Embracing Change: Implementing New Pathways, Co-Prerequisites and Placement Reform
Guided Pathways Work:

- Serve as lead or co-lead of the following reforms:
  - Accelerated English Pathways Initiative (District-wide)
  - Directed Self-Placement Equity Initiative (District-wide)
  - Program Mapping (South-Specific)

- Faculty Co-Lead of the Guided Pathways Initiative

Also facilitating or supporting campus-wide efforts around scheduling reform, developing an equity-based PD program for faculty teaching “milestone” courses, cleaning up campus pre-reqs and more!
South’s Tumultuous Introduction to Guided Pathways

- **The decision to adopt Guided Pathways was top-down.** Faculty and staff were not consulted during the initial decision-making process.

- **Many units at South operated in silos.** Miscommunication/lack of communication was common.

- **Faculty and staff response to Guided Pathways was decidedly mixed.** Some viewed it as a passing fad, others were ambivalent or actively resistant. Few were enthusiastic adopters.
How I Initially Got Involved
We must do more to help students earn postsecondary credentials so that they can access living wage jobs

96% of high school students want to go to college

65% of 9th graders enroll in college within six years of expected HS graduation

30% of 9th graders complete any kind of credential within six years of expected HS graduation

SOURCE: CCLI survey of Road Map high school students. Road Map Project 2018 Results Report.
College Enrollment & Success

- **College Direct Enrollment**: 60% HS class of 2017 grads who enrolled in college one year after graduating high school.
- **Ever Enrolled in College**: 65% 9th graders in 2008-09 who ever enrolled in a 2- or 4-year college by the end of the 2017-18 academic year.
- **Ever Persisted in College**: 52% 9th graders in 2008-09 who ever persisted to a 2nd year at a 2- or 4-year college by the end of the 2017-18 academic year.
- **Degree Attainment**: 30% 9th graders in 2008-09 who earned a 2- or 4-year college credential or degree by the end of the 2017-18 academic year.

Legend:
- Current Year’s Average Rate
- Baseline Rate
- % Progress Made
- % No Progress/ Negative Performance
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latino of Any Race
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Asian
- Two or More Races
- White

Road Map Project Results Report (2019).
Primarily catered to first-generation students, students of color, and English language learners.

“Build Your Own Combo!” system

Approximate 50% of the students were not passing our pre-college courses.

Of the 50% that passed, only 22% enrolled and completed English 101.
Developmental English Across the District Pre-2015

ENGL 092 + ENGL 093

ENGL 095 + ENGL 096

ENGL 096 + ENGL 101

Writing

Reading

Grammar

086+ 094

096

098

100+ 101

081

086

088

ENGL 080

ENGL 095 + ENGL 096

ENGL 097 + ENGL 098

ENGL 099 + ENGL 101
Help, Unexpectedly

- Attending NADE 2015 was instrumental to our success. The sessions we attended on course and program redesigns pushed us to be bold and create a realistic action plan and timeline.
What Paige and I Did:

- We met with our dean and VPI to secure their support and identify possible funding sources.

- Secured participation from English faculty through incentivized meetings and provided release-time for leads. Funding is essential for full buy-in among those asked to be involved. It cannot be a volunteer-only initiative.

- Instituted regular meetings with stakeholders to work on this reform effort together. This included student services, advising, financial aid, academic programs that feed into our courses (such as ABE, ESL, etc.), and learning support centers.

- Included our direct dean in the work. If leaders at the college are aware and engaged in the redesign work, more is possible.

