

The Community College of Baltimore County



Council on Innovation and Student Learning

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The Impact of School Culture

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The literature is full of research studies showing the impact of school culture on practically everything from what faculty talk about at lunch, to the type of teaching that is valued, to the view held about professional development, to the significance of learning taking place for all learners.

Terrence Deal and Kent Peterson tell us in their book, *Shaping School Culture*, that "strong, positive, collaborative cultures have powerful effects on many features of school." Such cultures they contend:

- Foster school effectiveness and productivity
- Improve collegial and collaborative activities that foster better communication and problem-solving practices
- Foster successful exchange and improvement efforts
- Build commitment and identification of staff, students, faculty and administrators
- Amplify the energy, motivation, and vitality of the staff and faculty
- Increase the focus of daily behavior and attention on what is important and valued

Would you want to live, work and prosper in such a place? No doubt about it. Are we there yet? Probably not. So, what positive things are you doing to shape the unwritten rules and traditions, norms, and expectations that will ultimately shape the culture of LearningFirst at CCBC?

Developmental Education Update

[This Month's Headlines](#)

Donna McKusick, Senior Director of Developmental Education at CCBC, reported recently on the status of the many projects and activities associated with the Title III grant. In the opinion of the Title III external evaluator, who met with Donna and other college officials in April, the developmental education program is progressing well through its implementation schedule.

Some of the highlights along the way include:

- A vote of confidence in the program by the Middle States evaluators
- The appointment of a college Coordinating Committee on Closing the Gap to provide oversight for the three campus committees
- Specialized training in Banner to help people access placement scores for developmental education students
- The initiation of a project to develop a Procedures Manual for the Title III grant

ECISL and the ECC Foundation

[This Month's Headlines](#)

The ECC Foundation has earmarked \$10,000 for the Essex Council on Innovation and Student Learning Grant Program. Congratulations to Amy Hoffman, ECISL Chair, and Woody Powell and the Foundation Board for this generous support of LearningFirst projects.

Computer Literacy

[This Month's Headlines](#)

Still shocked by the number of students who know little or nothing about how to use a computer. Well, there's hope on the way. The CCBC Essex Student Success Center is involved in plans to organize and schedule a series of computer workshops for beginners that will be offered on a regular basis throughout the year. Patricia Hall, coordinator of the center, stated that the workshops will hopefully start in the fall semester. Dr. Sylvia Sorokin will help identify a Computer Science, Engineering and Math Scholarship (CSEMS) recipient to conduct the workshops and Stacy Kurth-Ford has offered to help with the coordination of the workshops.

Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, Kansas, has developed a unique partnership with its area high schools. The partnership has a number of options that enhance students' readiness for college (e.g., basic skills instruction, concurrent enrollment in college courses, etc.).

While the initial thrust and emphasis have always been "helping students become successful in college," the program has developed an interesting outgrowth. That is the acknowledgement of the need to prepare students for the world of work as well.

The resultant program includes a series of workshops with a core curriculum that now includes information and activities to help students choose a career. The program is offered during the sophomore, junior and senior years of the student's high school experience.

Five developmentally appropriate goals guide the program:

- Identify personal interests, abilities, strengths and weaknesses, and influences on career choices
- Demonstrate an understanding of the career/life planning process
- Demonstrate the ability to locate, use, and understand resource information on careers
- Describe possible career choices based on the results of formal and informal assessments
- Develop a career/life plan, denoting both short and long term goals, and identify potential resources and barriers

If you would like to learn more about how Johnson County Community College works with local high schools to prepare students for the 21st Century, log onto the League for Innovation website under Learning Abstracts.