Guided Pathways Synopsis: North Seattle College

Purpose: This guide is a synopsis of the invaluable conversation that staff members of the State Board for Community and Technical College Education Division and Project Management Office had with leaders and key staff at North Seattle around how their college is succeeding with Guided Pathways work. It also includes what North Seattle College needs from the system to continue their success.

Audience: College Subject Matter Experts (SME) interested in Guided Pathways.

💡 **When did we meet?** SBCTC and North Seattle College met on Tuesday, November 8, 2022.

Key Success Points

- *LaunchPad:* Redesigned intake system to one-stop for students with three different navigators (college staff positions). Help students get on the path and stay on the path with less confusion of process as they have a contact person.

- *Transitional Studies/Special Population Navigators:* Intake was re-vamped. Multiple options for students to connect with their advisors. I-Best, ABE and High School Completion has been successful. Given the success of the intake redesign for Transitional Studies, the college is confident in moving forward with implementation across programs. Created an On-Ramp class for the I-Best pathway which helps guide and inform about the four areas of study. Have also found that ZipWhip has been a useful text messaging tool as students prefer over email communication.

- *Orientation:* Redesigned along with getting student leaders involved. Focused less on "information dump" and more on sense of belonging. Getting students involved in their areas of study from the start and connecting -with their faculty.

- *Advising:* Students have a primary advisor they work with on their degree pathway, supporting students with their goals and also preparing them for industry. It is a seamless systems for students from the start of their journey to completion, where they also work with a completion coach.

- *Program Maps:* Created interactive web-based maps that students access directly from college website. Holistic approach that extends beyond the classes students need to include checklists for what should happen outside of the classroom. The college has also developed

Areas of Study videos that support students across their processes and journeys to help guide decision making as students plan for a credential and career. This is also being leveraged at the HS level as students can access this information from the college website.

- **Directed Self-Placement:** Revamped and are now doing Directed Self Placement for English to remove barriers. Launching Math in February.

- **Open Educational Resources (OER):** efforts made in this area to remove barriers to students as these teaching, learning and research materials are free. North Seattle College has the most OER classes identified in ctcLink, a large undertaking with college wide collaboration. Emphasis has been on reducing cost for students and enhancing the pedagogy taking place in the classroom to make it more equitable. Proud of the efforts made so students can see themselves in the readings they are assigned and activities they are engaging in.

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- **Tutor Navigation Program (EDI):** robust program used to disaggregate data to identify the classes they embed tutors into for support.

- **Press Books Access:** Excited to be ahead of the game. Focusing on reducing costs for students.

- **Pathway to Teaching Excellence Program:** As of the Fall term, Teaching and Learning Center launched a new pathway. It is equity focused faculty development program where faculty are paid to lead and participate in a series of 7 workshops a quarter using a cohort model. This is designed to promote equitable and inclusive learning experiences.

- **Communication:** Aligning business processes district wide so students have the same experience. All three colleges are communicating well to standardize as much as possible.Key focus is shaping the Strategic Plan to incorporate guided pathways. Threading it throughout instead of seeming like an add-on.

- **Grants:** The college has added more grant programs to support historically under-served student populations.

Key Desired Improvements in ctcLink

- **Automated Notification or Work List for Students Making Program Changes:** Would like automation for Program Reviews and Program Updates (if possible), as it is currently challenging to maintain in all areas necessary for most the accurate Student Profile. Currently, there is not a good way to identify students who change paths. For colleges who have advisors tied to a program, there is work involved when a student initiates a change that then leads to an Advisor change.

- **SBCTC Comment:** This could potentially be solutioned with a query that looks at advisor assignments and program/plan changes made within a specified date range.
  - QCS_SR_PROG_PLAN_CHANGES_AUDIT is listed in metaLink as a query used to audit or review program plan changes (does not include advisor data).

- *Registration:* Would like direct links for the students to click on from the Program Maps available on the college website to jump into ctcLink to register for a particular class.

- *Meta-Major Coding:* Would like to code by meta-majors down to the sub plan level. There is an impact on exploratory students, who need to select a program/plan by the end of their first two terms.

- *Integrate to a single 3rd Party Software:* Would like smoother process from ctcLink to 3rd party software tools to streamline for students and staff. Currently the college is building out Degree Planner in Starfish, but the course information exists in ctcLink. Staff currently have to maintain two systems. Would prefer it if all schools chose ONE 3rd party tool. Starfish is where all retention work, early alert, connecting with academic advisors, tutoring and other resources students need is done at North Seattle, so that would be their preferred product.

- *Tracking Student Data Through Programs:* Meta-majors are difficult to track so it would be helpful for ctcLink to have an add-on. Plans with Programs tend to fall among different areas of study. Ideally would like to track without having to re-do all academic build.

- *Universal Login:* So many different systems to log into with various requirements. They have Starfish, ctcLink, Canvas and other software products they use on campus. This would really help from an equity point of view for second language learners.

- *Data:* Would like easy exporting of data which can then be imported into Starfish.
  - **SBCTC Response:** For automated extracts for 3rd party applications, colleges have access to their dataLink database and can create automated extract processes.

- *Advisor Committees:* Would like to automate these in ctcLink and rules in place to govern this. Automate based on the program a student chooses. Also would like various queries to pull Advising Committees.

