

***SHCOE ANNUAL REPORT TO
THE COMMUNITY
2010-2011***

Description of the Community

Smart Horizons Career Online Education (SHCOE), a private online school District, is located in Escambia County, Florida (just outside the city limits of Pensacola). All operations (e.g., administration, curriculum development, human resources, enrollment management, academics, and technology) are currently housed in three office buildings located on two different campuses within two miles of each other.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of Escambia County in 2010 is approximately 303,000. Of this group, approximately 71% are white, 23% are African-American, 4% are Hispanic, and 2% are Asian/American Indian. In terms of education levels, approximately 18% of the residents of Escambia County (54,540) do not have high school diplomas.

SHCOE Stakeholders

SHCOE's stakeholders are dedicated to providing support to the District and its students. SHCOE believes that the composition of this group will increase, evolve, and change over the next five years. However, based upon SHCOE's communications and relationships, SHCOE believes that the following organizations, institutions, and individuals have a vested interest in SHCOE and its success in meeting the educational needs of the adult learner:

- Program Managers of local, state, and federal nonprofit and for-profit educational programs, including:
 - North Florida Community College (NFCC)
 - Location – Madison County, Florida
 - Description – Public community college that offers high school dual enrollment courses, online courses, certificate courses, and general education courses (AA or AS), with more than 1,500 students
 - Summary of Partnership – Provides NFCC with a career online high school offering designed to reengage (adult) students back into the educational system to complete their high school educations and receive their diplomas
 - Website – www.nfcc.edu
 - Nova Southeastern University
 - Location – Davie, Florida
 - Description – Nation's seventh largest independent nonprofit university, which offers certificates as well as associate's (AA), bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees online or in a face-to-face format, with more than 28,000 students
 - Summary of Partnership - Smart Horizons has partnered with NSU's Fischler School of Education and Human Services to promote and provide child care professionals with the ability to further their careers through online and onsite programs. Child care professionals who complete the Smart Horizons Career Online Education training program and earn their

national Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC) can be awarded college-level credit towards a bachelor's degree at NSU's Fischler School. NSU is in the process of integrating Smart Horizons courseware into their associate's degree, developing a synchronous program utilizing the training toward a bachelor's or associate's degree, and collaborating with Smart Horizons to extend their reach into the early childhood arena.

- Website – www.nova.edu
- Compass Rose Foundation (CRF)
 - Location – Largo, Florida
 - Description – Nonprofit organization that has founded, governed, or managed a variety of postsecondary and career training institutes during its 80-year history
 - Summary of Partnership - Directs students toward Smart Horizons Career Online Education to earn their high school diplomas in preparation for moving on to postsecondary institutions that offer career certificates and AA diplomas
 - Website – www.compassrosefoundation.org
- Daytona College
 - Location – Ormand Beach, Florida
 - Description – Private college that offers certificate programs in massage therapy, aesthetic skin care, and cosmetology, as well as online AA programs in Business Administration, Medical Assisting, Medical Billing, and Medical Practice Management
 - Summary of Partnership - Provides Daytona College with a career online high school offering designed to reengage (adult) students back into the educational system to complete their high school educations and receive their diplomas
 - Website – www.daytonacollege.edu
- Florida Community College at Jacksonville (FCCJ)
 - Location – Jacksonville, Florida
 - Description – Public community college that offers a variety of two-year degrees and continuing education classes
 - Summary of Partnership - For individuals who complete the Smart Horizons training program and earn their national CDA credential or FCCPC, FCCJ will award six credit hours in EDG 2941 Supervised Student Participation. Students who complete the above and achieve TABE scores of 9 in Math, Reading, and Language will receive an additional three credits in EEC 1001 Introduction to Education.
 - Website - <http://www.fccj.org/>
- Local, state, and federal leaders with vested interests in increasing levels of education, who can reach out to their constituents and assist them in earning high school diplomas and career certificates, including:
 - National Association of Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies (NACCRA)

