Memo of Understanding

The Partnership for Cultivating Resilience

Improving Retention, Persistence and Achievement

This agreement outlines an integrated strategy to measurably enhance the persistence, performance, achievement, and retention of Texas community college students by equipping students, faculty, and administrators with the world’s leading methods for measuring and strengthening resilience—what science reveals to be the core ingredient of success in our adversity-rich world.

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Student persistence and engagement are essential to the progression of students from completion of courses to obtaining professional certifications and degrees. Strengthening resilience will measurably improve these behaviors by building student capacity to overcome the barriers and hardships they face, persevere when challenges arise, and cultivate the personal fortitude to achieve their goals of obtaining a higher education degree or certification.

At an institutional level, community colleges have a long history of resilience, surviving many challenges and constraints, while utilizing innovative methods to meet the needs of students. Enhancing and broadening these strengths is necessary in order to meet the current intensified challenges faced by the community college system. Research shows more resilient organizations demonstrate superior agility, innovation, consistency, and results.

The purpose of the Partnership for Cultivating Resilience to employ global best practices to measurably and permanently increase resilience of students, faculty, administrators and institutions throughout the Texas community college system.

PARTNER ROLES

The AQ-Based Partnership for Cultivating Resilience

The Partnership for Cultivating Resilience brings together PEAK Learning Inc., Integrated Work Strategies, LLC, and the Texas Community College Teachers Association (TCCTA) to employ the proven Adversity Quotient® (AQ®) methodology in support of Texas community colleges, students and faculty.

PEAK Learning, Inc.—Harvard Business School, among other elite institutions, has chosen the AQ method and tools as the global best practice in both measuring and strengthening personal and collective resilience. PEAK Learning, founded by Dr. Paul G. Stoltz in 1987, is the originator of the AQ theory, method, and tools used by more than one million people, in 63 countries, representing diverse socioeconomic segments. PEAK also directs the Global Resilience Institute, guiding resilience-based research in 29 countries.

As the developer of AQ, PEAK will be primarily responsible for customizing, contributing, supporting, and implementing the AQ Online tools, as well as guiding the research efforts to track and determine the impact the AQ-based resilience approach has on student success metrics.

Integrated Work Strategies, LLC—Since 1998, Integrated Work has strengthened mission-driven leaders and organizations through professional and organization development services. Integrated Work consultants offer coaching, facilitation, and training using world-class tools such as the Adversity Quotient. Jessica G. Hartung, founder and CEO, is the point of contact for implementing the AQ tools and methods with non-profit and government organizations.
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Integrated Work will collaborate directly with TCCTA to manage the roll-out and communications process, will co-design and deliver the on-site faculty training in collaboration with TCCTA and PEAK, and will introduce AQ concepts and promote use of AQ tools in faculty and student interactions and be available to consult with faculty as the AQ methods are implemented. Jessica Hartung will be responsible for delivery of keynote presentations and professional development sessions and ensuring applicability of the methods and AQ materials to the community college environment.

**Texas Community College Teachers Association**—Known for connecting people, institutions, resources, and ideas, TCCTA will be the focal point for introducing the Partnership and the innovative AQ tools and methods to Texas community colleges, as well as the on-going administrator of the Resilience Advantage Program.

TCCTA will serve as the key point of contact for Texas community colleges wishing to obtain more information or participate in the program. TCCTA’s leadership and knowledge are invaluable in the customization of program components.

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

Beyond the aforementioned gains, the outcomes of this targeted, multi-year effort are to have resilience become an embedded, core element of the community college experience in order to improve key outcome metrics including:

- Student persistence, retention, academic performance, certificate completion, graduation, post-graduation degree completion, and job placement
- Faculty resilience, engagement, effectiveness, wellness, and energy
- Comparative success of community college institutions in improving student retention, completion and graduation rates by measurably improving resilience, not by lowering standards.

Documenting the improvement in AQ/resilience across program participants and its impact on community college success metrics will be a key component of the program and a focal point of the Partnership. Outlined below are specific details of how the innovative Resilience Advantage program can be incorporated into the Texas community college system through this partnership at three levels:

- AQ Resilience Advantage for Texas Community College Students
- AQ Resilience Advantage for Texas Community College Faculty/Administrators
- AQ Research and Outcome Reporting

**AQ Resilience Advantage for Texas Community College Students**

To prepare incoming and current community college students to succeed, PEAK Learning and Integrated Work will customize the online Adversity Quotient Assessment and Video Coaching to be branded for each specific school that includes the AQ Resilience Advantage as a requirement for students. Through the online training, students will better understand their relationship with adversity, why it is important to their success as a student, and in life. They will learn to develop a resilient mindset and be trained in specific tools to assist them as they work through challenges and obstacles to completing their chosen degree or certificate program.
Both traditional and non-traditional students will glean the benefits of strengthening their resilience, fortitude, and ability not only to overcome the obstacles they face, but also transform them into the motivation needed to fuel their success in school and in life.

