



Impact of the Career Coach Program 2009-2010

Contacts:

Scott Kemp
Career Coach Coordinator
804/819-4968
skemp@vccs.edu

Wendy Kang
Dir. Workforce Research and Evaluation
804/819-4781
wkang@vccs.edu

Carrie Douglas
Workforce Services Coordinator
804/819-1684
cdouglas@vccs.edu

Summary

Career Coaches work in local high schools to help students explore careers and identify postsecondary programs and services to reach their goals. Since the inception of the career coach program in December 2004, the program has increased dramatically from 11 coaches in 13 high schools to approximately 106 coaches in over 155 high schools. Analysis of data indicate that the career coach program positively impacts short- and long-term education goals of students and the high schools in which the coaches work. Some of the impacts of the program in 2009-10 include:

- 87 percent or greater satisfaction rate of students receiving coaching services based on the coaches interest in student career needs, knowledge of career information, and assistance in making career and college plans
- 71 percent change in students without plans to continue to postsecondary education prior to meeting with the coach to having plans to continue to postsecondary education after meeting with a coach
- 95 percent of high school principals indicating that the coach program met or exceeded overall expectations
- 8 percent increase over four years in the number of recent graduates from high schools with a career coach that enroll in community college, as compared to enrollments before the high school had a career coach
- 4 percent increase over four years in the number of recent graduates from high schools with a career coach that enroll in CTE programs at the community college, as compared to CTE enrollments before the high school had a career coach
- 11 percent increase over four years in the number of dual enrollment 11th and 12th grade students from high schools with a career coach, as compared to dual enrollment 11th and 12th students before the high school had a career coach

The following report provides detailed information on the impact of the career coach program and includes a brief background on the program, a description of the measurements of program success, and the results of the analysis of data for 2009-10.

