**OFFICE OF
HIGHER EDUCATION**

MnSCU Two-Year Occupational Grant Pilot Program Report 2018

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About the Minnesota Office of Higher Education

The Minnesota Office of Higher Education is a cabinet-level state agency providing students with financial aid programs and information to help them gain access to postsecondary education. The agency also serves as the state's clearinghouse for data, research and analysis on postsecondary enrollment, financial aid, finance and trends.

The Minnesota State Grant Program is the largest financial aid program administered by the Office of Higher Education, awarding up to $198 million in need-based grants to Minnesota residents attending accredited institutions in Minnesota. The agency oversees tuition reciprocity programs, a student loan program, Minnesota's 529 College Savings Plan, licensing and early college awareness programs for youth.

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Executive Summary

The MnSCU Two-Year Occupational Grant Pilot Program provided last dollar grant funding and mentoring to students enrolled in qualifying occupational programs leading to employment in a high-demand occupation at a Minnesota State two-year college. The program expired on June 30, 2018. Only applicants enrolling in college and receiving grant funds in fall 2016 were eligible to participate during the two year period.

One cohort of students was eligible and entered college in the 2016-2017 academic year. The grant covered any remaining tuition and general fee charges after the student's Federal Pell Grant and Minnesota State Grant were applied. To qualify for the grant, the student must have been admitted and began enrollment in a qualifying program at a Minnesota State College during fall 2016 immediately following completion of high school, adult basic education, GED or Americorps program. Students were Minnesota residents with a family adjusted gross income of $90,000 or less. To receive funding, recipients agreed to participate in mentoring.

First Year Grants

Approximately $3.463 million was awarded in the first year to 866 recipients. The average annual award was $3,999 and ranged from $1 to $10,979 across the fall, spring and summer academic terms.

Year 1 Enrollment

- Most students (62%) enrolled full-time at 15+ credits in fall term with an average credit load of 15.27 credits for all participants.
- 182 participants enrolled in developmental education courses (21% of total participants).
- Participants completed the majority of credits attempted (89% of credits fall term, 86% of credits spring term, 98% of credits summer term).
- 64 percent of participants accumulated 30 or more credits by the end of the first year, an additional 12 percent accumulated for 24-29 credits, and 4 percent accumulated zero credits. The average number of credits accumulated was 34.93 credits. Accumulated credits were higher for students who transferred in credits (24% percent of recipients).

Year 1 Persistence and Completion

- 74 percent (644 students) persisted to fall term of the second year and 45 students (5%) had completed a credential. The remaining 178 participants (21%) were no longer enrolled at a Minnesota college participating in state financial aid during the second year.
- A total of 85 credentials were granted to 79 students during the first year. Of students graduating during the first year, construction trades had the most graduates (21 credentials).

Second Year Grants

Of the 644 participants re-enrolling in fall term of the second year, 351 students (55%) met the criteria to receive an award. The majority of non-renewals (87%) were for failure complete at least 30 program credits by the end of the first academic year.

Approximately $1.295 million was awarded during the second year to 351 recipients. The average award was $3,689 and ranged from $14 to $9,019 across fall, spring and summer academic terms.

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Introduction

This report provides an analysis of the first year and fall term of the second year of the *MnSCU Two-Year Occupational Grant Pilot* program. In particular, this report includes descriptive statistics of program grantees by enrollment, intensity, persistency, progress to degree and degree completion.

Program Overview

The MnSCU Two-Year Occupational Grant Pilot Program provided last dollar grant funding and mentoring to eligible new entering students in fall 2016 enrolled in qualifying career and technical programs at Minnesota State two-year colleges. The program provided participating students the opportunity to complete a qualifying program within two years or less and find employment in a high-demand occupation. The program was created by the 2015 Minnesota Legislature as a pilot program for the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 academic years. The program was enacted in 2015 *Minnesota Sessions Laws, Chapter 69 Article 3, Sec. 20*. The text of the legislation can be found in Appendix A. The program did not receive additional funding beyond fiscal year 2018 (academic year 2017-2018).

Student Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for the grant, the student must have:

- Been admitted and began enrollment (at least one program credit) in a qualifying certificate, diploma, associate of science (AS) or associate of applied science (AAS) program at a Minnesota State College during fall semester 2016 immediately following:
    - Graduated from a Minnesota secondary school during the 2015-2016 academic year; or
    - for those without a high school diploma, completed an Adult Basic Education program or passed a GED test as a Minnesota resident during the 2015-2016 academic year; or
    - completed a 12 or 24-month Americorps program during the 2015-2016 academic year that started immediately after high school graduation during an earlier academic year.
- Met the definition of "Minnesota Resident Student" used for state financial aid programs.
- Had an adjusted gross income (or wages for non-filers) of $90,000 or less for the 2015 tax year.
    - For a student applying as a dependent student, parental income was used.
    - For a student applying as an independent student, student (and spouse's, if married) income was used.
- Participated in free mentoring services throughout the student's academic program, and
- Had tuition and fee charges not fully covered by Federal Pell and Minnesota State Grants during fall 2016.

Applying for the Grant

To apply for the grant for the 2016-2017 academic year, students completed the 2016-2017 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Applicants were ranked by FAFSA application date and were funded on a first-come first-served basis. Students must have agreed to participate in mentoring in order to receive funds. The program expired on June 30, 2018. Only applicants enrolling in college and receiving grant funds in fall 2016 were eligible to participate during the two-year period.

First Year Grant

The grant was available for each term of the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 academic years, including summer terms, provided the student had tuition and fee charges not covered by federal and state grants. The amount of an individual student's grant changed depending on the student's enrollment level, tuition and fees and the amount of the student's federal and state grants.

Second Year Grant – Conditions for Renewal

The grant was renewed for the 2017-2018 academic year if the student met the following conditions:

- Submitted a 2017-2018 FAFSA and any other required documents in a timely manner,
- successfully completed 30 or more program credits during the first year,
- participated in required free mentoring services during the first year,
- maintained Satisfactory Academic Progress and obtained a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or higher at the end of the first year and for each term of the second year, and
- the college certified the student was on track to complete the program during the second year.

Students enrolled in shorter programs (30 credits or less) must have completed their programs during the first year and were not eligible for renewal.

