

**Council on Postsecondary Education  
Developmental Education Task Force  
Final Report Recommendations**

The task force is developing recommendations to improve the success of Kentucky's underprepared college students. These recommendations will emerge from seven problem statements identified through the work of the task force.

1. Wide variability exists in institutional delivery of developmental education services in postsecondary education, and there are varying degrees of developmental student success.
2. Collaborations between postsecondary education and P-12 have not yet resulted in a significant reduction in the proportion of underprepared freshmen who were recent high school graduates.
3. Strengthening Kentucky's teacher educator programs to improve K-12 teacher preparation and professional development can increase the college readiness of the state's high school graduates.
4. A targeted strategic funding and accountability system is needed to support postsecondary institutions in promoting the success of underprepared students.
5. Collaboration between adult education and postsecondary education must be directed toward reducing the proportion of underprepared GED graduates.
6. Large opportunity gaps exist in the preparation levels of first-time freshmen by race/ethnic group and by nontraditional status.
7. State-level assessment and placement policies do not consistently reflect current best practices to support student success.

Each problem statement is supported with evidence drawn from the information and presentations at the task force meetings. Each set of recommendations, responding directly to the problem statement, are supported by rationale statements and estimated time horizons for implementation. From the meeting discussions, it is clear that there are many effective and local projects underway that are making a difference to underprepared students. These recommendations are designed to offer systematic statewide support for postsecondary student success and provide a foundation for the Council's developmental education plan.

**Problem Statement 1: Wide variability exists in institutional delivery of developmental education services in postsecondary education, and there are varying degrees of developmental student success.**

**Evidence:** Recent findings from the Council’s developmental education report, highlighting developmental education of the 2004 cohort, showed that the proportion of undergraduates underprepared in math who received developmental education services ranged by institution from 64 percent to 96 percent. Also, first-year retention rates of underprepared math students who received developmental services ranged from 59.7 percent to 78.9 percent, and the proportion of students who received a C or higher in their first college-level math course ranged from 52 percent to 83.4 percent. Extensive research is available on the principles of best practice in developmental education from resources such as the National Center for Developmental Education (NCDE) and Achieving the Dream. Furthermore, the Kentucky Association for Developmental Education (KADE) serves as a resource providing leadership to help individual programs assess the effectiveness of developmental education.

Recommendation	Time Horizon	Rationale
1-A. Promote the use of the Kentucky Association for Developmental Education’s Faculty Training Outline as part of the orientation for all developmental educators.	Short (2007)	Kentucky’s developmental education professionals have prepared a training outline that is available to institutions hiring new developmental educators.
1-B. Require posting of mission statements for developmental education on institutional Web sites.	Short (2007)	NCDE research supports the process of developing a mission statement for developmental education offices as one of several key components for success.
1-C. Require institutional developmental education program leaders to complete interim reports on underprepared students, with descriptions of the cohort and first-year enrollment patterns and performance.	Short (2007)	Formative evaluations used within the institution to monitor developmental student progress are recommended by the National Center for Developmental Education as a key feature of effective delivery of developmental education.
1-D. Review the formation of a statewide joint admission and enrollment policy, a key in the upcoming release of the presidents’ Transfer Strategies Subcommittee report, as a response to underprepared student progress barriers at KCTCS.	Short (2007)	Joint enrollment provides a tangible reward and motivation for successful completion of developmental education courses.
1-E. Review the University of Louisville’s success in contracting remedial course delivery with Jefferson Community and Technical College as a possible model for other universities with nearby community and technical colleges.	Mid-range (2008-2010)	Underprepared students can have access to developmental instruction expertise that may be available from a nearby two-year institution.
1-F. Collect developmental education staffing data, including part-time/full-time status and earned credentials and set timelines/goals for increasing the use of full-time faculty in developmental education courses.	Mid-range (2008-2010)	Underprepared students need specialized teaching expertise that may not be available with the use of part-time or adjunct faculty. Determining the extent of use of part-time and adjunct instructors hired to teach developmental students will help institutions set standards.
1-G. Implement a statewide effort to develop online and alternative technologies to deliver developmental education courses in multiple formats that meet distance education standards of best practice.	Long-range (through 2020)	Kentucky has extensive technological resources and expertise that should be used to provide innovative solutions to expand efficient and effective delivery of developmental education courses.
Recommendation	Time Horizon	Rationale

