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Promising Practice Brief **Lincoln Land's "On Track for College"**

Program Background

- Lincoln Land Community College (LLCC) invites district high schools to administer their placement test to high school sophomores and/or juniors. Students immediately receive a copy of their test results showing where they would have to begin in reading, writing, and mathematics they were to start LLCC the next semester. Therefore, students are alerted early if they did not have the appropriate ability level in reading, writing, or math to be successful in college. Students who have this information at the end of their sophomore year in high school have sufficient time to enroll in a third and possibly a fourth year of math and English to address any deficiencies. The ultimate goal is to provide secondary students with time and opportunities to adjust their high school enrollment patterns to avoid the need for remedial and/or developmental courses in college.
- Two high schools participated in an expanded program in which students were offered up to sixteen weeks of instruction by LLCC faculty within a special "On Track for College" curriculum which focused in the areas of study skills, math, English and/or reading. Post tests are administered to determine changes in reading, writing, or math skills and students are given certificates of completion.
- Additional program goals include: (a) developing a broader reporting and data sharing avenues between the area high schools and LCCC; and (b) improving collaboration between the area high schools and LLCC.

Career Development Activity Highlights

- *Placement tests* – Placement tests are administered and results are shared early in a student's high school career. This helps students plan appropriately for later high school classes in order to avoid the need for remedial or development classes in college.



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- *On Track for College Curriculum* – LLCC faculty and adjunct instructors work with a select group of high school students to build reading, writing, math, and/or study skills for college level work. Post-test are available to these students to help assess progress.
- *“On Track for College”: A step-by-step guide for parents* – A parent’s guide is distributed through area high schools to the parents of 8th grade students. It includes a year by year description of what students should be doing at each grade of high school to prepare for college entry. It addressed LLCC degrees, financial aid, the enrollment process, placement testing, course sequences in composition, reading, and mathematics, and other services such as tutoring, career development, student life, and special needs.

Evidence of Success

- Sophomore and/or junior class profiles are available for participating district high schools, showing strengths and weaknesses in reading, writing, and mathematics. Those participating in pre and post-test have the potential to receive more detailed information.
- In February 2006, this program was recognized by the Illinois Board of Higher Education as “Featured Effective Practice” that has a direct connection to *The Illinois Commitment*.

Reference

Illinois Board of Higher Education. (2006). *On Track for College: Placement Testing of Area High School Juniors and Sophomores*. Springfield, IL: Author. Retrieved March 26, 2007, <http://www.ibhe.org/EffectivePractices/Featured/result.asp?Y=2005&F=007170&P=2&T=164&S=A>