Qualifying Occupational Programs

Qualifying programs included those programs covered by the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act and in an occupational field designated as high demand by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) in the areas of:

(1) agriculture, food, and natural resources;
(2) business management and administration;
(3) human services;
(4) engineering, manufacturing and technology;
(5) arts, communications, and information systems; and
(6) health science technology.

To identify qualifying programs of study, DEED selected programs of study categorized as "high demand," as these programs feed into occupations in the upper two quintiles of DEED's Occupations in Demand rating. Table 1 shows designated programs of study meeting this criteria. Approximately 92 percent of programs of study under the Perkins Act met the high demand definition.

Qualifying programs excluded programs that were longer than 72 credits, were designed to last longer than two years, or included pre-requisites which prevented students from being admitted to the program in fall 2016 and completing the program in two academic years. Students were required to check with their college to make sure a program met the requirements for participating in this pilot program prior to applying for admission. Programs excluded for not meeting the "high demand" requirement included programs in: natural resources and conservation; architecture; communications and journalism; communications technologies; American sign language; legal support services; library science; parks, recreation, leisure and fitness studies; science technologies; and visual and performing arts.

Table 1. Qualifying Program Codes

Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) Code	Program of Study
01	Agriculture, agriculture operations, and related sciences
11	Computer and information sciences and support services
12	Personal and culinary services
13	Education
14	Engineering technologies and engineering-related fields
15	Engineering
19	Family and consumer sciences/human sciences
27	Mathematics and statistics
43	Homeland security, law enforcement, firefighting and related protective services
44	Public administration and social service professions
46	Construction trades
47	Mechanic and repair technologies/technicians
48	Precision production
49	Transportation and materials moving
51	Health professions and related programs
52	Business, management, marketing, and related support services

Results Year 1

The results of descriptive statistics on MnSCU Occupational Grant recipients related to enrollment patterns, enrollment intensity, persistency, progress to degree, and degree completion are presented below. Minnesota State Colleges awarded Occupational Grant funds to 866 students during the 2016-2017 academic year.

Recipient Demographics

The average parental adjusted gross income of Occupational Grant recipients was $63,951. As shown in Figure 1, recipient incomes were concentrated at incomes between $40,000 and $90,000. Only 12 percent of recipients had incomes below $40,000. As shown in Table 2, women represented one-third of recipients (334) and students of color represented 17 percent of recipients.

Spending in Year 1

As shown in Table 3, approximately $3.463 million were awarded in Year 1 to 866 recipients. The average annual award was $3,999 and ranged from $1 to $10,979 across the three academic terms. Annual awards by institution are available in Table 4.

Figure 1: Distribution of Year 1 Recipients by Family Adjusted Gross Income, 2016-2017
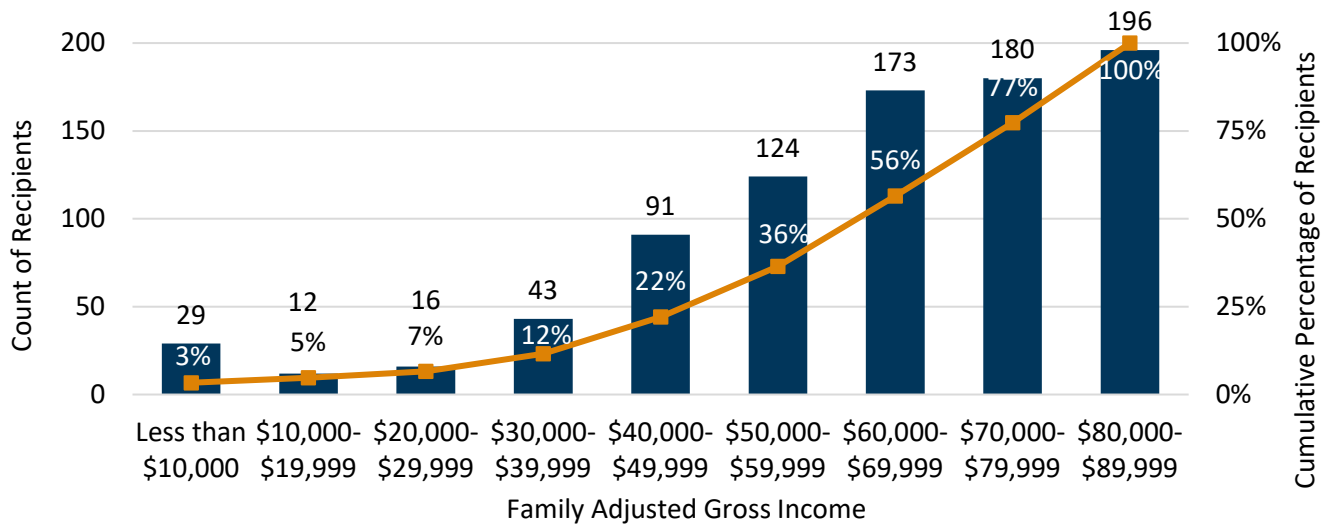
Table 2: Distribution of Year 1 Recipients by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2016-2017

Gender	Number of Recipients	Percent of Total
Female	292	34%
Male	568	66%
Total	860	100%
Race/Ethnicity	**Number of Recipients**	**Percent of Total**
Black or African American	Count too small to report	n/a
American Indian or Alaska Native	Count too small to report	n/a
Asian	28	3%
Hispanic/Latino	53	6%
Two or More Races	37	4%
Subtotal Students of Color	*147*	*17%*
White	704	81%
Not Reported	15	2%
Total	**866**	**100%**

Table 3. Occupational Grant Spending by Term

Term	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean
Fall 2016	865	$1	$4,207	$1,613,955	$1,865
Spring 2017	744	$4	$4,377	$1,495,577	$2,010
Summer 2017	304	$173	$3,623	$353,285	$1,162
Annual 2016-2017	866	$1	$10,979	$3,462,818	$3,999

