High Flyers

POLICIES AND STRATEGIES THAT BOOST DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION SUCCESS IN FLORIDA'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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THE DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE consists of 15 Achieving the Dream community colleges that are building on demonstrated results to scale up developmental education innovations at their institutions. Six states are committed to further advancement of their Achieving the Dream state policy work in the developmental education realm. Managed by MDC with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Lumina Foundation, the initiative aims to expand groundbreaking remedial education programs that experts say are key to dramatically boosting the college completion rates of low-income students and students of color. The innovations developed by the colleges and states participating in the Developmental Education Initiative will help community colleges understand what programs are effective in helping students needing developmental education succeed and how to deliver these results to even more students.

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Acknowledgements

Introduction

In 2010, Jobs for the Future (JFF) contracted BTW *informing change* (BTW) to conduct a study on developmental education (DevEd) practices and policies in the state of Florida. This study was undertaken with two purposes. First, JFF wanted to see what common threads could be identified among the strategies and approaches of community colleges that outperformed their peers in advancing developmental mathematics students into college-level courses. Much research on community college improvement starts from a set of discrete program innovations or pilot projects and tests the effectiveness of these innovations in anticipation of scaling effective practices over time. Such a programmatic approach runs the risk of overestimating the importance of specific innovations and underplaying the importance of institutional factors such as leadership, broad commitment to professional development and instructional excellence, regular use of data to inform decision-making and other components of continuous improvement mechanisms. JFF wanted to undertake a different type of inquiry: if researchers started by identifying a group of high-performing colleges according to a set of objective criteria and indicators, could a set of focused and consistent visits to these institutions "give voice to the data" in instructive ways? Could this research approach shed light on commonalities and differences in how faculty, staff and administrative leaders understand the student experience and interpret the roots of their relative success?

In addition to an interest in the institutional stories themselves, JFF had a second purpose in commissioning this research. JFF has served as the state policy lead for two ambitious multi-institution and multi-state community college improvement efforts in the past few years: Achieving the Dream (ATD) and the Developmental Education Initiative (DEI). In this role, JFF has been exploring how state agencies and community college system leaders can support and guide institutions in adopting and strengthening continuous improvement strategies based on student performance data. JFF has helped states in these initiatives think not just about how to collect and report student data, but also how to use data strategically to spur and guide strategic discussions and planning processes that could inform state policy, as well as practice.

With this goal in mind, JFF wanted to test a relatively lower-cost and timelier research method that states might use to put state data into action to identify institutional approaches that all community colleges might find helpful. JJF chose the state of Florida for this study in part because of its strong statewide education data system, which allows comparison of colleges. JFF worked with the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) and its student data system to (a) identify a set of high-performing community colleges and (b) visit those colleges with a defined interview protocol in order to draw out each institution's own explanation for its relative success. This method combined a selection process driven by state data on college DevEd success and completion with case study narratives based on intensive, two-day site visits. JFF's goal was to see if the resulting analysis could be a useful tool for pushing state authorities and community colleges toward more holistic and strategic discussions, well-designed policy changes, and actions to accelerate change and diffuse effective processes and policies statewide. A final piece of this method was to compile perspectives from and practices at each of the selected colleges that describe the implementation of Florida's statewide DevEd policies.

This research was conducted as a contribution to what has been called "comparative effectiveness" research. State-level data on institutional performance can be used not only for accountability purposes, but can also serve as the grounding and grist for continuous improvement efforts, making data-informed decision-making more routine and manageable. JFF commissioned this effort in the belief that this method of inquiry would inform the body of work on improving community college performance and increasing student completion.

This study used focus groups, interviews and supplementary data to explore the extent to which selected colleges exhibit characteristics of DevEd success and how statewide policies may contribute to strong DevEd performance in relation to these characteristics. The first part of this report is a brief on Florida's DevEd policies, as seen from the perspective of state administrators, college leaders and college staff. The second part is a set of case studies on the practices of three community colleges in Florida that were particularly successful in serving students in need of developmental math, compared to other colleges in the state during the years 2002 to 2008.

FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION SUCCESS

Because community colleges have open access (i.e., all students are eligible to attend regardless of their academic achievement), DevEd is a large component of community college education nationwide. Extensive research on community colleges from JFF's DEI partners and other experts in the field suggests that colleges with high DevEd student success exhibit certain institutional characteristics.[1] Specifically, colleges with high success in DevEd practice a combination of the following characteristics, which are explored in detail throughout the rest of this report:

1. **Demonstration of committed and intentional institutional leadership from the president and senior administrators**

The leaders of the colleges shape the culture and philosophy of DevEd at their institution. Their commitment to DevEd student success serves as an example to faculty and staff, and their level of involvement can bring more resources to and create better visibility for DevEd students. Committed leadership is often displayed through clearly making DevEd an institutional priority, ensuring that an adequate organizational structure is in place for a DevEd program (e.g., integrated or centralized), providing a comprehensive system of supports for DevEd students and/or implementing institutional policies to promote successful completion of DevEd courses.

2. **Identification and adoption of innovative developmental education instruction**

DevEd instruction is innovative when it moves beyond standard practices to meet the individual needs of students who are not yet ready for college-level coursework. These practices might be initiated by faculty, administrators or other leaders within an institution. They can include learning communities, modularized curricula, supplemental instruction, techniques that foster faculty collaboration and more. These practices are pursued with the specific intention of improving student learning and promoting success in DevEd.

3. **Practice of proactive student support services**

Effective support services guide students from enrollment and orientation to degree completion and graduation. Student support encompasses a range of services, including course planning, career counseling, crisis support and other strategies that allow college personnel to interact with students outside of the classroom. Support can be formal, through an academic advisor or counselor, or informal, through regular interactions with faculty and/or

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[1] For examples, see Jenkins, 2006; Jenkins, 2011; Edgecombe, 2011; Rutschow and Schneider, 2011; and Seymour, 2009.

administrators. DevEd students, who are less prepared for college than other students, often require more frequent, proactive and intensive support services to stay on track.

4. Regular use of data by faculty and administrators

Faculty members are considered to be regularly using data if they apply information on student outcomes and progress to inform their decisions on how to organize and deliver curricula to DevEd students. Regular use of data by college administrators often takes the form of a visible and capable institutional research department. Data on DevEd students can take many forms. Institutional data traditionally consist of enrollment, retention, completion and transfer rates by certain demographic groups. Data can also include surveys of students, test scores, grade point averages, class attendance records and secondary data on effective DevEd practices and policies implemented at other institutions. The heart of the data characteristic is the regular use of evidence, in the form of data and trends, to inform practice and policy.

5. Provision of ongoing professional development for faculty and advisors

Professional development consists of ongoing training and education of faculty and advisors who regularly interact with DevEd students on topics such as curricula development, content delivery, teaching techniques, testing, technology and changes in state policy. Because community colleges often rely heavily on adjunct and/or part-time faculty to teach DevEd courses, professional development is a key factor in providing adequate support and ensuring quality of teaching. Professional development can be as formal as a statewide conference on DevEd or as informal as a seasoned faculty member mentoring new or adjunct instructors.

SELECTION OF HIGH-PERFORMING COLLEGES

Since 2005, JFF has worked closely with a set of states in a Cross-State Data Work Group created as a component of the ATD state policy effort. These states developed a set of community college student success metrics and definitions; participating states have run state- and institution-level analyses of the outcomes for several cohorts of students across the state. Because of the critical importance of moving students beyond DevEd into credit and key gatekeeper courses, the Cross-State Data Work Group identified a set of intermediate progression measures that correlate with degree completion.[2] These included metrics on DevEd outcomes.

For the purposes of this study, the FDOE worked with JFF in 2010 to compare outcomes for all the community colleges in Florida on a common set of measures that were a subset of the Data Work Group's measures of progress and success. The selection methodology was fairly straightforward. JFF used Florida data to identify community colleges in the state that exhibited high performance in DevEd relative to other Florida institutions between 2002 and 2008, particularly among adult developmental math students (over 22 years old upon first-time enrollment). JFF focused on math because students generally have more difficulty meeting math requirements than reading or writing, although this approach could be used to target other indicators and trends of interest to state leaders.

JFF analyzed data from multiple cohorts of first-time full- and part-time students in Florida's community colleges between 2002 and 2008. Data were disaggregated so that the progress of two distinct target groups could be identified: all DevEd students, defined as those testing into any DevEd course based on common placement exam scores, and students testing into lower-level developmental math. Because the state was particularly interested in

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[2] Gatekeeper courses are fundamental college-level courses that are often prerequisites for enrolling in more advanced classes. Gatekeeper courses are usually the first college-level course in a subject area and are sometimes characterized as having high enrollment and low success rates.

the progress of older students who placed into developmental math, the student population was disaggregated into those under 22 and those 22 or over at the time of enrollment.

In the analysis, JFF compared institutional performance on first-, second- and third-year measures of progress and six-year success rates. First-year measures included fall-to-spring persistence, passing 80 percent of attempted credit hours and earning 24 or more credit hours. Second- and third-year measures included fall-to-fall persistence, passing the developmental math sequence by the end of year two and passing the credit gatekeeper math course by the end of year three. Six-year success rates included degree completion and transfer with or without a credential.

To select high-performing colleges in terms of success of developmental math students 22 years of age or older, JFF and FDOE researchers created a set of categories of college performance, including DevEd math completion, gatekeeper math completion, consistent top performance in DevEd math and gatekeeper course completion, and six-year success rates for degree completion and transfer.[3] Colleges that met predetermined "high performance" thresholds for at least three of the five categories were included in the pool of potential candidates for case studies. Separate pools were created for colleges that were high performers among all older DevEd students, those that were high performers among older students in lower-level developmental math and those that were high performers in both. There was minimal variation across these groups (each of which included six or seven colleges).

JFF and the FDOE Division of Florida Colleges assessed the list of potential case study candidates in terms of college size, geography, leadership and performance metrics. JFF made the final decision to conduct case studies of three high-performing institutions: one rural, one suburban, and one urban. The colleges were Chipola College, the College of Central Florida and Daytona State College.[4]

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This report describes the opinions and experiences of the colleges and the Division of Florida Colleges and does not make any causal claims or definitive conclusions of what actions and strategies led to each college's success. No additional quantitative analyses were conducted on the colleges beyond those to select the high-performing colleges, nor were any site visits conducted at low-performing colleges for comparison. In addition, the case study methodology does not differentiate the success of the practices themselves from the implementation of the practices.

The data collection consisted of interviews and focus groups at the selected community colleges, interviews with key Florida Department of Education staff and analysis of institution-level data. All information was self-reported by a sample of administrators, faculty members and advising staff. Although BTW is confident that the findings represent a full range of perspectives, they may not reflect all of the experiences of and beliefs at each college or throughout the state. The narrative is based on commonly mentioned information and responses. In addition, representatives from each college and the Division of Florida Colleges confirmed the dates and figures.

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[3] For more on the measures and the thresholds used for inclusion in "high-performing" categories in each, see Appendix A.

[4] As a result of recent changes in Florida legislation, the three colleges in this study now offer bachelor's degrees, technically making them state colleges rather than community colleges. Bachelor's degree programs at community colleges help students to have lower tuition costs, allow students to earn bachelor's degrees in areas that do not have a four-year college and alleviate overcrowding at Florida's public four-year colleges. These bachelor's degree programs are known as "two plus two" programs because only students who already have an associate's degree from the college can enroll in a bachelor's degree program at the same college. Bachelor's degree offerings at community colleges are usually limited to fields related to local industries and these institutions still function primarily as community colleges.

The Interaction of Practice and Policy: Developmental Education in Florida's Community Colleges

Across the nation, policymakers, educators, and students and their families are concerned with how to ensure that students attending community colleges complete their degree in order to have productive and fulfilling careers. Florida's statewide developmental education (DevEd) policies and their implementation at the state's community colleges shed light on potential ways to improve the success rates of students who begin their college careers in DevEd. This brief uses information from interviews and focus groups with representatives from the Division of Florida Colleges and three high-performing colleges to explore how key DevEd statewide policies influence institutional practices.

Chipola College (Chipola), the College of Central Florida (Central Florida), and Daytona State College (Daytona State) were chosen by Jobs for the Future (JFF) to represent rural, suburban and urban institutions that are demonstrating success in moving students through their DevEd coursework. The demographics of these colleges' communities represent the diversity of the state (Exhibit 1).

Exhibit 1

A Comparison of Each College's Demographics to the State of Florida[1]

	State of Florida	Chipola College's Community	College of Central Florida's Community	Daytona State College's Community
Socioeconomic Indicators				
Total Population	**18,423,878**	115,588	507,236	588,044
Average Poverty Rate	**13.2%**	20.6%	16.1%	12.4%
Median Income	**$47,802**	$35,912	$39,383	$46,322
Unemployment Rate	**6.2%**	5.2%	7.7%	7.0%
Highest Education Level of Adults 25 Years & Over				
No High School Diploma	**15.1%**	24.3%	16.3%	12.9%
High School Diploma	**50.9%**	57.9%	59.4%	57.3%
AA or AS Degree	**8.4%**	6.0%	7.9%	9.3%
BA Degree & Above	**25.6%**	11.8%	16.4%	20.6%

Source: Socioeconomic indicators taken from 2008 U.S. Census and Department of Labor data. Education figures taken from 2005–2009 five-year estimates from the American Community Survey.

[1] Chipola College's community consists of Jackson, Washington, Holmes, Calhoun and Liberty Counties. The College of Central Florida's community consists of Citrus, Levy and Marion Counties. Daytona State College's community consists of Volusia and Flagler counties. The population figures are a sum of the population of the communities' counties and the other indicators are a population-weighted average.

Chipola's rural and Central Florida's suburban communities are both substantially less affluent than the state as a whole, as evidenced by the low median income in Chipola's community and the high unemployment rate in Central Florida's community. Although the unemployment rate in Daytona State's community is also high, a higher percentage of adults in the area have associate's and bachelor's degrees than in Chipola's and Central Florida's surrounding communities.