- Location - Arlington, Virginia
 - Description - NACCRA is the nation's leading voice for child care, aimed at increasing the quality and availability of child care professionals and advocating positive child care policies.
 - Summary of Partnership - Smart Horizons has partnered with NACCRA to provide e-learning opportunities, which include Child Development Associate (CDA) training, pre-training services, and CDA credential renewal requirements.
 - Website - www.naccra.org
- Child Development Education Alliance (CDEA)
 - Location - Orange Park, Florida
 - Description - CDEA provides professional development, networking opportunities, public policy information, and family support materials to child care, kindergarten, and preschool programs around the United States.
 - Summary of Partnership - Smart Horizons has partnered with CDEA to provide FCCPC training, CDA training, and CDA credential renewal training.
 - Website - www.cdealliance.org
- National Association of Child Care Professionals (NACCP)
 - Location - Austin, Texas
 - Description - NACCP provides online training and professional development to owners, directors, administrators, emerging leaders, and other professionals who are dedicated to early childhood education.
 - Summary of Partnership - Smart Horizons has partnered with NACCP to provide e-learning opportunities, including CDA training, pre-training services, and CDA credential renewal training.
 - Website - www.naccp.org
- Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)
 - Location – Colorado Springs, Colorado
 - Description - The Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) strives to enable and equip Christian educators and schools worldwide to effectively educate children and adults.
 - Summary of Partnership - ACSI, through its Early Education Services, provides regional and national services that assist early education programs serving children from birth to prekindergarten 5-year-olds. ACSI currently sells Smart Horizons courseware internationally, and it is used to meet the requirements of ACSI's Preschool Associate Credential (PAC) and the national CDA.
 - Website – www.acsi.org
- International Federation of Protection Officers (IFPO)
 - Location - Naples, Florida
 - Description - The IFPO is dedicated to providing cost-effective and meaningful training for security and protection officers.

- Summary of Partnership - Smart Horizons has partnered with IFPO to provide e-learning opportunities, which include the Certified Protection Officer (CPO) program.
 - Website - www.ifpo.org
 - Palm Beach Collaboration Group (Early Childhood Education)
 - Location – Palm Beach, Florida
 - Description – Nonprofit organization focused on providing early childhood practitioners with professional development and education opportunities
 - Summary of Partnership – Assists SHCOE in identifying adults interested in pursuing CDA training and earning high school diplomas
- SHCOE Board of Directors
- SHCOE Faculty and Staff
- SHCOE District Advisory Council
 - Dr. Howard Liebman, Superintendent
 - Mr. Doug Peterson, SHCOE Board Member
 - Mrs. Susan McLeod, Lead Academic Coach
 - Mr. Ashton Hayward, City of Pensacola Mayoral Candidate
 - Mr. Robert David, President of TechSoft
 - Mrs. Natalie Prim, VP, Community Affairs, Chamber of Commerce
 - Mr. Patrick G. Rooney, Lead Principal Consultant, Coastal CXO Services, Inc.
- City of Pensacola Mayor’s Office
- City of Pensacola Chamber of Commerce
- Workforce Escarosa
- SHCOHS Student Council

Description and Research of Typical SHCOE Student

SHCOE seeks to meet the academic and career needs of the approximately 45 million adults throughout the United States who were not successful in traditional brick-and-mortar high school settings and consequently lack high school diplomas (Gates Foundation, 2006). These adults find themselves unable to move beyond their current circumstance in order to obtain employment, enter into higher education (i.e., postsecondary career training), meet other current employment requirements, or further their employment opportunities. In order to advance, they must acquire a high school diploma and career certificate.

Nationwide, approximately 7,000 students drop out of high school every day, and only about 70% of students graduate with a high school diploma (Albright & Salmanowitz, 2009).

A recent US Department of Education report noted that adults without high school degrees are comprised of multiethnic, multiracial individuals, with the majority being Hispanic or African-American (Cataldi, Laird, KewalRamani, and Chapman, 2009). The same report also noted that the median income for this demographic of students was approximately \$24,000.

Other key demographics include:

- Higher than average unemployment
- Higher incidence of incarceration

- Higher incidence of health problems
- Higher probability of having a child before the age of 18
- Higher probability of being on welfare and/or food stamps

SHCOE believes that many of these adults can be reengaged back into the educational system through participation in a self-directed, teacher-supported career online high school diploma program that directly relates to obtaining employment upon graduation.

