

**The South Carolina
Commission on Higher Education**



“New Front Door”

**Changing the way we operate
to change the lives of our citizens**



Presentation by: Dr. Garrison Walters

We must educate more adults

- South Carolina will not be competitive in the Knowledge Economy unless we make a major effort to educate more adults (those over 25)
- Improving the P-12 to higher education pipeline is a critical goal, but by itself can't lead to massive change in a short period of time
 - **SC has a big education deficit but the P-12 student population is expected to grow very little**



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Categories of Adults

(over age 25)

Lacking a high school diploma	~500,000
High school but no college	~900,000
Some college	~500,000
Total	Over 1,900,000 people

- Focus on first two groups
 - **Those with some college have already shown some understanding; need to be reached differently and we're working on that**
- Narrow the numbers
 - **Assume ~20% are getting GEDs or are enrolled or planning to enroll in college (usually technical college system—note the average age)**
 - **Assume ~30% aren't going to respond because of current job satisfaction, age, health, etc.**
 - **Leaves a market of ~700,000 people!**
 - **Assume it's only half that—still an enormous potential benefit to individuals, employers, and the state**



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We'll have to change to change the people we want to help

- Our target population comprises people who aren't going to be moved to change by traditional educational marketing
 - **We do great advertising, but it doesn't work for them**
 - They lack confidence
 - Don't think they can succeed
 - Don't understand the system and are intimidated by it
 - Don't want to go back to high school
 - They lack time—job and family pressures
 - They lack money—low wage earners
 - They need job relevance—have to justify time and effort

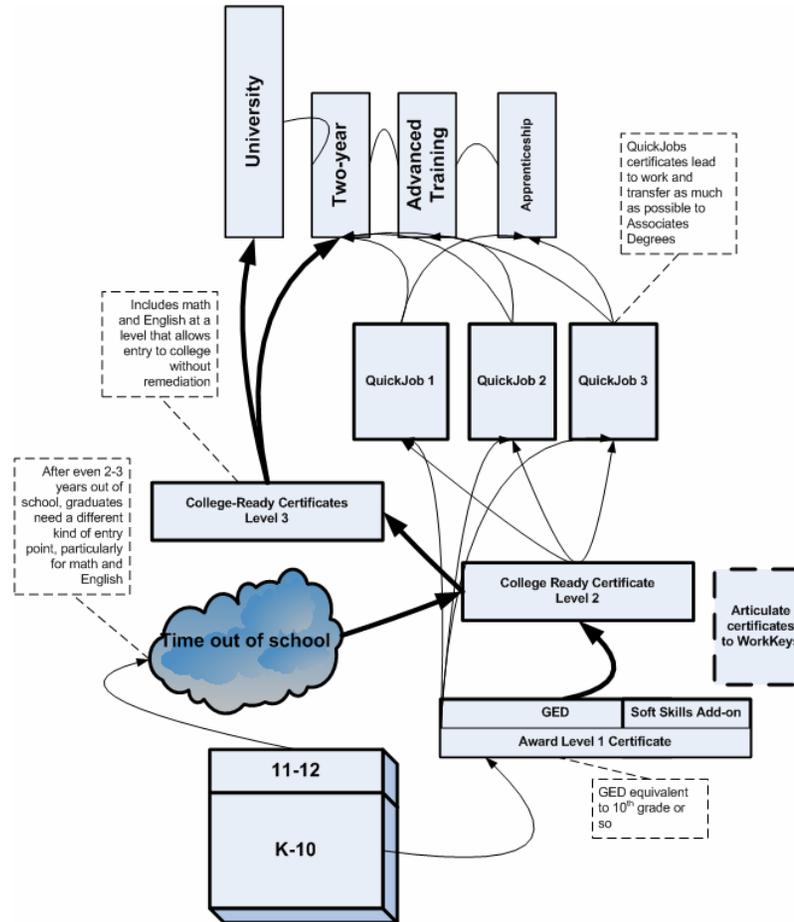


Start with Marketing

- What's our television ad going to say?
 - **You can succeed, people like you have**
 - **You can afford it**
 - **It's convenient to your needs**
 - **It will help you get a better job and be happier**
- In other words, we have to say the same things that are known to work for other products and services
 - **Our target audience is a tough one to connect with; we'll need to be prepared to work hard**



What could a Program Look Like?



