

Since launching its Achieving the Dream strategies in 2007, the attrition rate at Renton Technical College (RTC) has dropped from 39% to 28%.



What We Are Doing

RTC's Achieving the Dream strategies include a Reading Apprenticeship program.

From 2008-2009 to 2010-2011, when the attrition rate in workforce programs dropped by 11 percentage points, persistence among first-year students increased from 63% of the 1,614 students who started in 2008-2009 to 74% of the 1,466 students who started in 2010-2011. Persistence is defined as students who have completed a workforce degree or certificate or are still enrolled at the college.

Persistence of new Hispanic students in workforce programs increased from 61% in 2008-2009 when 76 first-year Hispanic students enrolled to 78% in 2010-2011 when 60 Hispanic students were included in the new student cohort.

Since RTC launched its Reading Apprenticeship in 2008, 96 faculty and staff members have received professional development to use RA pedagogy to improve students' reading comprehension. Triangulated data found positive results in students' performance.

Who We Are

Founded in 1942 as a war production school, Renton Technical College now enrolls 12,000 students in 67 full and part-time degree and certificate programs. 59% of the students are male, 41% are female. 19% identify as Asian / Pacific Islander, 15% as Hispanic, 15% as African American, 2% as Native American.

In addition to mentoring other Achieving the Dream colleges throughout Washington state and testing the Voluntary Framework

of Accountability, RTC is currently working with six Washington colleges to share data, pool institutional research capacity, and reduce redundancy.

RTC's Reading Apprenticeship team is developing an online professional development course. The college has also received national recognition for its Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (IBEST).

"Achieving the Dream strategies add a powerful dimension to Renton Technical College's preparation of students for today's competitive workforce."

– Steve Hanson, *President*, Renton Technical College

How We Work

Achieving the Dream is incorporated in RTC's strategic planning. The college has also meshed it with other initiatives to serve high numbers of economically disadvantaged students. For instance, Achieving the Dream data systems are tracking the progress of students in workforce training programs targeted by the **College Spark Universal Design for Learning** project.

RTC plans to continue:

- **The Math Tutoring Center** where the performance of students participating in its interventions are being compared with control groups who have not participated
- **The Integrity Task Force** which strives to improve data systems in a skilled and methodical way and uses student success data more effectively college-wide

Achieving the Dream Model

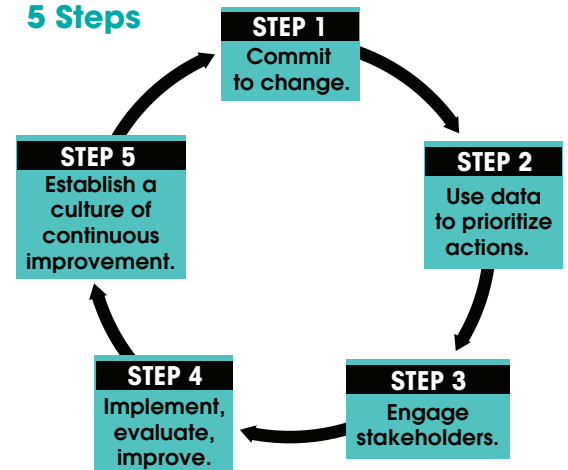
Achieving the Dream community colleges commit to our Student-Centered Model of Institutional Improvement. Based on four principles, the model frames the overall work of helping more students, particularly low-income students and students of color, stay in school and earn a college certificate or degree.

Each college approaches the work differently, but Achieving the Dream's five-step process provides practical guidelines for keeping the focus where it belongs and building momentum over time. Throughout the process, Achieving the Dream coaches offer customized support and help each college's core team implement data-informed programs and policies that build long-term, institution-wide commitment to student success.

4 Principles

- ▶ Committed leadership
- ▶ Using evidence to improve programs & services
- ▶ Broad engagement
- ▶ Systemic institutional improvement

5 Steps



1 Goal: Student success.

Achieving the Dream Leader Colleges



Leader Colleges are demonstrating the power of the Achieving the Dream Student-Centered Model of Institutional Improvement. They show us it is possible to raise persistence and graduation rates, close achievement gaps, and change lives. Leader Colleges embody the ultimate goal of Achieving the Dream, and as such, serve as mentors within our community of learners.

To be eligible for Leader College distinction, colleges must show three or more years

of improvement on one or more of these five measures:

- Course completion
- Advancement from developmental to credit-bearing courses
- Completion of college-level math and English courses
- Term-to-term and year-to-year retention
- Completion of certificates or degrees

For more information, visit
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Achieving the Dream™