SHCOE's Blended Personal Learning Curriculum Model

Rationale

The Smart Horizons Career Online Education (SHCOE) curriculum model emphasizes subject matter mastery through personal learning supported by academic coaching from certified teachers. The curriculum model was selected based upon a review of over 30 years of empirical research, over 10 years of successful commercial implementation, and numerous discussions with postsecondary career training institutions (e.g., Sunstate Academy, Compass Rose Foundation, North Florida Community College, and Southwest Florida Career College) and adult education consultants. Based on their initial feedback, SHCOE recognized the need for a career online high school and training program. It was recognized that the two requirements (academics and career training) were closely intertwined, since many career fields that are currently in demand (e.g., healthcare, early childhood education, and office management) require a high school diploma to obtain employment or transition into a postsecondary institution.

Based on the published research, a qualitative assessment of the target audience, and Smart Horizons' existing expertise in developing training curriculum (child care, protection officer, and office management credentialing), the SHCOE Board of Directors decided that the development of a blended personal learning curriculum model could meet the needs of its population of students.

SHCOE's curriculum team performed a needs analysis to determine project feasibility, "real-world necessity," and program goals.

The primary factors considered during this analysis were:

- Potential target audience
- Accreditation requirements
- National and major state educational standards
- Existing career track courseware
- Target audience expectations
- Estimated timeline for completion of new courseware

The blending of career training courseware with secondary education courseware that is aligned to national and state standards provides SHCOE students with the opportunity to earn a

high school diploma and complete the training coursework needed to obtain a credential in one of six emerging career fields with excellent employment prospects (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2010).

Overview of SHCOE's Blended Personal Learning Curriculum Model

Personal learning is a well-established instructional paradigm that allows students to progress through a unit of study at their own rate, advancing only after answering knowledge checks correctly. Personal learning builds subject matter mastery at the students' pace, not an instructor's. The approach is premised on decades of empirical research by leading scientists and researchers (e.g., B.F. Skinner, Robert M. Gagne, and Fred S. Keller).

The SHCOE approach divides subject matter into units that have predetermined objectives. Assessments are directed toward understanding and comprehension. Students work through each unit in an organized fashion, demonstrating mastery on lesson exams before moving on to new material. Students are allowed to revise their work based on specific feedback until they meet the targeted outcomes. This online instructional approach better positions students for a successful educational experience.

Students who do not achieve mastery receive academic interventions through SHCOE's Academic Coaches and Academic Support Instructors using online virtual classrooms and one-to-one instructional sessions conducted over the telephone. SHCOE students continue the cycle of studying and testing until mastery is met. The flexibility offered to students who need extra learning time to master subject content is an approach that has shown success in alternative brick-and-mortar and online schools (Cavanaugh, 2009).

This approach is most useful with students possessing basic skills and slow learners who were not successful in a traditional academic environment. The goal is success for the SHCOE student. It is asserted that success in achievement, attitude, and motivation in the education or learning environment makes learning more effective (Davis & Sorrell, 1995).

