

The following documentation is an excerpt from the mid cycle grant review provided by external evaluator, Shannon O'Brien for the Western North Carolina Network for Access and Success dated August 1, 2006-January 31, 2008. Institutional and community impact is evidenced in this report.

Cherokee County Schools

Hiwassee Dam High School

Partnering Institution: Western North Carolina University

Number of Students 2006-2007: 181

ARC Status: Economically & Educationally Distressed

End of Course Test Passing Rates

	E.D. Students	N.E.D. Students
HDHS	78	82
North Carolina	51	74

SAT Participation

	Participation Rate	Average Score
HDHS	56	1020
North Carolina	71	1004
Nation	48	1017

Cohort Graduation Rate

	2006	2007	% Change
HDHS	89	89	0
State	68	69	+1

College Going Rate

	2006	2007	% Change
HDHS	79	84	+5

Activities:

- Promotion of Health Care and Education Professions
- Providing supplies and fees for courses
- Participation in Teachers of Tomorrow at WCU
- Career Fair and College Visits

Program Points of Interests:

Middle and High School Culture of College Preparedness

After over five years of teacher training, students are consistently trained to be thinking about where they will attend post-secondary education. According to administration “I don’t know is not an answer” when students are asked whether or not they will attend college. One on one conversations, as well as classroom discussions, involve college readiness. In recognition of academic achievements, a trophy case was built specifically for scholarly awards.

Consistent School Visits by College Representative

Weekly visits by a representative from the university admissions developed consistency in students’ lives, which in turn developed into trust and then academic achievement. According to Dr. Kim Elliott of Western Carolina University, “Two student’s English grades increased from a D to an A in the short time (4 weeks) that our representative was working with those students.” She emphasized the need for well-qualified personnel to serve these students, professionals with experience working with young people. She has received many emails of gratitude from the two high schools that received these weekly student services.

Sustainability Efforts

Cherokee schools have developed remarkably strong alliances with local private industries. For example, MOOG Electronic Components donated motors to strengthen physics instruction. Additionally, Snap-O and Blue Ridge Electric have also contributed significantly towards academic programs.

Graham County Schools

Robbinsville High School

Partnering Institution: Western Carolina University

Number of Students 2006-2007: 327

ARC Status: Economically At-Risk

End of Course Test Passing Rates

	E.D. Students	N.E.D. Students
RHS	>95	>95
North Carolina	73	50

SAT Participation

	Participation Rate	Average Score
RHS	43	970
North Carolina	71	1004
Nation	48	1017

Cohort Graduation Rate

	2006	2007	% Change
RHS	76	71	-5
State	69	69	+1

College Going Rate

	2006	2007	% Change
RHS	77	49	-28*

Activities:

- Career Fair and College Visits
- Parent Information Nights
- Tutoring
- Job Shadowing
- Teachers of Tomorrow Programming

Program Points of Interests:

Teacher Professional Development Opportunities

Substitute teachers were hired to allow faculty to be trained in SAT preparation. Integrating test preparation into the regular curriculum has show an increase in tests scores, as well as a general awareness and consistent dialog regarding college readiness. School-wide “Word of the Day” supports this effort.

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Increased Tutoring Opportunities

One on one academic support, especially in Spanish, has proven helpful for academic success.

Sustainability Efforts

Robbinsville High School is well aware of federal programs available to support college access. Educational Talent Search has been in existence since the late 1980s and Robbinsville was one of the first GEAR-UP grant recipients. School counselors explain that there is an extremely high need to continue efforts to sustain college access programming for this very remote community.