Table 4. Occupational Grant Spending by Institution

Institution	N	Sum	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Alexandria Technical & Community College	75	$302,000	$4,024	$276	$7,705
Anoka Technical College	22	$84,000	$3,831	$182	$7,189
Anoka-Ramsey Community College	25	$104,000	$4,166	$1,661	$7,544
Central Lakes College	37	$167,000	$4,502	$224	$10,351
Century College	59	$204,000	$3,466	$1	$7,073
Dakota County Technical College	30	$125,000	$4,155	$28	$7,634
Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College	1				
Hennepin Technical College	10	$36,000	$3,610	$687	$7,757
Hibbing Community College	14	$54,000	$3,832	$852	$7,179
Inver Hills Community College	5				
Itasca Community College	29	$106,000	$3,658	$352	$6,510
Lake Superior College	18	$91,000	$5,051	$1,790	$8,037
Mesabi Range College	4				
Minneapolis College	24	$72,000	$3,003	$490	$7,750
MN State College-Southeast Technical	17	$92,000	$5,389	$982	$8,940
MN State Community & Technical College	72	$268,000	$3,728	$36	$8,562
MN West Community & Technical College	40	$148,000	$3,701	$20	$8,113
Normandale Community College	63	$293,000	$4,656	$603	$9,303
North Hennepin Community College	23	$91,000	$3,935	$875	$7,470
Northland Community & Technical College	38	$139,000	$3,660	$212	$10,979
Northwest Technical College	15	$54,000	$3,627	$691	$8,449
Pine Technical & Community College	9				
Ridgewater College	71	$302,000	$4,248	$82	$8,224
Riverland Community College	16	$84,000	$5,231	$2,330	$8,232
Rochester Community and Technical College	42	$173,000	$4,127	$926	$7,049
Saint Paul College	22	$81,000	$3,676	$287	$8,663
South Central College	25	$110,000	$4,392	$1,677	$8,370
St. Cloud Technical & Community College	56	$210,000	$3,745	$167	$6,951
Vermilion Community College	4				
Total	**866**	**$3,463,000**	**$3,999**	**$1**	**$10,979**

Award amounts are not shown where the number of students is less than 10.

Enrollment Patterns in Year 1

How many credits did participants enroll in?

Table 5. Enrollment Intensity, Occupational Grant Recipients, Fall Term Year 1

Enrollment Level Fall 2016	Number of Students	Percent of Students
1-5 credits	2	0%
6-8 credits	24	3%
9-11 credits	47	5%
12-14 credits	256	30%
15+ credits	537	62%
Total	866	100%

As shown in table 5, most students (62%) enrolled full-time at 15+ credits in fall term in the first year. An additional 30 percent enrolled for 12-14 credits. Only eight percent enrolled for fewer than 12 credits. Credits taken ranged from four credits to 25 credits, with an average credit load for the first-year fall term of 15.27 credits.

How many credits of developmental education did participants enroll in?

During the first-year fall term, 182 participants enrolled in developmental education courses (21% of 886 total participants). Developmental education credits taken ranged from one credit to 12 credits with an average development education credit load of 4.95 credits. Developmental education credits represented seven percent of total credits taken during first-year fall term.

How many credits did participants complete?

Table 6. Credit Completion by Term, Occupational Grant Recipients, Fall Term Year 1

Term	Calendar Year	Credits Attempted	Credits Completed	Percent Completed
Fall	2016	13,228	11,709	89%
Spring	2017	12,455	10,769	86%
Summer	2017	196	192	98%

As shown in Table 6, participants completed the majority of credits attempted (89% of credits fall term, 86% of credits spring term, 98% of credits summer term).

Persistence to Spring Year 1

Of students enrolling in their fall term, how many were still enrolled in spring term?

As shown in Table 7, 93 percent of participants persisted to spring term. An additional three participants completed a credential by the end of fall term during the first year. Approximately seven percent of participants (61 students) dropped out before spring term of the first year.

Table 7. Persistence to First Spring Term, Occupational Grant Recipients

Institution	Number Enrolled Fall 2016	Percent Enrolled Spring 2017	Percent Completing Prior to Spring 2017	Percent Not Enrolling Spring 2017
Alexandria Technical & Community College	75	93%	0%	7%
Anoka Technical College	22	91%	5%	5%
Anoka-Ramsey Community College	25	88%	0%	12%
Central Lakes College	37	86%	0%	14%
Century College	59	95%	0%	5%
Dakota County Technical College	30	97%	3%	0%
Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hennepin Technical College	10	90%	0%	10%
Hibbing Community College	14	86%	0%	14%
Inver Hills Community College	5	100%	0%	0%
Itasca Community College	29	90%	0%	10%
Lake Superior College	18	94%	0%	6%
Mesabi Range College	4	n/a	n/a	n/a
Minneapolis Community & Technical College	24	88%	0%	13%
MN State College-Southeast Technical	17	94%	0%	6%
MN State Community & Technical College	72	93%	0%	7%
MN West Community & Technical College	40	95%	0%	5%
Normandale Community College	63	90%	0%	10%
North Hennepin Community College	23	100%	0%	0%
Northland Community & Technical College	38	92%	3%	5%
Northwest Technical College	15	87%	0%	13%
Pine Technical & Community College	9	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ridgewater College	71	100%	0%	0%
Riverland Community College	16	94%	0%	6%
Rochester Community & Technical College	42	95%	0%	5%
Saint Paul College	22	91%	0%	9%
South Central College	25	88%	0%	12%
St. Cloud Technical & Community College	56	88%	0%	13%
Vermilion Community College	4	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	866	93%	0.3%	7%

Outcomes not reported for cells showing fewer than 10 students.

Progress to Degree Year 1

Of students enrolling in fall term, what was the mean and median number of credits accumulated in the fall, spring, and summer terms?

Table 8. Total Credits Accumulated by Occupational Grant Recipients, Year 1

Total Credits	Number of OGS Recipients	Percent of OGS Recipients
0	35	4%
1-11	54	6%
12-23	122	14%
24-29	103	12%
30+	552	64%
Total	866	100%

As shown in table 8, most students (64%) accumulated 30 or more credits by the end of the first year. An additional 12 percent accumulated for 24 to 29 credits. Four percent of recipients accumulated zero credits in the first year. Credits accumulated ranged from 0 to 161 credits, with an average of 34.93 credits accumulated in the first year per recipient.

Accumulated credits were higher for students who were able to transfer credits. Approximately 24 percent of recipients (210 students) had transfer credits. Transfer credits reported ranged from one to 62 credits with an average of 3.08.

Degree Completion Year 1

Of students enrolling in fall term, how many completed a credential in year 1?