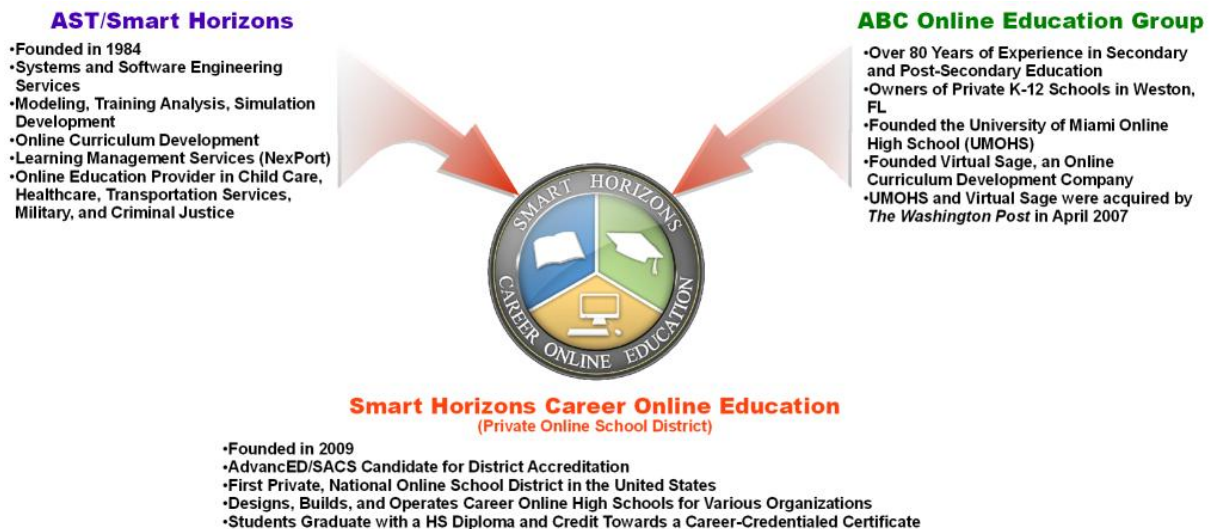
SHCOE's curriculum model is based on the belief that all SHCOE students can learn when provided with conditions appropriate to their situation. The SHCOE student must reach a predetermined level of mastery on one assignment before he/she is allowed to progress to the next assignment.

SHCOE uses online learning to bring quality educational opportunities within the reach of every student. In SHCOE's online learning setting, students receive specific, instant feedback (submitted electronically) concerning their learning progress at regular intervals throughout the instructional period. This feedback helps SHCOE students' meta-cognitive skills by identifying what they have learned well and what they have not learned well. Students are allowed more time to achieve mastery in areas that are not learned well. Only mastery scores of 70 or higher, which equates to grades of "A," "B," and "C," are permitted, because these are the accepted standards of mastery.

History of Smart Horizons Career Online Education (SHCOE)

SHCOE was founded in the summer of 2009. As the District name indicates, SHCOE is not a brick-and-mortar District. Instead, we employ computer technology to support students' educational requirements over the World Wide Web. SHCOE believes that our self-directed, teacher-supported, online educational approach offers students 24/7/365 access to high-quality career online education.

Smart Horizons Career Online Education (District) is comprised of two motivated and experienced educational entities that have combined their resources and experience to ensure the development and management of quality, supportive, and career-based online high school programs for working adults who were unsuccessful in high school.



The first entity of Smart Horizons Career Online Education is Advanced Systems Technology, Inc.® (AST), a systems and software engineering firm that specializes in information technology and in the development of computer-based instruction and training. Founded in 1984, AST has grown to more than 300 professional engineers, programmers, military analysts, and instructional systems designers and developers at over 20 locations across the United States. Smart Horizons, a division of AST that was founded in 1997 and has more than 85 employees, is an online provider that offers training and education courseware (Childcare, Transportation Services, Protection Officer, Healthcare, Telecommunications, Nutrition, and Business Skills) to over 200,000 students around the world. All Smart Horizons online courses are developed by experienced instructional designers and media designers. In addition, Smart Horizons provides various educational organizations with learning management services (LMS), within its Nexport system, to manage their online educational institutions.

The second entity, the ABC Online Education Group, is comprised of career educators with decades of experience as owners and administrators of private K-12 schools, as well as an online curriculum publishing company (Virtual Sage) and an online college-preparatory and career-preparatory high school (University of Miami Online High School) both of which were acquired by *The Washington Post* in April 2007).

SHCOE'S Mission

Smart Horizons Career Online Education is committed to preparing adult learners for entrance into careers and the workplace by delivering high-quality, supportive, and career-based online education.

SHCOE'S Vision

Smart Horizons Career Online Education's vision is to offer adult learners who did not complete high school an affordable, flexible opportunity to learn at their own pace and prepare them for careers and employment based on academic requirements.

SHCOE's District Strategic Continuous Improvement Plan, with its "Quality Management Program," ensures that all students are provided a high-quality, supportive, and career-based online education.

SHCOE'S Values

- SHCOE has high expectations for adult students' learning, which are supported by clear learning targets, a career-based curriculum, and ongoing assessment that measures academic gains and student progress.
- SHCOE provides a supportive and technologically-rich learning environment that is responsive to the needs of the students within the District.
- SHCOE provides an engaging, career, mastery-based, high school and training curriculum that is aligned to National and State Standards.
- SHCOE prioritizes the use of District resources to improve student learning, support professional development for faculty, and provide ongoing communication to students, faculty, staff, and the community.