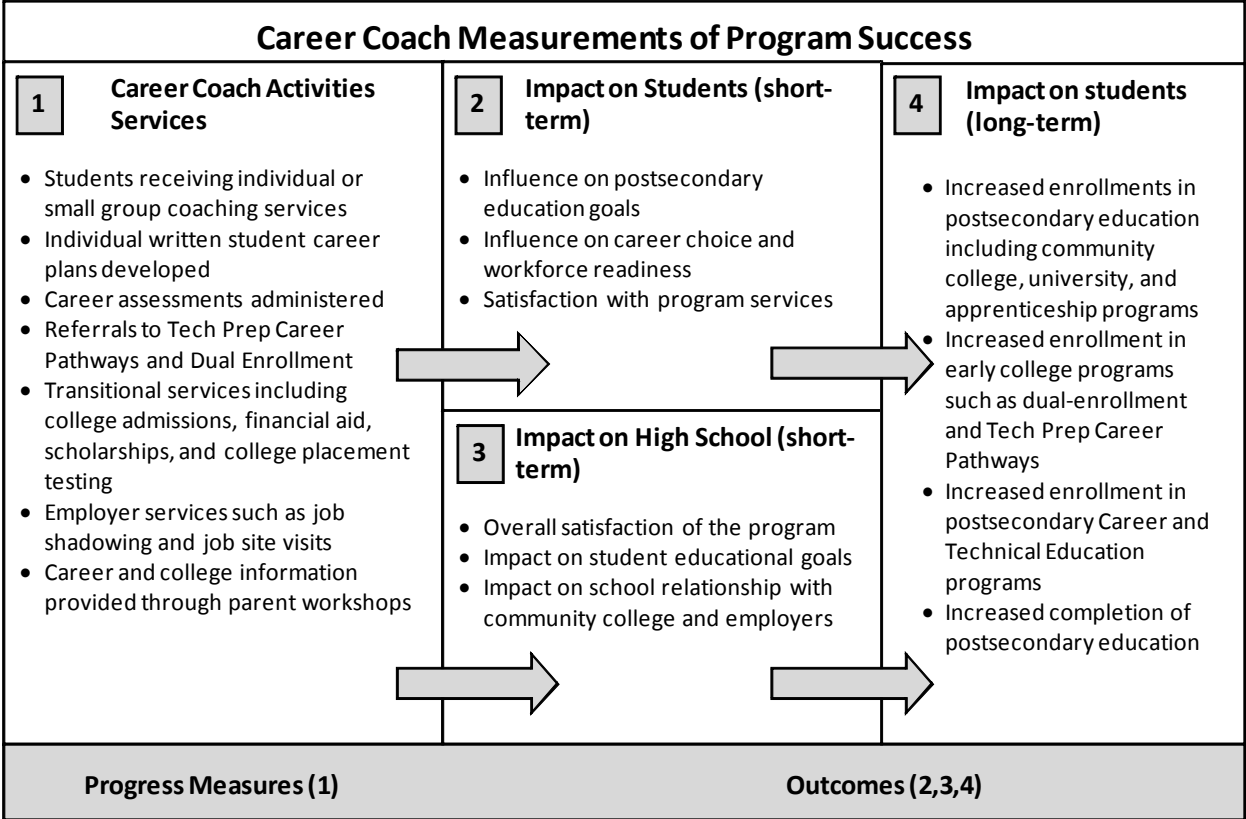
Background

Career coaches are community college employees based in local high schools with the mission to help high school students define their career aspirations and recognize postsecondary programs and services that can help students achieve their goals. Career coaches target high school students who most need career planning services: middle majority students who are poised to become the mainstay of Virginia's workforce but who, conversely, often graduate from high school without a definitive plan or resources for postsecondary education and training. Beginning in January 2005 with 11 career coaches based in 13 high schools throughout the Commonwealth, the Virginia's Career Coach Program (VCCS) has dramatically expanded so that, in Academic Year 2010-11, approximately 125 career coaches will be based in over 180 schools. While day-to-day functions of a career coach may vary according to local needs, major responsibilities of all coaches include:

- Facilitating the development of individual career plans and portfolios
- Administering and providing interpretation of career assessments, such as the Virginia Education Wizard
- Sharing information on careers and career pathways
- Connecting students to early college programs such as dual enrollment
- Assisting in the successful transition of students from high school to postsecondary education or training including assistance with college admissions and financial aid processes
- Connecting students, parents, teachers, and counselors with local and regional workforce needs and business and industry mentors

Career Coaches Measurements of Program Success

The VCCS assesses the career coach program through four key areas: (1) career coach activities, (2) influence of the services provided to students, (3) influence of the program on high schools, and (4) impact on enrollment in postsecondary education. The diagram on the following page outlines the activities within each measurement area. The activities focus on the mission of the program, which is listed above. The first measurement area, career coach activities, is categorized as a progress measure, while the remaining areas are categorized as outcomes of the program. Progress measures provide an interim assessment of the program, but do not ensure program success. For example, the number of students provided individual/small group coaching services does not measure the quality of the service, it only measures the quantity. Conversely, student satisfaction with individual/small group coaching services and the ability of coaches to influence a student's decisions on postsecondary education (measurements described in areas 2-4) provide a more qualitative assessment of whether or not coaches are achieving the outcomes of the program.



Career Coach Performance Summary for 2009-10

In 2009-10, it appears that coaches had a positive impact on the four measurement areas of the program. The table below provides the status of the measurement areas. The remaining sections of the report provide detailed information of the measurements for 2009-10.

| Career Coach Performance for 2009-10 | Performance |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Career Coach Activities | |
| Students receiving individual/small group coaching services | 38,691 |
| Individual written student career plans developed/revised | 17,920 |
| Referrals to CTE Career Pathways programs or Dual Enrollment through individual/small group sessions | 13,915 |
| College placement assistance in individual/small group sessions | 12,333 |
| Students provided services through employers, such as job shadowing, mentoring, etc. | 23,031 |
| 2. Impact on Students (short-term) | |
| Influence on postsecondary education goals | |
| -Change in students indicating no postsecondary plans prior to work with a coach to indicating postsecondary plans after meeting with a coach | 71% |
| -Change in students indicating plans to attend community college prior to working with a coach to indicating either a desire to go directly to four-year university or to community college <u>and</u> then transferring to a four-year university after meeting with a coach | 22% |
| Satisfaction with program services | >87% |
| 3. Impact on High School (short-term) | |
| Exceeded or met overall expectations of the program | 95% |
| Exceeded or met expectations for improving high school partnerships with community colleges | 94% |
| Exceeded or met expectations for addressing student interest in postsecondary education | 96% |
| 4. Impact on Students (long-term) | |
| Increase in enrollments at community college as a percentage of recent high school graduates (over 4 yrs) | 8% |
| Increase in enrollment in postsecondary career and technical programs as a percentage of recent high school graduates (over 4 yrs) | 4% |
| Increase in enrollment in early college programs (dual enrollment) as a percentage of the 11 th -12 th grade high school population (over 4 yrs) | 11% |