Table 9. Enrollment Intensity, Occupational Grant Recipients, Year 1

Completion Term	Completion Year	Total Credentials	Certificate less than 1 year	Certificate of 1-2 years	Associate Degree	Diploma / Certificate of 2-4 years
Fall	2016	18	9	3	6	0
Spring	2017	66	17	41	7	1
Summer	2017	1	0	1	0	0
Total	2016-2017	85	26	45	13	1

As shown in Table 9, a total of 85 credentials were granted to 79 students during the first year. Construction trades had the most graduates (21 credentials). Table 10 displays the number and type of credential by major.

Table 10. Completions by Award Type and Major, Occupational Grant Recipients, Year 1

Major Code	Major Name	Certificate of 1 Year or Less	Certificate of 2 Years	Associate Degree	Diploma / Certificate of 2-4 years	Total Awards
1-Agriculture	Equestrian / Equine Studies	1	1	0	0	2
15-Engineering Technologies	Water Quality and Wastewater Treatment Management and Recycling Technology	0	1	0	0	1
24-Liberal Arts	Liberal Arts and Sciences	0	0	9	0	9
43-Security and Protective Services	Criminal Justice / Police Science	1	0	1	0	2
46-Construction Trades	Carpentry / Carpenter	2	2	0	0	4
46-Construction Trades	Electrician	0	0	0	1	1
46-Construction Trades	Lineworker	0	15	0	0	15
46-Construction Trades	Plumbing Technology / Plumber	0	1	0	0	1
47-Mechanic and Repair Technologies	Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation and Refrigeration Maintenance	0	2	0	0	2
47-Mechanic and Repair Technologies	Musical Instrument Fabrication and Repair	1	1	0	0	2
47-Mechanic and Repair Technologies	Autobody / Collision and Repair Technology / Technician	1	0	0	0	1
47-Mechanic and Repair Technologies	Automobile / Automotive Mechanics Technology	4	1	0	0	5

Major Code	Major Name	Certificate of 1 Year or Less	Certificate of 2 Years	Associate Degree	Diploma / Certificate of 2-4 years	Total Awards
47-Mechanic and Repair Technologies	Diesel Mechanics Technology / Technician	0	0	1	0	1
47-Mechanic and Repair Technologies	Small Engine Mechanics and Repair Technology / Technician	0	2	0	0	2
48-Precision Production	Sheet Metal Technology / Sheet Working	0	1	0	0	1
48-Precision Production	Welding Technology / Welder	3	12	0	0	15
51-Health Professions	Dental Assisting / Assistant	0	3	0	0	3
51-Health Professions	Emergency Care Attendant (EMT Ambulance)	2	0	0	0	2
51-Health Professions	Sterile Processing Technology	2	0	0	0	2
51-Health Professions	Massage Therapy	0	2	0	0	2
51-Health Professions	Licensed Practical Nurse	0	1	0	0	1
51-Health Professions	Nursing and Patient Care Assistant	5	0	0	0	5
52-Business, Management	Business Administration and Management, General	1	0	1	0	2
52-Business, Management	Office Management and Supervision	1	0	0	0	1
52-Business, Management	Entrepreneurship / Entrepreneurial Studies	2	0	0	0	2
52-Business, Management	Human Resources Management / Personnel Administration	0	0	1	0	1
ALL	ALL	26	45	13	1	85

Note: 24-Liberal Arts is not an Occupational Grant eligible program.

Results Year 2

As shown in Table 11, 74 percent (644 students) persisted to fall term of the second year and 5 percent (45 students) had completed a credential in the first year. The remaining 21 percent were no longer enrolled in the second year at any Minnesota college participating in state financial aid.

Table 11. Persistence to Second Fall Term, Occupational Grant Recipients

Institution	Number Enrolled Fall 2016	Percent Persisting Fall 2016 to Fall 2017	Percent Completing Prior to Fall 2017	Percent Not Enrolled Year 2
Alexandria Technical & Community College	75	76%	0%	24%
Anoka Technical College	22	68%	9%	23%
Anoka-Ramsey Community College	25	68%	0%	32%
Central Lakes College	37	43%	0%	57%
Century College	59	75%	2%	24%
Dakota County Technical College	30	80%	13%	7%
Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hennepin Technical College	10	60%	20%	20%
Hibbing Community College	14	86%	7%	7%
Inver Hills Community College	5	n/a	n/a	n/a
Itasca Community College	29	86%	0%	14%
Lake Superior College	18	78%	6%	17%
Mesabi Range College	4	n/a	n/a	n/a
Minneapolis Community & Technical College	24	63%	0%	38%
MN State College-Southeast Technical	17	65%	6%	29%
MN State Community & Technical College	72	71%	15%	14%
MN West Community & Technical College	40	70%	15%	15%
Normandale Community College	63	78%	2%	21%
North Hennepin Community College	23	87%	0%	13%
Northland Community & Technical College	38	76%	11%	13%
Northwest Technical College	15	53%	7%	40%
Pine Technical & Community College	9	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ridgewater College	71	83%	3%	14%
Riverland Community College	16	81%	0%	19%
Rochester Community and Technical College	42	81%	7%	12%
Saint Paul College	22	73%	5%	23%
South Central College	25	84%	0%	16%
St. Cloud Technical & Community College	56	66%	7%	27%
Vermilion Community College	4	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	866	74%	5%	21%

Completed only include those students completing a credential in Year 1 and not enrolling in Year 2.
Outcomes not reported for cells showing fewer than 10 students.

Of students enrolling in Year 2, what percentage of credits attempted were completed?

Second-year participants completed 90 percent (8,955 credits) of credits attempted (9,977 credits) during fall term. Spring and summer 2018 term data will be available in winter 2019.

Grant Renewal Year 2

As shown in Table 12, of the 644 enrolling in fall term of the second year, 351 students met the criteria to receive an award.

Table 12. Year 2 Grant Renewal Status, Occupational Grant Recipients

Year 2 Status	Number	Percent
Participants, Year 1	866	
Persisted to Fall 2017	644	
Received an award in Year 2	351	55%
Did not receive an award in Year 2	293	45%

As shown in Table 13, the majority of non-renewals were for failure to meet the credit requirement. Minnesota statutes requires that participants completed at least 30 program credits by the end of the first academic year, including summer term.

