

Nevada State High School Uses StudentTracker® to Validate College Graduation Rates for Successful Outcomes



In 2008, it was reported by the Nevada System of Higher Education that Nevada graduates only half the students compared to the national average. And they estimated that only one in 10 of the state's 9th graders will achieve a college education. With Nevada trailing

behind in college readiness, there has been a substantial challenge for educators and administrators across the state to understand how to evaluate and improve their programs.

Nevada State High School, a public charter school serving grades 11-12, strives to improve this transition from high school to college by first becoming aware of the true achievements of their graduates throughout higher education. Starting with just 40 students in 2004 and growing to 227 students to date, their mission is support students in a college environment with personal, academic, and social skills through a free dual enrollment program, thus, enabling students to gain college credits early on and excel through the completion of college.

The Full Picture on Where Graduates Go

For more than six years, their high school used StudentTracker® to help benchmark the persistence and success rates of their graduates over time. They previously relied on their alumni keeping in touch to let them know how they did in higher education, either in person or through Facebook. In particular, they had an issue with tracking nonadmitted or returning students in college.

"We can't track all of our graduates, and sometimes we won't hear from our alumni," commented Dr. Wendi Hawk, Principal and Chief Academic Officer at Nevada State High School. "With StudentTracker reports, we get a full picture of where they are and can document their pathways." StudentTracker enables the school to track students every year and be able to demonstrate the success of their programs by documenting progress toward achieving the school's goals. Also, there are times when, due to the college coursework they offer, many Nevada State High School graduates are counted as college transfer students rather than high school graduates. StudentTracker helps them document this data, so that they can question and request a change in the data reported by the Department of Education.

Document Multiple Pathways through College

"The reports are great, and we love the new data reporting tool on the Web! It makes it very easy to auto generate and share the detailed reports," said Dr. Hawk. "Clearinghouse data helps us claim students that may get

misreported, and we get the most comprehensive facts on our graduates every year. We learned, for instance, the number of bachelor degrees earned by alumni and when students go to art institutes."

They are also able to view students who are new to college, those who returned after a stopout, or transfer to a different institution. Nevada State High School realized that the majority of students were selecting in-state colleges and some were completing a four-year degree in a little over two years (due to their dual credits from their charter school). Their StudentTracker results also showed that:

- More students were enrolling for college during the fall right after graduating (an increase from 84 percent in 2009 to 91 percent in 2011)
- In 2010, 87 percent were enrolled in college during the two years after high school

"I'd encourage other schools to use StudentTracker®! It's good information that you're able to use for school improvement."

Dr. Wendi Hawk, Principal & Chief Academic Officer, Nevada State High School

 Top 10 colleges enrolled included the College of Southern Nevada, University of Nevada - Las Vegas, and Nevada State College

"I'd encourage other schools to use StudentTracker! It's good information that you're able to use for school improvement. Especially in our economic crisis, it is crucial getting students through college, and StudentTracker enables us to assess how we get them there," said Dr. Hawk.

Nevada System of Higher Education (Feb 2011). College Readiness Standards for Nevada. Retrieved from http://system.nevada.edu/ tasks/sites/Nshe/assets/File/Academics/reports/College_Readiness_ Presentation_for_Web.pdf.

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