



ALMY EDUCATION

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3 Questions to Answer Before Starting a Developmental Math Redesign

If your community college is like most, your developmental math approach is not working for you or your students.

Developmental math can drive students away from colleges, either by not enrolling for classes to avoid math or by leaving the college because of poor math experiences. Many initiatives, particularly reducing equity gaps, are affected by how well or poorly a developmental math approach works.

When your approach is effective, the ripple effects are immediate and extensive. Likewise, when the approach to developmental math is ineffective, the negative effects are felt throughout the college's programs, disciplines, and initiatives. It really does make that big of a difference.

Because time is of the essence, it's tempting to jump into a redesign using various approaches you may have heard or read about. But it's unlikely to be successful, both in terms of buy in and in terms of outcomes. To speed up, we have to start by slowing down.

That's why I've put together a list of 3 questions to answer before starting a redesign. This will help you start the process right which will lead to better outcomes sooner.

Enjoy!

Kathleen Almy
CEO, Almy Education



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What is the #1 problem you want to solve?

It seems obvious to think about outcomes, but most redesigns start with diving into approaches with placement and instruction. It's easy to assume that everyone knows the problem because developmental math has often been a problem for decades. But what is the actual outcome you want to see? Is it higher pass rates within classes? Fewer students starting in developmental math? More students graduating? More students finishing a college-level math class? Start by stating your biggest problem, then state any others after it.

Takeaway: Start with the end in mind

How will you build buy in?

While you have the authority to require a change to be made, the entire redesign process will go more smoothly and quickly if the affected parties believe in it. That means building buy in. It takes some time up front, but the payoffs are significant. Having buy in, particularly from faculty, makes the difference in implementing a change and implementing a change that scales and lasts.

Takeaway: If you want to go far, go together

Who will lead the charge?

Every successful redesign has someone who owns the project and commits to it fully. They are tenacious and not easily deterred by challenges, which are 100% sure to come. This person believes in the project, is eager to see it implemented, and is willing to do the work to make that happen. Without this person, redesigns never get out of the talking phase. If this person is a faculty member, gaining buy in is often easier.

Takeaway: If you want change, find a catalyst

Next Steps

When you start to work on a redesign, there's so much more to consider. You'll want to think about:

- How does your approach serve all students?
- How does your approach address equity gaps?
- How can the plan be scaled for maximum impact?
- How will other disciplines be affected?
- How will other areas of the college support the implementation?

Our *Win-Win* approach addresses all these needs and more. We perform an audit of your college's history with developmental math, including past initiatives, resources, and culture. We look at the data, define the problems, get insight from affected parties, particularly faculty, and build a custom plan for redesign to implement change on your campus at scale.

Check out this site for more information including who it's for, how it works, and pricing.

www.almyeducation.com/winwin



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About Kathleen

Kathleen Almy is the CEO and founder of Almy Educational Consulting. As math faculty with over 20 years of experience in high school and college classrooms, she brings her love of math and helping students succeed in college to every project she works on. She led local, state, and national initiatives for over a decade before starting her own consulting group. In her most recent position, she led the Illinois transitional math implementation required by a law and affecting over 700 high schools and nearly 50 community colleges. Prior to that initiative, she worked for nearly a decade to implement a non-STEM pathways alternative to beginning algebra known as Math Literacy for College Students. Through that work, she traveled the country providing professional development to support faculty with its innovative pedagogy, worked throughout Illinois to change state-level policies that affected acceptance of the course, and co-authored a textbook, *Math Lit*, to support faculty teaching the course. She initially learned how to lead and effect change through her work leading her college's complete developmental math redesign.



She is tenacious, passionate, and committed to improving math for every student with a college math requirement. Considered a thought leader in developmental math reform, math pathways, and transitional math, she has served in national and statewide positions and given numerous talks and keynotes.



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