123-CONÉCTESE
A Comprehensive Campaign for Enhancing Student Persistence & Success
Bergen Community College, NJ

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Student enrollment at Bergen Community College has changed dramatically in the last few years in size, demographics, and academic readiness. Significant expansion led to serious challenges: Approximately 90% of incoming students test into developmental English or mathematics. Only 49% of them return to the College after three semesters. Between one half and 65% pass basic skills or entry college-level courses, and fewer than 8% attain degrees over a given four-year period. The 123-CONÉCTESE Campaign will address these challenges.

The Campaign will enhance student persistence and success through three primary goals: (1) guide 3,500 incoming developmental students (nearly 30% of whom Hispanic/Latino) to transition more effectively to college, (2) support their learning in basic skills and entry-level courses, and (3) develop an optimal infrastructure for the first two goals. Over five years, student return rates for a fourth semester are projected to improve to 63% from a baseline of 49%.

Beyond numbers, the spirit of the Campaign lies in strong connections to be built among students and over 200 staff/faculty Success Advisors and student Peer Advocates through individualized/group mentoring and advising. Students will engage in self-discovery, college orientation, and career exploration. Basic skills courses will be reformed to enhance learning (content-courses pairing, accelerated, or self-paced). In-class tutoring and recitation sessions will be expanded. An academic intervention system, faculty professional development and training, enhanced facilities and student resources, and external assessment will support these activities.

The College designed this Campaign with the aim of incorporating permanent improvements in academic support services to developmental students beyond Title V funding.