Measurement Area One: Career Coach Activities

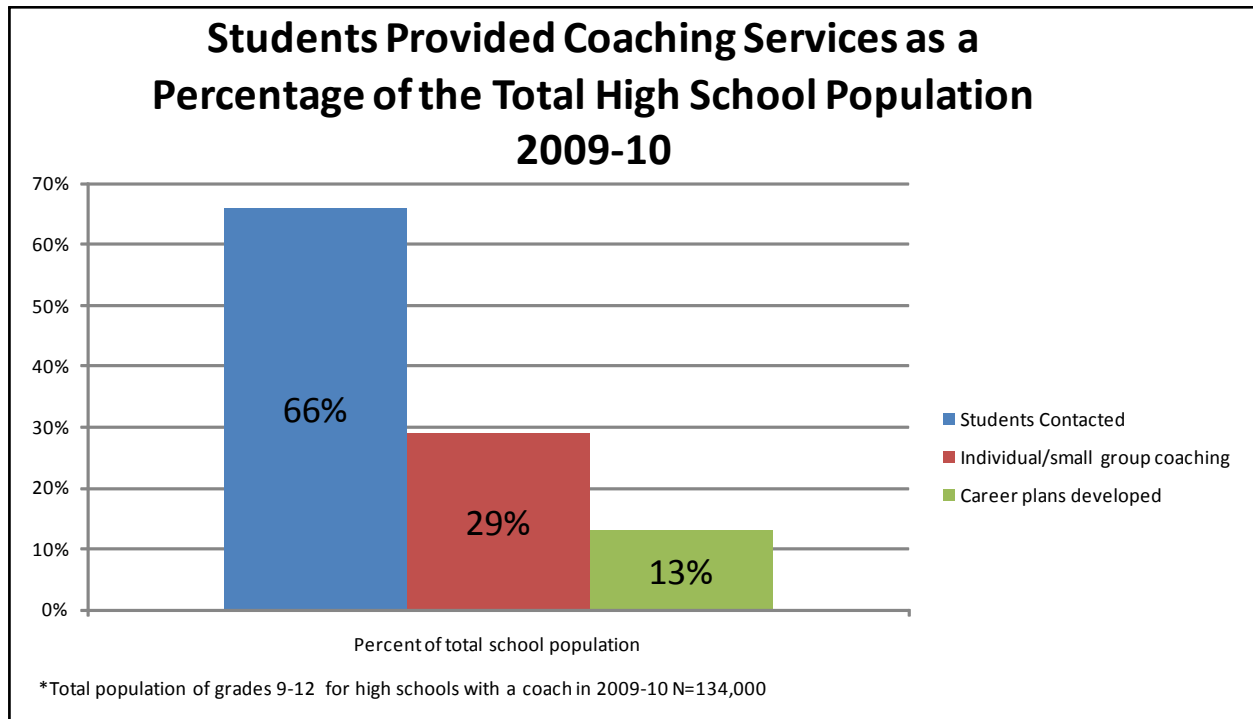
Career coaches are located across the Commonwealth in high schools and career and technical centers. Currently, coaches are located in all community college service areas. The types of services provided align with the VCCS career coaching model and include: contacting students, providing individual/small group coaching, administering career assessments, developing career plans, providing assistance with college placement, and referring students to early college placement programs, such as dual enrollment or career and technical (CTE) programs of study (Tech Prep). Coaches also connect students to local employers who serve as career advisors and mentors to students.

In 2009-10, career coaches were provided with additional clarification for reporting their activities, resulting in separate counts for individual/small group sessions and classroom sessions. During this timeframe, 106 coaches served 156 high schools and contacted a total of 87,969 students. These coaches provided 38,691 students with individual/small group coaching sessions and 69,572 students with coaching services in classroom settings. Additionally, coaches assisted 17,920 students with career plans in individual/small group sessions and 24,460 in classroom sessions. Referrals to CTE programs of study and dual enrollment were also broken out by individual/small group and classroom services. The table below provides summary data by service area for the past three academic years.

| Career Coach Activities and Services for 2007-08 to 2009-10 Academic Year | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|---|
| | 2007-08 | 2008-09 | 2009-10 |
| Activities | | | |
| Number of coaches | 86 | 107 | 106 |
| Number of high schools | 130 | 154 | 156 |
| Students contacted | 67,783 | 82,537 | 87,969 |
| Students provided individual/small group coaching services | 41,742 | 57,549 | 38,691* |
| Career plans developed | 15,350 | 28,175 | 17,920 – ind./small 26,460 – classroom |
| CTE Program Study | 21,145 | 20,842 | 12,263 – ind./small 20,349 – classroom |
| Referrals to Dual Enrollment | 25,534 | 30,546 | 13,915 – ind./small 28,987 – classroom |
| College placement assistance | 12,271 | 17,875 | 12,333 – ind./small 18,425 - classroom |
| Averages per coach | | | |
| Students contacted | 788 | 771 | 830 |
| Students provided individual/small group coaching services | 485 | 538 | 365 |
| Career plans developed | 178 | 263 | 169** |
| Source: Activity reports submitted by career coaches annually. *Due to additional clarification on individual/small group coaching, these figures decreased in 2009-10. **Individual/small group career plans were used to calculate the 2009-10 average. | | | |

