

Valley Advantage

Academic Catch-Up Program

Valley Advantage at KVCC was co-led by the Director of the Kalamazoo Valley Accelerated Associate Program (KVAAP) and the Dean of Liberal Arts, along with a team of faculty with a passion for developmental education to design the math and English programming and additional faculty and staff who provided student success content. The in-person program met four days per week for three weeks. Students received breakfast or lunch, food shares and a starter cooking kit, gas cards and bus passes, loaner laptops, classroom supplies, and a \$550 stipend, dispersed incrementally based on weekly completion of required work.

Four cohorts, with a total of 68 participants, participated in Valley Advantage in summer 2023. 91% completed the program and 76% subsequently enrolled at KVCC. These students had an average GPA of 2.4 in Fall 2023.

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Morning Cohort	8:00-8:30	Breakfast/Resources	Breakfast/Resources	Breakfast/Resources	Breakfast/Resources
	8:30-9:45	College Knowledge	College Knowledge	College Knowledge	College Knowledge
	10:00-11:30	Mathematics	Reading and Writing	Mathematics	Reading and Writing
Afternoon Cohort	1:00-1:30	Lunch/Resources	Lunch/Resources	Lunch/Resources	Lunch/Resources
	1:30-2:45	College Knowledge	College Knowledge	College Knowledge	College Knowledge
	3:00-4:30	Mathematics	Reading and Writing	Mathematics	Reading and Writing

The English class emphasized both reading and writing. For the math component, students were divided into groups based on ALEKS scores. Lower-scoring students received direct instruction, while higher-scoring students worked on ALEKS modules with support from tutors.

Strategy Highlights

- KVCC connected Valley Advantage to the college's food share program. Students received weekly food boxes, recipes, and cooking kits. The English class was built around a healthy food theme to deepen the connection and reduce stigma associated with the food share program.
- Students received a weekly stipend as a means of getting students to enroll and provide ongoing motivation to persist in the program.
- An orientation day was added to the program in fall 2023 to ensure all students had KVCC IDs, understood parking, received their loaner laptops, and could login to their email and other accounts.

KVCC offered one session of Valley Advantage in Fall 2023. This session had a higher percentage of adult learners who benefitted from the addition of the orientation day. 83% of these students completed the program.

"It's like orientation on steroids!"