The AQ Resilience Advantage Video Coaching program for students will include the following:

- Customized video introduction about the role of resilience in success at school and life
- Initial assessment of resilience using the AQ Profile®
- Printable individual report which can be reviewed and discussed as part of a Learning Frameworks course, mentoring program, and comparable initiatives to improve the success rates of incoming and existing students
- Customized video coaching exercises and instruction designed to provide students with tools to develop a more resilient mindset—increasing their engagement, energy, and perseverance
- Re-assessment using the AQ Profile, documenting the increased resilience of the student at the completion of the program, individually and collectively

The AQ Resilience Advantage Video Coaching program can serve as a vital component to the achieving outcomes of programs designed to support incoming and existing student success at community college, such as Learning Frameworks courses and mentoring programs. Including the program as a requirement in such initiatives immediately increases their depth and value, leading to better results with little added cost or effort on the part of the institution.

**Resilience Advantage for Texas Community College Faculty/Administrators**

To underscore the purpose of the Partnership for Cultivating Resilience and the rigor behind the Adversity Quotient methods and measures to Texas community college faculty and administrators, Integrated Work/PEAK will deliver a keynote presentation during the 2013 TCCTA Conference as well as professional development sessions. The focus of this session will be to develop an understanding of the important role that resilience plays in student achievement, the impact that the AQ Resilience Advantage program will have on performance metrics of participating schools, and an introduction to the principles of the Adversity Quotient. Integrated Work will develop the presentation in collaboration with PEAK Learning with TCCTA providing input and feedback on the session outline.

As the Partnership works to build the resilience of students across the Texas community college system, it is imperative to develop the capacity of community college faculty and administrators to thrive through challenging times and position themselves as coaches to support and promote a resilient mindset within the student body. To do so, the Partnership will make available two methods of faculty and administrator training—a faculty version of the online AQ Resilience Advantage Video Coaching program and in-service Resilience Advantage training.

The faculty/administration version of the online AQ Resilience Advantage Video Coaching program will be developed with TCCTA branding for all Texas community colleges and will include the following:

- Customized video introduction about the role of resilience in success at school and life
- Initial assessment of resilience using the AQ Profile
- Printable individual report
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- Downloadable guides and worksheets for use when incorporating the AQ tools and methods into Learning Frameworks courses, mentoring and tutoring programs, and conversations with students
- Customized video coaching exercises designed to not only increase the participant’s individual response to adversity but also to build their capacity to provide coaching, counseling, and support to students in a way that increases their resilience
- Re-assessment using the AQ Profile, documenting the increased resilience of the faculty member at the completion of the program

For colleges dedicated to increasing the overall resilience of their campus, Integrated Work (through a central agreement with TCCTA) will offer full or half-day faculty and administrator in-service Resilience Advantage training on the tools and principles of the Adversity Quotient, leading to increased retention of outstanding faculty and staff, improved health and wellness, and increased energy and effectiveness in their roles. Participants in training sessions sponsored by their school will automatically receive enrollment in the online Resilience Advantage Video Coaching program.

Research and Outcome Reporting
To evaluate the success of the Resilience Advantage Programs and ensure quality of the Partnership’s effort, outcomes will be documented on several levels:

1. For each individual college and the program as a whole, the following metrics will be tracked and reported to TCCTA:
   - Total number of students and faculty participating in the program
   - Completion rates of students and faculty participating in the program
   - Range, Mean, Median AQ Profile (and CORE) scores – students and faculty
   - Percentage increase in AQ Profile scores of students and faculty
   - Percentage increase in AQ Profile scores of students for whom participation was a requirement
   - Student and faculty satisfaction with the Resilience Advantage program

   TCCTA will be the key point of contact for distributing information to participating schools and utilizing positive performance data to increase future enrollments.

2. Upon receiving payment for a threshold of 20,000 enrollments, PEAK Learning will fund up to three independent studies conducted by a leading psychometrician and academic assessment expert to track and assess the relationship between AQ and student retention, completion, and performance. Design of the study will be a collaborative effort between PEAK Learning, Integrated Work, and TCCTA. Participating schools will provide the academic data on each student in a standardized format to enable the study to be completed.