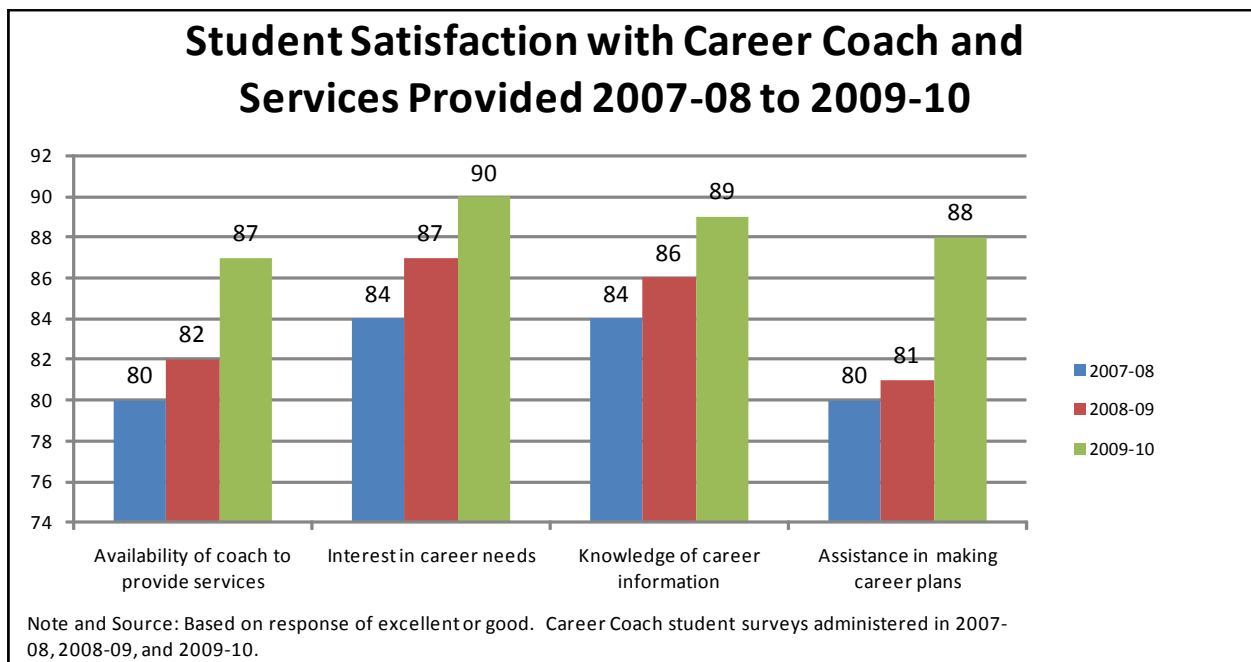
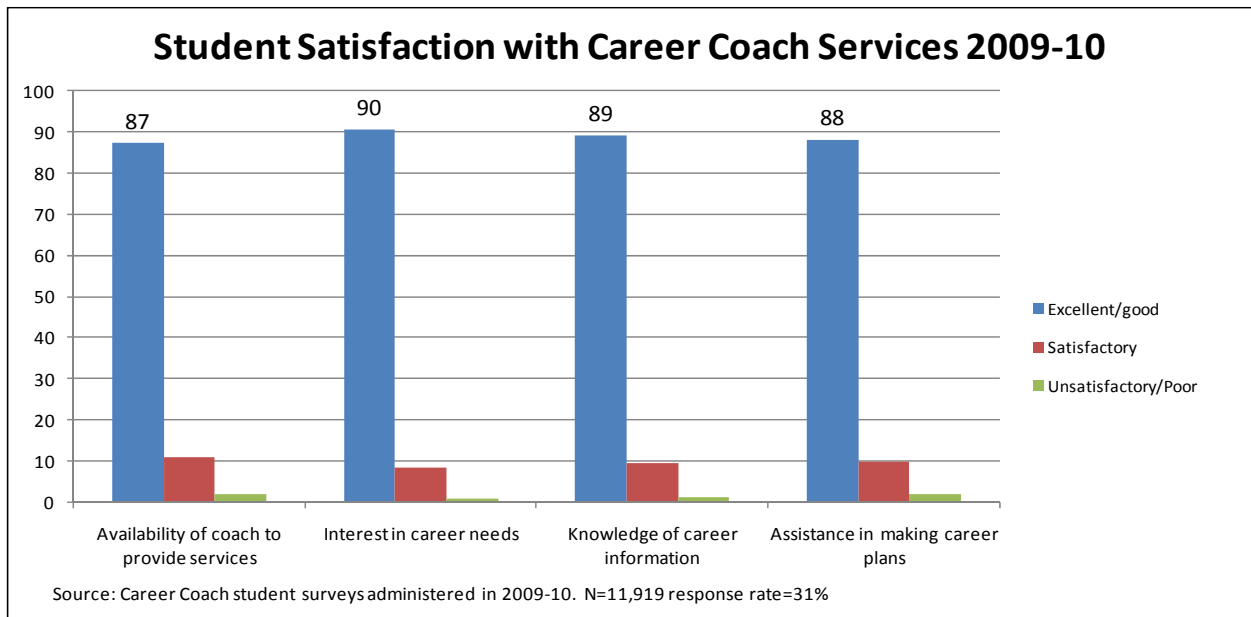
Coverage of Coaching Services