Table 13. Reasons for Non-Renewal in Year 2, Occupational Grant Recipients

Reason for Not Receiving an Award in Year 2	Number	Percent
Failed to Meet Mentoring Requirement	0	0%
Failed to Meet Credit Requirement	255	87%
Eligible but No Financial Need	21	7%
Did Not Complete a FAFSA	7	2%
Transferred to Non-Eligible College or Program	10	3%
Total	293	100%

Spending Year 2

As shown in Table 143, $1.295 million was awarded during the second year of the program to 351 recipients. The average annual award was $3,689 and ranged from $14 to $9,019 across three academic terms. Information on annual awards by institution is available in Table 15.

Table 14. Occupational Grant Spending by Term, Year 2

Term	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean
Fall 2017	347	$14	$4,208	$695,202	$2,003
Spring 2018	287	$14	$4,663	$563,282	$1,963
Summer 2018	41	$194	$2,479	$36,340	$886
Annual 2017-2018	351	$14	$9,019	$1,294,824	$3,689

Table 15. Occupational Grant Spending by Institution, Year 2

Institution	N	Sum	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Alexandria Technical & Community College	35	$150,965	$4,313	$498	$6,911
Anoka Technical College	9				
Anoka-Ramsey Community College	8				
Central Lakes College	6				
Century College	12	$34,081	$2,840	$187	$7,723
Dakota County Technical College	13	$63,364	$4,874	$767	$7,512
Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College	0				
Hennepin Technical College	4				
Hibbing Community College	3				
Inver Hills Community College	0				
Itasca Community College	15	$47,337	$3,156	$110	$5,043
Lake Superior College	8				
Mesabi Range College	3				
Minneapolis Community & Technical College	6				
MN State College-Southeast Technical	7				
MN State Community and Technical College	30	$98,988	$3,300	$174	$7,032
MN West Community & Technical College	17	$87,991	$5,176	$1,563	$8,903
Normandale Community College	25	$89,935	$3,597	$766	$6,646
North Hennepin Community College	6				
Northland Community & Technical College	22	$74,790	$3,400	$766	$8,436
Northwest Technical College	3				
Pine Technical & Community College	7				
Ridgewater College	44	$161,809	$3,677	$655	$7,296
Riverland Community College	10	$34,246	$3,425	$629	$8,186
Rochester Community and Technical College	5				
Saint Paul College	10	$37,374	$3,737	$1,572	$6,559
South Central College	14	$38,269	$2,733	$69	$6,002
St. Cloud Technical & Community College	28	$110,330	$3,940	$14	$6,324
Vermilion Community College	1				
Total	351	$1,294,824	$3,689	$14	$9,019

Award amounts are not shown where the number of students is less than 10.

Next Report

This report provides results for the first year and second-year fall term from an analysis of the *MnSCU Two-Year Occupational Grant Pilot* program. In particular, this report includes descriptive statistics of program grantees by enrollment, intensity, persistence, progress to degree and degree completion. The next report will include comparative data on enrollment, persistence and completion by non-Occupational Grant participants, full results of second year enrollment and completion by Occupational Grant participants and short-term employment outcomes.

Appendix A. Enacted Legislation

Minnesota Session Laws 2015, Chapter 69, Article 1, Sec. 3

Subd. 18. MNSCU Two-Year Public College Program

(a) $3,993,000 in fiscal year 2017 is for two-year public college program grants under article 3, section 20.

(b) $782,000 in fiscal year 2017 is to provide mentoring and outreach as specified under article 3, section 20.

(c) $225,000 in fiscal year 2017 is for information technology and administrative costs associated with implementation of the grant program.

(d) The base for fiscal year 2018 is $3,481,000 and the base for fiscal year 2019 is $0.

Minnesota Session Laws 2015, Chapter 69, Article 3

Sec. 20. MNSCU COLLEGE OCCUPATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PILOT PROGRAM.

Subdivision 1. Pilot program administration.

The commissioner of the Office of Higher Education shall administer a pilot program pursuant to this section for the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 academic years including summer session.

Subd. 2. Definitions.

(a) For the purpose of this section the terms defined in this subdivision have the meanings given them.

(b) "College" means a two-year college in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.

(c) "Eligible individual" means an individual who:

(1) is a resident;

(2) has graduated from a Minnesota secondary school, has as a Minnesota resident completed an adult basic education (ABE) program, or as a Minnesota resident, has passed general education development (GED) testing;

(3) first applies for a grant for the fall term immediately following secondary school graduation, passing GED tests, or completing an ABE program; and

(4) has completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

(d) "Grant" means a scholarship granted under this section.

(e) "Program" means a certificate, diploma, or associate of science or associate of applied science in a program area covered by the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act and in an occupational field designated as high demand by the Department of Employment and Economic Development. "Program area" includes only the areas of:

(1) agriculture, food, and natural resources;

(2) business management and administration;

(3) human services;

(4) engineering, manufacturing and technology;

(5) arts, communications, and information systems; and

(6) health science technology.

(f) To the extent not inconsistent with this section, the definitions in section 136A.101 apply to this section.

Subd. 3. AmeriCorps worker; exceptions.

(a) Notwithstanding any contrary provision of this section, an eligible individual who completes a 12-month or 24-month approved AmeriCorps program commencing immediately after secondary school graduation, may apply for a grant for the fall term immediately following completion of the AmeriCorps program. These individuals have a two consecutive academic year grant eligibility period commencing the start of that fall term.

(b) For the purpose of this subdivision, an "approved AmeriCorps program" means a program overseen by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) including:

(1) AmeriCorps Volunteer in Service to America (VISTA);

(2) AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC); or

(3) AmeriCorps State and National.

Subd. 4. Grants.

The commissioner shall, to the extent of available funds and subject to this section, make grants to eligible individuals to attend a program at a college.

Subd. 5. Application.

Application for a grant shall be made by a FAFSA and on any additional form required by the commissioner and on a schedule set by the commissioner.

Subd. 6. Income limits for grant recipients.

Dependent students reporting a parental federal adjusted gross income on a FAFSA of $90,000 or less are eligible for a grant. Independent students reporting a family adjusted gross income on a FAFSA of $90,000 or less are eligible for a grant.

Subd. 7. Grant amount.

The amount of a grant is equal to program tuition and fees minus any federal Pell grant received or state grant for which the individual is eligible. For the purpose of this subdivision, "fees" has the meaning given it in Minnesota Statutes, section 136A.121, subdivision 6.

