**ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE**

**PROGRAM: Adult High School Diploma Programs**

**PRESENTATION DATE: June 17, 2011**

**Opening Remarks:**

We congratulate you for completing and presenting a thorough and well-executed Program Review. It was an impressive first Program Review, which will provide a baseline for ongoing program planning, assessment, and continual improvement. You presented a model for how distinct programs with a common goal can work together to conduct a Review.

The District Student Services Leaders (DSSL), as well as others that attended your presentation, contributed to the comments included in this report. This Response contains the following four sections: 1) commendations, 2) suggestions, questions, and areas for further consideration, 3) response to recommendations, and 4) closing remarks.

**Commendations**

1. Excellent presentation. It was visually appealing, well organized, and well presented, with all staff contributing to the process. The student testimonials were a very nice touch that personalized the information.
2. Excellent job integrating two distinct college programs into one overall Program Review. It was clear to the audience that these two programs have a shared common goal of student achievement of the Adult High School Diploma, but with different target student populations and different program characteristics.
3. Nice job setting the context for the demand for these programs based on Oregon and national high school graduation rates and the reality for high school dropouts. Additionally, the historical account of what lead to current AHSD programming was informative and interesting, especially given this as the first Program Review.
4. There is good evidence of staff participating in professional development opportunities to enhance skills in field.
5. Program models and student profiles are well defined.
6. Clear presentation of program service outcomes including numbers served, demographics of population, AND of some student outcomes including credits earned, diplomas earned, associate degrees earned, as well as success rates compared to other student populations.
7. Great effort to identify intended learning outcomes for students participating in the programs, as well as recognition that assessment strategies need to be developed to determine effectiveness of programs in helping students achieve outcomes.
8. Recommendations are relevant, clearly communicated, and supported with specific next-step actions by AHSD and GtC program staff.

**Suggestions, questions, and areas for further consideration**

1. The specific mission and program goals for both AHSD Program and GtC could be better defined and articulated. What specific program goals drive the work in your programs? How are these goals identified and modified as your context changes? How are current national, state and PCC trends or initiatives impacting ability to achieve goals or the need to modify goals?
2. There is very little evidence of analysis of collected data as reported in the Program Review. Although limited to student satisfaction and some self-reported outcomes data, there was an opportunity to analyze these results. What questions does the data bring to mind? i.e., is a 50% *very satisfied* rate with the knowledge and expertise of AHSD specialists (pg. 42) acceptable? How might you determine what students’ expectations are of specialists? What might you do to improve satisfaction in this area? A critical piece of ongoing program assessment is to demonstrate how assessment data is being used to inform planning, decision-making, and allocation of resources – the “so what?” This piece is largely missing from this Program Review.
3. The design of GtC pre- and post satisfaction surveys are strong and demonstrate self-reported student development and achievement of some outcomes. The same criticism of a lack of analysis of evidence collected holds true, however. A more comprehensive approach to program assessment for the purpose of ongoing program improvement and reporting is encouraged.
4. Continuing along the lines of #2 response above, it is impressive that 100% of surveyed AHSD Program students report using MyPCC at least 3 times per term (pg. 43), especially given your Learning Outcome #3 – use appropriate technology. Your Review; however, does not speculate whether this may be a direct result of AHSD Program design. Attempts to link outcomes to intentional program design would be helpful.
5. For all student service areas at PCC we are starting to move beyond assessing student satisfaction and numbers served to assessing student learning and program outcomes. How do we know that students and our programs are achieving the outcomes that we say they will? What evidence do we and can we collect to assess effectiveness of our program design, including available resources and capacity? How do our program design and resources align with intended learner outcomes? We strongly encourage efforts be made towards the AHSD Program Recommendation #1 in your Review. See response below for more details.
6. This is a very good start at identifying student learning outcomes and tying them to CAS standards and PCC core outcomes (not “values,” as labeled in the Review). We encourage further development of these outcome statements, perhaps adding additional relevant outcomes specific to each program area. Support and tools for development of learning outcomes will be available as the District Student Service Leaders move forward their initiative to develop a culture of evidence in student services.
7. We encourage all AHSD specialists to be trained on new Academic Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress policies and procedures in order to work with students on probation or returning from suspension, per new process in effect Winter 2012.
8. We encourage the AHSD Program staff to build on relationships with other departments, including joint trainings, professional development, resource sharing, and collaborative initiatives. There was very little mention of AHSD Program’s relationship to other PCC departments as it relates to the continuum of experience for students. As the work of AHSD specialists is largely academic advising, it is critical to maintain and build on the relationship with Advising Centers at each campus.
9. For the AHSD Program, increased cohort-building activities would likely lead to increased engagement, retention, and success of participants. While we recognize that the population you serve is diverse, are there strategies that could be employed to foment a cohort identity such as group advising sessions, informational workshops, next steps educational and career planning sessions, tutoring, etc. that may support learners’ achievement of outcomes? What lessons can be learned from GtC and other intentional case management programs (such as ROOTs) to enhance outcomes for your students?

**Response to recommendations**

*Adult High School Diploma Program*

1. Create a PCC AHSD Assessment Plan

**Response:** We strongly support this recommendation! Your currently outlined plan for this work is strong. Creation of student service area outcome and assessment plans is one of two top priority initiatives of the District Student Services Leaders (DSSL) group. As you state in your recommendation, it will be critical to follow the district wide approach and process for this work as it is developed.

