementary Education Degree (AAEE) were developed independent of each other. ADE included post-secondary representatives in the development process and the Ed. Professions program was designed to articulate with the Introduction to Education courses offered by the post-secondary teacher education programs throughout Arizona. However, formal articulation/dual enrollment agreements were not sought. The AAEE was developed with all public post-secondary two-year and four-year institutions represented and formal articulation agreements were established. Although many of the same individuals participated in both development processes a connection was not made. The CCTI project provided the catalyst for Maricopa Community Colleges and ADE to work together to develop a career pathway utilizing the two programs. Without such a catalyst the two programs may have existed as separate programs instead of being integrated into a seamless pathway in a statewide career model.
2	Support systems must be in place or created for students, parents, faculty, and academic advisors for a career pathway to be successful.	Each institution must identify the role it will play in student's success and persistence as they move through the career pathway. Once the role is established all institutions involved must consistently share their role with each other, identify the ways they will work together and implement a plan that will ensure the needs of these individuals are met as an integrated part of the career pathway.

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3	Data sharing issues between career pathway institutions must be eliminated.	Student data and tracking are essential to determine the success of a career pathway. All stakeholders (students, parents, faculty, advisors and administrators) must understand and value the necessity of data collection in the support and retention of students participating in the career pathway. When possible exhibiting data collection systems within institutions should be integrated rather than duplicated or re-created.
4	Community Colleges are uniquely positioned to work with both secondary and post-secondary four-year institutions.	Community colleges have historically developed relationships with the entities in the communities they serve. These relationships have included articulated agreement for dual enrollment with secondary education and Associate in Transfer Partnership Degrees with four-year post-secondary institutions. The career pathway model requires a seamless, systemic approach be developed to reach the expected outcome of student success and persistence. Without articulated agreements between secondary/two-year post-secondary and two-year post-secondary/four-year post-secondary institutions seamlessness is not possible and persistence can be hindered.
5	A strong committed Leader must be identified at each institution participating in the career pathway. These individuals are the "keepers" of the big picture.	Irregardless of whether the career pathway is implemented at a local, state or national level a committed Leader for each institution involved must be identified. This Leader must commit, support with all available resources, and become a prophet for the pathway. Where possible, these Leaders must integrate the goals and strategies of the career pathway into the mission, vision, and practice of the institution. This integration is the only way to ensure a systemic and sustainable career pathway.