This brief begins with a summary of reportedly successful college characteristics at each of the selected colleges, and continues with an exploration of how key developmental education policies in Florida translate into practice at the institutions.[2] It concludes with considerations for the state of Florida going forward and for other states that may be able to learn from Florida's story.

FINDINGS FROM THREE HIGH-PERFORMING COMMUNITY COLLEGES

JFF chose three high-performing institutions as sites for an examination of practices that—according to leaders, administrators, faculty and advising staff at each college—may contribute to the success of DevEd students. The state of Florida defines an institution's "college prep" success rate as the annual percentage of DevEd students (i.e., students who started their college careers at the DevEd level) who passed the highest DevEd course by the end of their second year in college.[3] In 2008, the math success rates at the three colleges in this study were higher than the state's average rate (Exhibit 2).[4]

Exhibit 2
Developmental Education Mathematics Success Rates, 2008[5]

State of Florida	Chipola College	College of Central Florida	Daytona State College
51.7%	74.8%	59.4%	68.4%

A large body of research on community colleges suggests that colleges with high DevEd student success often exhibit certain institutional characteristics, including demonstration of committed and intentional institutional leadership from the president and senior administrators; identification and adoption of innovative developmental education instruction; practice of proactive student support services; regular use of data by faculty and administrators; and/or provision of ongoing professional development opportunities for faculty and advisors.[6] BTW *informing* change (BTW) conducted site visits to explore the extent to which the three selected colleges exhibit these five characteristics of DevEd success. The findings reveal various similarities among these high-performing colleges, but also several distinctions.

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[2] For a longer discussion of DevEd successes at each college, see the individual college case studies.

[3] Many Florida colleges use the term *college prep* to refer to DevEd courses and students. Therefore, in this report, the term *college prep* is sometimes used by interviewees and in state data.

[4] While Central Florida's success rate is lower than the other two colleges' rates, the college was chosen for its steady improvement in DevEd math success in recent years. For more information, see the case study on Central Florida.

[5] JFF focused on DevEd math success as a criterion in particular to select colleges for this study. This is because DevEd students generally have more difficulty completing DevEd math than reading and/or writing. See the Introduction and Appendix A for additional information on JFF's college selection process.

[6] For more information on these characteristics, see page 2 of the Introduction.

Exhibit 3 lists the five identified characteristics of high-performing colleges and graphically depicts which ones were fully present, somewhat present or minimally present at each college. The variable presence of these elements of success at the colleges suggests that institutions do not need to excel in all areas to achieve student success; they simply need to find the combination that works best for the individual college, given its individual demographic makeup and student population. Yet arguably, if the lacking elements are addressed, even greater student success could be achieved.

Exhibit 3
Comparison of Key Elements of Success at Each College

	Chipola College	College of Central Florida	Daytona State College		Key
Committed Leadership	+	+	+	+	Fully Present
Innovative Instruction	+	+	+	✓	Somewhat Present
Proactive Student Support Services	✓	✓	—	—	Minimally Present
Regular Use of Data	✓	—	+		
Professional Development	—	—	—		

Two characteristics are consistently present across all three colleges: committed leadership and innovative instruction. At each college, the president and other senior administrators consider DevEd an institutional priority; these leaders' positive regard for their DevEd students serves as a model for faculty and staff and creates visibility for the DevEd mission. This **committed leadership** is exemplified primarily through college leaders' visible support in the development of programs and practices that promote DevEd student success. While Chipola's and Daytona State's leaders have articulated to faculty and staff that success is best fostered through the integration of DevEd coursework into the math and English departments, Central Florida's leaders have recently taken the opposite approach and created a stand-alone DevEd department to ensure ample resources for their students.

In addition, each college engages in **innovative instruction** that moves beyond standard classroom practices to meet students' individual needs and promote DevEd student success. Chipola, Central Florida and Daytona State all provide supplemental instruction for students outside of the classroom through tutoring centers and online programs for individualized lessons. Instructors at each college believe that classroom instruction alone is insufficient for DevEd students to comprehend and absorb the material. Furthermore, all three colleges use standardized curricula and course delivery to create consistency across all sections of DevEd courses, an approach that may be especially important considering the high incidence of part-time instructors at many community colleges.

The remaining three characteristics vary in the degree to which they are present at each college. **Proactive student support** is a uniformly less developed function at the three colleges compared to instruction; none of the colleges has an advising program dedicated to DevEd students. However, each college does have a campus-wide reporting system to detect and support students whose academic performance or lack of attendance is jeopardizing their success. Chipola and Central Florida also engage their faculty to serve as informal advisors for students.

The colleges also vary in the degree of **regular use of data** to promote student success. Daytona State has the strongest data "culture" in that institutional data is regularly used to inform college- and departmental-level practices, and individual departments collect their own data to monitor progress and identify areas for

improvement. While Chipola's use of institutional data is not as prevalent, the college regularly collects and uses data in the form of student opinion and experience surveys to inform institutional practices. Use of data is least apparent at Central Florida, which is just starting to strengthen its institutional research department.

Interestingly, while faculty and staff acknowledge the availability of **professional development** to improve instruction and services, there was no evidence suggesting that it was a key factor in improving DevEd student success.

HOW STATE POLICIES TRANSLATE INTO COLLEGE PRACTICES

While Florida's colleges are given autonomy to develop and implement various programs and practices, many other programs and practices are influenced by a set of policies determined centrally at the state level. In fact, many of Florida's DevEd policies provide a balance between state standardization and institutional control. This section discusses key statewide DevEd policies and areas in which colleges have local flexibility (also listed in Exhibit 4), and includes discussion of the ways in which the three colleges in this study work with Florida's policies to pursue DevEd student success.[7] The section begins with policies that affect all aspects of DevEd (assessment/placement and finance) and then continues with policies that relate specifically to four of the five college characteristics strongly identified as factors for Dev Ed student success.

Exhibit 4
Key Florida DevEd Statewide Policies and Institutionally-Controlled Practices

Mandated Statewide Policies	Institutionally-Controlled Practices
College placement exam instrument and competencies	Number of permitted attempts on placement exam
Minimum placement exam cutoff score	Maximum placement exam cutoff score
DevEd exit exam instrument and competencies	DevEd exit exam cutoff score
Limit on number of credits students can take before enrolling in DevEd (12 credit rule)	Instructional delivery
DevEd funding formula	Departmental structure
Out-of-state fees for third course attempt	Academic advising
DevEd competency areas	Student Life Skills courses
Annual accountability reporting	Professional development

Assessment and Placement

Compared to other states, Florida has relatively proscriptive and strict statewide policies regarding DevEd assessment and placement. First-time-in-college, degree-seeking students are required to take a college placement exam before enrolling at a Florida community college. Results measure college readiness and are used to determine whether students are initially placed into college-level courses or into DevEd courses. Since 1997, colleges have used the state-approved College Entry-Level Placement Test (CPT), which assesses reading comprehension, sentence structure and elementary algebra skills.[8] Providing consistent exams across all colleges

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[7] This brief discusses only the DevEd policies and practices brought forth in interviews with representatives at the Division of Florida Colleges and three colleges in this study. Therefore, the policies in this section are not an exhaustive list of all mandates regarding DevEd in Florida's community colleges.

[8] In 2011, Florida's colleges began to transition to a new placement exam called the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT). Colleges are also permitted to use students' SAT or ACT scores to determine placement.

ensures that Florida's students are measured on the same competencies, and that they cannot "game the system" and choose to attend a certain college based on the relative difficulty of its placement exam.

Not only is the assessment determined by the State, but so is the minimum cutoff score to qualify for college-level coursework. However, colleges are provided with the flexibility to set a cutoff score *above* the state minimum if an institution wants to set a higher standard of competency. Colleges also set their own policies on the number of times students are permitted to take the exam. Florida requires students to pass an exit exam upon completion of each DevEd course as well; however, institutions are permitted to set their own cutoff scores.

The colleges in this study have incorporated these state parameters in ways that work best for the individual institutions. For instance, Central Florida found that if students at the margin (within 10 points) of passing the CPT receive targeted summer support, they can often pass the test on the second try. Thus, the college created Project Eagle, an intensive four-week summer bridge program for recent high school graduates that focuses on study skills and instruction in each of the DevEd subject areas.

Florida also mandates that students who require DevEd coursework must enroll in those courses before completing 12 college credits. This policy ensures that students cannot postpone enrollment in the courses that are necessary to succeed in future classes. If students enroll in DevEd courses immediately, they can build essential knowledge and skills early in their college careers, leading to less attrition. This policy is highly regarded at all three colleges. Faculty and staff at each institution report strict adherence to this policy, and that it has been one of the key mechanisms that advisors and instructors have used to convince students to enroll in DevEd courses as early as possible.

Finance

Florida's funding formula for its community colleges is based on the number of students that are enrolled full-time, with annual adjustments made by the Legislature to address program expansion or a decline of state resources. While in some states the individual colleges must bear the financial burden of DevEd students, the share of DevEd students at each Florida institution does not substantially affect their funding formula. The state's community college funding formula makes it possible for senior leaders at each college to be committed to DevEd and college-level students alike. Furthermore, the community college system is Florida's only postsecondary education system with statutory authority to provide DevEd coursework, eliminating any incentive for colleges to incorrectly categorize DevEd students as college-level students before they are ready; this authority thereby supports community colleges in their open access mission. The benefits of this finance policy are apparent at Chipola, Central Florida and Daytona State in that institutional leaders are fully committed to the success of DevEd students and the colleges are careful not to marginalize or devalue these students. Colleges do not treat DevEd students as a financial burden, but rather as students who deserve to have sufficient institutional support to ensure their success.

Fiscal policies are also used as a means to reduce student attrition. Florida requires students who repeatedly fail or withdraw from a course to pay out-of-state fees when enrolling in the third attempt at the course. This policy is valid for both DevEd and college-level courses. Similar to the 12 credit rule, the institutions value this state policy as it encourages students to persist in their courses in a financially impactful way. According to the colleges' faculty and staff, a state mandate often has more weight with students than a college-specific policy does, as students are less likely to appeal for an exception.

Instruction

Florida has statewide developmental education competencies in reading, writing and math for colleges to incorporate into their DevEd coursework. Some of these competencies include recognition of main ideas, distinction of fact from fiction, sentence structure, punctuation, algebraic expressions and basic operations with linear expressions. In addition, Florida has a statewide common course numbering system for colleges to use that enables students to transfer courses from college to college. By standardizing DevEd content and course numbering, students are able to transfer colleges within a DevEd course sequence without being required to duplicate coursework.

Other than the competencies and course numbering, however, colleges have flexibility in instructional practices. For instance, colleges can control whether to keep DevEd as a stand-alone department or integrate the courses into the relevant academic departments. As mentioned earlier, both Chipola and Daytona State have a decentralized DevEd structure, incorporating DevEd math into the math department and DevEd reading and writing into the English department. Leaders at these colleges believe that decentralization reduces the stigma associated with DevEd coursework, and also creates continuity between DevEd and college-level coursework. Central Florida, on the other hand, has tried decentralization in the past but has recently built a separate DevEd department that houses DevEd faculty and advisors. Central Florida's leaders felt that creating a "one-stop shop" for DevEd would simplify processes for students and create better connections between DevEd faculty and advisors.

The State encourages other DevEd curricular practices such as small class sizes and learning communities, which are structured around promoting team teaching and student cohorts to support student persistence. However, these practices are not mandated or encouraged through finance policy. Colleges are given the flexibility by the State to establish instructional practices that are most effective for each institution. For example, Daytona State has found that accelerated, modularized courses are hugely successful for its students because they reduce attrition and help students to maintain momentum in each class. Central Florida has experimented with learning communities to better support DevEd students. Chipola has found success in integrating a strong culture of supplemental instruction into its DevEd coursework through the development of a drop-in academic support center called the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE). Each of these colleges has succeeded in leveraging the State's flexibility to customize their own methods for success.

Student Support Services

Florida does not require a certain frequency or type of academic advising for DevEd students. As a result, advising and counseling practices vary: colleges can provide optional or mandatory advising for DevEd students or for all students. This absence of state policies on advising for DevEd students is apparent in the practices of each college. None of the colleges has historically had specific advising programs for DevEd students, though very recently Central Florida has decided to employ dedicated DevEd advisors. Because Chipola often relies on informal faculty advisors, the college has developed detailed academic plans that guide faculty and students through course-taking, degree attainment and career exploration.

While the State encourages colleges to develop Student Life Skills (SLS) courses to orient DevEd students to study skills and other successful college habits, colleges are not required to offer these courses. For institutions that do offer these courses, some require DevEd students to enroll while others treat the courses as electives. Central Florida and Daytona State provide SLS courses through their student services departments, and both colleges mandate these courses for DevEd students. Although Chipola experimented with offering this type of course, they were not popular with students and were eventually eliminated.

Florida has demonstrated a desire to increase and promote student support services through its online advising system, *FACTS.org*, which is a website that allows students to access their transcripts, assess the impact of changing majors on their course of study and perform audits on progress toward degree completion and transfer to four-year institutions. Colleges are tasked with encouraging students to use the website, as students are not required to do so. In 2011, a component called "Finish Up Florida" was added to the website that allows returning college students to find old school records to streamline the process of re-enrolling in college.

Use of Data

Florida stands out in the nation for the great importance it places on the collection and use of data to track students and measure academic success. In 1990, Florida created a student database to track students in the community college system, administered by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE). Colleges are required to submit annual data to the FDOE on a variety of indicators including DevEd course completion rates, degree attainment, transfer rates and student grade point averages. The FDOE then compiles these data into an annual Accountability Report, which is distributed to colleges and other stakeholders for planning, evaluation and comparison. For DevEd in particular, the report provides information on the types of students taking DevEd courses, completion rates and success rates once students enter college-level courses. The accountability report is also periodically presented to the Legislature to show successes and areas for improvement.