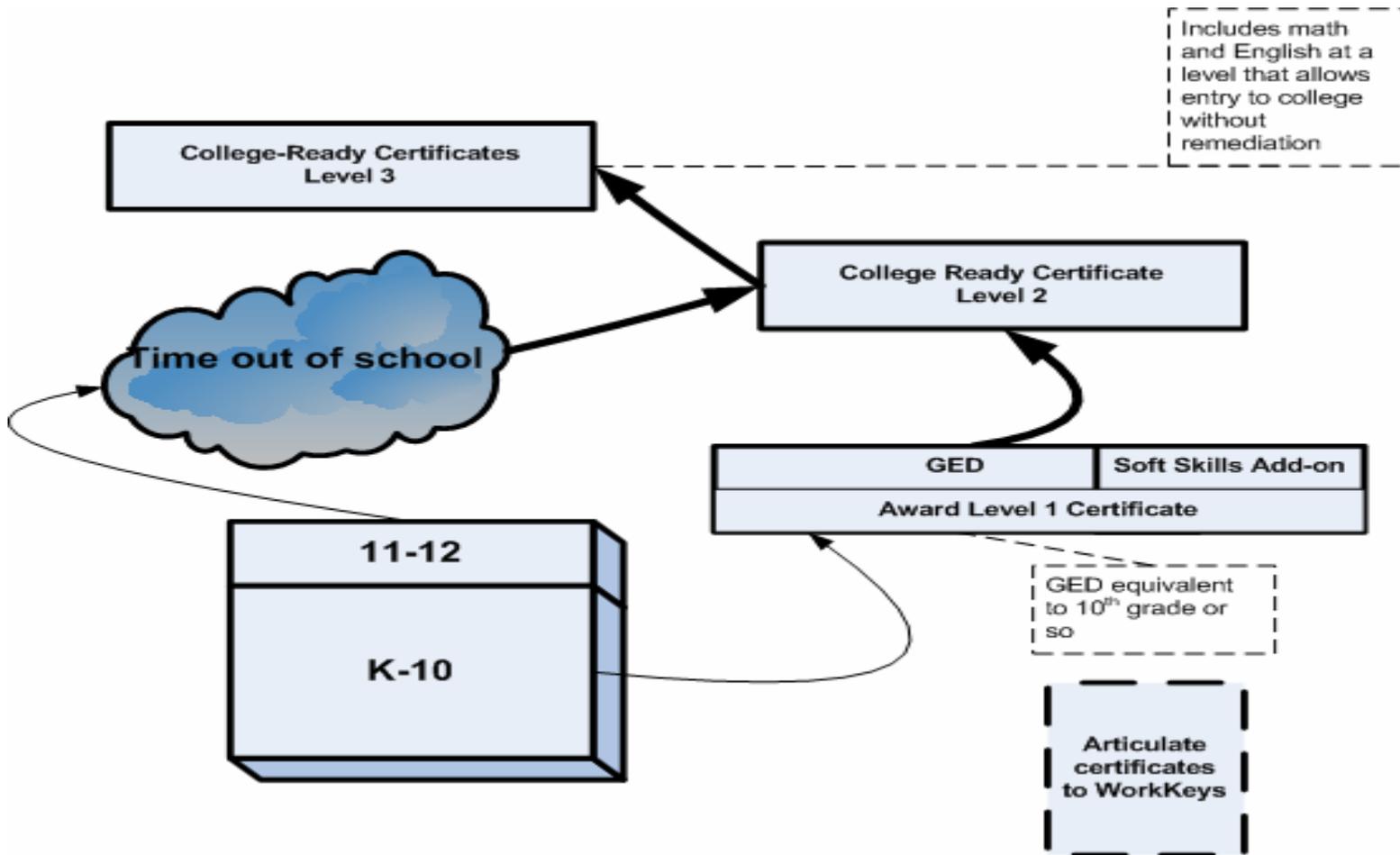
Adults are Different

People who don't go directly through high school graduation to college need a different kind of path. They don't fit into the traditional entry point, even if it begins with remediation, for both practical and psychological reasons. If we offer them entry level certificates they will have: 1) the self-paced, low-cost, flexible delivery, **no fail** approach needed to bring them into education; 2) easily achievable certificates that reward progress and reassure employers; 3) early access to practical skills that help them in the job market; and 4) complete transferability so that no path is ever the wrong one.



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Certificate System



Characteristics of Certificates

- Modular (on line with in-person options)
- Competency-based, no-fail (like many industry certificates)
- Inexpensive or free
- Available from many sources
- Contains some material relevant to jobs (likely Information Technology)
- Gives credit for appropriate experience (these are pre-college, not college degree credit bearing)



Fitting Certificates into the System

- First, remember that there are multiple audiences
 - **Intending to go to college for a degree**
 - **Needing competencies necessary to get training for a job**
 - **Not sure what they want to do but don't want to make a mistake**



Examples of Certificates

- Level 1- equivalent to GED+
 - Add soft skills needed for employment, so not identical
 - People who pass GED will only need to add a soft skills component to get a Level 1 certificate