1. Develop a more effective data system and build on data collection and usage

**Response:** We strongly support this recommendation and believe it is essential for your program to utilize an effective data management system for case management, file sharing across the district, and reporting purposes. We encourage staff to work directly with the district Advising Coordinators to be part of a current conversation about AdvisorTrac and the exploration of a more effective software tool for the district. We encourage staff to follow up directly with Enrollment Services managers to explore Banner designations, GRAD Plan, and related communication and report tools for AHSD programs.

1. Add a .5 FTE High School Completion Resource Specialist position at SEC

**Response:**  With existing staffing at 2.75 FTE across the district, the ratio of students to staff does not warrant additional staffing at this time. You may consider alternative ways of organizing current caseload across the district with current staffing. Requests for additional staffing must be accompanied by provision of data demonstrating the need.

1. Expand program website

**Response:** We support this recommendation and encourage staff to pursue improving content on website, as well as other communication tools for linking students and other stakeholders to information. We also encourage strengthening communication and file sharing among staff across the district. As the college moves to the cloud-based Google platform this year, we encourage exploration of tools available for these purposes to increase effectiveness and efficiency.

1. Provide 8 tuition paid college credits for graduating students

**Response:** While we support the concept of increasing numbers of AHSD graduates transitioning to college and would welcome reviewing a formal proposal, we believe there are significant obstacles to achieving this recommendation. Similar to other existing models, such as PCC GED completers, this is a strategy to support successful transition of this population to degree-seeking college students. Based on what we know about the current GED model, funding would be an obstacle. The following should be included in the proposal: number of students to benefit per quarter, funding impact, program design (i.e., how many credits achieved as AHSD student would merit tuition credits?), and anticipated impact on students. Note that once they complete the Adult High School Diploma students are eligible for Financial Aid. Enhanced transition advising and financial literacy support for this population may result in the same impact as offering tuition credits. Program Review data demonstrates that over 11% of students that graduated with a HS Diploma during 2007-2010 earned a college degree. Note that there was a favorable response to this concept by a Campus President attending your presentation.

1. Professional development goals

**Response:** We strongly support ongoing professional development for staff. We encourage you to work with supervisors, as well as Staff Development, to identify resources and time needed to take advantage of development opportunities.

*Gateway to College Program*

1. Develop more effective data system and build on data collection and usage

**Response:** We support this recommendation and agree with the imperative of having sound data that is easy to populate and access. It appears that PCC Prep Alternative Programs are already working with TSS on this goal. GtC staff may want to remain alert to current conversations regarding AdvisorTrac and possible improved software tools to be explored by district advising for similar purposes.

1. Explore possibilities for more effective use of existing PCC technology tools

**Response:** We support this recommendation, per the response to Recommendation #1 above and for Recommendation #2 in the Adult High School Diploma Program section.

1. Explore a new initiative and develop appropriate model to serve “5th year seniors”

**Response:** We strongly support this recommendation. It appears that there is a “lost” population of community members that would benefit from the type of wrap-around services that GtC offers, but that are currently ineligible for the program. We recognize that these students may end up in the general Adult High School Diploma Program, but only if they have the resources to do so on their own. We encourage a formal proposal for program expansion be submitted to administration for consideration.

1. Increase academic skills, especially around mathematics courses

**Response:** We strongly support this recommendation and encourage the development of additional support and course offering options to meet diploma graduation requirements for students that you have identified in your review.

1. Strengthen resource specialist to student relationship

**Response:** We support this recommendation to utilize current and emerging technology and social media to improve connections between students and resource specialists. We encourage ongoing pilots in this area as outlined in Review and encourage sharing results beyond the GtC and alternative education communities, as there would likely be applications to other case management services at the college.

1. Develop more student leadership opportunities

**Response:** We support this recommendation and encourage GtC staff to consult with campus Student Leadership program leads and advisors for program development ideas and to seek opportunities for collaboration.

*PCC Adult High School Diploma*

1. Utilize PCC technology

**Response:** We support this recommendation, per the responses to Recommendation #1 & #2 for GtC section and for Recommendation #2 in the Adult High School Diploma Program section. Note that Enrollment Services is prepared to work with staff to add the AHSD program in GRAD Plan.

1. Improve communication on issues related to AHSD within the PCC community and at the state level

**Response:** We strongly support this recommendation, which stemmed from the High School Relations Task Force work as reported in March 2009. We encourage the identification of a chair or co-chairs for the Adult High School Diploma Committee (if not already identified) and a review of membership to include representatives from Enrollment Services, faculty, general PCC Academic Advising, and other key partners. We also encourage staff to contribute to the discussion regarding the “State Plan” for adult high school diplomas, as it relates to PCC.

**Closing remarks**

This Program Review was well-executed and represents a solid first review by staff of the college’s adult high school diploma programs. Most of the recommendations made for each program area are relevant and Administration supports staff initiative and action to accomplish stated goals. The Review made it clear that there has been and will likely continue to be a population within our community for which the adult high school diploma is desired and important.

Key areas for growth within programs include better clarity of student learning outcomes, as well program outcomes or service standards; enhanced assessment of outcomes and use of evidence for continual program improvement; strengthening of partnerships with other college programs and service areas; and application of creative strategies to enhance student engagement, retention, and success, including transition to college completion.

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