While Florida is known nationally as a champion of statewide data systems, this culture has been absorbed to varying degrees at each college. Daytona State has a strong data focus, using both institutional and departmental data to inform curricular practices, institutional policies and annual trends. Faculty and administrators are comfortable using data to inform practices and thus use it as a main mechanism for change. Chipola and Central Florida, on the other hand, have not historically used institutional data much beyond compliance with state accountability reporting requirements. Chipola's advising staff, however, administers student surveys to determine their needs and preferences for course scheduling, transfer planning and other supplemental services. These surveys have allowed the college to be proactive in addressing student concerns and issues.

Professional Development

The State provides professional development opportunities for college leaders and staff. For instance, the Florida Developmental Education Association (FDEA) is a professional organization that convenes DevEd faculty to discuss best practices and new ideas in DevEd. FDEA's annual conference is used to create a statewide discussion on important themes and topics in DevEd, such as DevEd competencies and SLS courses. In addition, the Florida Connections Conference was started in 2005 with the Achieving the Dream initiative as a one-time effort to bring colleges together to discuss how to use data to inform DevEd practices and policies. After the first event, the Connections Conference quickly evolved into an annual event for faculty and administrators from all of Florida's community colleges to share and learn about ways to improve DevEd success.

Surprisingly, while professional development opportunities regarding DevEd abound in Florida, attendance is not mandatory, and most representatives from the three colleges in this study do not consider professional development as a main strategy to foster DevEd student success. However, with a range of new statewide DevEd policies currently being implemented around instruction and testing, these statewide conferences might lead to more discussion on college-level implementation of new policies. In fact, at a recent FDEA conference, Daytona State representatives led a discussion on the benefits and implementation of accelerated DevEd courses. Discussions such as these may become more frequent and beneficial as colleges concurrently implement new state policies.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE STATE OF FLORIDA

Key leaders at the three colleges have very positive impressions of and attitudes toward the Division of Florida Colleges and the statewide policies set by the legislature. In general, the colleges found that the statewide policies serve to help institutions succeed, rather than serving as an impediment. In this age of political discord, especially regarding education, these results stand out and are worthy of note by college-governing bodies in other states.

The way in which Florida implements its DevEd policies likely contributes to Chipola, Central Florida, and Daytona State's satisfaction with statewide mandates. As exemplified above, Florida's policies demonstrate a balance between state standardization and institutional flexibility to foster DevEd students' success. If Florida were to standardize too much and allow little or no flexibility, colleges would not be able to best meet the needs of their particular demography and industries. On the other hand, if the State allows too much flexibility, it would be difficult to create consistency for students or to hold colleges accountable for the same level of performance. The balance is most notable in assessment and placement policies. Other state policy areas, such as student support services, are less balanced, which may contribute to the weaker advising function described by each of the three colleges. In policy areas where states can find the right balance, both college accountability and institutional customization can be achieved.

Representatives from the three colleges in this study generally believe that the State's thoughtful and effective DevEd policies have helped the colleges to increase their DevEd program effectiveness and foster student success. Yet leaders at the colleges have a few concerns that could be addressed at the state level in the near future. It is not a surprise that given the current economic crisis, these considerations pertain to adequate financial resources to implement new statewide DevEd policies.

Ensure adequate funding to implement college readiness programs for high school students

To address the large share of students who go directly from high school to college and are in need of DevEd coursework, Senate Bill (SB) 1908 was passed by the Florida Legislature in 2008 to require high schools to make college readiness exams available to high school students who are interested in attending college. If a student passes the exam in high school, he or she may enroll in a Florida community college within two years and will not be required to take DevEd courses. However, if a student does not pass the exam, the school will recommend and provide the opportunity for that the student take remedial coursework during the 12th grade before high school graduation.

College leaders agree in principle with the mission and intent of SB 1908: remediating students before they enter college to save time and resources. However, representatives at all three colleges expressed concern that high schools are not provided with adequate resources, including funding and time, to implement successful college readiness programs. They worry that SB 1908 is a well-intentioned program that presently does not have adequate funding to achieve the intended outcome of reducing the number of high school students requiring DevEd coursework. The passage of House Bill (HB) 1255 in 2011 will provide some additional funding for high schools to implement this program, although representatives at the colleges encourage the State to fully address financial barriers to implementation so that SB 1908 can be most effective.

Provide flexibility in student financial aid formulas to accommodate innovative DevEd delivery methods

The new Florida Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT), which is currently undergoing initial implementation, is a result of the State involving faculty to develop a college placement exam that not only tests students on competencies, but will also contain a diagnostic component that colleges can use to identify and target particular deficiencies. These diagnostics will aid colleges to administer modularized, individualized curricula to students, rather than standardized full-semester DevEd coursework taught at the level of the lowest common

denominator. The aim of modularization is to streamline the requirements for coursework that is not applicable toward a degree, improve retention and success of DevEd students and reduce the cost of DevEd to the state.

Colleges appreciate the introduction of modularized DevEd curricula based on the upcoming PERT diagnostic tools. However, they are concerned that state and federal financial aid policies are not currently flexible enough to accommodate modularized courses. To receive full financial aid, students must be enrolled full-time and have registered for their classes by a certain date at the start of the term. If a student's PERT diagnostic exam results in enrolling in less than a full term of DevEd coursework or if the required modules start later in the term, college representatives worry that this may affect financial aid and impede college affordability. Colleges encourage the State to address these issues before the PERT and modularization are fully implemented at all colleges.

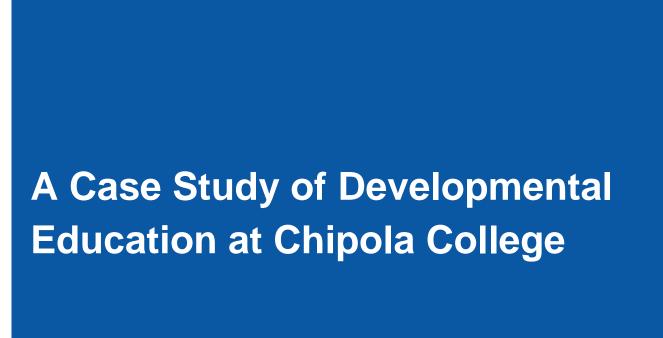## CONSIDERATIONS FOR OTHER STATES

Lessons learned from this study about the relationships between state policy and the institutional practices of high-performing colleges may have considerable implications for colleges in other states. While findings from this study cannot be said to be causal (as discussed in the limitations section of the Introduction), they may lead to important considerations for other states about whether their state policy environment adequately supports the characteristics of high-performing colleges. Exhibit 5 provides a questionnaire which state policymakers can use to begin to assess a state's policymaking environment.[9] Noting each state's progress toward each component can provide insight on policies and practices to explore to support greater DevEd student success.

Exhibit 5
Questionnaire for State Policymakers

State Policy Environment Question	Degree of Presence in State Policy		
Assessment and Placement			
Does the state require entering students to take a standard assessment of college readiness to place into college-level coursework?	+	✓	—
Does the state mandate common cutoff scores to place into DevEd or college-level coursework?	+	✓	—
Does the state mandate a common DevEd exit exam that tests mastery of particular competencies?	+	✓	—
Are students who are placed into DevEd required to fulfill their requirements early in their academic career (e.g., before completing 12 credits or some similar benchmark)?	+	✓	—
Finance			
Does the state fund DevEd courses at the same level as college-level courses, allowing college leaders to be committed to DevEd and college-level students alike?	+	✓	—
Does the state provide adequate and flexible funding for colleges to carry out statewide policy mandates and changes?	+	✓	—
Does state policy on tuition and fees create a financial disincentive for students to repeatedly withdraw from and re-enroll in the same course?	+	✓	—

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[9] In 2011, the Developmental Education Initiative also created a self-assessment tool to help states consider whether their policy environment maximizes student success for those in developmental education. The self-assessment tool covers categories that are both similar to and distinct from those found in this study. To download a copy of that tool, please visit www.jff.org/publications/education/dei-self-assessment-tool/1243.

State Policy Environment Question	Degree of Presence in State Policy		
Committed Leadership			
Does the state's policymaking environment exemplify a balance between state standardization and institutional flexibility in a manner that attracts and supports strong leaders who are able to make decisions that are appropriate to their individual colleges?	**+**	✓	—
Does the state provide flexibility for college leaders to decide on an integrated or dedicated DevEd structure?	**+**	✓	—
Innovative Instruction			
Does the state have DevEd competencies that colleges incorporate into their coursework?	**+**	✓	—
Does the state have a statewide common course numbering system to prevent duplication if students transfer to another institution?	**+**	✓	—
Does the state provide colleges with flexibility in deciding instructional practices and curricula?	**+**	✓	—
Does the state allow for proficiency-based innovations such as modularized and/or accelerated DevEd courses?	**+**	✓	—
Does the state encourage other innovative instructional practices such as learning communities or supplemental instructional labs?	**+**	✓	—
Proactive Student Support Services			
Does the state require or encourage colleges to provide orientation for students entering DevEd?	**+**	✓	—
Does the state require or encourage colleges to provide consistent advising for DevEd students?	**+**	✓	—
Does the state require or encourage colleges to provide courses that teach DevEd students essential life and study skills?	**+**	✓	—
Does the state provide an online advising system that allows students to assess progress to degree completion and transfer, regardless of institution or level of education?	**+**	✓	—
Regular Use of Data			
Does the state require colleges to report data to contribute to an annual community college database of key indicators?	**+**	✓	—
Does the state's community college database disaggregate developmental education outcomes by key subgroups on a regular basis?	**+**	✓	—
Do the state's performance measures include intermediate measures that identify key academic achievement points or predictors of long-term success?	**+**	✓	—
Do the community college database's reports allow for comparisons among peer institutions to identify institutions that are achieving the best results with high-priority student subgroups?	**+**	✓	—
Professional Development			
Does the state require or encourage colleges to offer professional development for instructors and staff who work with DevEd students?	**+**	✓	—
Does the state provide dedicated resources to allow DevEd instructors and staff to take advantage of professional development opportunities?	**+**	✓	—
Does the state use its professional associations to focus attention of leaders and faculty on the student success agenda, particularly on DevEd strategies?	**+**	✓	—
Does the state sponsor faculty convenings for structured sharing and learning opportunities on developmental education improvement efforts across the colleges?	**+**	✓	—

A Case Study of Developmental Education at Chipola College

Chipola College

A busy Walmart aisle or a local restaurant is an unlikely place for an instructor to advise a student about his or her selection of courses for the next semester. At Chipola College (Chipola), however, faculty members and advising staff take advantage of every interaction, impromptu or planned, to provide the guidance and support necessary for their students to excel. In fact, the tight-knit community within Chipola is one of the institution's ingredients for success.

The culture that permeates Chipola's community is one of small-town America. Chipola is located in Marianna, a town with a population of approximately 6,000. Though the town is only about an hour's drive from Tallahassee, it feels a world away from the state capital and much closer in culture to towns on the other side of the Alabama and Georgia borders, just 30 miles away. Because of its rural setting, Chipola's reach is vast, serving two time zones, five Florida panhandle counties and students from neighboring states. There is a palpable sense of genuine warmth and welcome on campus, both for newcomers and those who visit the campus daily.

The community's economy is not as strong as in other parts of the state; the average income level in the area is lower and the poverty level is higher than in the state overall (Exhibit 1). In addition, while many adults in Chipola's surrounding community have high school diplomas, few have associate's or bachelor's degrees.

Exhibit 1
A Comparison of Chipola College's Demographics to the State of Florida

	State of Florida	Chipola College's Community[1]
Socioeconomic Indicators		
Total Population	18,423,878	115,588
Average Poverty Rate	13.2%	20.6%
Median Income	$47,802	$35,912
Unemployment Rate	6.2%	5.2%
Highest Education Level of Adults 25 Years & Over		
No High School Diploma	15.1%	24.3%
High School Diploma	50.9%	57.9%
AA or AS Degree	8.4%	6.0%
BA Degree & Above	25.6%	11.8%

Source: Socioeconomic indicators taken from 2008 U.S. Census and Department of Labor data. Education figures taken from 2005–2009 five-year estimates from the American Community Survey.

[1] Chipola College's community consists of Jackson, Washington, Holmes, Calhoun and Liberty Counties. The population figure is a sum of the population of these five counties and the other indicators are a population-weighted average.

Chipola was chosen for this study to represent small, rural colleges in Florida that are excelling in moving students through their developmental education (DevEd) and gatekeeper college-level coursework, particularly in math.[2] The state of Florida defines an institution's "college prep" success rate as the annual percentage of DevEd students (i.e., students who started their college careers at the DevEd level) who passed the highest DevEd math, reading and writing courses by the end of their second year in college.[3] In 2008, Chipola's success rates were more than 20 percentage points higher than the state's average rates (Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 2
Developmental Education Success Rates, 2008

	State of Florida	Chipola College
Math	51.7%	74.8%
Reading	68.3%	88.1%
Writing	62.5%	89.0%

Source: Florida Accountability Report, 2008.

Chipola was also selected for this study because of its success in moving students through their DevEd coursework and into college-level courses. Exhibit 3 shows that Chipola has also consistently scored higher than the state average on this measure. The percentage of DevEd students who started in the upper-level of DevEd math and completed the gatekeeper math course(s) by the end of their third year in college is consistently higher than the state average from 2002 through 2006.[4]

Exhibit 3
Gatekeeper Math Completion Rates, 2002–2006

	State of Florida	Chipola College
2002	35.5%	43.7%
2003	34.3%	45.6%
2004	32.0%	45.4%
2005	31.5%	46.2%
2006	35.2%	39.0%

Source: Jobs for the Future's calculations from Florida Department of Education institutional-level data.

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[2] Jobs for the Future (JFF) focused on DevEd math success as a criterion in particular to select colleges for this study. This is because DevEd students generally have more difficulty completing DevEd math than reading and/or writing. See the Introduction and Appendix A for additional information on Jobs for the Future's college selection process.

[3] Many Florida colleges use the term *college prep* to refer to DevEd courses and students. Therefore, in this case study, the term *college prep* is sometimes used by interviewees and in state data.

