



Dr. Casey Crabill
President
Onondaga Community College
4585 W Seneca Turnpike
Syracuse, NY 13215

Dear President Crabill:

Thank you for being part of the Achieving the Dream (ATD) National Reform Network and for your continued commitment to student success and equity. After reviewing your Implementation Plan and receiving input from your coaching team, we offer several observations in this letter about your institution's progress to date regarding the student success and equity goals you have identified. Specifically, the feedback will note some of your Implementation Plan's strengths and identify areas of potential improvement or recommend areas for further exploration.

Strengths of the Implementation Plan

As we reflect on all of your work over the past year and your plans going forward, we are most impressed by these accomplishments.

- We are particularly impressed with Onondaga Community College's (OCC) holistic approach to planning your student success agenda. The two priorities identified are comprehensive and the initiatives that comprise each priority build upon each other to obtain greater impact.
- We congratulate the ATD teams at OCC for the process by which the priorities were selected, which was clearly based on comprehensive data analysis. The Data Team in particular should be commended for analysis of data around all five ATD measures and disaggregation of this data to identify achievement gaps specific to OCC. Your college is clearly well along the path to adopting a culture of evidence!
- Additionally, the Core and Data Team's efforts to broadly communicate and engage all constituencies across the college in data-informed student success planning and decision-making during your first year with ATD were remarkable. The combination of a Kickoff event, the two Data Café's, the Big Idea forums, the ATD Brown Bags, and numerous newsletters constitute a model that other colleges will be encouraged to follow. We look forward to seeing the next steps in your communications as you continue to build excitement around your work.

Focus on Institutional Change

Achieving the Dream Institutions recognize the importance of designing effective, scalable changes that fit together to build whole-college solutions to improving student outcomes. Your institution has demonstrated its commitment to institutional change through its efforts over the past year and its plan for implementation.

We are excited that OCC has chosen to build on existing strong initiatives by scaling and integrating these initiatives to increase alignment and coordination. This is a substantial task and marks a significant change in institutional practice. We are also pleased to note that your ATD priorities are fully aligned and integrated with your Strategic Plan, your Mid States Self-Study draft, and the goals from the SUNY Excels Performance Improvement Plan. This demonstrates a robust understanding of the need for aligned change implemented at scale that will serve OCC well as implementation and scaling of your interventions begins.

Areas of Improvement and Recommended Next Steps

We recognize that the distinct environment of each college poses unique challenges and opportunities. In terms of next steps, we would like to suggest the following as possible ways to improve student outcomes over the next year.

- As you move forward, we encourage the teams charged with overseeing the priorities to set reasonable, clear deadlines with explicit deliverables for every aspect of the work.
 - When confirming appropriate deadlines, it will be important to consider not only the evaluation and research required to ensure your work is effectively designed but also the important and urgent need to reach scale to provide all students with the support they need. Throughout the scaling process and beyond, refinements can continue to be made to the design of initiative as new data and promising practices from the field emerge.
- We look forward to seeing how you visually represent how the work you are pursuing with ATD intersects with your Strategic Plan.

Final Thoughts

ATD is continuously building upon the institutional change lessons learned from our network over the last twelve years and, as a result, at DREAM 2016 we released the next iteration of our [institutional change framework](#). This framework identifies the seven core capacity areas essential to growing colleges' abilities to impact student outcomes through systemic and sustainable practices. In the coming year, ATD will release a new suite of tools and other resources to undergird colleges' implementation of and maturation in the core capacity areas. We urge you to make the most of the new framework and resources as you take your student success work to the next level.

We appreciate the hard work, time, and resources that your institution devotes to your Achieving the Dream efforts. We encourage you to discuss the feedback in this letter with your Leadership Coach and Data Coach, who are ready to support and guide you moving forward as it may assist you in shaping the direction of your ongoing student success efforts. We look forward to working with you in the coming year and welcome your questions and comments along the way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen A. Stout". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K' and 'S'.

Dr. Karen A. Stout
President & CEO
Achieving the Dream, Inc.