

Pam Campbell from Pathways Presentation to the AVATAR Advisory and Core
Committees Summary

February 22, 2012; 12:30 -3:30pm; Educational Service Center Region 10, Dallas

Pam Campbell, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Educational Partnerships, San Jacinto College co-leads a Pathways Project with colleague, Katherine O'Bryan. Ms. Campbell shared an overview of the Houston Pathways Initiative. The partners include: The University of Houston - Central, Downtown, Clear Lake, and Victoria; Houston Community College; San Jacinto Community College District; Houston, North Forest, Spring Branch, Pasadena, Deer Park and Galena Independent School Districts (ISD).

Main Themes and Lessons Shared:

1. Leadership: leaders must be committed to the project. ISD buy-in is crucial; senior level administrative members are needed; empowered partners; content specialists from the ISDs; one higher education and one ISD co-leader the groups and there is a secretary for each group. Leader training is provided.
2. University Partnerships: prepare for different expectations of partners and students; identify feeder systems between 2 and 4 year higher education institutions; create mutual respect among partners; Pam found value in the use of the "Shared Language of English/Language Arts" video and reminding higher education faculty of the amount of face-time high school faculty have with the students.
3. First Generation College Students: this population is always unfamiliar with the process and does not handle bumps in the road well; be careful and understand their experience; daunting situations may lower their tenacity; they need "shepherds."
4. Data Elements: are the backbone to the Pathways project and are used to make decisions.
5. Meetings: they are always face to face and take place once a month from 3:30 to 5:30; food is always provided for the faculty; always concluded with written feedback from the participants; agendas are always printed with meeting norms and expectations written on them (no phones, be fully present, etc.).
6. First meeting and resources: all participants should be given College and Career booklets/TEKS/college syllabi/ Gap Analysis; all participants should have to take COMPASS and TAKS/STARR to comprehend expectations.

7. Counselor Involvement: courses student select in 7th and 8th grade will impact their high school success; include the middle school level for good curriculum alignment.

Questions and Answers with Pam Campbell:

1. How do you fairly compensate teachers and participants? (Don)
 - a. Co-chairs were compensated but regular members were not. They were given gifts such as 4 gig jump drives, goody bags of teacher items, choice of a professional development book, and always were fed well at the meetings. Teachers and faculty were supported to present. Funds for substitutes were provided if teachers met during school time. Furthermore, a broad network was created. For example, a community college was able to donate their older microscopes to a high school that could not afford them
2. How do we change faculty practice? (Kathy)
 - a. Everyone has to become reading teachers. Groups created action research plans.
3. How are we going to get the focus of provosts and superintendents across the state? (Don)
 - a. We have Educational Service Center colleagues with the same training across the state (Kathy)
 - b. Stressing issues of reducing developmental education, promoting dual credit, student retention, student graduation, faculty satisfaction with student performance will be important, and it will take work (Jean)

Pam Campbell's Suggestions for successful Vertical Alignment Training

1. Discover New Ideas: There is value in using "flipped-classrooms", where students watch instructional online videos at home and use their class time to work problems and talk in small groups .
2. Ban the use of acronyms which lessens the chance of misunderstandings between levels of educators.
3. Dual credit programs allow students to have one foot in the door of higher education during high school.
4. Early assessment of student deficits is critical for early and successful interventions. Her project gives eighth graders and eleventh graders the COMPASS exam to assess their college readiness.
5. Everything must be intentional and planned. Nothing should be left to chance.
6. Prepare students through college not just to college.