[4] Gatekeeper courses are fundamental college-level courses that are often prerequisites for enrolling in more advanced classes. Gatekeeper courses are usually the first college-level course in a subject area and are sometimes characterized as having high enrollment and low success rates.

Chipola's total student enrollment in the 2007–08 school year was approximately 2,100, and about two-thirds of entering students were required to take at least one DevEd course.[5] Chipola's student demographic is younger, less transient and less racially diverse than other parts of the state—this is apparent simply by walking around the campus on a given day. In fact, during the 2007–08 school year, about half of the college's students were under the age of 20 and three-fourths were white.[6]

In February 2011, BTW *informing change* (BTW) staff visited Chipola for two days to learn from leadership, faculty and staff about their DevEd policies and/or practices. BTW conducted interviews with five Chipola senior administrators and also facilitated three focus groups with DevEd faculty and advising staff. The interviews and focus groups explored the extent to which key institutional leaders, faculty and staff believe that Chipola has exhibited the five characteristics of high-performing colleges, especially between 2002 and 2008.[7] These stories paint a portrait of DevEd at Chipola College.

KEY ELEMENTS OF CHIPOLA'S SUCCESS

Committed Leadership
· Inclusive philosophy
Innovative Instruction
· Supplemental instruction
· Majority full-time faculty
· Consistent curricula and course delivery
Student Support Services
· Informal advising
· Academic plans
· Attendance monitoring
Use of Data
· Student surveys

CHIPOLA COLLEGE'S STORY OF SUCCESS

Chipola's administrators, faculty and staff point to the institution's committed leadership, innovative instruction, various student support services and use of student survey data as the four key components that explain the college's success in DevEd.

Committed Leadership

"We accept DevEd students wherever they are, with no judgment."

Administrators, faculty and advising staff agree that Chipola's leadership is one of the strongest characteristics that has contributed to the college's DevEd student success. The college's president and senior administrators place great importance on DevEd students and have intentionally put effort into integrating DevEd into Chipola's campus culture. Since about two-thirds of all incoming students take at least one DevEd course, DevEd is considered by the institution's leaders as the first step toward a college degree and not a punishment for a lack of academic excellence. As one senior administrator plainly stated, "Our DevEd students are just as important as [our] other students."

The college's leaders and senior administrators agree that DevEd is the foundation for a strong college career. This philosophy has been

"The students in the developmental programs...are essential to the survival of this college and we want them to succeed.... [T]hese students are valued at this college."

—Faculty Member

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[5] The data used to select colleges for this study were from 2002 to 2008; site visits were conducted in 2011.

[6] Data from U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences.

[7] The five characteristics are demonstration of commitment and intentional institutional leadership from the president and senior administrators; identification and adoption of innovative developmental education instruction; practice of proactive student support services; regular use of data by faculty and administrators; and/or provision of ongoing professional development opportunities for faculty and advisors. For more information, see page two of the Introduction.

adopted by faculty and advisors who interact with students on a daily basis. According to one faculty member, "At other colleges DevEd is sometimes an add-on for unprepared students. But we just look at it as a first semester course group rather than a special group.... [DevEd students] see themselves as regular college students. Chipola does not have a separate department for DevEd students. Thus, the DevEd math courses are administered through the math department and taught by the department's faculty. Similarly, DevEd reading and writing courses are administered by the English department and taught by the same faculty who teach college-level reading and writing. As one faculty member stated, "You would have no idea from walking around campus who is in DevEd. They walk in and out of the same doors." This integrative approach was developed to prevent any stigma becoming associated with DevEd students and faculty.

"We have that personal touch that larger colleges can't have."

—Senior Administrator

Part of Chipola's philosophy stems from its rural location. Chipola's leaders are aware that students in the area do not have a variety of opportunities to excel academically, and they believe DevEd at Chipola can give them a second chance. One faculty member confirmed this thought with a simple statement: "Unprepared doesn't mean incapable." In other words, not having the resources to achieve academically in high school does not mean that a student is doomed to fail at Chipola. On the contrary, DevEd is the first of many steps students take to become prepared for college-level work.

Chipola's current DevEd philosophy and structure were formalized in 2006 when the institution's leaders were tasked with renewing Chipola's accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).[8] Chipola's SACS accreditation process included a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that focused on a strategy of improving student retention by removing the obstacles that students face during their first year of college. This strategy, called the First Year Learning Experience (FYLE), encouraged Chipola leaders to become more attuned to the needs of entering DevEd students. The QEP and FYLE strategy helped to define the college's attitude toward these students. One senior administrator noted, "We take them where they are and help them with the incremental steps to college work."

Innovative Instruction

"ACE lab is a hit—a big hit."

Supplemental instruction is a huge part of Chipola's academic culture. According to key administrators and staff, it has significantly improved the outcomes of DevEd students. Chipola started supplemental instruction with separate writing and math labs where students could seek help from faculty after class. Its Student Success Center had a similar strategy that focused on the lowest-achieving students. However, faculty and staff believe that once Chipola combined all of its supplementary instruction under one roof for both DevEd and college-level students, at the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) lab, this strategy became even more successful in helping students to complete their coursework. Faculty and staff wholeheartedly agree that the ACE lab is a main reason for Chipola's recent DevEd student success.

"We have so many places [in the ACE lab], so many little corners where we can sit and talk [with students] about whatever problem they're having."

—Faculty Member

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[8] Regional college accreditation ensures that an institution meets certain standards so that students are eligible for federal financial aid, faculty can apply for federal research grants, and courses and degrees from the institution are recognized by other institutions.

The ACE lab is a large, airy building in the center of the campus that serves as a drop-in tutoring center for all courses; the lab also provides DevEd exit exam preparation and study skill guidance. Students can use these resources on a daily basis between 8 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. without a scheduled appointment. There is a steady flow of students going in and out of the building's many rooms—approximately 900 out of the college's total 2,100 students visit the ACE lab each semester. Instructors and advisors use class time to take their students to the ACE lab at the start of the term to familiarize them with the lab's services. Many instructors even offer extra credit as an incentive for students to use the lab. The ACE lab provides individualized tutoring as well as group tutoring, and students are encouraged to pair with a study buddy to address any fears of requesting extra help.

The lab is managed by a full-time staff person and students, including those in teaching credential programs, are hired to serve as tutors. Faculty members are required to visit and provide assistance at the lab. Faculty members often find that students are reluctant to approach instructors in an office setting but are less intimidated about talking with an instructor at the ACE lab. According to one faculty member who frequents the ACE lab, "Students are always coming through the ACE lab and some find out when my hours are. That's when they try to find me because they know where the ACE lab is and they know I'll be there during that particular time." Faculty members also use the ACE lab as a way to connect with their colleagues' students, so that students can receive guidance from any instructor at the lab, not just their own.

Administrators and faculty credit the ACE lab as the primary resource that has increased course completion rates of DevEd students. The ACE lab serves as a stable resource for *all* students to supplement classroom learning—it provides them with extra help while simultaneously reducing the stigma of needing that extra help. More than anything, the lab provides an informal space for students to interact with faculty and tutors. As one faculty member stated, "What I've found is that I might be in [the ACE lab] and maybe the student didn't come specifically to see me and really wasn't even planning to get his paper looked at. But [the student takes a chance and says], "Since you're here, do you mind taking a look at this with me?"

"I don't think there is a better faculty in Florida."

Faculty members are undeniably committed to the success of DevEd students at Chipola and for this reason they maintain high standards for those students. Faculty often go above and beyond the requirements of their positions by providing personal phone numbers to students, collaborating with colleagues to develop best practices and providing "hand holding" if necessary to help students succeed. As one math faculty member put it, "We found teachers who have a passion to teach at [the DevEd] level. It's not a punishment class. They have a passion for making a difference for those who struggle. There is an expectation of what is needed to be successful, and that standard is not lowered [for DevEd students]."

"My theory about developmental students is that no matter how they come to me, no matter what level they're at when they get to me, here they are sitting in this room, paying their tuition.... I really feel that my job is to take them as far as I can. Everybody's not going to go the distance in the same amount of time, but they can all get there."

—Faculty Member

Chipola relies minimally on adjunct faculty; almost all faculty members are full-time employees of the college. Due in part to the full teaching workload and a mandatory 35-hour work week, English and math faculty usually teach both DevEd and advanced courses in their subject area, reducing the stigma of teaching DevEd courses and allowing students to better connect to the next level of coursework. Because faculty in these departments teach both DevEd and college-level courses, most DevEd faculty

at Chipola have master's degrees, though this is only a state and regional accreditation requirement for college-level instructors.

These committed, full-time instructors have also contributed to the structure of DevEd courses. In the past, Chipola offered two levels of DevEd, but instructors combined the courses in 2006 because few students tested into the lower level. Students who struggle with the combined DevEd course are now given extra, individualized assistance by instructors on an as-needed basis. DevEd courses at Chipola were held five times a week during the 2002–2008 time period, which is more time in class than is required by the State. This daily class structure is not possible at many other colleges where students are often older and have less flexibility in their schedules. However, Chipola's student composition is responsive to this intensive instruction. Faculty members agree that more hours in class increased program effectiveness, as it allowed instructors to interact with students every weekday rather than three times a week. Without the commitment of full-time faculty members, these strategies would not have been possible. As stated by one faculty member, "We value [the students]...I don't know what the case is with other colleges, but I think we would rank among the highest as far as the priority we give—the value we place—on developmental students. We don't mind teaching them—we enjoy seeing them succeed and get into college-level courses."

In addition to influencing the course structure, Chipola's full-time faculty members emphasize collaboration and consistency to promote DevEd student success. To increase consistency in DevEd course delivery, the math and English departments each have a senior faculty member serve as the "lead instructor." Lead instructors decide on the curricula, homework, tests, grading rubrics and more. All other sections of that course follow the lead instructor's weekly plan. Faculty members who teach the same math and English courses (both DevEd and non-DevEd) meet regularly to ensure consistency across the different sessions and instructors. In addition, when grading DevEd exit exams, instructors collaborate with each other to discuss students' individual needs and accomplishments. According to one departmental chair, "Consistency is one of the biggest things.... [I]f you compare us to other colleges, we are very consistent. All DevEd instructors use the same homework, handouts, examples, etc. A student can go to a different session and still get the same coursework." The physical proximity of faculty offices to one another also encourages instructors to communicate and share informally in hallways and common spaces.

> *"I think it's good that faculty teach all classes. We can't afford for teachers to be too specialized."*
>
> —Senior Administrator

Faculty members also encourage collaboration among students at Chipola. DevEd instructors take opportunities to engage students in group activities so that students build connections that promote perseverance in class and beyond. One faculty member stated, "The biggest thing to help my students is to form networks within the classroom. [At the start of the term,] I immediately do an activity to connect students with each other and collaborate [with each other]. They learn to appreciate...and depend on each other. In the ACE lab, those same students work together on other assignments. That is one of the strongest success points that I have noticed. They become [more] engaged when they get to know each other."

Faculty members use various technological tools to deliver DevEd curricula. For example, instructors use a blackboard software application to post assignments, syllabi and test preparation materials online, so that students are prepared when they come to class. Faculty also noted that DevEd success is partially a result of keeping a detailed, online daily course schedule so that students are not surprised by deadlines, content or in-class activities. Students in DevEd courses make use of classroom "clickers," which are handheld devices that allow them to anonymously submit real-time answers to questions posed by instructors. This innovative technology helps DevEd instructors gauge the level of student learning and motivates students to engage in the classroom. In the words of one key college administrator, "We use clickers so that DevEd students do not hide."

Student Support Services

"We are all advisors."

Chipola's advising staff emphasize the "front door" experience—a strong focus on orientation, advising, financial aid, testing and the creation of a united college entrance—when students first attend college. To this end, in 2004, the college built a new structure to accommodate its student services offices in one central location. The college also requires all students to meet with an advisor prior to registering for their first term's courses.

"We pay attention to the first day of attendance. If you are a no-show, we call you. It may be that [students] may not have a car, thought they dropped the class, are in the wrong section, etc.… That opens the door to issues that we can solve."

—Senior Administrator

Though students are assigned to academic advisors at the start of their college careers, faculty members also serve as informal academic advisors. Students enroll in classes with assistance from faculty, and there is an understanding at Chipola that every instructor and staff person is an advisor. Faculty members receive training on academic advising during an annual college-wide faculty/staff meeting where they are updated on student support services, academic guides, testing and new policies. They also participate in registration and orientation activities at the beginning of the school year. This provides students with the option to receive support from formal advisors or informal faculty advisors, knowing that they will receive accurate, valid information either way.

An important component of Chipola's support structure is its detailed academic plans for students pursuing associate's degrees and/or working toward a transfer to a four-year college in the region. These academic plans are updated every year to include program length, entrance requirements (including DevEd), possible employment areas and course requirements by semester. Both advisors and faculty use these plans to help students chart their course schedules each term, as well as to ensure clarity and uniformity in the guidance students receive. The academic plans are included in a larger advising manual that provides placement cut-off scores, testing dates and advising tips to formal advising staff and informal faculty advisors.

Chipola's advising policies on attendance are strict and, according to faculty and advisors, students take the policies very seriously. All students who miss the first day of class are called by advisors, in an attempt to reduce

drop out. During the call, advisors address any obstacles to attending class that students might have, including transportation and childcare. If a student misses more than three sessions of a class in a row, the instructor can ask advising staff to contact the student and address the problem with an in-person advising session. Chipola's math department has an "excessive absence" policy, which mandates that if a student misses 10 or more classes, he or she will automatically fail the course unless there is an approved appeal. However, Chipola's attendance policies are not only punitive. If students miss fewer than three classes in a term, many instructors allow students to drop their lowest test or assignment score. These strategies promote persistence throughout the semester, especially for students who often do not want to be in a DevEd class.

Use of Data

"Surveys give us a better idea of the entering cohort."