- **Made professional development mandatory** to teach our newly designed courses and instigated regular faculty/advising meetings for continued PD and course/policy revisions.
• Eliminated 8 developmental courses from our curriculum!
• Moved to an integrate reading, writing (IRW) model
• Developed a co-requisite course to accelerate students’ pathway to college-level English
• Intentionally embedded academic success strategies, study skills, and Productive Persistence in each course outline
Initial Improvements

Reduced the number of students starting two or more levels below college-level English by 20%

Increased the number of students starting at college level English by 16%
Innovative Features
Approach to Reading and Writing Instruction

- Use of learning teams as well as student-generated class contracts, activities and curriculum and/or rubrics helped students feel supported, seen, empowered, and acknowledged as learners and human beings.
Use of Productive Persistence strategies and course readings that aimed to provide students with knowledge and strategies they could use to overcome obstacles, address stereotype threat, and foster a growth mindset around their skills and abilities.
Incorporated “difficulty journals” and other metacognitive activities that aimed to reframe struggle, setbacks, and failure as a productive and positive part of the learning process.
Time devoted to unpacking the expectations that both teachers and students bring into the classroom around topics such as class discussion, reading, writing, peer review, asking for help, etc.
Call-Out Systemic Inequities

- Time also unpacked **inequitable practices and systems in higher ed** to help students contextualize common student struggles within the larger context.
Student Impact:

Our curricular changes led to students expressing a greater sense of belonging, belief in their capacity to learn, and confidence in their ability to persist past obstacles.
Today, 8 out of every 10 students are passing our pre-college courses. Over 70% of transfer students are reaching the Year 1 English Milestone.

We’re still innovating! We just eliminated another developmental English course (English 97). Students can not reach college-level English in a quarter or less! (See next slide)
Eliminated English 97 from our curriculum.
All students now enter college-level English in one quarter or less!
We made significant strides reducing equity and achievement gaps! This is especially true when it comes to pass rates for low income students, students of color, and first-generation students in Year 1 English (see next 3 slides).
Milestone Success

Year 1 English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Seattle South</th>
<th>Peer College(s)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highest Quintile</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Highest</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Lowest</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest Quintile</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmatched Address</td>
<td></td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Results < 10 are suppressed.
Milestone Success

Year 1 English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Year 1</th>
<th>Seattle South</th>
<th>Peer Colleges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historically Under Served</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or White</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Results < 10 are suppressed.
Milestone Success

Year 1 English

English Year 1
- Student of Color: 62%
- White: 58%
- Unknown: 50%

Seattle South: 62%
Peer College(s):
- 49%
- 53%
- 50%

Notes: Results < 10 are suppressed.
I THINK WE'RE DONE HERE.
Not so fast!
Last year, we occasionally combined Tier classes into “bucket” classes for enrollment reasons…

One Course!

- ENGL 97
- ENGL 98
- ENGL 99/101
English 97 Student: Ileana Gonzalez

English "Bucket" Instructor: Paige Talbot
“I agree with Thomas Friedman’s argument because I think that when you want to express yourself it needs to be in a noticeable way other than online. There is a lot happening in this generation that requires our attention and expression. Informing ourselves about the latest events is important, but it is more important to empathize and act on it. Let’s not roll over and ignore the events happening worldwide by being inactive. Instead, let’s pursue our ideals in a noticeable way so our voice can actually be heard and change can actually happen.”
Wonderlic Placement Test

50 multiple-choice questions in 20 minutes

!!!!!!!
“The consequences of under-placement are several: it leads to lower course completion and persistence, as well as greater time, tuition, and opportunity costs for the student” (Hodara, Jaggars, and Karp; Nodine et al.)
The Community College Research Center at Columbia University has studied placement for years.

They have determined that high-stakes placement tests are “unsound and unfair” (Scott-Clayton, J., & Stacey, G. W., 2015).
This is not new news. Here is the headline from a 2012 CCRC Press Release:

“Thousands of Community College Students Misplaced into Remedial Classes, New Studies Suggest”
From the Four Bucket Classes Paige Taught:

- 20 students were under-placed (1 in 5).
- All 20 students were students of color.
- Of the students who went on to take English 102, all passed with a 3.2 or higher.
Our Takeaways:

- Our campus over-relies on a high stakes standardized placement test (Wonderlic) which disproportionately places low-income and students of color into pre-college English courses. **Or put another way, our placement test blocks students of color from first-year writing, and effectively from access to college, at significantly higher rates than whites.**

- We know that phenomenon such as “imposter syndrome” and “stereotype threat” often causes students to doubt their abilities or conform to stereotyped expectations, particularly when it comes to testing and placement.