In 2009-10 coaches worked with students in approximately 160 of the 350 high schools and career and technical schools in Virginia (47 percent). In some college service regions, coaches are located in all the high schools while in others, colleges place coaches in targeted high schools based on the greatest need for services. Coaches contacted approximately 66 percent of the students in their high schools, provided individual/small group coaching to 29 percent, and career plan development to 13 percent. The graphic below illustrates the percentages by each service area.



Measurement Area Two: Impact on Students (Short-term)

In order to measure the short-term impact on students, coaches survey students who receive services to assess their satisfaction of the program and the influence of the career coach on the student's career plans. In 2009-10, coaches surveyed nearly 12,000 students (approximately 31 percent response rate of total students provided individual/small group coaching services) across 152 high schools. Over 87 percent rated their coach services as either excellent or good for the coach's availability to provide services, to express an interest in their career needs, to share knowledge of career information, and to assist in making career plans. This is an increase over the prior year where coaches averaged 84 percent in the same areas. The graphs shown below illustrate the student satisfaction of the coach program in 2009-2010 and over the last three years.



In addition to providing a positive service to students, coaches also appear to have an influence on career plans for students with and without a plan to enter postsecondary education prior to meeting with the coach. Based on the student survey, 71 percent of the students responding that they did not have plans for postsecondary education prior to meeting with the coach indicated an intent to attend postsecondary education after meeting with a coach either through attending a registered apprenticeship program, a technical school, community college, or four-year university (see table below). In addition, students with postsecondary plans prior to meeting with a coach also appear to benefit, in terms of increasing educational aspirations, from the coaching process. Twenty-two percent of students responding with the intent to attend community college prior to meeting with a coach indicated a desire to attend community college and then transfer to a four-year university or go directly to a four-year university after meeting with a coach.