Chipola collects its own data on students to inform the college's practices. Student surveys are administered by the advising staff during orientation and graduation to determine student needs and preferences for course scheduling, transfer planning and other supplemental services. These surveys have allowed the college to be much more proactive in addressing student concerns and issues. For example, one year the survey results showed that students missed classes regularly in order to get to their jobs on time. To address this, Chipola's administration office began offering more on-campus work opportunities and encouraging students to choose those positions over off-campus ones. Another year, the survey showed that students lacked confidence in their public speaking skills; the college thus added an oral presentation component to many of its core classes, so that students could develop the skill in a variety of classroom settings.

"Lots of students go to class and then drive to work at Hardee's or McDonald's and then go back home.... So we learned that a lot of students need to work on campus."

—Senior Administrator

AREAS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

OTHER DEVELOPING PRACTICES

Student Support Services
· Formal advising
Use of Data
· Institutional data
Professional Development

While informal advising is a way of life at Chipola, formal structures for ongoing advising are not as prevalent. Similarly, while student surveys offer data that the college's leaders use, institutional data are collected but not widely utilized. Additionally, professional development for staff is not a prominent strategy to increase DevEd student success. Though each of these strategies has some presence at Chipola, it is apparent that other strategies are used more deliberately.

While students are assigned an advisor at the beginning of their college careers, they are not required to see their advisors beyond their first appointment. DevEd students do not receive any more advising than do college-level students, unless they specifically seek it out. There is a sense that informal advising makes up for the lack of formal advising at Chipola, and that this works because of Chipola's size. According to one advisor, "One of the biggest reasons that we are successful is because we are small—we know the students and they know us."

Though the college does not explicitly require formal advising throughout the year, it makes up for this by having an open-door policy that allows students to see advisors in the student services department without an appointment at any time during the school year. This, of course, puts the onus on students to request formal advising when they need it.

The institutional research (IR) department at Chipola is very capable and has high visibility with faculty and staff. As one advisor stated, "[The IR department] is always publishing data about this or that or the other on campus." However, it is not clear whether faculty systematically use institutional data to inform curricular practices. Faculty and staff know that the IR department's variety of reports and newsletters are available to them but do not identify concrete ways that the data can be regularly used within the departments. DevEd instructors have access to student scores on DevEd exit exams and the passing rates for each section of the course, and academic departments use this information to informally measure each class's DevEd student success rate. However, there is less systematic use of data beyond this to develop curricula or change teaching practices. It appears that Chipola's small size has allowed innovative instruction to be based primarily on experiences, anecdotes and student surveys, rather than documented institutional analysis.

Faculty and advising staff have taken advantage of professional development opportunities at Chipola, especially in creating a better first-year experience for DevEd students and in using technology and supplemental instruction in classrooms. Yet, Chipola's faculty and staff do not mention professional development as a primary tool for improving DevEd student success. Instructors are highly encouraged to attend DevEd conferences throughout the state and as one administrator stated, "I don't know of anybody who was refused an opportunity to participate in a professional development conference that they wanted [to attend]." Thus, the general feeling among faculty and staff is that professional development is available if requested, but it is not a deliberate strategy for change.

CHIPOLA COLLEGE: A LEARNING TOOL FOR OTHER RURAL INSTITUTIONS

Chipola College has had an impressive record in the last 10 years of building a foundation of college success for students who require DevEd coursework. The institution's committed leadership, innovative instruction, student support services and student surveys are credited as the main practices that have fostered this college's success.

Chipola's story of success shows how a college can use its size and geography to its advantage. The institution's leaders have used the college's close community to create an inclusive, supportive college environment for all students—DevEd students in particular. This philosophy has resulted in DevEd students becoming an integral part of the rest of the college community, rather than being stigmatized.

The college has also leveraged its limited local workforce to develop a committed group of full-time faculty who spend ample time on campus (and even off-campus) engaging with students. Chipola could have used its size and geography as an excuse for lower performance; instead, the college has embraced these aspects and found ways to use them as strengths. Chipola College has established a track record of success in supporting students to complete DevEd coursework and advance to college-level classes at rates much higher than in other, often more resource-intensive, parts of the state.

A Case Study of Developmental Education at the
College of Central Florida

College of Central Florida

It is difficult to imagine a college advisor driving 60 miles during peak traffic hours to administer a college placement exam to *one* prospective student. It is similarly unusual for a college to encourage a staff person to travel 50 miles to discuss possible career possibilities with another prospective student or to keep testing offices open during holidays. At the College of Central Florida (Central Florida), however, administrators, faculty and staff make tremendous efforts to minimize obstacles to success that a college student might face. This commitment to the achievement of its students is the main ingredient for the college's success.

Central Florida's main campus is located in Ocala, Florida, a suburban city situated between the larger metropolitan areas of Gainesville, Tampa and Orlando. Ocala's wide boulevards, well-kept highways and large strip malls make this sprawling suburb appear larger than its actual population of approximately 52,000. Central Florida extends its reach with additional campuses in Citrus, Levy and Marion counties, which have a combined population of half a million people. The poverty and unemployment rates of the counties served by Central Florida are higher than state averages, while the median income is below the state average (Exhibit 1). While about three-fifths of all adults in Central Florida's surrounding community have a high school degree, only one-quarter have some type of postsecondary degree.

Exhibit 1

A Comparison of the College of Central Florida's Demographics to the State of Florida

	State of Florida	College of Central Florida's Community[1]
Socioeconomic Indicators		
Total Population	18,423,878	507,236
Average Poverty Rate	13.2%	16.1%
Median Income	$47,802	$39,383
Unemployment Rate	6.2%	7.7%
Highest Education Level of Adults 25 Years & Over		
No High School Diploma	15.1%	16.3%
High School Diploma	50.9%	59.4%
AA or AS Degree	8.4%	7.9%
BA Degree & Above	25.6%	16.4%

Source: Socioeconomic indicators taken from 2008 U.S. Census and Department of Labor data. Education figures taken from 2005–2009 five-year estimates from the American Community Survey.

[1] The College of Central Florida's community consists of Citrus, Levy and Marion Counties. The population figure is a sum of the population of these three counties and other indicators are a population-weighted average.

Central Florida was chosen for this study to represent medium-sized, suburban colleges in Florida that have steadily improved their success in moving students through their developmental education (DevEd) coursework, particularly in math.[2] The state of Florida defines an institution's "college prep" success rate as the annual percentage of DevEd students (i.e., students who started their college careers at the DevEd level) who passed the highest DevEd math, reading and writing courses by the end of their second year in college.[3] Exhibit 2 illustrates that Central Florida's 2008 DevEd success rate in math was almost eight percentage points higher than the state's average rate.

Exhibit 2
Developmental Education Success Rates, 2008

	State of Florida	College of Central Florida
Math	51.7%	59.4%
Reading	68.3%	62.1%
Writing	62.5%	42.3%

Source: Florida Accountability Report, 2008.

While Central Florida's reading and writing rates are still below the state average, the college was selected for this study due to its steady growth in the share of students who started in upper-level DevEd math and completed their coursework by the end of their second year of college. As shown in Exhibit 3, this consistent growth led to completion rates that exceeded the state's overall rate in 2005.

Exhibit 3
Upper-level Developmental Education Math Completion Rates, 2004–2007

	State of Florida	College of Central Florida
2004	62.6%	60.1%
2005	63.2%	63.9%
2006	66.3%	69.0%
2007	65.2%	75.9%

Source: Jobs for the Future's calculations from Florida Department of Education institutional-level data.

From 2002 to 2008, student enrollment at Central Florida more than doubled, bringing the total 2008 student population to approximately 6,200.[4] This substantial increase in the student population has not deterred the college's leaders from emphasizing personalized learning for all students. Central Florida's focus on individual

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[2] Jobs for the Future (JFF) focused on DevEd math success as a criterion in particular to select colleges for this study. This is because DevEd students generally have more difficulty completing DevEd math than reading and/or writing. See the Introduction and Appendix A for additional information on Jobs for the Future's college selection process.

[3] Many Florida colleges use the term *college prep* to refer to DevEd courses and students. Therefore, in this case study, the term *college prep* is sometimes used by interviewees and in state data.

[4] The data used to select colleges for this study were from 2002 to 2008; site visits were conducted in 2011.

students has especially encouraged non-traditional, adult students to enroll at the college; almost half (46%) of Central Florida's students are above 21 years of age.[5] As one administrator explained, "For our adult students, we have tried doing developmental education classes on Saturdays, evenings and mornings. We have tried so many ways of reaching these students."

In March 2011, BTW *informing change* (BTW) staff visited Central Florida's main campus for two days to learn more about the college's continuous improvement in DevEd. BTW staff conducted interviews with nine Central Florida senior administrators and also facilitated three focus groups with DevEd faculty and advising/counseling staff. The interviews and focus groups explored the extent to which key institutional leaders, faculty and staff believe that Central Florida has exhibited the five characteristics of high-performing colleges, especially between 2002 and 2008.[6] Their stories paint a portrait of DevEd at Central Florida.

THE COLLEGE OF CENTRAL FLORIDA'S STORY OF SUCCESS

Central Florida's administrators, faculty and staff attribute the college's DevEd success to committed leadership, innovative instruction and various student support services.

KEY ELEMENTS OF CENTRAL FLORIDA'S SUCCESS

Committed Leadership
- Holistic and personalized approach

Innovative Instruction
- Learning communities
- Consistent curricula and course delivery
- Supplemental instruction

Student Support Services
- Informal advising
- Early Alert system

Committed Leadership

"Leadership has to set the tone, and they tell us that DevEd is a priority."

Administrators, faculty and advising staff agree that the commitment of Central Florida's leaders is a key factor in the college's success with DevEd students. Central Florida's leadership has taken an active role in shaping DevEd at the college, making it an institutional priority. Senior administrators have leveraged resources over the last several years to develop and implement several initiatives focused on DevEd, including the college's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) in 2005 and a Title III federal grant in 2007.[7]

Both initiatives signaled the proactive involvement of Central Florida's leaders in addressing DevEd student retention and readiness for college-level work. Central Florida's leaders recognize that it is difficult to successfully bring visibility and improvement to DevEd at an

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[5] Data from U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences.

[6] The five characteristics are demonstration of commitment and intentional institutional leadership from the president and senior administrators; identification and adoption of innovative developmental education instruction; practice of proactive student support services; regular use of data by faculty and administrators; and/or provision of ongoing professional development opportunities for faculty and advisors. For more information, see page two of the Introduction.

[7] In 2005, Central Florida underwent its renewal of accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and created a QEP that focused on a strategy to improve DevEd success. Regional college accreditation ensures that an institution meets certain standards so that students are eligible for federal financial aid, faculty can apply for federal research grants and courses and degrees from the institution are recognized by other institutions. In 2008, Central Florida applied for and was awarded a Title III federal grant to further improve student success in DevEd. The purpose of Title III funding is to expand institutional capacity by providing funds to improve and strengthen the academic quality, institutional management and fiscal stability of eligible post-secondary institutions. Central Florida used this funding to implement DevEd-related programs such as the centralized DevEd department.

organizational level without buy-in and support from high-ranking senior administrators. One senior administrator noted, "The leaders have to say that it is important. The Academic Vice President and Vice President of Student Affairs and the President have to say that this is important."

The decision by a group of senior administrators to re-energize the Remediation Task Force (RTF) during the development of the QEP is another example of the commitment of Central Florida's leaders to DevEd. [8] Through the RTF, senior administrators began working with representatives from high schools and school districts in local counties to reduce recent high school graduates' need for DevEd coursework once they arrive at Central Florida. The RTF process brought together senior administrators from various departments, including Instructional Affairs, Student Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness, and illustrates how inter-departmental cooperation and collaboration has contributed to Central Florida's DevEd success.

The leadership at Central Florida has also taken a holistic and personalized approach to serving DevEd students, by focusing on the whole student and not just on academic performance. Senior administrators, faculty and advising staff place the same priority on providing personal and non-academic support as they do on academic support. They believe that if students have unresolved non-academic issues, their class attendance and commitment to learning are likely to suffer. As one administrator noted, "Our commitment to students and learning in an open, caring and inclusive environment is our bedrock. This philosophy pervades all the programs at this college, including DevEd. I don't think we feel differently about DevEd just because it is DevEd." This type of compassion resonates with Central Florida's senior administrators and staff, who work individually and collaboratively to create a supportive environment for their students.

"A community college's success is dependent on individualized services and attention."

—Senior Administrator

Central Florida's president and senior administrators promote individualized and personalized services for all students and firmly reject the "one size fits all" approach. One administrator clearly articulated the college's reasoning behind this, saying, "The students bring different things to the campus and not every student needs the same thing to get to where he or she wants to go. People assume that DevEd students are all alike, but that's far from the truth. There are a range of reasons why these students are here and what they bring to the campus, so there have to be individualized approaches and services." This belief is held by faculty and advising staff, who often go well beyond the call of duty to provide targeted supports to their students.

Central Florida's leaders believe in and promote experimenting until they find the approach that works best for the college and students. For example, for over a decade, Central Florida's decentralized DevEd structure produced only modest success in moving students through DevEd courses. As a result, in 2005, Central Florida leaders decided to encourage innovation, focusing its QEP on providing senior administrators and faculty with opportunities and resources to develop and implement different DevEd structures and delivery methods.

Ultimately, from 2005 to 2008, Central Florida adopted a tightly coordinated DevEd structure. One administrator explained, "When we wrote the QEP, we wrote it as a highly coordinated but decentralized model, which meant faculty would stay in their departments and advisors would stay in the Student Affairs Department, but they would meet regularly to look at the [QEP] and work toward the objectives that we were trying to achieve."

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[8] The RTF was created under a state-mandated program in 1998 with the purpose of reducing the need for remediation in math, reading and writing for recent high school graduates enrolling in college for the first time.

This culture of experimentation set the foundation for implementing other innovative and evidenced-based practices to enhance student success in DevEd, including learning communities, lead instructors and a student attendance and behavior monitoring system called Early Alert, which are discussed in the following section. Some of these practices were successful and are thus in place today, while other less successful practices have been discontinued.