- Significant research states that lengthy developmental sequences are detrimental to students’ path to completion and leads to higher drop-out rates (Bailey & Cho, 2010; Bailey, Jeong & Cho, 2010; Jaggers, Hodara & Stacey, 2013).

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“Placement is destiny. When students are assessed ‘not college ready,’ the treatment prescribed—layers of remedial coursework—leaves them less likely to reach their goals.”

– Katie Hern
One way to boost completion of college level math and English in year one is to reduce pre-college course taking

Pre-college course taking - SPS grads with 3.0+ GPA who enroll directly in a CTC

At Highline College, the proportion of students that place “college ready” in math increased by 49 percentage points in four years.

How did they do it?

- Multiple placement options
- System to track type of placement and method used by students
- Investment in assessment and placement advisors
- Increase use of HS transcripts
- Create pre-assessment “brush up and retake opportunities

Figure 3 - Percent of entering students placing "college ready" in math at Highline College (2014-17)
Reform, Take Two:
District-wide DSP Equity Initiative
With one of the most diverse student bodies in the state, equity and inclusion are driving the creation and implementation of an equity-based model for placement reform tool at the Seattle Colleges.

We are implementing a shared districtwide Directed Self-Placement (DSP) tool that will provide students with a culturally inclusive and responsive way of placing themselves into the appropriate level English course.
What We Are Doing Right Now:

- Secured funding (creatively!) and we are using that funding to pay English faculty to complete reform work.
- We consulted our colleagues at other colleges to identify effective placement reform measures.
- We once again instituted regular meetings with stakeholders to gain an accurate understanding of placement, identify challenges, brainstorm solutions, and obtain campus-wide feedback on the DSP tool we’re creating.
- We involved administrators once again. This time around, we asked the VPI and VPSS on each campus to sign MOUs. Deans are frequent present at quarterly meetings.
- We are overt that this is an equity and social justice initiative. The status quo is NOT okay. The status quo is harming our students.
Innovative Features
What We’ve Done So Far:

- Funded through a Perkins Replication Grant in the Spring of 2018, South Seattle College faculty built a small pilot tool for students pursuing a non-academic, professional technical degree (AAS).

Incorporating Student Writing Samples as the Primary Guide to Self-Placement

- Our DSP tool is unique in that students review other student writing samples as part of determining their appropriate course level.

- Students cite these annotated writing samples as the most helpful element of the DSP tool in their decision on where to place.
Providing a Simplified Framework for all Placement Measures
Currently, South offers 17 different methods for placement into ENGL&101.

Expiration dates between placement methods vary.

Furthermore, several methods require students to gather official/unofficial documents and make an appointment with an advisor to verify ENGL&101 eligibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TESTS</th>
<th>TRANSCRIPTS</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wonderlic (2 years)</td>
<td>HS Transcript (Overall GPA) (10 years)</td>
<td>CLEP/PLA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT (5 years)</td>
<td>Bridge to College English (1 year)</td>
<td>Placement Reciprocity (1 year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT (5 years)</td>
<td>College Transcript</td>
<td>Instructor Recommendation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS (2 years)</td>
<td>Grade in previous ENGL course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL (2 years)</td>
<td>Grade in previous IEL course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GED (10 years)</td>
<td>Grade in previous ESL course</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Smarter Balance (1 year)</td>
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</table>
Our DSP tool is the overarching framework for English placement and incorporates all multiple measures, making this DSP tool unique compared to other colleges that have implemented a directed self-placement tool as one option in the suite of multiple measures.

