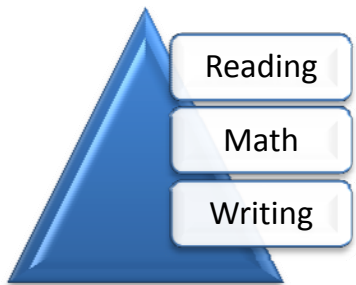


Jackson County Education Summit



A TRI-SUMMER EDUCATION SUMMIT: A Proposal

**Baker College
Jackson Community College
Spring Arbor University**

Executive Summary: The three institutions of higher education (IHEs) in Jackson County are concerned and now seek to address the challenge of the number of traditional age

students, graduating from high school, ill-prepared for collegiate level work. Specifically, the IHEs propose to work in partnership with the Jackson County Intermediate School District and the Jackson County area high schools to mitigate this challenge.

Clearly, a number of related activities are currently underway to help stem this tide. Most notably is the new mandated state curriculum, though the effectiveness of this initiative may not be known for a few more years. In addition, the Jackson County Commissioners established an Education Committee charged with the identification and correction of numerous educational challenges in the region. On a similar track, the Jackson County United Way has adopted three new areas of focus, including: income, health, and education – the later tasked with helping children, youth, and non-traditional adults achieve their educational potential. Both the County and the United Way are mindful of their comparable efforts and both secondary and post secondary professionals serve on both of these committees.

Proposal: It is proposed that three Education Summits be established to address the aforementioned challenges. It is further proposed that these Summits would be structured for three half-days per week for two weeks. The first of these Summits would begin during the summer of 2009.

The specific goals of the initiative are to:

- Mitigate the curricular separation between the IHEs and the high schools in the areas of mathematics, reading, and writing.

- Establish uniform student competencies for the handoff between high school requirements and college.
- Establish a meeting each semester, following the Summits, for area high school and college faculty to renew their progress on curricular adjustments
- Utilize data to monitor progress of student performance related to curricular change.
- Formalize communications among high school and college faculty by establishing list-serves, blogs, etc.
- Incorporate the work of the JCISD Math & Science Center into the work of these Summits.
- Develop Summer Education programs around assisting high school students to stay “at grade level” in the targeted instructional areas through high school.

Jackson Community College will continue on its course of presenting Achieving the Dream data, as well as placement and institutional experiential data to Jackson County Schools and the other IHEs with regard academic performance during their first year at JCC. Likewise, the other colleges will share their student performance data with area schools. The effort will promote trend analysis and evaluation.

Mathematics will be the focus of the first Education Summit.

Timeline:

- ✓ *February:* The IHEs will prepare, with assistance of Jackson County Schools, funding proposals for the Weatherwax Foundation and the Jackson County Community Foundation for the purpose of providing financial assistance for the Education Summit series. Funding would provide for facilitators, wages, textbooks, travel, materials, and meals.
- ✓ Local schools will recommend a representative to serve on a Summit Planning Committee to define the form and structure of the Summits.
- ✓ February: The IHEs will secure a contract and commitment of a neutral facilitator.
- ✓ April: The Summit Planning Committee will define specific Summit outcomes.
- ✓ May: The agenda will be formalized and distributed.
- ✓ August '09: Math Education Summit
- ✓ August '10: Writing Education Summit
- ✓ August '11: Reading Education Summit

As part of the initiative, text book utilization at secondary and post-secondary schools, student performance data, and curricula will be considered. The intended goal will be to reach agreement on instructional outcomes at the secondary level and start-up

instructional strategies and curricula at the post-secondary level and the codification of defined outcomes at both levels.

It is hoped that the Education Summit series will open the communication conduits between secondary and post-secondary faculty for, perhaps, the first time. With utilizing this communication vehicle, combined with specific learnings of the local schools and the IHEs from initiatives such as the African Male Summit and the Achieving the Dream Initiative (ATDI), it is hoped that the Colleges will begin reducing the number of students who test into the development education courses by 5% each year until targets of 25%, 20% and 10% are respectively reached for mathematics, reading, and writing. The College will track data, in concert with the local schools, to note specific progress from the 9th grade to freshman enrollment, and beyond, at the College. Additional data points will include persistence in follow-on credit courses, persistence from term to term, and gate-keeper course success.

As noted previously, cost considerations may include, but are not limited to, textbook purchases and, if volunteers cannot otherwise be engaged, compensation/stipends according to prevailing contract language for secondary and post-secondary school faculty. Given that the Education Summit may last several days, or up to six work days, other costs may include meals and transportation.