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LCCC to schools: Let's talk about preparation

Local students weren't proficient in their first semester of college math, but were a little better in other areas.

By Aerin Curtis

acurtis@wyomingnews.com

CHEYENNE -- On average how do students do in their first semester in college?

That's a question a group of administrators from Laramie County Community College, Laramie County School Districts 1 and 2 and Albany County School District 1 met to answer Wednesday.

LCCC offered districts information on how students have done at LCCC, and how many have, according to entrance-placement exams, started in remedial classes. The data only applied to students who enrolled at LCCC, not all students who'd graduated from the different districts.

Of the 344 students from LCSD1 who started at LCCC in the fall of 2010, 315, or 80 percent, weren't proficient in math.

While fall 2008 was the semester the most students tested proficient in math, 54 percent, the number has decreased yearly.

For LCSD2 students -- 23, or 88 percent, weren't math proficient, while ACSD1 had 34, or 81 percent.

Results in reading and writing found numbers to be more positive for the districts. Of the 29 students from LCSD2 at the college, seven students weren't proficient in reading and six weren't writing proficient.

ACSD1, which sent 61 to LCCC, had seven in reading and 14 in writing who weren't proficient

LCSD1 students who weren't proficient to a college level numbered 74 in reading and 115 in writing.

"It's not as big a surprise that students going to LCCC need a higher level of remediation, though it's disheartening," said Brian Farmer, LCSD1 board of trustees chairman. "We want everybody to have the skills for the next step."

In addition to releasing the numbers, LCCC Board of Trustees members and district officials suggested ways to help shrink the number of students who needed remedial services.

"I think the obvious piece here is that there's a disconnect between what our students in high school are ending up with as far as mathematics, reading and writing and what the expectation is

when they come to LCCC,” LCSD1 trustee Jan Stalcup said. “A dilemma seems to be that the placements at LCCC don’t test (students) over the things they learn in high school, and whether that’s true or not that’s something we need to figure out.”

While most mentioned the need for greater communication between the college and high schools, LCSD2 Superintendent Jack Cozort also mentioned that there could be issues with using the ACT and COMPASS placement exams as they may be testing students as 11th- or 12th-graders on subjects they studied as ninth-graders.

Another meeting between the groups has been set for August to help align expectations for students.

“We’re all in this together, we’re all in the education business,” said Brenda Lyttle, LCCC board of trustees chairwoman. “We wanted a discussion about what we can do right now so students benefit.”

[Becca Knows Now](#) wrote on *Mar 17, 2011 7:14 AM*:

" I graduated last year from E.H.S. with a 3.78 GPA. I am now taking classes at L.C.C.C., I have had to take remedial math classes. It does not make sense to me that I had solid A's in A/P mathematics, including 3 years of Algebra. The concepts that were taught to me included many short-cuts that diminished the foundations of Algebra. As a result, I tested into a higher class in my placement tests, but I had to drop back 2 classes in order to learn the proper concepts correctly. My first semester grades are near perfect, and my final grades were all A's. I am a good student, I work hard and strive to do my best, just like I did at East. I can only hope that the professors now are not lying to me the way the East teachers did. I hope I am being taught correctly and learning correctly and not being used as a marker for some efficiency statistic.

At East, I did my job and worked hard. I was lied to by the system, I was told I did well, and the teachers knew better. Stop lying to students! "

[J.J.](#) wrote on *Mar 17, 2011 6:57 AM*:

" A good portion of the problem lies with students AND THEIR PARENTS feeling a sense of entitlement to good grades regardless of performance in the classroom. How else do you explain a student having a 3.87 GPA and scoring an 18 on the ACT?

I weep over our nation's future for it is dim. Extremely dim! "

[KLR](#) wrote on *Mar 17, 2011 6:51 AM*:

" If the colleges are using the COMPASS, why do we use PAWS, maybe we should use COMPASS at the HS level at the beginning of 11th grade and anyone who is below the college starting level has to either start remedial classes at LCCC with the school district paying or the school should have a mandatory program for this area. Instead we know the kids are behind yet they don't have extra homework in these areas nor do their teachers expect them to spend any extra time in the class. If you ask about extra help for your child in these areas you are told to call the English or Math teacher who should already be helping your child in these areas. "