When DSP is just one option, students are able to default to other options without exploring self-placement alternatives. **By having all students begin with the DSP tool, even if they meet a different multiple measure, students will be more aware of the expectations of each ENGL course.**
Providing a Guide for Collaboration Among Separately-Accredited Colleges

Based on feedback collected from our stakeholders, we are focusing on more than just the creation and implementation of a shared DSP tool; we are also focusing on **coding and multiple measures alignment** this year to ensure that students are easily able to enroll in courses at any of the Seattle Colleges.

All pre-college English courses and College-level English courses are undergoing review and necessary revision to align course descriptions, topical outlines, and learning outcomes.

English faculty are conducting meetings with testing, advising, and institutional research to determine how best to code and track DSP data after implementation. Emphasis is on how all three colleges can align the entering and tracking of placement data (using the current SMS or CTClink upgrade scheduled for December 2020).

English faculty (in coordination with stakeholders) are reviewing expiration dates and scores across multiple measures. We are working towards eliminating or standardizing expiration dates and scores where possible.
Next Steps:

We are now building-out our tool for campus-wide adoption at South Seattle College drawing on social justice and anti-racist pedagogy and practices to ensure our tool uses texts, videos, and images that are diverse and broadly inclusive.

We believe/hope that our future districtwide DSP tool will allow more students to begin in college-level English, which in turn, will lead to increased student completion and the narrowing of equity gaps.
Lessons Learned from the Trenches
IF YOU RECALL…
South’s Tumultuous Introduction to Guided Pathways

- The decision to adopt Guided Pathways was top-down. Faculty and staff were not consulted during the initial decision-making process.

- Many units at South operated in silos. Miscommunication/lack of communication was common.

- Faculty and staff response to Guided Pathways was decidedly mixed. Some viewed it as a passing fad, others were ambivalent or actively resistant. Few were enthusiastic adopters.
Lessons Learned
Managing Complex Change

Vision + Skills + Incentives + Resources + Action Plan = Change

Vision + Skills + Incentives + Resources + Action Plan = Confusion

Vision + Skills + Incentives + Resources + Action Plan = Anxiety

Vision + Skills + Incentives + Resources + Action Plan = Resistance

Vision + Skills + Incentives + Resources + Action Plan = Frustration

Vision + Skills + Incentives + Resources + Action Plan = False Starts

Build your Foundational Knowledge

Your curricular or institutional reform sounds compelling, but before you begin spreading the news about your reform plans, become informed. Take the time to research and learn about similar (or possibly alternate) reform efforts.

We Recommend:

- Review relevant scholarship; the more, the better!
- Attend applicable conferences.
- Consult with colleagues who have performed similar reform efforts.
- Draw on the connections you across WA state. Reach out to colleagues at nearby colleges to ask questions, seek guidance, or to solicit relevant materials.
It Takes a Village. For Reform to Work, it Needs to be a Community-Wide Effort.

- Reforms with too few passionate supporters often fall apart, while those with too narrow a base of support can run into political headwinds.
- For larger reform efforts to work, it needs to be a campus wide effort, not just a departmental one.

We Recommend:
- Involve all faculty in the process through incentivized meetings.
- Institute regular meetings with stakeholders to create buy-in as well as troubleshoot challenges as they crop up. Pull them into the process as early as possible.
- Get upper administration involved early. If leaders of the college are aware and engaged, more is possible. Also, if they are part of regular planning meetings, they can be your biggest advocates when things go awry or you need to make a big request.
It Needs to be Funded

- Funding is essential to secure buy-in. It shouldn’t be a volunteer-only initiative.
- The most successful reform efforts pay faculty and staff a stipend for reform work and professional development. If it’s a major reform effort, leads often receive release time.