Innovative Instruction

"Learning communities create closer connections between students and between faculty members."

"In the learning communities, the instructors were able to discuss what was going on in their classes and how students were reacting. They were a little bit better prepared and had a little more background information on the students. There was that team teaching and that worked really well."

—Faculty Member

Under the highly coordinated DevEd structure, Central Florida experimented with learning communities for two years with the intent of fostering connections between DevEd students and collaboration among faculty members. The learning communities paired two classes in consecutive time slots to provide instructors with the opportunity to coordinate content and class assignments and even co-teach lessons. Student Life Skills (SLS) courses, which focused on life skills, financial management and careers, were paired with DevEd math courses; DevEd reading courses were paired with DevEd writing courses. "We read a novel in our reading course, and in their writing class students wrote [assignments] based on what they read," one faculty member recalled.

After a few years, Central Florida ran into administrative challenges with learning communities. Successful implementation required substantial time commitment and flexibility on the part of students since courses occupied long blocks of time in the middle of each day. This proved difficult for adult students with jobs and/or families. Learning communities were also time-consuming for instructors, especially for adjunct faculty with other jobs. As a result, in 2008 the learning communities came to an end. According to one senior administrator, "The learning community activities did not fit with the schedules of adult and commuter students who have to go to work [after class]. It is very difficult to coordinate activities when you don't have students living in the dorms where you could have after-hour activities."

The administrative and logistical challenges (e.g., ensuring that students who enrolled in the paired classes were actually required to take both classes), as well as the time and resources required to schedule and plan the learning communities, were too onerous to overcome. Regardless, the changes to DevEd structure and the experimentation with learning communities between 2005 and 2008 illustrate Central Florida's ongoing drive to improve success in DevEd.

"The lead instructors are down in the trenches with you."

A hallmark of DevEd instruction at Central Florida is the use of lead instructors. Lead instructors have been credited with adding consistency to both the overall curricula as well as curricular delivery. For example, Central Florida has designated one lead instructor to each DevEd subject area (i.e., math, writing and reading), establishing a content expert who is responsible for maintaining standards for DevEd course content and delivery. This standard ensures that all DevEd students, regardless of the quality of individual instructors, receive the same

general instruction at Central Florida. One faculty member noted, "We have uniformity in college prep. There are certain things that all prep courses are supposed to do—teach the same skills, use the same textbooks and use the same language." Furthermore, this consistency has increased the quality of teaching, mitigating some of the negative impacts associated with relying heavily on part-time adjunct faculty to teach DevEd courses.

"You'd have to go hide somewhere not to get help on this campus!"

Central Florida's senior administrators and faculty have credited targeted and one-on-one supplemental instruction as a main contributor to the success of DevEd students. For instance, the college designed a special summer bridge program called Project Eagle that serves 50 entering college students who have taken the college placement exam and are on the cusp (i.e., within 10 points) of passing. Most Project Eagle participants are recent high school graduates who need extra targeted support to pass the college placement exam. During the summer, these students come to Central Florida for a four-week program that focuses on team building, study skills and intense instruction in each of the DevEd subject areas. As one administrator noted, "In this program, these students are learning how to learn, how to take tests [and] how to relate to one another." Project Eagle participants attend DevEd classes taught by college faculty in the mornings. In the afternoons, they receive additional individualized support during tutoring sessions. Due to the intensity of the program, the majority of the students who participate in Project Eagle are able to pass their college placement exam and place out of DevEd courses in the fall.

Project Eagle participants also receive additional guidance and support to ensure that they become successful students at Central Florida. One senior administrator explained, "We get students acclimated to the college, give them college campus tours and do motivational and leadership exercises. We have various departments come in to introduce students to other services such as admissions, financial aid and testing. We sort of do orientation for these students; this is in addition to the regular orientation." The senior administrators and DevEd faculty are fierce advocates of this program because it serves students who only need help on specific topics to pass a college placement exam to move on to college-level courses.

Once students are enrolled in DevEd courses, faculty members encourage them to seek additional one-on-one assistance and tutoring at the math lab and in the reading and writing centers, which are all-day tutoring centers open Monday through Saturday. In addition to hired student tutors, DevEd faculty members also volunteer a few hours each week at these instructional centers. This provides students with the opportunity to receive assistance outside of structured classroom and office hour time.

"The lead instructors share their course materials with the adjuncts. When somebody new is hired, they meet with the lead instructor and they know what to do to get started. This help[s] that [new] instructor gain a strong footing."

—Faculty Member

> *"We give our students a lot of one-on-one [attention] because we want them to be successful—we really do. And if we get them to be successful, it's a win-win situation. It's a win for them because they can go to the next courses; it's a win for the college because the college has a student that can go on [to college-level courses and eventually graduate]."*
>
> —Faculty Member

One administrator enthusiastically described the level of customized supplemental instruction that is available to meet DevEd students' needs. "If a student needs three prep courses, then we are going to throw everything at that student—one-on-one tutoring, group tutoring, online support, labs, one-on-one sessions, modular sessions. We will give that student every support that we can possibly give them," he said. "If a student is in second-level math, they won't need much support, so we will provide them the level of support needed, but not as much."

This level of individualized and personalized supplemental instruction helps to ensure student success. As mentioned by an administrator, "There is no excuse for students at Central Florida to fail, unless they just don't want to [succeed]."

Lead instructors have also initiated supplemental instruction efforts. In 2007, instructors began to offer workshops to DevEd students on topics that they struggled with, such as arithmetic and pre-algebra. These one-day workshops are aligned with DevEd curricula and syllabi to ensure that the timing of the workshops is appropriate. As one faculty member stated, "We would offer a day workshop and an evening workshop and anybody could come. It was free. The lead instructors would choose different faculty members to run the workshops. And the first time we did it, maybe 10 people came. The last time we did this, we could not fit everybody in the classroom."

These workshops also give faculty members another setting in which to provide additional assistance to their students and interact with them at a more personal level. Due to the popularity of these workshops among DevEd students, lead instructors have expanded them to include presentations by non-DevEd faculty to introduce students to beginning college-level content.

Student Support Services

"Each faculty member is kind of a designated crisis counselor."

Under the highly coordinated DevEd structure, all Central Florida students are formally required to meet with an academic advisor after taking a college placement exam—but informal advising is where Central Florida's personalized attention really benefits DevEd students. Faculty members frequently serve as informal advisors and answer questions regarding courses, degree requirements and careers. Instructors create an open and safe environment in their classroom for students to ask both academic and personal questions. One faculty member stated, "We had discussions about different types of [college] degrees and what should be students' expectations. They could ask questions at any time because they were...with the same instructors and it was a small group." DevEd faculty members take it upon themselves to ensure that there is a consistent flow of information between them and DevEd students. DevEd faculty members also offer crisis and personal counseling to students who experience any number of issues, including relationship problems, financial crises and imbalances in work, school and family schedules.

In the early 2000s, Central Florida introduced the Early Alert system, which has become integral to providing DevEd students access to the individualized services that Central Florida takes much pride in offering. Instructors are expected to raise a red flag when they see a student struggling in a class, academically or otherwise, so the student can receive appropriate support before he or she falls through the cracks. As one administrator noted, "It is a support mechanism for students who are messing up, not showing up for classes, not turning in assignments, or having emotional issues [and] problems at home." Once the student has been identified as needing additional assistance, advising staff make efforts to connect the student with various support services on and off campus. An administrator explained, "We sit down with them and find out what is going on. If it is an academic issue then we connect them with resources, such as remedial services, tutoring services, math labs, you name it. Frequently we discover it is other issues [that cause the problem], such as economic, mental health, divorce, substance abuse. We have services for that too." Overall, Central Florida's leaders believe that most students who are targeted through Early Alert eventually show academic improvement. Early Alert was initially implemented to target DevEd students only, but the program has since been scaled to cover the entire student population at Central Florida.

> *"With Early Alert, we are capturing students before they become a problem."*
>
> —Senior Administrator

Central Florida's support services make student success and retention a priority. One advisor summarized, "When we look at retaining students, there are four areas [we can address]. If there is a student who does not want to go to school, there isn't much you can do. But if there are academic issues, we have services to help with that. If there are economic issues, we have services for that. If there are behavioral or emotional issues, we have services for those as well. They have access to the services and can take advantage of these services."

AREAS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

OTHER DEVELOPING PRACTICES

Student Support Services
· Formal advising
Use of Data
· Institutional data
Professional Development

Faculty, staff and administrators at Central Florida do not identify ongoing formal advising, use of institutional data or professional development as primary contributors to the college's DevEd success between 2002 and 2008. However, since 2009, Central Florida has made great strides to improve and integrate these three strategies, in part due to the availability of additional funding and resources.

Although Central Florida had a strong informal advising component between 2002 and 2008, it did not have ongoing formal advising for DevEd students. Students were only required to meet with an academic advisor once during their college careers. Around 2003, due to financial reasons, Central Florida decided to transition from part-time counselors who taught SLS courses to full-time academic advisors in the Student Affairs Department. This decision further reduced the level of personalized and individualized academic advising that was available to all students. DevEd students felt the impact the most because they require a greater level of personal interaction with and monitoring from advisors. According to a faculty member, "Academic advisors were dealing with classes and there really wasn't any special emphasis on [college] prep students. The whole process was: folks would come in, make an appointment to see an advisor, get their academic advisement and go on their merry way. And that was pretty much it. So as far as [having] special advising for developmental students or anything like that, there really wasn't any."

After the mandatory initial meeting with an advisor, the responsibility was on the students to seek out advising. During the same time period, a switch to 10-minute walk-in advising sessions further limited the interaction between academic advisors and students to class scheduling and academic planning. As one faculty member described, "Students come in, tell us who they are and tell the advisor what classes they want. The advisors try to get them in [those classes], and they leave. Our DevEd students need more contact."

In the early 2000s, Central Florida implemented a new data system with the intention of improving institutional data collection and use. Unfortunately, due to staff attrition the new data system was not fully utilized for system-wide data collection and dissemination. One senior administrator summed up the situation this way: "We are data rich and information poor, and getting reports has not been easier." Per the state requirement, the Institutional Effectiveness Department collected data on Central Florida's progress on various accountability measures, including DevEd enrollment, completion, withdrawal rates and retention. These data were only used in limited ways, such as during the QEP and Title III federal grant application process. Thus, there was a widespread feeling across various departments that new services and programs were being implemented to increase DevEd student outcomes and success, yet no data systems existed to demonstrate the effectiveness or success of these programs. In 2010, however, a new Director of Institutional Effectiveness was hired to increase the availability and use of institutional data, and faculty and administrators are excited about pending changes.

Central Florida's faculty and advising staff are highly encouraged to attend DevEd-related workshops, webinars and conferences throughout the state. Yet, faculty and staff did not mention professional development as a main strategy to improve DevEd student success and were more likely to discuss other characteristics such as DevEd structure or learning communities. Since 2008, however, when Central Florida received Title III federal funding, professional development opportunities for faculty and advising staff increased tremendously.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT: RECENT CHANGES TO CENTRAL FLORIDA'S DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION STRUCTURE

Since 2008, Central Florida has increased its momentum with DevEd and implemented a variety of practices and policies to further improve DevEd success rates, accountability for DevEd student outcomes and individualized and personalized services.

Central Florida's leaders began to realize around 2007 that their highly coordinated DevEd system created a situation of "all of the responsibility but none of the authority to accomplish institutional initiative." After three years of a highly coordinated system, the college created a fully centralized DevEd structure that included a separate department called Academic Foundations. The move to centralization demonstrates Central Florida's culture of continuous experimentation to increase student success. One senior administrator noted, "It was time for us to centralize to bring more sense of program to DevEd, rather than it being a series of courses." While some faculty members worried that centralization might cause isolation for DevEd students, administrators believed that the benefits outweighed the drawbacks. Another administrator justified this transition: "We had different pockets doing some of the same things, just with a different name and twist to it. It was too spread out. We were trying to pull it together [with a highly coordinated structure] but sometimes you have to centralize…We know it is better for us."

For DevEd students, the Academic Foundations Department serves as a one-stop shop for accessing DevEd courses, connecting with DevEd faculty members and advisors, and receiving a range of services and supports. Similar to the structure of the learning communities program, the Academic Foundations Department continues to offer two levels of DevEd courses in math, reading and writing, as well as three types of SLS courses. Currently, students who are required to take two or more DevEd courses are also required to enroll in the SLS course.

The Academic Foundations Department houses a dean, nine full-time DevEd faculty members and two full-time academic advisors dedicated to DevEd students. The decision to have DevEd faculty and advisors in such close proximity has tremendously increased the level of formal and informal academic advising available to DevEd students. As one advisor noted, "We have a lot of interaction with the faculty who bring DevEd students to us or who tell us what's going on with the students. We can really get involved because of this." The two academic advisors are a welcomed addition to the DevEd team, as they not only provide assistance with scheduling and academic planning but also provide students with a chance for more personalized interaction and counseling.

THE COLLEGE OF CENTRAL FLORIDA: LESSONS FROM EXPERIMENTATION

The College of Central Florida has had a record in the last 10 years of providing personalized and individualized services to promote college success for DevEd students. Committed leadership, innovative instruction and specific types of advising have contributed to this college's success. The institutional leaders' philosophy around targeted services and a culture of experimentation has improved Central Florida's DevEd structure and curricula delivery methods since 2002. In addition, the college's practices around the role of lead instructors, supplemental instruction and student support services are also credited as significant contributors to the college's success with DevEd.