<p>1-H. Universities would be requested to submit a document describing what they are currently doing to address the issue of underprepared students coming to college in the area of mathematics and literacy and what are their plans in the near future to address this issue.</p>	<p>Short (2007)</p>	<p>Mathematics and literacy skill development review and planning can improve college readiness of incoming students.</p>
<p>1-I. Establish a collaborative, statewide research center for the purpose of analyzing P-20 data to facilitate understanding of the etiology of low student achievement in Kentucky and the efficacy of implementation strategies designed to improve teacher preparation, student learning, and baccalaureate degree attainment. The center will be charged with devoting significant intellectual and statistical resources to the evaluation of statewide policies, procedures and plans designed to reduce the need for developmental education and increase student retention and graduation rates in postsecondary education.</p>	<p>Long-range (through 2020)</p>	<p>A central source for undergraduate student research can provide analytical support and expertise in design and evaluation of interventions and policies.</p>

**Problem Statement 2: Collaborations between postsecondary education and P-12 have not yet resulted in a significant reduction in the proportion of underprepared freshmen who were recent high school graduates.**

**Evidence:** Kentucky has been recognized nationally for the high-level collaborations in state P-16 and adult education policy development. However, recent research of incoming freshmen to Kentucky's public institutions showed that 46 percent of recent high school graduates were underprepared for college in 2004, down from 48 percent in 2002. In 2006, there were two very important advances to improve, in the long term, the preparation of high school graduates for college: (1) a more rigorous curriculum for high school students was approved by the Kentucky Board of Education and (2) the passage of Senate Bill 130 supporting statewide implementation of ACT's college readiness assessment system (Educational Planning and Assessment System). Existing assets, the High School Feedback Report, and local P-16 councils will continue to be important assets to address the shorter term problem of increasing college readiness of Kentucky's high school graduates.

Recommendation	Time Horizon	Rationale
<p>2-A. Recommend that the Interagency Dual Credit Task Force include strategies for use of dual enrollment programs to improve the college readiness of high school students.</p>	<p>Short (2007)</p>	<p>Research from Columbia University's Community College Research Center suggests that "credit-based transition programs" can be used to support developmental needs of high school students. The current Interagency Dual Credit Task Force's review of state policy should explore meeting developmental student needs through dual enrollment programs.</p>
<p>2-B. Encourage full participation by independent postsecondary education institutions in the High School Feedback Report.</p>	<p>Short (2007)</p>	<p>The 2002 High School Feedback Report included student data from just two independent institutions, down from 13 independent schools that participated in the 2000 report. Data from all independent institutions provides a more complete and accurate assessment of college readiness of all Kentucky high school graduates.</p>
<p>2-C. Restore funding for local P-16 councils as formal channels to expand college readiness issues centered on High School Feedback Reports, EPAS results, and the Kentucky Early Mathematics Testing Program (KEMTP) and GEAR UP. Tie continued funding to improvements in the college readiness of adult and traditional students in the local P-16 council's area of responsibility.</p>	<p>Mid-range (2008-2010)</p>	<p>Several information resources exist to measure college readiness of middle and high school students. Data alone will not help students unless interventions and programs are implemented to address the findings. Locally managed P-16 councils can serve as an effective vehicle to achieve greater results from available information and to provide postsecondary developmental educator tutorial assistance to public school students and professional development to public school teachers.</p>

**Problem Statement 3: Strengthening Kentucky's teacher educator programs to improve K-12 teacher preparation and professional development can increase the college readiness of the state's high school graduates.**

**Evidence:** Emerging research from Louisiana demonstrates that student achievement is an effective way to measure teacher preparation programs. In five out of eight higher education regions in the state, more than half of the public school teachers were trained by Kentucky public institution teacher preparation programs. Consequently, improvements in Kentucky's teacher educator programs can have a significant impact on student preparation for college.

Recommendation	Time Horizon	Rationale
3-A. Require the Kentucky Center for Mathematics and the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development to offer high-quality professional development for K-12 and adult educators directly tied to college readiness standards.	Short (2007)	Kentucky's strategic investments in math and reading development are available to prepare the teaching workforce to improve college readiness.
3-B. Provide funding for the K-16 student data warehouse to support teacher preparation program assessment.	Mid-range (2008-2010)	Student cohort data are needed as the first step in implementation of the Value-Added Teacher Preparation Model.
3-C. Require teacher preparation program compliance with the EPSB-led Master's Degree Program Redesign Committee.	Mid-range (2008-2010)	Extensive work has already been completed to strengthen the curriculum for experienced teachers.
3-D. Support the EPSB and Council's plans to implement the Value-Added Teacher Preparation Model research project with the availability of public school student performance data.	Long-range (through 2020)	As other states show the student achievement benefits of assessing teacher preparation programs, Kentucky also should be prepared to incorporate this model.
3-E Universities would be requested to submit a document describing what they are doing in their teacher preparation programs to ensure that graduates are prepared to diagnose and address learner problems in the areas of literacy and mathematics and what are their plans in the near future to further address this issue. This recommendation probably needs to be connected to program approval and continuing accreditation through EPSB.	Short (2007)	Teacher preparation programs can help new public school teachers prepare early interventions in the academic skill areas, math and literacy, that have historically been subject areas of low college readiness.