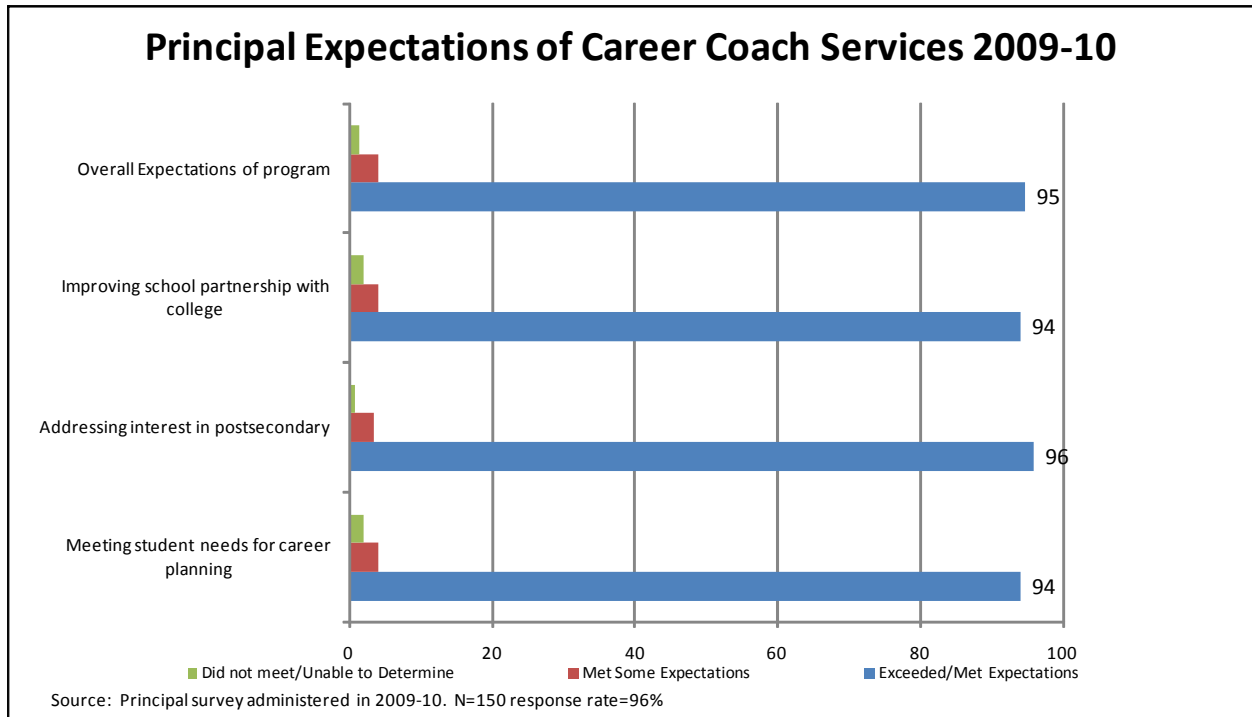
| Influence of Career Coach Services on Students with and without Postsecondary Plans | |
|--|-----|
| <p><i>Change in students with no postsecondary plan:</i> no postsecondary plan → postsecondary plan (Percent of students with no postsecondary plans prior to meeting with a coach indicating a plan to attend postsecondary education after meeting with a coach)</p> | 71% |
| <p><i>Change in students with postsecondary plans:</i> community college (CC) plan → CC-4 Year or 4 Year plan (Percent of students with plans to attend community college prior to meeting with a coach indicating a plan to either attend a community college and then transfer to a four-year university or go directly to a four-year university after meeting with coach)</p> | 22% |
| Source: Career coach student surveys administered in 2009-10. N=11,919 Response rate=31% | |

Coaching services also help clarify career goals for students planning to attend postsecondary education. When asked to identify the impact of the services provided by the coach, over two-thirds of the respondents indicated that it assisted them in: (1) developing a plan to continue to postsecondary education, (2) setting a career goal, and (3) feeling more confident about the future.

| Student Ranking of the Top Three Outcomes of the Services Provided by a Coach |
|---|
| <p>Develop a plan to continue to postsecondary education upon graduation</p> <p>Set a career goal</p> <p>Feel more confident about the future</p> |

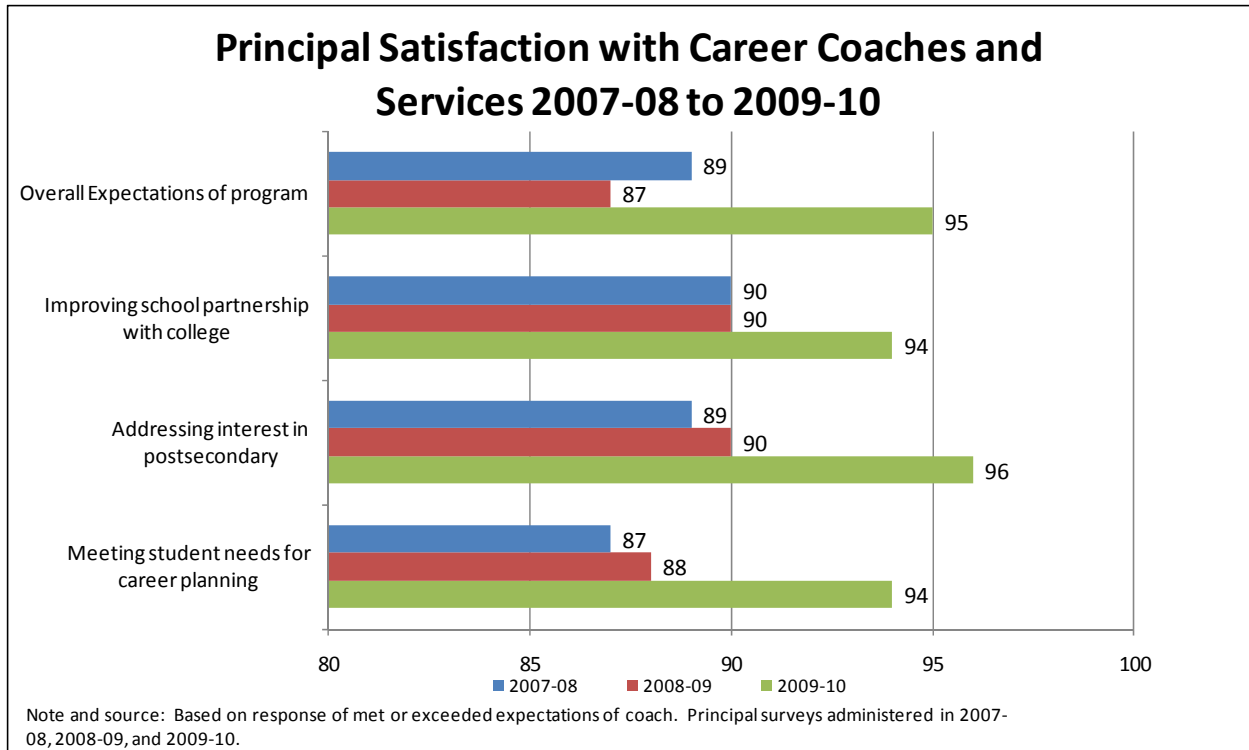
Measurement Area Three: Impact on High Schools with a Coach