Looking ahead, Central Florida plans to continue strengthening its DevEd structure and practices and increasing DevEd student graduation rates by participating in the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's *Completion by Design* initiative.[9] Central Florida faculty and administrators are excited about implementing the new state college

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[9] In 2010, Central Florida was awarded the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's *Completion by Design* grant to improve DevEd students' experiences from the beginning to the end of their college careers. This grant will focus on increasing DevEd student graduation rates by directly addressing organizational and administrative factors, such as resources, institutional leadership and state policy.

placement exam that contains a diagnostic tool to identify areas of weakness in reading, writing and math. Faculty members are also excited about implementing modularized curricula that will allow them to offer targeted assistance to DevEd students. In addition to instructional benefits, this will help reduce attrition and the amount of time students spend in DevEd courses. DevEd faculty and staff are also developing ways to increase communication with other college-level departments, such as English, math and humanities. Within broader conversations about strategic direction, leaders and faculty members are beginning to discuss ways to offset the potential negative impacts of DevEd centralization, such as a sense of stigmatization and student fragmentation from the rest of the student population.

Central Florida's story of success demonstrates how a college can provide individualized student services, regardless of the college size, and explore DevEd practices and policies to find the ones that work best for the college and its students. Central Florida leaders and faculty members continuously seek the right strategies to improve DevEd success, but they do not hesitate to abandon practices and policies that fail to produce the desired results. In the midst of this experimentation and transition, Central Florida maintains a focus on creating a supportive environment for DevEd students to ensure that they complete their DevEd sequence successfully.

A Case Study of Developmental Education at Daytona State College

Daytona State College

Chances are, if you were asked to visualize the city of Daytona Beach, you would mention the area's long strips of crowded, sandy beaches or perhaps its famed international speedway. You might even mention the several annual festivals that bring in motorcycle enthusiasts from around the country. Yet these tourist attractions do not tell the city's full story. If you look carefully, nestled between the beach, the speedway and the international airport is a bustling three-mile strip of college culture. In fact, the city's West International Speedway Boulevard is home to four institutions of higher education: a historically black university, an aeronautical university, a satellite center of a large state university and Daytona State College (Daytona State).

Daytona State is an example of a college achieving admirable levels of student success, despite its urban location. A large institution in the heart of a large community, the college's flagship campus is located in the city of Daytona Beach, with additional campuses in nearby DeLand, Deltona, New Smyrna Beach and Palm Coast. Daytona State's students come primarily from two counties that together have a population of approximately 588,000. The college's surrounding community is relatively representative of the state in terms of its average income level, though the unemployment level is slightly higher than in other parts of the state (Exhibit 1). The highest education level of the majority of adults in the area is a high school diploma; only one in five also have at least a bachelor's degree.

Exhibit 1

A Comparison of Daytona State College's Demographics to the State of Florida

	State of Florida	Daytona State College's Community[1]
Socioeconomic Indicators		
Total Population	18,423,878	588,044
Average Poverty Rate	13.2%	12.4%
Median Income	$47,802	$46,322
Unemployment Rate	6.2%	7.0%
Highest Education Level of Adults 25 Years & Over		
No High School Diploma	15.1%	12.9%
High School Diploma	50.9%	57.3%
AA or AS Degree	8.4%	9.3%
BA Degree & Above	25.6%	20.6%

Source: Socioeconomic indicators taken from 2008 U.S. Census and Department of Labor data. Education figures taken from 2005–2009 five-year estimates from the American Community Survey.

[1] Daytona State College's community consists of Volusia and Flagler counties. The population figure is a sum of the population of these two counties and other indicators are a population-weighted average.

Daytona State was chosen for this study to represent large, urban colleges in Florida that are excelling in moving students through developmental education (DevEd) coursework, particularly in math.[2] The state of Florida defines an institution's "college prep" success rate as the annual percentage of DevEd students (i.e., students who started their college careers at the DevEd level) who passed the highest DevEd math, reading and writing courses by the end of their second year in college.[3] Exhibit 2 shows that Daytona State's 2008 success rates were approximately 15 percentage points higher than state averages.

Exhibit 2
Developmental Education Success Rates, 2008

	State of Florida	Daytona State College
Math	51.7%	68.4%
Reading	68.3%	83.7%
Writing	62.5%	76.1%

Source: Florida Accountability Report, 2008.

Daytona State was in part selected for this study because its high DevEd success rates are consistent across various student demographics as well. Exhibit 3 shows that a much larger share of students of various age, racial/ethnic and income groups who started in upper-level DevEd math and completed their coursework by the end of their second year of college, compared to the state overall.

Exhibit 3
Upper-level Developmental Education Math Completion Rates, 2007

	State of Florida	Daytona State College
All Students	65.2%	85.4%
Students Aged 22 & Under	65.8%	85.5%
Students Over the Age of 22	64.9%	84.6%
African American Students	61.0%	89.4%
Latino Students	69.4%	95.2%
Federal Pell Grant Recipients	68.4%	82.6%

Source: Jobs for the Future's calculations from Florida Department of Education institutional-level data.

[2] Jobs for the Future (JFF) focused on DevEd math success as a criterion in particular to select colleges for this study. This is because DevEd students generally have more difficulty completing DevEd math than reading and/or writing. See the Introduction and Appendix A for additional information on Job for the Future's college selection process.

[3] Many Florida colleges use the term *college prep* to refer to DevEd courses and students. Therefore, in this case study, the term *college prep* is sometimes used by interviewees and in state data.

Daytona State's campus is vast; the college's parking area alone could likely outsize some smaller colleges. Along with its size, there is a sense of energy and bustling activity that permeates the campus. Daytona State's student enrollment has been steadily increasing over the past decade.

In the 2007–08 school year, the college's total student enrollment was approximately 14,000.[4] About 19,000 students currently attend Daytona State and half are required to take at least one DevEd course in their first year. Walking around the campus, the age range of students is also apparent. In 2007–08, 60% of the college's students were under the age of 25, while 40% were between the ages of 25 and 64.[5]

In March 2011, BTW *informing change* (BTW) staff visited Daytona State's main campus for two days to learn from leadership, faculty and staff about their DevEd policies and/or practices. BTW conducted interviews with three Daytona State senior administrators and also facilitated three focus groups with DevEd faculty and advising staff. The interviews and focus groups explored the extent to which key institutional leaders, faculty and staff believe that Daytona State exhibits the five characteristics of colleges with high DevEd success, especially between 2002 and 2008.[6] Their stories paint a portrait of DevEd at Daytona State.

DAYTONA STATE COLLEGE'S STORY OF SUCCESS

KEY ELEMENTS OF DAYTONA STATE'S SUCCESS

Committed Leadership
· Inclusive philosophy
Innovative Instruction
· Accelerated courses
· Consistent curricula and course delivery
· Faculty initiative
· Supplemental instruction
Use of Data
· Institutional data
· Departmental data

Administrators, faculty and advising staff agree that the three strongest characteristics that explain Daytona State's relative DevEd student success are strong leadership, innovative instructional practices and frequent use of data.

Committed Leadership

"Our philosophy is positive immersion."

Daytona State's leaders have adopted an inclusive philosophy that ensures that DevEd students are treated like other college students, with minimal distinctions from the mainstream student body. The institution's DevEd courses are administered and taught through the math and English departments, as Daytona State's senior administrators believe that a separate DevEd department would make the college lose focus on the end goal of students graduating with a college degree. Leaders at Daytona State have set a high standard for the institution—they see the state's average success rates as a minimum bar to be met and exceeded.

When you separate [DevEd from college level], the stigma appears...within the students themselves."

—Faculty Member

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[4] The data used to select colleges for this study were from 2002 to 2008; site visits were conducted in 2011.

[5] Data from U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences.

[6] These five characteristics are demonstration of commitment and intentional institutional leadership from the president and senior administrators; identification and adoption of innovative developmental education instruction; practice of proactive student support services; regular use of data by faculty and administrators; and/or provision of ongoing professional development for faculty and advisors. For more information, see page two of the Introduction.

Daytona State has developed a DevEd structure that produces top scores for their students, and the college's leaders do not let the institution's urban location and diverse population serve as an impediment to high performance.

To achieve even higher DevEd success rates, Daytona State's leaders recently investigated the possibility of a stand-alone department. After researching best practices in the field, however, they felt strongly that a separate DevEd department would be psychologically and emotionally limiting for students. According to one instructor, "You go to our classrooms right now [and] you don't know which one is college prep and which one is not. They're all students to us. So now what happens is they leave my class and go to the next class [and] they don't have the stigma that's associated with it." Since about half of entering students are already required to take at least one DevEd course, Daytona State's administrators do not think it makes sense to create a distinct department, as it would create unnecessary bureaucracy. To prevent labeling or embarrassment, Daytona State's key leaders encourage faculty to treat DevEd students with respect, engaging in adult-level conversations in classrooms and using curricula that are relevant and age appropriate.

Innovative Instruction

"Shorter classes work better."

Daytona State has developed a number of innovative instructional practices that promote DevEd student success. The most significant practice was the 2006 implementation of accelerated and modularized DevEd classes in the math and English departments to address the issue of DevEd retention and completion. These courses changed the structure of DevEd courses from 16-week, full-semester to 8-week, half-semester classes. The abbreviated course structure keeps students in the classroom for the same number of hours as in full-semester courses but they now meet four to five times a week rather than twice a week. With the course curricula compressed into half the number of weeks, students are able to complete two levels of DevEd in one semester, cutting in half the amount of time necessary to move onto college-level coursework. This serves as a huge motivating factor for students, leading to greater persistence and course completion. As explained by one DevEd instructor, with semester-long DevEd courses "[y]ou've got twice as much time during which life can interfere." The shorter classes allow students to maintain their momentum to get through their coursework.

"In my first calculus class [as a student], the lady said, 'Look to your left. Look to your right. One of you won't be here at the end.' … [W]e have the opposite philosophy. I am embarrassed when I look at my completion rates if they're not at a certain standard that I set for myself…. [W]e are not patting ourselves on the back because only nine students made it."

— Faculty Member

Daytona State's faculty and administrators believe that accelerated learning is a primary strategy that increases DevEd student success. Because students are enrolled in DevEd courses for fewer semesters, they can have the opportunity to enroll in college-level coursework as early as their second semester. The courses are modularized, allowing students to learn the topics in which they are behind, rather than covering all DevEd topics, which can cause boredom and disengagement. Finally, because students are now in class or lab every day, there are fewer gaps within the week to contribute to learning loss.

The academic calendar also supports accelerated and modularized learning. Strategically, mid-semester in the fall occurs before Thanksgiving break and before spring break in the spring semester. Ending a course before a long break prevents truancy and attrition after the break ends. As described by a faculty member, "[W]e saw a high dropout rate here at our college in the tenth week at Thanksgiving break, where students wouldn't come back. In the spring, that tenth week is around spring break. And students wouldn't come back. What you have to realize here is…right around Thanksgiving is Oktoberfest, where students literally could make $2,000–$3,000 for two weeks, selling shirts, cigarettes and the whole nine yards. So, they would come to school, be here seven, eight, nine weeks—then miss one or two weeks to go make that money, which you can't blame them for. But they wouldn't come back or they would try to come back and…had missed so much school that they weren't successful." Eight-week courses helped to alleviate this mid-semester dropout problem.

DevEd faculty members have discovered several additional positive outcomes as a result of the implementation of accelerated and modularized courses. First, students are now less likely to drop out of a course due to a disagreement with or dislike of the instructor, since 8 weeks in a course is more tolerable for students than 16 weeks. Second, because students register for lower- and upper-level DevEd courses at the same time, there is a cohort of students moving from one course to the next, creating a collaborative and shared learning environment. According to one faculty person, "[Y]ou will hear them [say], 'Hey, what time are we meeting? We'll all come back at 11 o'clock and let's do our work together.'…[T]hat's what this program really invites. And it goes beyond this class—they continue to work together because they find their courses together. They agree upon what teacher they're going to take and you'll see them sticking together through their college credit courses."

The math department is a very vocal champion of accelerated DevEd courses. The accelerated course structure, along with several other curricular changes, increased DevEd math completion rates by over 20% in just a few years. English faculty members have a more mixed response. While most English instructors believe that accelerated courses increase student momentum and allow for cohort learning, some still prefer longer courses since they believe that more weeks of reading and writing practice leads to greater success.

"When you talk about our system, everybody is doing the exact same thing."

After the implementation of accelerated courses, the math department addressed a lack of consistency in curricula and content delivery of the DevEd courses. Led by the math department's chair, the faculty decided on several structural changes to promote standardization and greater student success. The department abandoned its lecture-focused teaching format and began using video instruction. These videos, developed by and featuring math faculty members, are 30-to-60–second clips that teach vital DevEd math concepts such as fractions or percentages. One instructor explained, "Basically you take 10 to 15 minutes, show your videos, do the instruction and then give them that time to practice immediately what you just taught them…. If they just wait until they get home, they open the book and they think, 'Ok, I don't know how to do this now by myself.' But you show them the consistent way to do it and it's just so nice that [the students] have somebody right there to correct them when they're making the mistake. I think everybody really prefers to work in that group atmosphere so that…they get that instant feedback."

Because Daytona State relies heavily on adjunct professors, the videos created much needed instructional standardization. Students are taught the same material in the same format, irrespective of their instructor. This minimizes the impact of part-time adjunct staff teaching the vast majority of DevEd math courses. As stated by a faculty member, "All of us use the videos—no ifs, ands or buts about it…. [W]hen you talk about our system, everybody is doing the exact same thing. The rationale behind that is consistency throughout the entire course.

Along with the video instruction, the math department fostered consistency by publishing their own customized textbooks to include examples, in-class exercises and supplemental work that relate directly to the concepts taught in the videos. The textbooks also contain standardized daily schedules for each DevEd course, which keep both the

instructor and students on task. In addition, the department altered the homework structure so that 90% of coursework for DevEd courses is completed in class with assistance from the instructor. This reduces the impact of external factors that result in incomplete homework, including work commitments and lack of support at home.

Similar to the math department, the English department relies heavily on adjunct professors. Therefore, to maintain consistency the department chair created full-time lead instructors to develop the curricula, syllabi and content delivery for the DevEd reading and writing courses. The practices developed by the lead instructors are carried out by the entire department. The English department has also embraced technology to maintain consistency, providing online self-learning modules to all DevEd students. Students take a diagnostic exam—then enroll in the online modules according to these results—which ensures that their weaknesses are identified and addressed uniformly across all instructors.