Subd. 8. Eligibility period.

A grant may be made only for academic terms that are during the two academic years commencing the fall term immediately after secondary school graduation, completing an adult basic education program, or passing all GED tests. A grant is available for up to 72 semester credits.

Subd. 9. Satisfactory academic progress.

An individual is eligible for a grant if the individual is making satisfactory academic progress as defined under Minnesota Statutes, section 136A.101, subdivision 10, and has a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale at the end of the first academic year and at the end of each academic term after the first academic year.

Subd. 10. Credit load.

A grantee must have accumulated at least 30 program credits by the end of the first academic year including summer term. A college must certify that a grantee is carrying sufficient credits in the second grant year to complete the program at the end of the second year, including summer school. The commissioner shall set the terms and provide the form for certification.

Subd. 11. Grant renewal.

A grant may be renewed for a second academic year. Application for renewal must be on a form provided by the commissioner and on a schedule set by the commissioner.

Subd. 12. Mentoring.

A grantee must be provided mentoring. Mentoring must include, but is not limited to:

(1) communicating frequently and consistently throughout program participation;

(2) developing a personalized student success plan. The plan must include concrete steps towards program completion and job placement and identify and make contingency plans for potential obstacles to program completion;

(3) connect grantees to on-campus resources and personal development opportunities; and

(4) financial planning.

The commissioner shall issue request for proposals to provide mentoring activities. The commissioner shall select the proposal that in the commissioner's judgment demonstrates the best potential within available funding for achieving success in assisting students to complete programs. The commissioner may accept and select proposals made by colleges.

Subd. 13. Outreach.

The commissioner may through the office and by contract engage in recruitment for and promotion of the grants.

Subd. 14. Insufficient appropriation.

Grant awards shall be made based on the date of receipt of application from the earliest to the latest date. If there are not sufficient funds, grants shall not be prorated and eligible individuals shall be placed on a waiting list. Preference shall be given to timely received renewal grant applications prior to the award of new grants.

Subd. 15. Reporting.

(a) A college must report to the commissioner the following information:

(1) the number of grantees and their race, gender, and ethnicity;

(2) grantee persistence and completion;

(3) employment outcomes; and

(4) other information requested by the commissioner.

(b) The commissioner shall report annually by January 15, to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over higher education finance by college and in aggregate on the information submitted to the commissioner under paragraph (a). The commissioner may include in the report recommendations for changes in the grant program.

EFFECTIVE DATE.

This section is effective July 1, 2016.

Appendix B. Minnesota Occupational Grant Mentoring Final Report from Inside Track

June 2018

Introduction

The Minnesota Office of Higher Education (MOHE) contracted with InsideTrack to provide one-on-one mentoring for the recipients of the Occupational Grant Pilot Program. The mentoring program ran from August 2016 through June 2018. The goal of the mentoring program was to provide Occupational Grant recipients with one-on-one mentoring, with a focus on student persistence, retention, program completion, and overall student success. The mentoring program served as the contracted student success plan, as outlined in the legislation for the Occupational Grant pilot program. In year two of the program, qualification for the Occupational Grant was re-evaluated after the end of each term (Fall 2017 and Spring 2018) and determined eligibility for continuing with mentoring. Of the 873 students awarded the Occupational Grant in Fall 2016, 336 students remained eligible for mentoring in Spring 2018.

The following serves as the final report about the Occupational Grant mentoring program. Given that mentoring wrapped up in the middle of the summer semester, this report primarily provides qualitative information about the student experience. However, one data point that can be reported on has been provided by the Minnesota State System Office and captures graduates. At the end of the Spring 2018 semester, there were 207 students who received a credential of some kind (certificate, diploma, or Associates). This is in addition to the 95 graduates reported on in the December 2017 mentoring report.

The information covered in this report includes:

- Overall student trends observed through mentoring
- Student Stories
- Appendix: Excerpts from the December 2017 mentoring report
  - Mentoring methodology and approach to student engagement
  - First to second year preliminary retention results *(success defined as retained or graduated)*
  - Second year non returning reasons

Overall student trends observed through mentoring

Below is a summary of key student trends observed through mentoring:

- Behaviors of student success
    - Students demonstrated strong noncognitive skills, which were often attributed to life experiences (working in a family business, farming, high school leadership or involvement, etc)
    - Many students modeled self-agency and independence in problem-solving
    - Quick to learn how to integrate into the school community and adapt to new educational systems when guided through what was available for support
    - Many students demonstrated strong backgrounds from high school in problem solving skills, note-taking, and how to have a growth mindset
- Engaging with the school community
    - Commitment and responsibilities outside of school at times took priority over school, including a lack of time to engage with the school community
    - Many students were face with establishing new relationships for the first time due to having gone to the same school with the same friends since elementary school
    - Programs that were designed around cohort-based learning provided for "built-in" school community for students
- Academics and grant program
    - Some students lacked a commitment to their declared program and made a decision to change their program, causing them to lose grant eligibility
    - Students in technical programs were more often seeking employment after program completion, while students in more general programs (business, engineering, criminal justice) were planning to continue with more education
    - Dropping of courses or leaving school completely were most attributed to challenges outside of school and the inability to balance school and life commitments
    - Gaps in school were also impacted by low engagement with campus resources and not being proactive in seeking out help
    - Ability to use Occupational Grant funds in the summer was crucial for many students to meet grant eligibility after the first year
    - Some programs were more hands-on in guiding and supporting students through necessary processes (course registration, applying for graduation, meeting deadlines, etc.)
    - Students in the second year of the grant program were very driven towards future planning, whether that was to move onto a career or continued education
    - Observed information gaps (among students and campus departments) about grant program and ongoing eligibility requirements
    - Some students assumed that they continued grant eligibility because they did not thoroughly review their financial aid award information each semester
- Observations about student engagement with mentoring
    - Proactive and repetitive outreach was key to initial engagement
    - Students responded best to a multi-channel communication approach and taking note of students' preferences was important
    - Clarification about the various campus support roles for students and how mentoring fit into their overall experience was critical

Student stories and reflections

The following are student stories and student reflections captured by the mentors. These provide a glimpse into the experiences of Occupational Grant students and the impact of mentoring. The student names have been anonymized to protect the identity of the students.