The influence of the career coach in the high school is another critical element to the success of the program. In order to assess the impact of the program on the high school, VCCS staff administered a short survey to high school principals. One hundred and fifty principals responded to the survey (a 96 percent response rate). The survey asked questions related to expectations and impact of the program (graphic below).



Over 93 percent of principals surveyed responded that the program met or exceeded expectations in the areas of overall expectations of the program, improving school partnerships with the community college, addressing interest in postsecondary education, and meeting student needs for career planning.

The following graph depicts the increase in principal satisfaction that the program has experienced over the last three years.



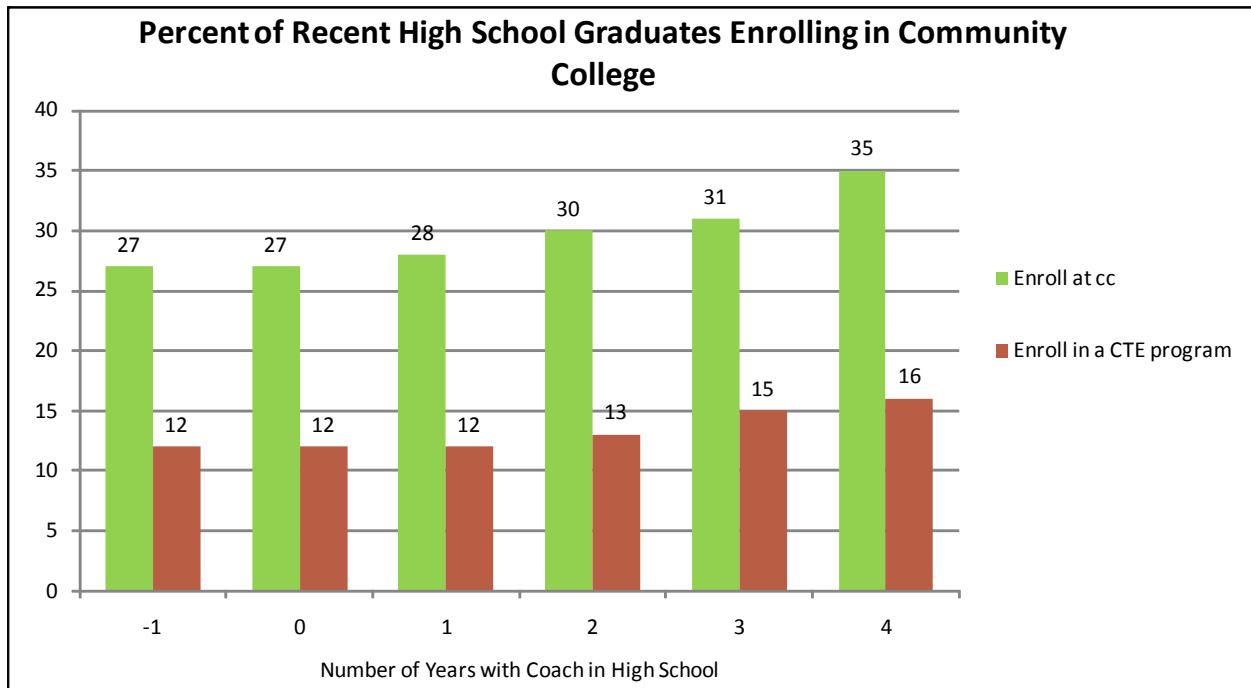
When asked to rank the top five job duties performed by career coaches in their high schools, principals indicated the following: (1) assisting students with career plans, (2) administering/interpreting career assessments, (3) assisting students with college admissions and applications, (4) assisting the guidance department with career events, and (5) connecting students with business and industry representatives.

