Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) and Iowa community colleges.

Overview

The Voluntary Framework for Accountability (VFA) was designed by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) to serve as an accountability framework for community colleges with success measures tailored for the sector. Designed specifically with community colleges in mind, the VFA contains measures which encompass and reflect the full breadth of the community college mission and the diversity of students' goals and educational experiences. VFA allows internal, inter-college, and state-wide comparisons and benchmarking, both in pre-set or customized groups of colleges or states. Partnering with the community college presidents, the division funds the VFA membership costs for the community colleges and supports the statewide initiative as a data clearinghouse to ensure consistency in data reporting.

Structure

The VFA Measures are subdivided into three major categories: credit Student Progress & Outcomes (SPO), Career &Technical Education (CTE), and Adult Basic Education Outcomes (ABE). SPO is based on two-year and six-year cohort tracking, while CTE and ABE track only one year cohort progress during the year and one year past cohort’s formation.
Project Oversight

In Iowa, VFA processes are guided by the overall Steering Committee and three section sub-committees: SPO, CTE, ABE. The Steering Committee adopts strategic decisions, while sub-committees work on their implementations.

Iowa VFA Steering Committee: community college presidents, VFA specialists, Division’s managers.

VFA Progress

Because of needed data scope and complexity, VFA in Iowa has been implemented in several stages.

FY 2014: Pilot SPO section, 2-year cohort reporting, 13 colleges participated, nine colleges published.

FY 2015: Full implementation of SPO section, 2-year cohort reporting, all colleges participated, all colleges published.

FY 2016: Full implementation of SPO section, 2-year cohort reporting, pilot 6-year cohort reporting (several colleges), CTE section profile reporting by all colleges.

FY 2017: Full implementation of SPO section (2- and 6-year cohort) reporting, full implementation of CTE and ABE sections.

Further Information

VFA page in Iowa Department of Education web site:
https://www.educateiowa.gov/voluntary-framework-accountability-vfa

VFA web-site:
http://vfa.aacc.nche.edu