TIME ON TASK + CLASS ATTENDANCE = STUDENT SUCCESS

Daytona State's recent structural changes around DevEd emphasize time on task and class attendance as the equation for student success. The time students spend on task increased significantly when accelerated courses were implemented—students began working in groups to complete their homework assignments in class and attended class or lab every day. The revised course structure ensures that students spend at least eight hours per week on a single subject. Class attendance is also vital, as it ensures that students are present to be able to spend time on task. Again, the accelerated courses were developed to motivate students to persist through the term. According to one administrator, "[I]t's not whether or not they can do the math. If they're in class, we can help them. And if they're willing to work they can be successful." Daytona State's recent changes helped to get students into class and doing the work, and administrators and staff believe this is why their students have been so successful.

"There's an ownership with our faculty that is a really integral part of our program."

The instructors in Daytona State's English and math departments have a strong culture of personal initiative to improve student success. This is partially because the college's senior administrators expect department chairs and instructors to design curricula that produce maximum results. The academic departments find that they receive ample support for this to occur. One faculty member described the transparent process of requesting funding from senior administrators for new technology or experimental teaching methods: "The only questions they ask me [are], 'Is it going to help the success rate?… Is it going to make them better students?'" If the academic departments can show that the funding will directly benefit students, the college's leaders are willing to provide that additional support.

"I would say 95% of the college prep courses are taught by our adjuncts…[T]he phrase I say is they drink the Kool-Aid. They bought into the system and…that's the bottom line."

—Faculty Member

Similarly, department chairs hold all faculty members accountable for the delivery of quality, standardized content. Both full-time and adjunct instructors pride themselves on being integral components of this process, rather than passively waiting for department chairs or administrators to lead.

Adjunct faculty members, who teach a high proportion of DevEd courses at Daytona State, are held to similar standards as the full-time faculty. Adjunct instructors are supported by full-time staff and encouraged to communicate questions or concerns to full-time staff. As stated by one full-time English faculty member, "We have [departmental] meetings in the evening so that [adjuncts] can come. And then [the full-time faculty

members are] there too and it's like everyone is a part. It's not like you're over there, and we're here." In addition, because DevEd courses are housed in the department of their subject areas, DevEd faculty members openly communicate with other instructors within each department. For example, the college-level English instructors help grade DevEd exit exams, which is a process they value, as the students who pass the exit exams will soon be sitting in their classrooms.

"This institution has taken supplemental student learning very, very seriously."

"[O]f your 10 office hours, 6 might be spent in your office and 4 might be spent in the Academic Support Center or the Writing Lab. I think that helps a lot because the student sees that they can get that firsthand help."

—Faculty Member

A variety of supplemental instruction and academic support services are available to students at Daytona State. The Academic Support Center was first started as a resource exclusively for DevEd students. Due to its popularity and increased funding from a 2002 federal grant, the Center expanded its services to the general student population in 2004. The Center is a computer-based facility that provides walk-in tutoring, workshops, supplemental instruction, student support services and more. Faculty members encourage their students to use the Center frequently. In addition, full-time faculty members are required to hold office hours at the Center to reach out to students who are too intimidated or not motivated to visit an instructor at his or her office.

In 2010, Daytona State built on the continued success of the Center to develop the specialized College Writing Center. Students can make appointments for one-on-one tutoring sessions at the Writing Center to enhance their writing skills and work on assignments. For example, students can request the Writing Center's help on a creative writing piece for an English class or assistance with a cover letter for a summer internship. This allows students to supplement their classroom learning at a pace that is best suited for them.

In both the math and English departments, students are required to complete 60 to 90 minutes of online lab assignments at these resource centers. These lab assignments ensure that students get enough exposure to and practice with the concepts. Overall, Daytona State's faculty and staff believe that these supplemental instructional centers have led to vast improvements in DevEd student success, especially for minority students. As one senior administrator stated, "If a student comes to class every day, does [his or her] homework and lab…then the student has to work to *not* pass the class. Homework and lab are major parts of their grade…[I]f you understand the homework, then you should be able to do it on the test."

Use of Data

"We are data driven."

Daytona State has a strong data culture; data are used frequently to inform daily and system-wide practices and policies. In the late 2000s, staff in the institutional research (IR) department expanded the department's role from collecting data for the mandated state accountability report to also utilizing data to improve several core performance indicators, including assessment scores, persistence rates and completion rates.

The math and English departments have been proactive in requesting and using data provided by the IR department. For example, in recent years the English department asked the IR department to conduct further analysis on college placement exam results so that the department could decide on the best cut-off score for each level of DevEd. The math department wanted more information on how repeated attempts affect placement test

results and requested analysis on this topic by the IR department. The IR department is also proactive in presenting data to administrators and department chairs who do not necessarily request it. They present annual and historical rates for several key indicators, so that any weak areas of performance can be addressed by the institution. They also conduct various student surveys to measure needs, resources and engagement, and the department shares the results with other relevant departments.

Academic departments also collect their own data on DevEd students to make curricular and other choices. For example, the math department creates analysis sheets to analyze midterm and final exam results across course sections to help instructors better target their course content and textbooks for the following semester. The department also analyzes broad student competencies, such as evaluating math expressions or solving elementary equations. Department chairs track the exam questions that cover these competencies, the results of the assessments and modifications to delivery or content that could foster more success. One math instructor noted, "Those analysis sheets are really helpful for me because if a lot of students [are] missing this question or getting this question right, it kind of directs [me to] where I need to work better or what I'm doing alright at. So it kind of helps me see...a weakness in my teaching or...a bright spot and maybe I need to focus on this more. So it's not just an analysis for...the students but for my teaching and what can I do better to make the students more successful."

AREAS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

OTHER DEVELOPING PRACTICES

Student Support Services
- Track Alert system
- Student success courses
- Formal advising

Professional Development

While Daytona State's leaders, faculty and staff describe committed leadership, innovative instructional practices and the use of data as the main ways that Daytona State has succeeded in DevEd, student support services and professional development are viewed as lesser contributors.

In response to the many changes to DevEd instruction, the Student Affairs Department has engaged in several changes of its own to address the needs of DevEd students. Daytona State developed the Track Alert reporting system in 2006 that allows faculty to notify advisors if students are experiencing academic obstacles, demonstrated through excessive absences, inappropriate behavior and other "red flags." If an advisor receives an alert, he or she follows up with the student via e-mail or telephone to inform the student about support services that are available on campus. Advisors find that not all faculty members use this strategy and there is variability in its effectiveness. According to one advisor, "Sometimes it doesn't work—[students] don't call back or they don't pay attention. Other times they kind of snap to, saying, 'Oh, I need to talk to my professor,' which is what we want."

In addition, Daytona State's advising staff developed a student success course that focused on life skills, study skills and positive behavior. Starting in 2002, students who enrolled in at least two DevEd courses were required to take the student success course.[7] This course was originally taught by the advisors who developed the curricula. In recent years, however, budget shortages have resulted in adjunct professors being the primary teacher of the student success course. Many advisors believe that this has reduced the quality of the course because adjuncts do not have enough campus knowledge to expose students to the range of support services offered and there is no mechanism to ensure consistent content delivery.

Despite recent innovations, Daytona State's advising function is not yet as developed as its instructional function. This is due in part to the college's size. After a prospective student takes a placement exam, he or she is required to meet with the advisor to receive the test results and enroll in the first semester of courses. However, until very

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[7] This policy changed last year due to budget cuts; only students who test into DevEd reading are now required to take it.

recently, DevEd students have not been required to visit their advisors beyond the first meeting. Daytona State has only 18 full-time advisors for its student population of over 19,000. At one point, advisors kept a caseload of approximately 100 DevEd students and maintained contact with them throughout the year, but this program fell apart because of the sheer workload. The college is actively working to address its capacity problem. For instance, Daytona State created a faculty advisor program in 2007 in which eight non-DevEd math faculty members assist with DevEd advising during enrollment periods. This has helped to reduce the enormous caseload for DevEd advisors.

"I think that the [students] that really pay attention and are interested in doing well get…a lot out of the student success class. They come back and say, 'Wow, I learned a lot of that because somebody told me.'"

—Advisor

The advising function could also be supported by creating increased opportunities for interaction between DevEd instructors and advisors. Instructors and advisors usually interact with each other only if a faculty member reports a student's excessive absences to student services. For example, many instructors within the math and English departments are not aware that some of their colleagues have taken on roles of faculty advisors. The size of the campus, including physical distance between the buildings that house advisors and faculty, and a large presence of adjuncts impede regular patterns of interaction. While advisors are committed to student success, many faculty members are concerned that given the advisors' caseloads, they simply cannot keep up with the quick pace of innovation and changes to the DevEd structure and content.

Daytona State's professional development opportunities for faculty members and advisors are varied and include online training, workshops to learn new technology and statewide conferences. However, faculty, staff or administrators do not mention these strategies as significant contributors to improving Daytona State's DevEd student success. Professional development does not appear to be a strategy that Daytona State deliberately engages in to foster DevEd student success, at least in the form of formal training.

DAYTONA STATE COLLEGE: A LEARNING TOOL FOR OTHER URBAN INSTITUTIONS

Daytona State College has had a commendable record in the last 10 years of implementing innovative practices to promote college success for students who need DevEd courses. The high standards promoted by the institution's leaders, innovative changes around DevEd instructional practices and strong data culture are credited as the most significant strategies in fostering this college's success.

Looking to the future, Daytona State already has many structures in place to accommodate recent DevEd state policy changes. For example, the State is beginning to implement a new college placement exam called the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT) that contains a diagnostic tool that identifies areas of weakness in reading, writing and mathematics. These diagnostic tools will allow colleges to teach students in modules, rather than having students take the same DevEd curricula regardless of their strengths or weaknesses. Daytona State will be able to implement this state policy fairly smoothly through the use of its accelerated courses and video tools. The college's IR department also appreciates the State's growing emphasis on collecting and analyzing data because it matches the college's data culture and motivates the college to continue to find new ways to use data to improve student success.

Daytona State's story of success is an example of a school that has surpassed the stereotype of a struggling, urban college. It is apparent that Daytona State sets high expectations and consistently meets or exceeds those expectations. Rather than using its urban setting as an excuse for performance problems, the college has found

strategies that work within a large, diverse student population, particularly those that pertain to efficiency, consistency and quality. The college has done an admirable job of placing responsibility on the college's leaders, as well as on the instructors and advisors who work directly with students, to create student success. As a result, students at Daytona State are supported by administrators, faculty and staff to complete their DevEd coursework more frequently than in other parts of the state.

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Methodology for
Selecting High-performing Colleges

In 2010, Jobs for the Future (JFF) identified three community colleges in Florida (Chipola College, the College of Central Florida and Daytona State College) for further investigation of the colleges' developmental education (DevEd) practices and policies that may have led to a strong performance, particularly among adult students. JFF's methodology for analyzing and selecting high-performing colleges in DevEd is described below.

OVERVIEW OF THE DATA USED BY JFF

To select the community colleges for this study, JFF reviewed Florida's institutional-level data from the 2002 cohort through the 2008 cohort and used Achieving the Dream's Cross-State Data Work Group criteria to define the cohorts. In the analysis, JFF used key metrics developed by the Cross-State Data Work Group, including:

First-year Measures

- Persisted fall to spring
- Passed 80% or more of attempted hours
- Earned 24 or more hours

Second- & Third-year Measures

- Persisted fall to fall
- Passed developmental math sequence by year two
- Passed gatekeeper math by year three

Sixth-year Success Rate

TARGET POPULATION

The overarching focus for this analysis is the college performance of students who place into DevEd. The data analysis included disaggregation by the following sub-groups:

- All DevEd students (defined by those testing into any DevEd course based on the common statewide assessment test score)

- Students placing into lower-level developmental math (as defined by the Cross-State Data Work Group)

In consultation with the Division of Florida Colleges of the Florida Department of Education, the data analysis was further refined to focus on older students (over 22 years old).

PROCESS FOR CREATING THE POOL OF HIGH-PERFORMING COLLEGES

The selection of the colleges was established by examining the following five categories for two target sub-groups (all older DevEd students and older students who placed into lower-level developmental math).

- Category #1 – College with the greatest percentage increases on key intermediate measure *Passed developmental math sequence by year two* (i.e., threshold is based on at least a 10% increase between 2002 and 2007)

- Category #2 – College was consistently among the top performers on key intermediate measure *Passed developmental math sequence by the end of year two* (i.e., threshold is based on being among the top ten institutions in at least four of the six cohorts)

- Category #3 – College with the greatest percentage increases on key intermediate measure *Passed gatekeeper math sequence by the end of year three* (i.e., threshold is based on at least a 10% increase between 2002 and 2006)

- Category #4 – College was consistently among the top performers on key intermediate measure *Passed gatekeeper math sequence by the end of year three* (i.e., threshold is based on being among the top ten institutions in at least three of the five cohorts)

- Category #5 – Top-performing college on *six-year success rates* (i.e., threshold is based on being among the top ten institutions in both cohorts)

Colleges were then further examined to identify those that fell into multiple categories. The colleges listed below were in at least three of the six categories.

Pool of Possible Colleges

High-performing Colleges Among All Older DevEd Students	High-performing Colleges Among Older Students in Lower-level DevEd Math	High-performing Colleges with Both Sub-groups
• Chipola College • College of Central Florida • Daytona State College • Lake City Community College • Pensacola State College • Santa Fe College • St. John's River Community College	• Chipola College • College of Central Florida • Daytona State College • Pensacola State College • Santa Fe College • St. John's River Community College	• Chipola College • College of Central Florida • Daytona State College • Pensacola State College • Santa Fe College • St. John's River Community College

SELECTION OF HIGH-PERFORMING COLLEGES

JFF had additional conversations with the Division of Florida Colleges about colleges' performance, leadership, geography and size. After some additional reflection, JFF selected three high-performing colleges from its pool of possible colleges for the study: Chipola College, the College of Central Florida and Daytona State College.

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