**Problem Statement 4: A targeted strategic funding and accountability system is needed to support postsecondary institutions in promoting the success of underprepared students.**

**Evidence:** Well-designed developmental education programs require funding to provide enhanced services (summer programming and supplemental instruction). Although students have received math, English, and reading instruction in high school, the relative cost of developmental education services is a smaller investment compared to the cost of not remediating students and reducing the educational attainment of Kentucky's adults. Institutions will be required to increase degree output at higher rates than at any other time to meet the goals of the Council's "Double the Numbers" plan, and underprepared students will need to receive services to get them on track for success. The recent release of two reports on developmental education services and outcomes, in compliance with the Council's Mandatory Placement Policy, have provided preliminary data on which to build a more sophisticated and appropriate accountability system for strategic investments in developmental education.

Recommendation	Time Horizon	Rationale
4-A. Fund infrastructure support for postsecondary institutions that is dependent upon the submission and implementation of a plan for delivery of underprepared student services that reflect best practice and that include assessment of current services, workforce professional development needs, and goals for underprepared student performance.	Mid-range (2008-2010)	Provide resources to assess and strengthen developmental education infrastructure according to best practice research.
4-B. Fund performance incentives for institutions that make adequate and timely progress in achieving the goals of underprepared student performance and retention at levels equal to or approaching prepared students.	Mid-range (2008-2010)	Carefully constructed incentive funding programs will serve to increase the importance of underprepared student success at the institutional level. Unintended consequences must be avoided.

**Problem Statement 5: Collaboration between adult education and postsecondary education must be directed toward reducing the proportion of underprepared GED graduates.**

**Evidence:** Among the 2004 first-time college cohort, 92 percent of Kentucky's GED graduates entered postsecondary underprepared in one or more subjects. The Council's "Double the Numbers" plan requires more adults to enter college and to earn a baccalaureate degree. Successful college readiness programs for GED graduates are essential to effectively increase the state's educational attainment of adults.

Recommendation	Time Horizon	Rationale
5-A. Insure alignment and collaboration between adult basic education services and postsecondary developmental education.	Mid-range (2008- 2010)	Basic education services should align more closely with postsecondary developmental education to allow eligible adult students access to services prior to enrolling in college courses.
5-B. Provide funding for adult and college developmental educators tuition reimbursements for postsecondary courses in core content areas.	Mid-range (2008- 2010)	Efforts to improve instructor preparation will improve college readiness of GED graduates.
5-C. Institute a time limit for degree completion for adult education instructors and program directors without a baccalaureate degree that are grandfathered into the system.	Mid-range (2008- 2010)	Twenty-seven percent of adult education staff does not have a bachelor's degree.
5-D. Work with postsecondary institutions to identify courses and internships for a bachelor's degree in adult education.	Mid-range (2008- 2010)	Formal education opportunities improve adult educator skills and introduce developmental teaching content in the curriculum.
5-E. Develop and fund strategies that support current university professional development partners in adult education (Collaborative Center for Literacy Development, Morehead State University, Northern Kentucky University, University of Kentucky, and Western Kentucky University) and other partners to improve/upgrade teaching skills of adult educators.	Mid-range (2008- 2010)	Existing resources will be used to increase adult educator access to professional development opportunities.
5-F. Pilot college-bound GED curricula in county-level projects by aligning GED curricula and college level courses.	Mid-range (2008- 2010)	County-level projects capitalize on existing partnerships and can provide evidence of effectiveness before resources are committed for statewide implementation.
5-G. Develop a report of GED graduate performance in postsecondary education for adult educators, comparable to the High School Feedback Report.	Long-range (through 2020)	GED recipient performance information provides adult educators with information and gaps in student preparation that should be addressed.
5-H. Work with ACT and ACE/GED Testing Service to develop score comparisons between ACT and GED. Identify GED scores that indicate college readiness.	Long-range (through 2020)	Readiness standards based on the GED results will help early diagnosis of GED students who are preparing for college.
5-I. Require new adult education hires to take PRAXIS I examinations and meet score minimums.	Long-range (through 2020)	PRAXIS scores serve as a helpful indicator of instructor readiness.
5-J. Recommend the creation of an adult education teaching credential through the Education Professional Standards Board.	Long-range (through 2020)	Professional credentials provide a formal opportunity to improve adult educator skills and the opportunity to include developmental teaching content in the curriculum.