SHCOE Strategic Goals

- **Teaching and Learning** – develop and provide a research-based curriculum; a self-directed, teacher-supported instructional model; and a District-wide assessment plan that facilitates student achievement
- **Data Collection Infrastructure** – develop and improve technology systems to effectively implement enrollment management, curriculum development, student achievement, and instructional planning decisions

- **Support for System-Wide, Continuous Improvement** - establish, utilize, and monitor an environment of continuous improvement focused on student achievement
- **Collaborative and Supportive Relationships** – develop, create, and support an environment that encourages collaboration and communication among internal and external stakeholders

Description of SHCOE’s Programs and Services

Number of Schools in the District: 1

Name of School: Smart Horizons Career Online High School

Highlights of SHCOE’s Programs and Services Include:

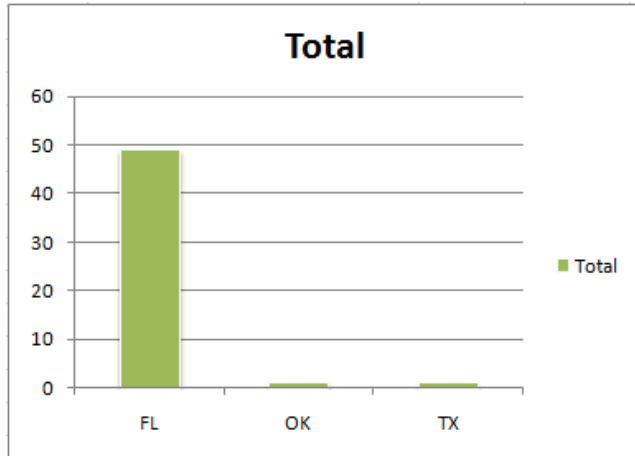
- The nation's only career online private school District with a direct connection between academic courses and career majors
- Convenient, flexible year-round (rolling) admissions
- Challenging, self-directed, teacher-supported career online high school courses in all major core academic areas (Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies)
- Career-credentialed elective courses in the areas of healthcare (home health aide), office management, criminal justice (protection officer), homeland security, early childhood education, and transportation services
- District academic courses aligned to National and State Standards
- District curriculum designed to engage working adults who dropped out of high school
- District Academic Support Center with certified teachers devoted to students’ success
- One-on-One Academic Coaching designed to engage students in a self-directed, teacher-supported online learning environment (Student Engagement Model)
- Career Corner that supports students obtaining information regarding career certificate requirements
- Academic and Career Writing Portfolio Program designed to prepare students for employment and improvement in written communication
- Weekly Webinar Sessions with an Academic Coach that focus on such topics as writing, math, e-library, language arts, science, social studies, pacing, time-management skills, and online study skill tips

SHCOE'S Student Demographics

Total Number of SHCOE Active Students 54

Count	Cohort					Grand Total
	2010 April	2010 May	2010 July	2010 August	2010 September	
Future Start	0	0	0	0	2	2
Active	19	0	10	10	15	54
Cancelled Start	0	0	3	0	0	3
Withdrawn-Admin	16	3	2	0	0	21
Grand Total	35	3	15	10	17	80

Residence (State)

