

## Hawaii: EdReady at Waipahu High School

During the summer and fall of 2014, the Waipahu High School Early College program collaborated with the University of Hawaii to offer an online program, EdReady, with the goal of increasing the number of their high school students who could score well enough on the COMPASS placement exam to qualify for enrollment in college-level, dual-credit math courses.

### Waipahu High School Early College

#### INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE

The Waipahu High School Early College (WEC) program allows students to save time and money by taking courses for college credit while still enrolled in high school.

Students in the program are primarily Filipino, but also include Samoan, part-Hawaiian, and other ethnicities, with more than 80% non-native English speakers. WEC students take college classes on their high school campus after school. In 2013-2014, the school offered 17 college classes with 350 students earning college credits.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

In the summer of 2014, WEC piloted EdReady with 18 students who were interested in improving their COMPASS test scores. WEC implemented EdReady as a three-week, self-paced, independent study option. The summer pilot students showed “astounding progress and results,” according to Mark Silliman, WEC’s Program Coordinator. He determined that, “this would be a great thing to do for a systemic approach for college preparation.” So starting in the fall of 2014, he expanded the program and gave the new students a challenge. Those students who wanted to register for any dual-credit college-level course (in math or another subject) had to either log 20 hours of independent study time in EdReady, **or** reach an EdReady target score of 85 (out of 100). Students who met either of those benchmarks literally “earned a seat on the bus” -- the bus that transports



#### DETAILS

- **Who was served:** High school students
  - **When:** Summer (3 weeks) and Fall (9 weeks) 2014
  - **Number of Students:** 98
  - **Implementation:** Independent study within a H.S. Early College program
- Results:** 64% of participating students who took the COMPASS exam at the end of the program earned scores that placed them into college-level math. **76% of students re-taking the COMPASS exam moved up by one, two, three, or even four class placement levels after using EdReady.**

#### INSTRUCTIONAL APPLICATION

- COMPASS Exam Placement Prep for high school students who wish to take dual-credit (high school and college) math courses.

students from Waipahu High School to nearby Leeward Community College to sit for the COMPASS placement exam.

“In Early College programs,” explains Silliman, “the focus is trying to accelerate learning, and encouraging students who are willing to put the time and effort into it without holding them back.” Regarding the 20-hour or 85-score requirement, he noted, “I was a little bit heavy handed, and I thought it could be disastrous if half my cohort decided not to do it.” But most of the students took on the challenge. Each student who chose to participate was responsible for working through his or her unique EdReady study plan independently, outside of the regular school day. WEC has a computer lab available to students to ensure they had access to the Internet.

Based on individual student progress reported in EdReady, Silliman and an assistant checked in regularly with students regarding their progress. Students were also supported via email by University of Hawaii Online Learning Academy (OLA) Cybermentors during the program. Cybermentors sent each student a welcome email, a weekly progress email, and a completion email when they met their target score. They also provided encouragement and offered technical support as needed.

## RESULTS

WEC had a total of 98 students use the EdReady program during the summer and fall pilots. At the end of the program, 50 of those students sat for the COMPASS math exam: 32 (64%) placed into college-level math, while 18 (36%) placed into developmental math (a significant improvement over the general population of WEC students from the previous year, when only 41% were eligible for college-level math and 50% were enrolled in developmental math).

Seventeen (17) of the 50 students who took the COMPASS exam after using EdReady had also taken the COMPASS exam prior to participating in EdReady. For those 17 students for whom there are both “before and after” COMPASS scores: 13 (76%) placed into college-level math (Math 100 or above). For those 13 students: 7 moved up from developmental math into college-level math; 2 students stayed at the same college-level placement, and 4 students moved up from one college level placement to a higher college level placement.

Four remaining students (of the 17 “before and after” cohort) placed into developmental math. Two of them stayed at the same placement level, but two of them moved up in their developmental placement level.

Overall, for the students who moved up in levels: 5 students moved up one class placement level; 2 moved up two levels; 5 moved up three levels; and 1 moved up four levels.

Silliman said he was motivated to continue using EdReady for all students entering the WEC program for two reasons. One is the need for a solution that both motivates students and is effective. The second reason is that EdReady provides accelerated learning opportunities that target first-generation, low-income students who have knowledge gaps. "We would do a gross disservice if we were to throw these somewhat fragile and at risk-students into a college class ill-prepared in terms of readiness....When we are looking at the EdReady data in practical terms, this really works. It helps improve students' readiness to place higher on the exam."

When asked whether he would recommend EdReady to other high schools, he responded, "Absolutely!"

*"I took [one of my 9<sup>th</sup> graders] up to the [local college's COMPASS] testing center, and he comes bouncing out with this big grin from ear to ear, and I knew instantly that he was satisfied with his test result."*

*--Mark Silliman, Early College Coordinator, Waipahu High School*