

Aligning Redesign Across Campus

Bakersfield College

Their Approach

Bakersfield College, facing low college attainment in its region, wanted to bring more students into higher education and support students more effectively so that more achieve their goals—whether they pursue certificates, degrees, transfer, or career advancement.

To build a “bridge to baccalaureates,” Bakersfield College focused on dual enrollment. It set a goal for 2023 of ensuring that every Kern County high school graduate has taken at least 9 units of college courses, and that 10 percent hold an associate’s degree or certificate or are eligible to transfer to a four-year institution, starting with the students who enter high school in fall 2019.

What They Did

Bakersfield’s five-year, tiered implementation strategy began with a focus on career education and pathway entry. Bakersfield College established an Office of Outreach and School Relations, which coordinates annual events where K-12 superintendents and principals learn about dual enrollment with their colleagues. Its new Rural Initiatives Team offers continuing support, and the college distributes information in visits by counselors and other staff to high schools.

Implementation began with a pilot at Wonderful College Prep Academy (originally Paramount Academy), completed by 38 of 60 students (find more on implementation at <https://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/earlycollege> and community engagement at [kerneducationpledge.com](https://www.kerneducationpledge.com)). The specifics look different at each high school. For instance, at McFarland High School, each incoming freshman will choose from eight pathways, based on attending events during eighth grade (jointly hosted by the college and high school) and on summer bridge orientations.

What They Learned

Bakersfield learned that dual enrollment touches every aspect of every institution involved so it can’t be a “department.” And strong leadership is essential: Bakersfield’s president asks all managers to report how their work each week furthers Guided Pathways redesign, says Lesley Bonds, director of student success and equity at Bakersfield College and chair of its Guided Pathways implementation team.

Leaders at Bakersfield see the work aligning institutions as central to GP redesign because it will help ensure students arrive at the college prepared to enter a pathway and to complete transfer-level math and English in their first year.

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