

Academic Vertical Alignment Training and Renewal (AVATAR)

**A Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Funded Project
Implemented by the North Texas Regional P-16 Council, the University of North
Texas with Dallas ISD, Brookhaven College, and Region 10 ESC**

Partnership Agreement

Project Timeline: September, 2011 - August, 2013

Project Goals:

- Design scalable secondary and postsecondary training processes for vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment that support successful transition and completion for students preparing for higher education and careers; and
- Facilitate secondary and postsecondary faculty, administrators, and P-16 Council leaders work groups to conduct horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment among high school courses, higher education lower division course sections and between lower division course sequences in 2 year and 4 year higher education settings

Project Outcomes/Partnership Benefits:

- Enhance the success of students graduating college-ready from high schools and prepared for smooth transitions to postsecondary education with a significant decrease in the need for developmental education;
- Ensure course descriptions, content learning outcomes, instructional strategies, and student and instructor expectations are aligned and communicated so that secondary students are prepared to enroll and succeed in postsecondary education at all levels;
- Create secondary and postsecondary course templates aligned to the Texas Essential, Skills and Knowledge (TEKS), State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STARR) End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments, and Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) in Chemistry (List courses) and Mathematics (MATH 1314 or 1414); and
- Develop and deliver project training workshops to faculty, administrators, Education Service Center personnel, and P-16 leaders throughout the state and provide technical assistance to these participants so they replicate the vertical alignment processes and activities in their regions.

Project Plan:

During the AVATAR project, Dallas ISD teams will meet with faculty teams from Brookhaven Community College and the University of North Texas in their respective disciplines to achieve the AVATAR project goals and outcomes outlined above.

- The teams agree to work in a collaborative and cooperative fashion; yet, openly discuss issues and concerns related to vertical curriculum alignment and the process of conducting curriculum alignment between secondary and postsecondary faculty and institutions.

- The teams will participate in evaluation surveys and interviews during their sessions and provide open and honest input regarding the process and outcomes.
- The teams will use the course templates, course descriptions, content learning outcomes, instructional strategies, and student and instructor expectations in the courses they teach and share results as relevant to project.
- The teams will report at least every other month in departmental and/or curriculum meetings about the AVATAR project and their efforts.

Dallas ISD agrees to:

- Commit to active participation in the AVATAR Project and working with the AVATAR staff, postsecondary educators and ESC Region 10 staff for tenure of the project.
- Agree to share the training and vertical alignment process with other disciplines and schools throughout the district.

Phase 1 - October 1, 2011 through December 16, 2011

- Identify one administrator and two faculty members in mathematics and one administrator and two faculty members in chemistry to participate on AVATAR Project Team in approximately four, six hour sessions related to creating a vertical curriculum alignment training process that can be replicated statewide.
- Work with project team to create a vertical curriculum alignment process that can be used by secondary and postsecondary institutions and faculty to support student success between institutions and courses;
- Continue the curriculum implementation process during spring, 2012, in the classes of the faculty who participate in the AVATAR Project and agree to share the process with at least two (2) additional district/campus peers;
- Promote vertical and horizontal alignment discussions led by administrators working with the Project within their faculties and/or campuses.

Phase 2 – February, 2012 through May, 2012

- Continue in the AVATAR Project and allow the same project team to meet for up to four additional sessions, no more than six hours per session;
- Refine training sessions, training materials, templates, and overall vertical alignment process based on their implementation steps and continued discussions, so that it can be replicated and scaled to various disciplines and to various areas in the state of Texas;
- Continue implementation of the alignment templates in project team members' classes, sharing this process with two peers and will provide a thorough assessment of the process including their general feelings about the student outcomes;
- Determine a way to scale the process within their campuses for academic year 2012-2013;
- Review the professional development training materials and session outlines created.

Phase 3 – August, 2012 through May, 2013

- Continue work with AVATAR Project Team for up to four additional sessions, no more than six hours per session;
- Meet outcomes developed throughout the first year of the project for this additional time period.

Brookhaven College agrees to:

- Commit to active participation in the AVATAR Project and working with the AVATAR staff, Dallas ISD staff and ESC Region 10 staff for tenure of the project.
- Agree to share the training and vertical alignment process with other disciplines and schools throughout the college.

Phase 1 - October 1, 2011 through December 16, 2011

- Identify one administrator and one faculty member in mathematics and one faculty member in chemistry to participate on AVATAR Project Team in approximately four, six hour sessions related to creating a vertical curriculum alignment training process that can be replicated statewide.
- Work with project team to create a vertical curriculum alignment process that can be used by secondary and postsecondary institutions and faculty to support student success between institutions and courses;
- Continue the curriculum implementation process during spring, 2012, in the classes of the faculty who participate in the AVATAR Project and agree to share the process with at least two (2) additional college peers;
- Promote vertical and horizontal alignment discussions within their faculties.

Phase 2 – February, 2012 through May, 2012

- Continue in the AVATAR Project and allow the same project team to meet for up to four additional sessions, no more than six hours per session;
- Refine training sessions, training materials, templates, and overall vertical alignment process based on their implementation steps and continued discussions, so that it can be replicated and scaled to various disciplines and to various areas in the state of Texas;
- Continue implementation of the alignment templates in project team members' classes, sharing this process with two peers and will provide a thorough assessment of the process including their general feelings about the student outcomes;
- Determine a way to scale the process within their campuses for academic year 2012-2013;
- Review the professional development training materials and session outlines created.

Phase 3 – August, 2012 through May, 2013

- Continue work with AVATAR Project Team for up to four additional sessions, no more than six hours per session;
- Meet outcomes developed throughout the first year of the project for this additional time period.

Region 10 Education Service Center agrees to:

- Provide staff member to facilitate all of the vertical alignment process sessions with AVATAR Project staff support;
- Work collaboratively with the Dallas ISD, Brookhaven Community College and University of North Texas AVATAR staff to meet project goals and outcomes;
- Provide ongoing telephone and email mentoring support to project team members.

University of North Texas AVATAR staff agrees to:

- Work cooperatively and collaboratively with Dallas ISD, Brookhaven College and Region 10 ESC to achieve the AVATAR project outcomes and processes;
- Provide Dallas ISD compensation for Phase 1 (October 1, 2011 - December 16, 2011), in the amount of \$4000 upon receipt of satisfactorily completed templates and an invoice for project participation, no later than December 30, 2011;
- Provide Dallas ISD compensation for Phase 2 (February 1, 2012 – May 15, 2012), in the amount of \$4000 upon receipt of satisfactorily completed surveys, process outlines, evaluations, and an invoice for project participation, no later than May 31, 2012;
- Provide Dallas ISD compensation for Phase 3 (June 1, 2012 – August 1, 2013), in the amount of \$2000 upon receipt of an invoice for project completion, no later than August 31, 2013;
- Provide Brookhaven College compensation for Phase 1 (October 1, 2011 - December 16, 2011), in the amount of \$6000 upon receipt of satisfactorily completed templates and an invoice for project participation, no later than December 30, 2011;
- Provide Brookhaven College compensation for Phase 2 (February 1, 2012 – May 15, 2012), in the amount of \$6000 upon receipt of satisfactorily completed surveys, process outlines, evaluations, and an invoice for project participation, no later than May 31, 2012;
- Provide compensation to Region 10 ESC for its facilitation leadership and for serving as a liaison throughout the AVATAR project in the amount of \$3000 no later than May 31, 2012.

Signatures:

Date: October 1, 2011

Dallas ISD Representative

Region 10 ESC Representative

Brookhaven College Representative

M. Jean Keller, AVATAR Project and North Texas Regional P-16 Co-Coordinator