

HIGH SCHOOL FEEDBACK REPORT

Update and Discussion

The High School Feedback Report, a joint project of the Council on Postsecondary Education and the Kentucky Department of Education, is intended to provide useful information to high schools about their graduates' postsecondary education performance. The staffs are seeking suggestions for encouraging more widespread distribution and effective use of the report.

Between 1992 and 1999, the CPE produced annual editions of the report, allowing high schools to gauge their students' performance during their first year in college. The reports included the percentage of recent graduates enrolled in postsecondary education, the top five institutions they attended, the proportion of students that returned for a second semester, and the rates at which students enrolled in remedial or honors courses.

During this period, information about the proportion of recent graduates enrolled in remedial courses was typically of particular interest to educators and to the public. Yet, because each Kentucky public institution established its own threshold for placing students in remedial courses, it was difficult to gauge whether shifts in remedial enrollment should be attributed to changes in student preparation or changes in institutional policy.

In 2000, the CPE implemented a "mandatory placement policy" that established a consistent definition of under-prepared students. The policy requires public colleges and universities to provide academic assistance (remedial placement, tutoring, or enhanced courses) or reassessment to students scoring less than 18 on ACT math, English, or reading tests. Individual institutions may set higher placement standards.

To reflect this policy change, staff from the CPE and the KDE revised the High School Feedback Report to track on a biennial basis the placement and performance of students scoring below 18 on the ACT compared to all other students. The revised report also included information about the proportion of students who returned for a second year of college, and it allowed high schools to compare graduates' performance by postsecondary sector (public four-year institutions, public two-year institutions, and independent institutions).

The 2000 High School Feedback Report was produced by ACT, Inc. and distributed April 2003 to principals at over 300 Kentucky high schools. The reports were made available to the public on KDE's Max Web site, <http://kdemaxport2.kde.state.ky.us>. The CPE is currently waiting for a proposal from the Max Development Team regarding the feasibility of building the 2002 High School Feedback Report within the Max reporting system.

The following questions are among those that should be considered:

- Should the High School Feedback Report be distributed more widely and strategically, for example, to superintendents, mathematics and science teachers, school counselors, local P-16 councils, or parent groups?
- Should it be used as part of other assessment or accountability initiatives?
- How can the information in the report be better used to improve instruction and learning? For example, how could it be used to design teacher professional development programs at each high school?