Mesa Pathways Grant Final Report

Please submit all completed forms via email to mesapathways@sdccd.edu within 30 days of the completion of your Mesa Pathways Grant project with subject line: "Mesa Pathways Grant Final Report Submission"

Thank you so much for your willingness to share the story of your impact! This report will help us understand and advocate for your needs. Please answer succinctly but give enough detail for us to describe your work to a potential funder. (Roughly 150-250 words per question).

1. **Students Served.** Please describe how many students you served, as well as any information you have about the types of students. What were your outreach methods? What students responded?

The Grading for Equity Workshop: Computer Science Focus did not serve students directly, but instead reached K-12 and community college teachers in ICT pathways. We advertised via e-mail, Twitter, and through our networks.

By the start of the workshop, we had 16 participants signed up, with individual teachers covering all grades from K-12 through community college. As is expected for no-cost workshops, several participants were no-shows for the workshop.

Grade Level Taught by Participant	Number of Instructors Participating in Workshop	Number of Students Impacted Annually
Middle School (6-8)	1	56
High School (9-12)	4	850
Community College/Higher Education*	5	1470
Totals	10	2376

*Several participants are adjunct instructors at 4-year universities and/or university extensions

Based on the self-reported numbers of students that each participant interacts with annually, we anticipate that 2000-2500 students will be directly impacted. However, the ideas that we have exchanged will be further shared with colleagues, and ultimately lead to a larger number of students being impacted.

2. **Progress to Goals.** Referencing the goals stated on the original application, please describe progress to stated goal. Where appropriate, indicate a quantifiable metric that articulates impact, and describe what leads to that result.

The project description in the application was:
We will read and discuss the book, "Grading for Equity" by Joe Feldman. Additionally, we will collaboratively work on writing appropriate learning outcomes and rubrics to use with Standards Based Grading, and begin to build a course around Standards Based Grading. We will critically examine current assessments that instructors use, through an equity lens, and determine whether these assessments are appropriate to the standards (outcomes) that were written. Additionally, we will develop new assessments to measure learning related to the learning outcomes written.

The Expected Project Outcomes in the application were:
1. Instructors will develop a minimum of 3 learning outcomes for at least one course they teach.
2. Instructors with pre-defined standards (e.g., CS standards mandated by the state) will create a cross-walk between the pre-defined standards and the outcomes they intend to use for grading, and/or will re-write the standards in student-friendly language.
3. Instructors will develop a rubric to describe different levels of proficiency within each standard.
4. Instructors will develop or redesign at least one assessment related to a learning outcome they developed.
5. Instructors will receive feedback from peers about the outcomes and assessments they develop, and make changes based on that feedback.
6. Instructors will develop working relationships with instructors from other levels of education, as well as instructors from other institutions at the same level of education.

Goals 1-3: One workshop activity was to develop student-friendly learning outcomes and associated rubrics for the first two units. For some instructors, this meant 3 or more learning outcomes; for some instructors this meant only 2 learning outcomes. More important than the number of learning outcomes was the process: every active participant learned how to develop outcomes and rubrics based on required state standards (for K-12) or required course elements (for higher ed) and then received feedback via peer review.

Goals 4-5: Most participants redesigned an assessment and received peer feedback. Some participants chose to utilize their time to instead focus on course policy redesign from an equity standpoint, and brought that to the discussion for peer review instead. All contributions were welcome, and led to robust discussions that inspired all participants to reflect on their own assessments and course policies.

Goal 6: There is a high level of trust between the workshop participants; we are continuing communication via Slack, and hope to get together via Zoom near the end of the semester to share how our changes are affecting our students. Several instructors shared course materials, and we have started a larger discussion of how we can help our students successfully transition from K-12 to higher education with strong computer science skills. We are actively brainstorming ways to increase conversations between K-12 and community college so that we can work together to increase computer science offerings at the high school level and make the ICT pathway easier for students to navigate.

3. **Challenges and Lessons Learned.** What did not go as expected? What would you like to have done differently? Please be candid in this response – all facts are friendly facts!

Many participants did not show up at all, and several showed up for only 1-2 sessions. Summer vacations and family obligations were reasons that participants shared they missed sessions. If we were to do this again, we would consider charging the participants a small fee (maybe ~$10) to participate, so that they feel more invested in attending. We would likely also offer a scholarship to waive the fee so that nobody was excluded due to economic circumstances. Alternately, if we could provide a stipend to participants who complete the entire workshop, that would also increase attendance!

4. **Changes.** If you were to do this project again, would you make any changes to the budget or scope? (This will help us accurately represent your project in the case that we have a funder who may be willing to support your work.)

We did not have as many participants as we had initially hoped, but it actually worked really well to be able to have a facilitator in each breakout room, instead of facilitators having to jump from room to room. If we were to do this project again, I would recommend asking the participants from this workshop to help facilitate the next one, to ensure that each breakout room had a facilitator in it.

We would also want to expand the workshop to a larger region, starting smaller and ensuring the workshop format would scale; perhaps start with southern California, then reach out to all of California. The facilitator from SDCOE is actually going to be running this workshop with an entire school, and so will have more examples of learning outcome development from different disciplines. We are hoping to use the format of this workshop in a FIG at Mesa as well, with participants from multiple departments.

5. **Quotes, Stories, and Testimonials.** Please help us share our students' stories by describing any quotes from students or stories that describe how this grant impacted a specific student or students. Tell us a little bit about what you know of the student(s), and how this project impacted them.

Here are some quotes from workshop participants about what learning they took away from the workshop:

"The move to Grading for Equity practices are so much more complex to implement than I had first imagined. When I read the principles, I think "yes, of course!" but then when attempting to implement the practices there are so many gotchas and pain points. I think the structure of how to move towards equity with concrete steps will be most beneficial to my staff."

"Traditional A-F letter grading on a skewed 0 to 100% makes it difficult for students to recover from missed or 0-point assignments, causing frustration and demotivation. The goal of grading should be to reflect the level of learning a student has by the end of a course. Students tend to be more intrinsically motivated if they're learning for the sake of learning, rather than chasing points on assignments."

"Grade learning instead of behavior is the most important concept I got out of this workshop."

6. **Closing remarks.** What would you say to someone considering funding this initiative?

Equitable grading is incredibly important in connecting students with their intrinsic motivation to learn and to becoming lifelong learners. Ensuring that students gain skills, rather than rewarding students with a grade for their behaviors, helps students successfully continue their academic growth and enables students to complete a pathway of education to a job. This workshop provides a non-judgmental space for teachers to examine and adjust their grading practices with the support of their peers.