 - Remember that GED is only about 10th grade



Levels 2 and 3

- **Together comprise academic competencies needed to enter college free of remediation**
 - Shared with remedial education to save money and development time
- **Basic math, writing, critical thinking, and study/education coping skills**
- **Emphasize effective diagnostics for accurate placement and connection to learning styles**
- **Modular scores within levels– e.g. a student could have a score like 2.3.4.7 meaning-**
 - Initial number is current level (completed level 1-- then within level 2 he/she is at math=3, English=4, and IT=7)
 - If the student drops out for a while and returns, would start at last level for each area, not from the beginning for all



Levels and Workforce Preparation

- Many workforce training programs will require more than Level 1 but less than Level 2
- Solution is to articulate training requirements modules, for example:
 - **Level 2.4 in math and 2.0 in others might be enough for one program**
 - **Level 3.1 in English and 2.7 in math for another**
 - **Etc.**



Connection to WorkKeys

- Certificates and WorkKeys will be complementary
 - WorkKeys is an employer-driven interface, largely used to sort applicants for eligibility
 - Employer “doorway” is a critical one—many people will approach the system only that way
 - WorkKeys scores will be articulated to certificates
 - **A certain score could yield a certificate, provided by a partner college**
 - **Scores would also indicate placement for further education**
- Note: Redundant effort is a *good* thing, incoherent effort is a *bad* thing. There should be “no wrong door.”**