All AQ Studies are conducted by a one of the nation’s leading independent psychometricians, Dr. Jerilyn Grandy, former Senior Researcher with the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in Princeton, NJ, and one of the original researchers creating the global standard for college entrance exams. She is published on a range of issues including test reliability, validity, robustness as they relate to student performance and success.
Dr. Grandy and Dr. Paul G. Stoltz, the originator of the AQ theory and method, will team with TCCTA's designated resources to custom design a rigorous series of journal-worthy studies that examine the role AQ and its CORE dimensions play in all facets of students success, including grades, retention, completion, and post-graduation placements.

3. Faculty and administrators completing the program will complete an evaluation of the program through TCCTA, including detailed discussions of materials and guidelines provided, for continued improvement of the program. Best practices for integrating the AQ Resilience Advantage program into the curriculum, counseling, mentoring and any other programs designed to increase success rates will be discussed and documented.

Future case studies, white papers or published documents may be created by any of the Partners for Cultivating Resilience documenting the success of the initiative, providing they credit the collaborative effort and the partners involved.

**FUNDING PLAN**

Each organization involved in the Partnership will be making investments in the success of the program. In order to ensure there is momentum for the idea, customized materials, and infrastructure that ensures an outstanding student and faculty experience with the AQ Resilience Advantage materials, we propose the following strategy and methods of funding.

Making the AQ Resilience Advantage an embedded, required component of every new and/or first-year student’s enrollment will provide the most meaningful sample for tracking and improving the vital metrics throughout the Texas Community College system. Requiring enrollments for incoming students will also provide the strongest impact, reaching those students who may benefit most from the program.

Individual community colleges participating in the program will be charged a maximum of $50.00 per student and faculty enrollment in the program. This fee includes an unprecedented 83% discount to Texas Community Colleges off the standard rate of $295 per participant and is provided by Dr. Paul G. Stoltz out of respect for and commitment to the tremendous potential impact of this partnership and the countless lives it will improve.

TCCTA will obtain enrollment guarantees from participating community colleges in Texas prior to the start of the Fall 2013 semester. Based on a statewide annual potential of more than 450,000 students, pricing for the program will be based on these guarantees to allow all colleges to participate at deeply discounted enrollment prices according to the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Enrollments Range</th>
<th>Pricing Per Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 6</td>
<td>&lt;20,000</td>
<td>($50.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>20,000-25,000</td>
<td>($45.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>25,000-50,000</td>
<td>($42.50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>50,000-75,000</td>
<td>($40.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>75,000-100,000</td>
<td>($35.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>100,000+</td>
<td>($30.00)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each participating school that enrolls more than 1000 students will receive 25 complimentary faculty/administrator enrollments. Enrollment levels will be calculated annually.
A master contract will be established between TCCTA, PEAK Learning, Inc. and Integrated Work Strategies, LLC. Each community college that participates in the program will have an addendum agreement to the master contract specifying the arrangements and requirements to participate, including the research and data collection provisions and payment procedures.

Once the college clarifies the number of student enrollments they will purchase for the semester, students can be directed to a specific website that would allow the student to pay online to enroll themselves in the program. Alternatively, fees for the total enrolled participants per school can be invoiced directly to each school by PEAK Learning Inc. To provide each school with flexibility in how they choose to fund the AQ Resilience Advantage Video Coaching, the college from may collect the fees from students directly, administrated through course fees, or obtain funding through educational or foundation grants or other sources.

For its work convening stakeholders, sponsoring the Partnership for Cultivating Resilience, on-going process improvement, and support for faculty development, TCCTA will receive 5% of the revenue from enrollments in the Resilience Advantage program, less an $8.00 per enrollment fee to recover a portion of the sizable up-front commitment by PEAK to create this customized version of the AQ Resilience Program. This $8.00 per enrollment fee will be phased out over time, decreasing by $2.00 each successive year, provided there is minimum actual enrollment of 50,000 students per year.

For every 10,000 enrollments in the program, TCCTA will be provided with a complimentary full-day Resilience Advantage training to be delivered by Integrated Work to community college faculty and administrators during TCCTA Conferences, Regional Workshops, or at the community college of their choosing in order to reinforce the program and further develop the resilience of the community college system.

This Memo of Understanding is put forth to the TCCTA Board of Directors to outline the basic components of agreement from which formal contracts can be drafted. As of **November 16, 2012** the parties below agree to enter into contractual discussions in good faith to solidify the arrangements as identified in this memo. PEAK Learning and Integrated Work are dedicated to partnering with TCCTA to provide Texas Community College students, faculty, and administrators with the tools to develop resilient mindsets, ultimately improving the ability of students to achieve their goals and their lives.

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