Student Story 1

In Fall of 2016, David started at Alexandria Technical & Community College in the Machine Tool Technology, Diploma (OCC) program. He came into school with the promise of a machinist job at UMC once he graduated. By the end of his first month of school, he reported that he liked college better than high school, noting that there was a lot of work but it was manageable; he found himself shifting his habits and doing homework right when he got home instead of watching TV. By the end of his first semester he had finished his classes with A's in all but one class. David shared with his mentor that the secret to his success was paying close attention to expectations and putting in time for extra practice/studying. David saw mentoring as valuable for accountability, building and maintaining his motivation, and as a way to stay connected to goals when classes become less interesting or less challenging. David continued to develop strategies for success throughout his first year. He started meeting with instructors every couple of weeks to track his progress and to find ways to broaden his experience. David was eager to go above and beyond.

Over the course of two years in college, challenges are expected and David's experience is no different. Between challenging academic courses, his car dying, personal financial concerns, and registration difficulties (two weeks before the start of his second year he logged on to see that his entire schedule had been cleared), David faced obstacles but never stopped moving forward. He used the strengths and strategies he had gained through classes and mentoring, and leveraged all the resources available to him as a student. David used mentoring to process challenges and solutions, and valued being given the time and space to collaborate. Although David came into school with the promise of a job when he graduated, he knew it may not be the best fit and was open to other opportunities. David took advantage of opportunities to explore and connect with people in his field. He competed in skills USA and walked away with the gold medal, he connected with other people in his program and managed to secure an internship/summer job after his first year. By January of 2018, David had a job at Mold Tech in Albertville, MN starting on May 15th, a job he thought would be the best fit for him.

Student Story 2

In Fall 2016, Linda started at Central Lakes College in the Medical Assistant program. Linda began the program with some apprehension, particularly about balancing a heavy academic course load and Occupational Grant requirements with work, caring for younger siblings, and other life responsibilities. From the start, Linda recognized the value of mentoring for success with school and voiced her intent to leverage mentoring to stay on track for her goals with school. Through regular phone meetings with her mentor, Linda reduced her stress by strategizing and applying best practices for time management. These strategies included writing down deadlines and appointments and using calendar reminder features on her smartphone to keep track of her time. Linda found that these strategies helped her to successfully juggle her work schedule, family responsibilities, studying, and utilizing campus resources for the support she needed for school. Linda and her mentor texted frequently to address quick questions and celebrate wins! As challenges ranging from finals prep (she once had 10 finals in one

week) and losing her job unexpectedly arose, Linda again spoke of the value of mentoring in helping her stay on track. Linda met eligibility requirements to maintain the Occupational Grant for the duration of her program, and once called mentoring "a godsend".

Student Story 3

In Fall 2016, Brandon started at Ridgewater College in the Welding program. Brandon was strongly connected to his goals when he started his program - with lots of experience in welding on his family's farm, he wanted to bolster this experience with formal training and a degree from a reputable school to continue doing work he loved. In his first meeting with his mentor he stated that a college experience and degree was really important to him. About midway through his first semester, Brandon encountered challenges with some course material, and he indicated that he might be reconsidering his program choice. Brandon worked with his mentor to consider other options to explore (such as Ag Mechanics or Farm Management), research program courses, job descriptions, and career opportunities in these fields. He and his mentor also used this research as a springboard for conversations about motivation, help seeking behavior, and the value of facing challenges as part of personal development.

Brandon utilized campus resources to overcome challenges in his courses and ultimately felt confident in his decision to continue with his original welding program. Brandon maintained the Occupational Grant for the duration of his program and had secured a welding job upon graduation. When asked about the value of mentoring as part of his college experience, Jake said, "Ask questions! Ask for help, and get the answers you need."

Student reflections

- *It was so much fun working with you (mentor)! Thanks for all of your helpful hints and tools; I definitely needed them to get through these past couple of years. My plan is to continue my educational career; I'm going to Metropolitan State University next fall to continue my education degree, with an emphasis on English studies. Again, thanks for all of your help and support!*
- *I'm happy to say I've got a job lined up for myself that I'll be starting next week! I received a job offer from Miller Hill Subaru for a position as a express lane tech. It's mostly the same stuff I do at my current job and it pays a bit more, and I'm looking forward to my first day!*
- *I'm texting you to let you know I graduated Saturday with a 4.0. I ended up getting a degree in system administration, network administration, and three 15 credit certificates from the schooling the two year grant provided me. I am very grateful to you guys for letting me be a part of the program. I plan on getting some industry certificates this summer in the it field, and then I will be jumping straight into the workforce.*
- *I want to thank you for all your assistance and time over these past 2 years. It was very helpful to have someone walk me through this journey. I have had a couple of job interviews recently and one offer which I turned down because it was not a good fit. I am going to continue to look for something that is right for me. Recently, I got a promotion at Cub Foods to the meat department. The pay is good and the hours are nearly full time. In one year I will qualify for health care. I have completed 3 years at Cub and this is my best bet right now.*

Excerpts from the December 2017 Inside Track report

Mentoring Methodology and Approach

Mentoring prioritized educational and career-based goals, aimed to empower students to take ownership of their academic experience, utilize campus resources, and target growth in specific academic skill sets. Mentoring improved student performance through a combination of assessment and prioritization of student risk within eight focus areas, a tailored outreach and communication plan, and documented student risk to ensure student accountability. The eight focus areas of mentoring are *Academics – Finances – Career – Health – Graduation – Effectiveness – School Community - Managing Commitments*.

Student Engagement with Mentoring

Engaging students is not a "one size fits all" methodology. Strategies for engaging students derive from what students have both identified directly as their preferences for engagement as well as their behavioral patterns in engaging with mentoring. An individual student engagement strategy is based on student preference and behavior, level of risk, urgency and seriousness of risk areas, and mentoring topics needing to be addressed. Channel (phone, email, and SMS text), frequency, time and day, and combined outreaches are all carefully and intentionally considered in constructing engagement strategies.

In addition to one on one mentoring, students have the option to interact with the uCoach platform as an app that they download to their mobile device or desktop. Using the app is like having a mentor with you anytime or anywhere you need one. It's the primary means of communicating with a coach, whether that be via email, voice, text, or in-app messaging. The uCoach app is also a resource library, with digital guidance content like videos, links, and downloadable handouts available literally at every student's fingertips. A major priority for the uCoach Platform in year two of mentoring, is to support students through career exploration and preparation for a career in their desired field. Additionally, mentors have recently launched financial aid related modules through the uCoach Platform and will use the digital content to reinforce and enhance mentoring conversations and student priorities.