| Principal Survey – Top Five Job Duties of Career Coaches |
|---|
| Assisting students with career plans |
| Administering/interpreting career assessments |
| Assisting students with college admissions and applications |
| Assisting the guidance department with career events |
| Connecting students with business and industry representatives |

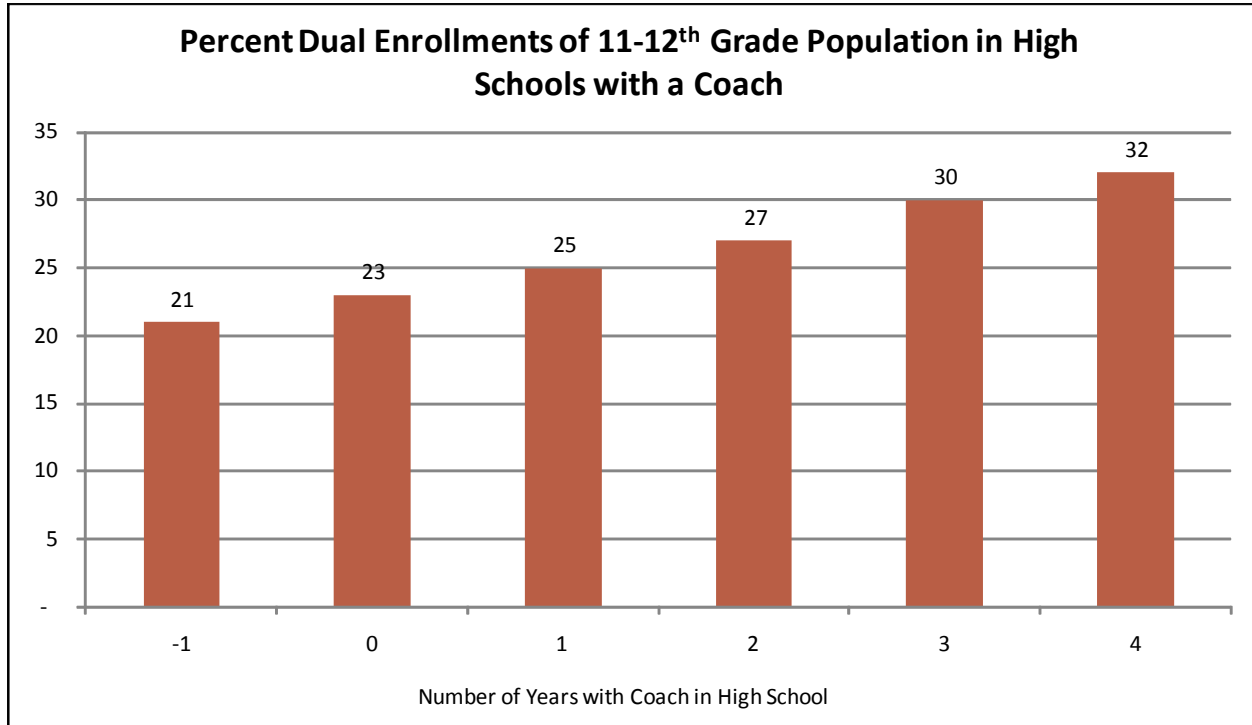
Measurement Area Four: Impact on Student Enrollments in Postsecondary Education

A key goal of the career coach program is to increase student enrollment in postsecondary education, whether it is at a four-year university, a registered apprentice program, a community college, or a technical school. Currently, data is only available for enrollments related to community colleges. The VCCS continues to seek alternative methods to collect postsecondary enrollments outside of the community colleges. This is expected to improve in the coming years with the receipt of a state longitudinal database grant to link secondary to postsecondary data.

Analysis of data indicates that high schools with a coach experience an increase the percentage of recent high school graduates that enroll at a community college within one year and an increase in the percentage of enrollments in career and technical (CTE) programs at the college (graphic below). The percent of recent graduates enrolling within one year at a community college from a high school with a coach increased from an average of 27 percent prior to a coach providing service in the school to 35 percent after providing services for four years. Recent high school graduates enrolling in CTE programs at the community college increased from an average of 12 percent prior to a coach providing services in the school to 16 percent after providing service for four years.



Dual enrollment increases in schools with a coach providing services. In the year prior to a coach entering the high school, the percentage of 11-12 grade students taking dual enrollment courses averaged 21 percent. Within four years of the coach entering the high school, the percentage of students taking dual enrollment courses increased to 32% (graphic below).



For more information about Virginia’s Career Coach Program, visit www.vccs.edu/careercoaches.