- *Improvements to Quick Admit for ESL:* Would like an ESL Navigator. Currently using Quick Admit and it is not quick. Staff have to connect with Admissions to complete. A lot of back and forth for students as well as staff. Process is time consuming and the college is working with limited resources.

- *Languages (Localization):* Would like an application or enhancement made to existing which has a language toggle. Want all languages but highest priority for North are the following: Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Amharic (Ethiopian language), Russian, Ukrainian, Korean, Arabic.

- *User Friendly:* Remove acronyms and expand representation to make it more user friendly.
  - **SBCTC Clarifying Question:** Does the college have an example of acronyms so we can see if this is at the configuration level or if it is by system design?

- *Accessibility:* Easily accessible application for all populations.

- **Prevent Duplicate Students:** More efforts are needed to prevent duplicate students, and capabilities to merge those that exist.

- **Improve the Activate Your Account (AYA) Process:** AYA confuses students when activating their accounts. Would like to have only one login the student utilizes. College is concerned that they lose students due to cumbersome process.

- **Streamline New Student On-Boarding and Communication Process:** College feels there are too many students being left in the pipeline attempting to get into classes.

- **Text Communication to Students, Visible to Staff in a Dashboard:** Collecting SMS communication or have communication dashboard. Would like students to have a communication board they view right after logging into ctcLink. Essentially a virtual one stop on dashboard as they do not check email.

- **Batch Enrollments:** Would like ability to do batch enrollment versus individual entries. It is missed from Legacy.
  - **SBCTC Feedback:** This exists in PeopleSoft using Block Enrollment functionality. Please see the following: https://ctclinkreferencecenter.ctclink.us/m/79558/c/266997
  - **College Additional Feedback:** Basic & Transitional Studies (BTS) requested the ability to do batch registration, which as you all noted is already possible, which is true. However, college has been informed it is not possible for classes that are coded as open entry/exit, as all BTS classes are. That is where we would like to have this ability.

Key Risk Points – Please Don't Disrupt This Process

- **Academic Structure:** While the college wants a way to code for Areas of Study, they don't want to redo all the years of work to construct their plan coding and sub-plan coding. If SBCTC radically changes the foundation of Academic Structure that would cause them a lot of re-work.

Professional Development Opportunities

- **Meta Majors Usage:** Once a ctcLink tool is implemented it would be critical for colleges to receive guidance on correct coding. Would also like direction from SBCTC as to how they can utilize Meta Major coding and learn about how Meta Majors are used in reporting.

- **Sub Plans Usage:** Would like direction and guidance from SBCTC (ctcLink Support and Education Division) on proper use of Sub-Plans and parameters for use. Have a good understanding of how sub plans work but possibly conduct a college sharing workshop for how to best adopt the usage of sub plans and better understand the impacts that it might have to other areas within the system that would be of benefit.
  - **SBCTC Response:** CS Core team supports needing a standardized coding and sub-plan approval process to define how sub-plans should be in leveraged across the CTCs.

- **Training for New Hires to ctcLink:** Although North Seattle has internally developed some very good staff training, the training information available for ctcLink is difficult to navigate

to know what a newly hired person at a college should take. It's confusing and challenging for figuring out how to best on-board a new hire. If there were a better way to get new hires on-boarded and there was guidance from the State Board for what they need to know. Also, more opportunities for Statewide training (versus self-paced on small college groupings) that are more specifically related to new hires that would help.

Review of the Set of Questions SBCTC Asked All Colleges

Questions for Overall College Perspective:

1. What is your college most proud of in the work you are doing to make your college more equity-centered/student-centered? How is this shaping your strategic plans for process improvement over the next two years?
2. What has your office done successfully to remove barriers for students who are wanting to attend?
3. How successful do you feel your college has been developing program maps and providing opportunities for exploratory courses? Is there anything within the ctcLink system you wish could be improved to help with this work?
4. What changes have you made in your business practices to improve progress monitoring of students? What are you most proud of in your process for ensuring staff are involved in identifying students who are struggling? Is there anything within the ctcLink system you wish could be improved to help with this work?
5. Does your college currently use a Third Party Product (Starfish, EAB Navigate, Civitas, Watermark Aviso, etc.)? If your college is using any tertiary systems (external products, business intelligence systems, and/or locally developed solutions) to support Guided Pathways, what benefits are being provided that are not currently available in ctcLink?
6. How do you feel your college is doing in evaluating student enrollments and their alignment to completing a degree in two years? What changes have you made across student services to support this work? Is there anything within the ctcLink system you wish could be improved to help with this work?
7. What elements of the Guided Pathways framework is your institution currently prioritizing? How are you currently documenting your work? Is there anything within the ctcLink system you wish could be improved to help with this work?

Questions for Specific Offices/Teams:

1. From each office (IT, Financial Aid, Admissions, etc.), what has been your greatest improvement to support Guided Pathways?
2. From each office, if you could improve the system in one small way to help your office significantly to support GP, what would you change in ctcLink?
3. From a data perspective-
    a. How are you tracking a student's journey through their programs on your campus?
    b. How are you currently reporting student enrollments by meta-major? Are you using locally developed Plan Code to Meta-Major crosswalks?
    c. What data points are you finding it difficult to track in the system today and what would you learn from tracking that data?

d. Is there anything within the ctcLink system you wish could be improved to help with this work?

4. From your area's perspective, what key enhancements could you envision that would support your college's Guided Pathways work?