We Recommend:

- Work with others to determine the dollar cost of your reform and to brainstorm where those finds might come from.
- Meet with any and all possible funding sources available at your institution. Be creative!
- Apply for state and national grants that will help fund your reform effort such as Title III, College Spark, CCRC, TAACT, and the Gates Foundation among others.
“The most common leadership mistake is treating adaptive challenges as if they were technical problems.” Ron Heifetz, Founder Center for Public Leadership Harvard’s Kennedy School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TECHNICAL CHANGE</th>
<th>ADAPTIVE CHANGE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offering Co-Req English Courses</td>
<td>Ensuring access and support for all students groups so they will pass the co-req course.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Recognize That it Will Take Time

- Major reforms can take years to complete. And in some ways, they never end.
- Getting people to work in a positive and constructive way to make cultural change happen takes time. Can we change culture? Yes. Can you do it quickly? No.

**We Recommend:**

- Do not rush it. Allow new reform efforts to be effectively introduced and understood is key to successful implementation. You can never have too many meetings with campus stakeholders.
- Embrace the process. Create a culture where it’s okay to have difficult conversations. Intentionally create time for the campus community to grapple with known challenges together.
- Make sure you build-in time for meetings, planning sessions, data collection, and assessment/review. Recognize that you may need to make adjustments and revisions based on the data you collect.
- Intentionally bring people from different units together. Invite them to troubleshoot and engage in the work together.
Recognize That it will be More Messy and Complex Than you Think!

- Reform efforts can touch on all aspects of the college. Added challenges, complications, and opportunities are to be expected.

- Be prepared for reactions, assumptions, rumors. Co-workers may voice their concerns at times and in ways that reflect their own anxiety about change—try not to take it personally.

- The push-back and buy-in dance is delicate and unpredictable. Use your support network.
Trust is essential for the success of change, but transformational change challenges trust.

Change creates uncertainty among staff and faculty, thereby provoking intense scrutiny of leadership’s intentions and a tendency to make interpretations that exaggerate management intentions. This can result in even less trust in leadership.

Campus leaders can often react similarly with negative interpretations of staff and faculty’s reactions, creating a vicious cycle of reduced trust.

Low trust can quickly turn into distrust or disengagement. The result may be a deadlock that both parties find difficult to break.
TRUST Students’ Capacity to Succeed

- We need to recognize that one of the biggest hurdles we face is our *own fixed mindset*. We can—and we must—push back against long-held assumptions we sometimes hold.

- We need to avoid viewing students from a deficit model. We need to have faith that all students can rise to the challenges we establish with guidance and support from us.

- We also need to recognize that we work within a system rooted in structural inequalities. No matter what we do, systemically disadvantaged students are going to walk onto our campuses and worry that they will be stereotyped, face prejudice, or worse—that they are not “college material.”

- Thus, to enact effective reform, we have to move away from making students “college ready” and move towards making our campus “student ready.” We need to understand the diverse student populations we serve. We can’t merely instruct their minds; **we also need to gain their trust if we want them to persist**. We need to provide these students with a sense of safety and belonging in our classes and on our campuses. This needs to be an explicit goal of the Guided Pathways initiative.
What have you learned today? How might this presentation inform your future reform efforts?

How might your college boost the number of students who complete a college level English or math courses by the end of their first year?

How can you work collaboratively with others to cultivate the conditions for all of your students to flourish?

What lingering questions do you have on this topic? What follow-up questions would you like to ask me?
Recommended Tool:

Racial Equity Analysis Tool: https://www.seattleschools.org/departments/department_of_racial_equity_advancement_drea_/racial_equity_analysis_tool

The Racial Equity Analysis Tool lays out a clear process and a set of questions to guide the development, implementation and evaluation of significant policies, initiatives, professional development, programs, instructional practices and budget issues to address the impacts on racial equity. To do this requires ending individual racism, institutional racism and structural racism.

Why and when should you use it?

- Use this tool to create an equity lens for educational leaders: The Racial Equity Analysis Toolkit provides a set of guiding questions to determine if existing and proposed policies, budgetary decisions, programs, professional development and instructional practices are likely to close the opportunity gap for specific racial groups in Seattle Public Schools.

- Apply the tool to decrease the opportunity gap, and increase positive outcomes for systemically disadvantaged students.