Preliminary Year One Results

InsideTrack was provided first to second year results data from the Minn State IR department. Results are preliminary and the final delivery of retention and graduation results will be reported by MOHE at a later date. At this point in time, InsideTrack is limited to only reporting retention or graduation for the original school ONLY. This is due to a data processing issue that was identified in November 2017. InsideTrack identified an inability to track retention at the original school and in the original program due to naming convention changes with some grant eligible programs in the data set provides to InsideTrack.

Preliminary results for all students mentored by InsideTrack (Total Fall 2016 starts = 873)

- **71.7% retained or graduated in the original school only**
    - 531 students retained first to second year at their original school only
    - 95 students completed their eligible program in the first year

The historical baseline for retention or graduation for the original school in the first year is 54%. This is based on a historical dataset that was provided by MOHE for the comparative Fall 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014 cohorts. These cohorts were limited to programs included in the Occupational Grant pilot program. The primary purpose of this analysis is to provide context for retention rates.

Retained or Graduated Original School Only (All Mentored Students)

Mentored students: 71.7%
Historical comparison: 54.0%
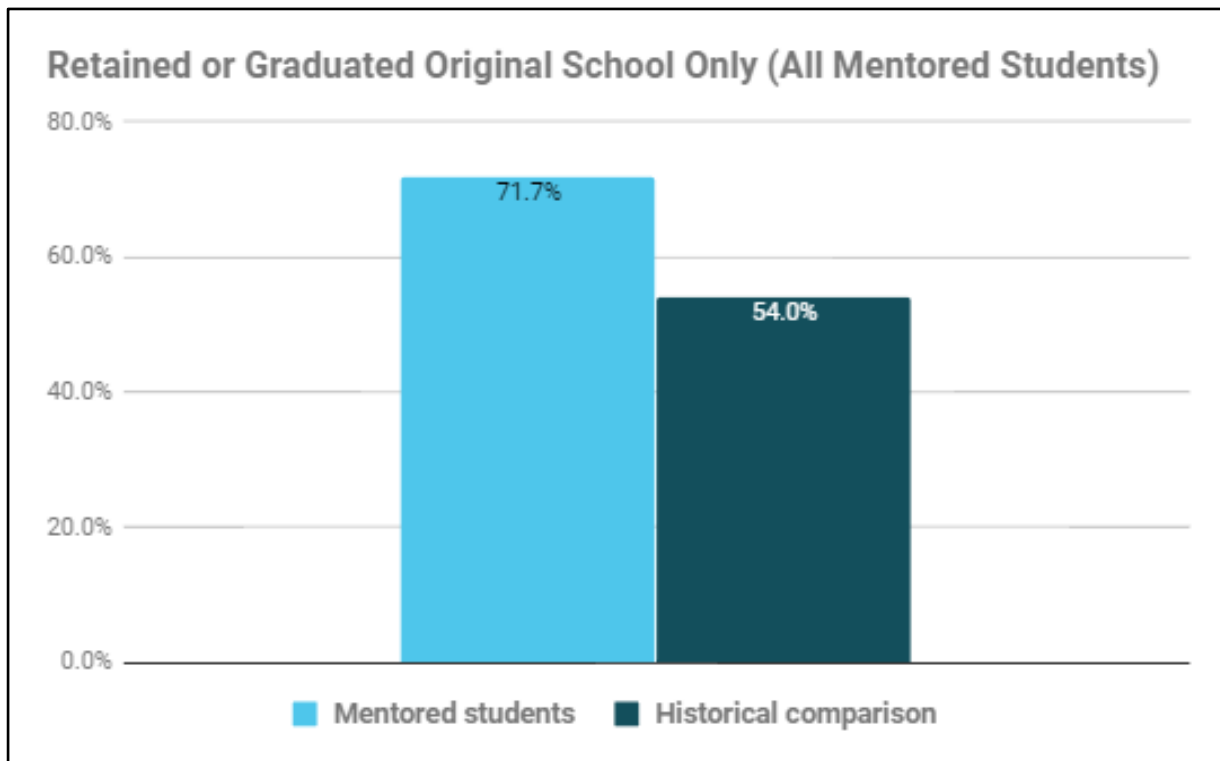
Fall 2017 Non Returning Reasons

Based on the preliminary first to second year results data from Minnesota State, the mentors documented primary reasons why students did not continue in school. Mentors based these reasons on student reported information and first to second year retention results data. The table below highlights the **top three** primary focus areas for non returning reasons, with additional information for added detail. There were additional non returning reasons captured, however the number of times they were reported is not as significant in number to identify a trend. Please note that a student is only assigned one primary reason and one accompanying sub reason.

Primary Non Returning Reason	Sub Reason	Student Total
Finances	Change in financial aid coverage	130
	Finances outside of school	2
	Lack of understanding of financial aid	2
	Unexpected financial commitment outside of school	7
Commitment to Graduation	Change in career direction	11
	Concerns regarding student effectiveness	3
	Future plans do not require a degree	16
	Lack of clear long-term goals	7
	Low interest in studies/material	13
	Low motivation	21
	Pursuing a degree not offered at this school	3
Academics	Academic readiness	5
	Academic termination	51
	Change in career direction	2
	Concerns regarding student effectiveness	3
	Lack of effectiveness and understanding of	4
	Underprepared for school	7

About InsideTrack

InsideTrack is passionate about student success. Since 2001, we have been dedicated to partnering with schools and universities to create adaptive coaching solutions that generate measurable results. These solutions combine professional coaching, technology, and data analytics to increase enrollment, completion, and career readiness. Our adaptive coaching methodology is based on the latest behavioral science research and knowledge gained from working with more than 1.5 million students and 1,600 programs. In combination with our uCoach® Platform, our approach optimizes student engagement and generates valuable insights on the student experience through predictive modeling, behavioral analysis, and multichannel communication. InsideTrack is a member of the nonprofit Strada Education Network. Join us and the leading institutions, foundations, and others working to bring the transformative power of education to all individuals. Visit us at www.insidetrack.com and follow us on Twitter @InsideTrack.