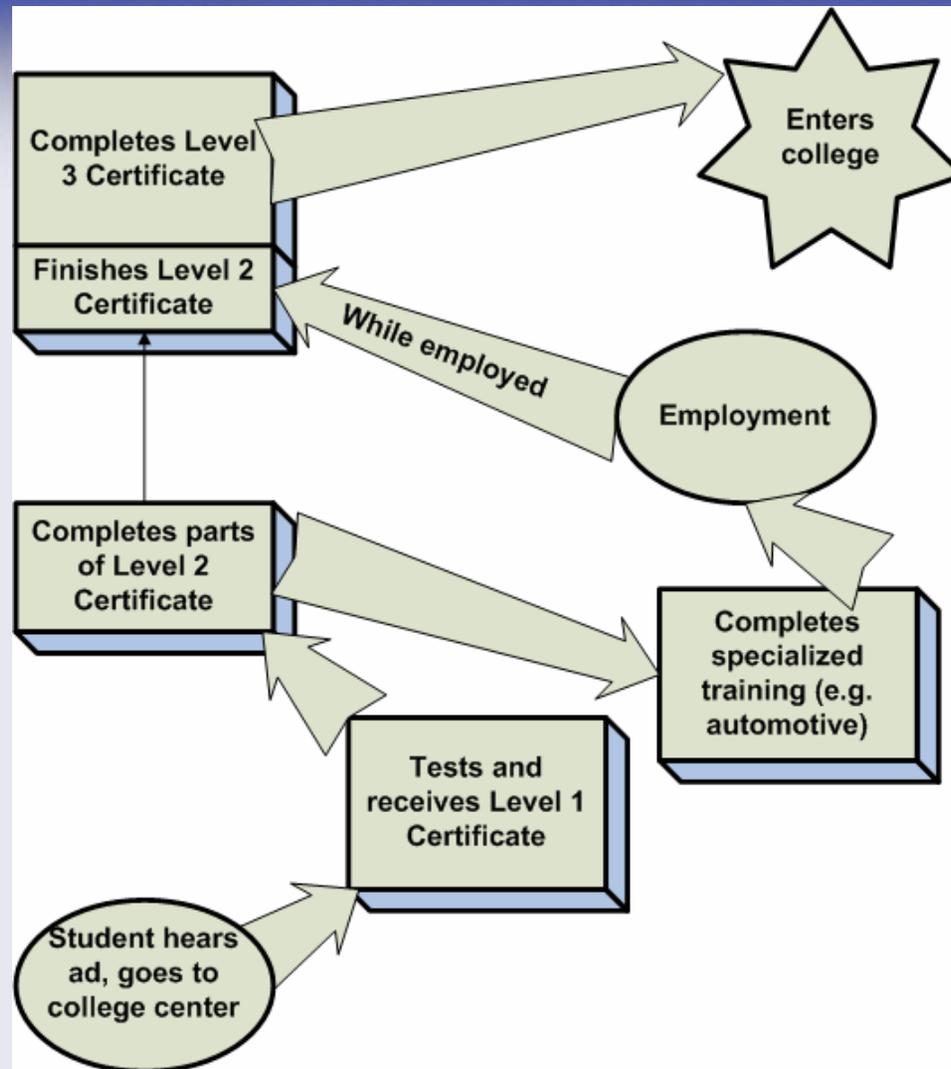


You Are Here” Map

- All certificates will be awarded by a technical college or designated higher education provider
- Holders will have an academic record and will be connected with college systems
- Colleges will generate visual, “you are here” maps on the web that show progress and future options



An example



Getting There I

- Design Principle I
 - **System must be easily understandable to the target audience; if we can't show them a simple picture plus words of how the system works for them, we'll have failed**
 - Focus groups?
 - For a great model, see <http://www.learnirectscotland.com/>
- Design Principle II
 - **System must be prepared for massive marketing effort—advertising to include TV, radio, billboards, everything we can think of and afford**



Getting There II

- Issue #1– Agree we want it
- Issue #2– Create group to oversee design
 - **Use as many existing pieces as possible (lots of good stuff out there already)**
 - Design continuous improvement component
 - **Include business and K-12**
 - **Rapid timetable**
 - **Agree on GED**
 - Need flexibility in offering, but don't want to lose current expertise and success



Getting There III

- Budget
 - **Can't estimate costs until we're into the design**
 - Good reason for urgency
 - **Shoot for July '10 start**
 - **Include in Higher Education Action Plan?**
 - **Start with regional pilot**
 - **Level 2 and 3 development costs could be offset by sharing with remedial programs**
 - Grant possibilities here





Conclusion

- Details are highly negotiable, but we can't afford not to start a program like this