**Problem Statement 6: Large opportunity gaps exist in the preparation levels of first-time freshmen by race/ethnic group and by nontraditional status.**

**Evidence:** For the first-time college students entering public postsecondary institutions in Kentucky in 2004, 77 percent of the African American students and 90 percent of the students over 25 years of age were underprepared. The benefits of improved educational attainment must reach across all demographic groups.

Recommendation	Time Horizon	Rationale
<p>6-A. Use the postsecondary education statewide diversity study framework and subsequent institutional diversity plans as a way to identify race neutral alternatives and to address underprepared student needs.</p>	<p>Mid-range (2008- 2010)</p>	<p>The Council's commissioned report to establish a platform for diversity planning presents an opportunity to make college readiness and developmental education a systemwide initiative. The framework would address the role of recruitment, admission, financial aid, retention, support services and integration of diversity values with academics, the role of K-12 in closing the achievement gaps among groups of students, and improving the readiness of public school graduates for postsecondary education.</p>
<p>6-B. Expand funding for the Council on Postsecondary Education's GEAR UP and Governor's Minority Student College Preparation Program (GMSCPP) to accommodate a broader spectrum of students.</p>	<p>Mid-range (2008-2010)</p>	<p>The GMSCPP is currently offered at each of the eight universities and 10 institutions of the KCTCS. Academic enrichment activities offered to student participants include: communication, computer technology, history and culture, math, science, research, public speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary and foreign language.</p>
<p>6-C. Use the EPAS diagnostic data to target and assist significantly underprepared demographic groups in order to prevent opportunity gaps by the junior year of high school.</p>	<p>Mid-range (2008-2010)</p>	<p>Implementation of EPAS provides a way to address opportunity gaps early. Again, the data are a necessary but insufficient condition for improving college readiness of high school graduates.</p>

**Problem Statement 7: State-level assessment and placement policies do not consistently reflect current best practices to support student success.**

**Evidence:** The current student assessment and placement regulations were established in 2000 for fall 2001 implementation. Since then extensive work has been done by Kentucky's faculty members and developmental educators to align student preparation measures with postsecondary placements and to measure underprepared student progress.

Recommendation	Time Horizon	Rationale
7-A. Convene annual meetings of Kentucky's developmental education program leaders and academic leaders to share best practices and assess progress in college readiness in Kentucky.	Short (2007)	The Council sponsors annual conferences to address teacher quality, faculty development and trustee orientation. Convening a similar conference for campus leaders, adult educators, and developmental education professionals will provide an important forum for the exchange of best practice information until improvements are evident in underprepared student success.
7-B. Refine the data needed to continue measuring the preparation and outcomes of incoming students.	Short (2007)	The release of two studies of developmental education services and outcomes revealed gaps in the data collections that need to be addressed.
7-C. Revise current guidelines for admission (13 KAR 2:020) to increase the system wide standards to higher recommended levels.	Mid-range (2008- 2010)	The work of several postsecondary institution faculty to align high school standards with postsecondary placement is evident in the Statewide Public Postsecondary Placement Policy that was adopted by the Council in November 2004. The state regulation should reflect this articulated agreement among postsecondary institutions.
7-D. Revise current guidelines for admission (13 KAR 2:020) to require that underprepared students begin developmental coursework in the first semester of enrollment.	Mid-range (2008- 2010)	The National Center for Developmental Education cites immediate enrollment in developmental education courses as a best practice contributing to student success. Among the 2004 first-time college students who were underprepared in math 20 percent did not complete developmental coursework during their first two years, jeopardizing their chance for success.
7-E. Revise current guidelines for admission (13 KAR 2:020) to require that underprepared students complete college entry-level coursework in the semester that immediately follows completion of developmental courses in that subject area.	Mid-range (2008- 2010)	The National Center for Developmental Education cites immediate enrollment in college-level courses following completion of developmental education courses as a best practice contributing to student success.
7-F. Support the statewide online mathematics placement test pilot project as a model for other subject areas.	Mid-range (2008- 2010)	Faculty members are currently developing a standardized placement test in math. The availability of an effective diagnostic will improve accuracy of math course placements.