



Pathways to Results News

December 2015



Implementing Changes on the Ground in Illinois: PTR's Year Two Teams

As we begin a new year and new work with the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), we are thrilled to see our [PTR Year Two: Implementation Communities](#)' teams get their project work up and running. Designed to transform student outcomes and share their innovations and successes with their colleagues across the state, these grassroots teams are using their data and evidence-based practices to introduce unique

interventions. However, all of the projects have one thing in common: they are seeking to produce more equitable student outcomes, and to do so in a way that can be brought to scale at their own institution and beyond. Here are the five teams selected by the ICCB and OCCRL to implement their proposed PTR innovations:

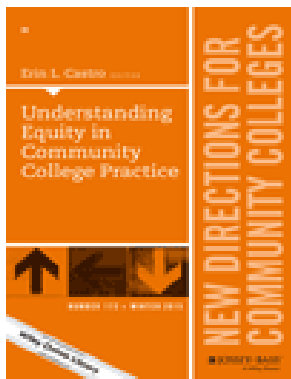
City Colleges of Chicago—Harry S. Truman College: Initiating a contextual reading skills intervention and customized certificate program to meet non-traditional demands.

Illinois Central College: Engaging in curriculum and learning outcomes redesign—from concept to skills-based curriculum.

Oakton Community College: Implementing work-based learning and improving adult noncredit to credit transitions.

Rend Lake College: Improving completion and retention through degree audits, early alert, and re-enrollment.

Sauk Valley Community College: Improving retention and learning outcomes through a project-based curriculum.



[Pathways to Results: How Practitioners Address Student Access, Outcomes, and Equity...](#)

At a time when the nation is focusing so much attention on college completion, what do we know about how students are completing their community college programs? Does the open-access mission of community colleges translate into favorable outcomes? What do we know about pathways and programs of study that include the community college? Do processes exist to systematically understand and improve pathways and programs of study?

Pathways to Results (PTR) engages practitioners in using data to close equity gaps for student groups historically underserved by postsecondary education, including students of color, low income and first generation students, and others. Addressing this issue, a new article titled *Pathways to Results: How Practitioners Address Student Access, Outcomes, and Equity in an Associate Degree Nursing Program* by Jessica Pickel and Debra Bragg describes the experiences of practitioners at Richland Community College who implemented PTR to improve student access, outcomes, and equity in an associate degree nursing program. The article shares lessons learned about the importance of involving institutional research (IR) in developing equity-minded practitioners, supporting faculty and staff with tools and resources, communicating with college leaders about program improvements based on data analysis, and engaging internal and external stakeholders in the process of improvement.

[Read more.](#)



[A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words: The New Pathways to Results \(PTR\) Visual](#)

The exact origin of the phrase "a picture is worth a thousand words" is debated, but there is no question that there is truth behind the saying. It is firmly planted in our media-filled

world. The value of imagery to convey complex meaning is more important today than ever before.

In our work with Pathways to Results (PTR), we continue to seek meaningful and concise ways to communicate about the often complex participatory processes that drive outcomes improvements for underserved students. This is why we are introducing a new graphic illustration of the PTR model designed by Dana Hagerstrom of Design House. Hoping to better convey what we mean by PTR, the graphic shows how our approach to closing performance gaps is rooted in data-centered **equity and outcomes assessment** that requires **reflective problem solving** to support the **engagement and commitment** of key stakeholders, **assessment of processes and practices**, and intentional **evaluation** for continuous improvement.

We are excited about the future of PTR, and we hope you are too. Please share your thoughts on the new PTR graphic and on the PTR process. We look forward to hearing from you.

[Read more.](#)

[Learning from our Nation's Student Activists](#)

Recently on the University of Missouri and other campuses (including our own), student activists are expressing concern about the experiences of students of color in the college environment. As these events have unfolded, those of us involved in [Pathways to Results](#) are reflecting on our work on equity-focused change initiatives across Illinois and beyond. Although fully unpacking connections between this movement and what we have learned through PTR could fill many dissertations, a few of PTR's most important lessons have resonated in the words of students who are trying to make their concerns about inequities, discrimination, and isolation clear to campus leaders. Three lessons that stand out are...

[Read more.](#)