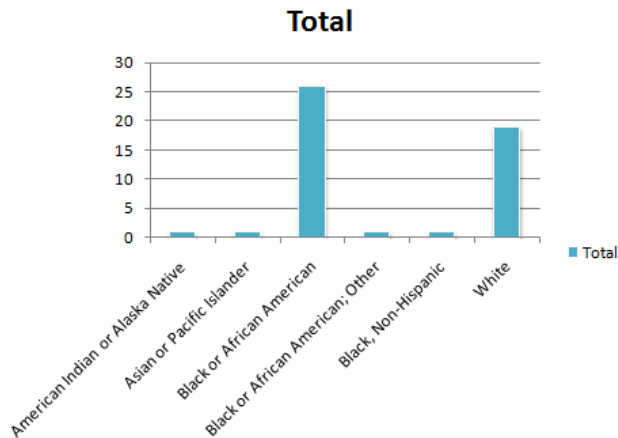


Ethnicity

Hispanics

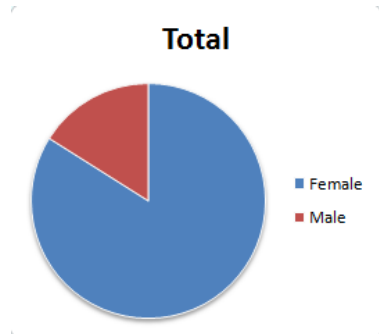
7 of out 56 students responded "Yes" to the question "Are you Hispanic?" in their enrollment form.

Racial Category



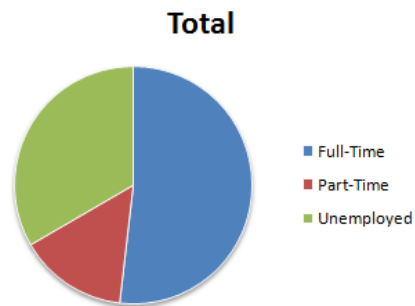
Gender

84% of SHCOE students are female and 16% of SHCOE students are male.



Student Employment Status

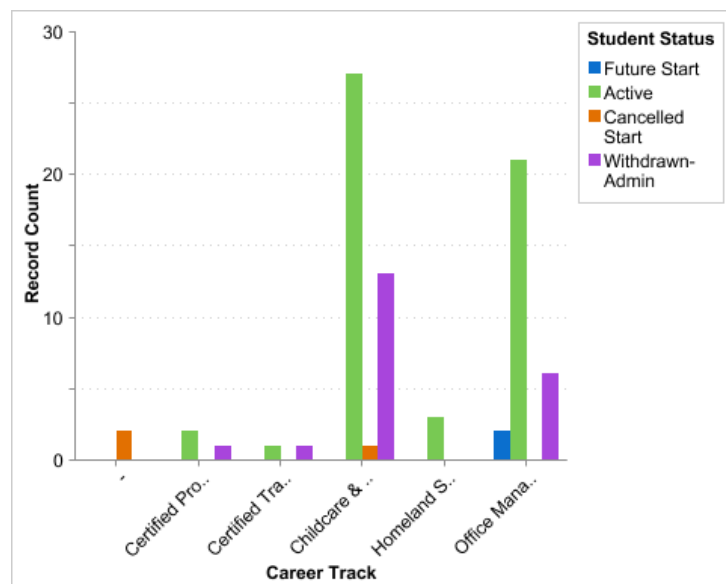
Employment Status	Count
Full-Time	28
Part-Time	8
Unemployed	18
Grand Total	54



Age

The average age of SHCOE's active students is 32 years old.

Students by Career Major



Summary of Student Performance

Student Performance Comparisons – Core Academic Programs

As of September 30, 2010		Core Academic Programs				Core Academic Program Total
Performance Metric	Mathematics	Language Arts	Science	Social Studies		
Total Enrolled						
Not Started	5	7	-	0	12	
In Progress	27	26	-	7	60	
Finished	11	5	-	0	16	
Total Average Assignments						
	17	16.8	-	-		
Student Performance by Course Phase						
Not Started						
Average Credit Assignments Completed	-	-	-	-	-	
Credit Assignments Completed (%)	-	-	-	-	-	
Grade Average Completed Assignments (%)	-	-	-	-	-	
In Progress						
Average Credit Assignments Completed	3.7	4.5	-	3.4	3.9	
Credit Assignments Completed (%)	22	26.5	-	21.4	23.3	
Grade Average Completed Assignments (%)	85.75	79.3	-	86.4	83.8	
Pretest Score Average (%)	53.8	45.4	-	39.4	46.2	
Finished						
Average Credit Assignments Completed	17	16.8	-	-	16.9	
Credit Assignments Completed (%)	100	98.8	-	-	99.4	
Grade Average Completed Assignments (%)	83.5	81.2	-	-	82.4	
Pretest Score Average (%)	51.5	53.7	-	-	52.6	
End of Semester Exam Score Average (%)	83.3	75.6	-	-	79.5	

Student Performance Comparisons – Career Elective Programs

Career Elective Programs							Career Elective Program TOTAL
Performance Metric	Child Care	Certified Protection Officer	Homeland Security	Certified Transportation Services	Office Management		
Total Enrolled							
Not Started	2	2	0	-	6		10
In Progress	23	6	3	-	8		40
Finished	96	11	7	-	15		129
Total Credit Assignments							
	12.25	14.2	18.4	-	7.6		
Student Performance by Course Phase							
Not Started							
Average Credit Assignments Completed	-	-	-	-	-		-
Credit Assignments Completed (%)	-	-	-	-	-		-
Grade Average Completed Assignments (%)	-	-	-	-	-		-
In Progress							
Average Credit Assignments Completed	3.5	3.9	13.3	-	3.4		6.0
Credit Assignments Completed (%)	29.7	34.2	62.8	-	48.6		43.8
Grade Average Completed Assignments (%)	85.4	91.8	93	-	82.3		88.1
Finished							
Average Credit Assignments Completed	12.3	14.2	18.4	-	7.6		13.1
Credit Assignments Completed (%)	100	100	100	-	100		100
Grade Average Completed Assignments (%)	82.9	89.4	93.1	-	89.5		88.7

Major Trends and Issues Impacting SHCOE

Benefits

- The increase in the number of adults in need of a flexible, online education: more than 4.6 million students were taking at least one online course at the start of the 2008-09 school year--a 17% increase from the previous year (US News & World Report, 2010)
- The Gates Study (2006) indicates that there are approximately 45 million adults who did not complete requirements to earn their high school diplomas
- The increase in the number of adults seeking a high school diploma and a career-credentialed certificate (Gates Study, 2006)
- The increased demand for more workforce, skill-based training, due to the ever-changing economy
- The increased need for more workers in key sectors, such as healthcare, early childhood education, and protection services professions (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2010)
- The affordability and accessibility of technology (e.g., public libraries, YMCAs)
- The expanding research related to effective online instructional and training practices that has provided a strong foundation for the build-out of SHCOE's programs

Limitations

- State adult education funding has decreased nationwide, while enrollment at public and private postsecondary institutions has increased (Council for Education Policy, 2004)
- Technology continues to evolve at a rapid rate
- An increase in poverty rates among adults without high school diplomas over the past 10 years has resulted in a shortage of monetary resources to reengage them back into the educational system

MAJOR STRENGTHS

Several major strengths include the following:

- SHCOE's five-member Board of Directors is unified in its focus on student achievement
- Extensive community concern regarding the adult education population is demonstrated through the array of external stakeholders and educational organizations who have partnered with Smart Horizons and SHCOE to meet this educational need
- AST/Smart Horizons' 25 years of experience in working with disenfranchised adult populations
- SHCOE's academic program is affordable, due to AST/Smart Horizons' 25-year investment in technology and curriculum development
- SHCOE's unique curriculum is designed to combine high school (academic) and career online education (training)
- SHCOE's clear focus on student achievement
 - Strategic planning process is systemic across the District
 - The District Strategic Plan outlines four goal areas; the first and primary goal focuses on student achievement
 - SHCOE's student engagement model is designed to retain and graduate students

- SHCOE's continuous improvement software system that documents and keeps a history of all district-wide needs and goals that are aligned with the District Strategic Plan
- SHCOE's use of data to guide and measure student engagement, student learning, and student achievement
- SHCOE's personnel evaluation and professional development systems that are aligned with strategic goals, as evidenced by the District Professional Development Plan and Campus for all faculty and staff members

CHALLENGES

The major challenges facing the district include the following:

- Working with a diverse population that has varying learning needs and time management issues
- The online learning environment can be challenging for SHCOE's diverse population of students and can generate a high attrition rate
- Based on a changing economy, SHCOE's ability to develop new career majors in a timely manner
- Continuous review of curriculum to meet student learning needs
- Ability to identify relevant metrics in a timely fashion
- Emerging technologies are evolving at a rapid pace
- Advocating for changes in the structure and formula under which adult education is funded in various states

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