Northern Illinois P-20 Network

Student Support Services Work Group Meeting

December 9, 2014, 1:30 p.m.
Waubonsee Community College, Sugar Grove Campus
Student Center, Room 136 or 815.753.0019

Attendees – Eric Weldy (NIU – Convener), John Coffin (ECC – phone), Paul Crawford (NIU), Kaitlyn Curta (HBR), Amy Franklin (NIU), Dana Gautcher (NIU), Angela Hite-Carter (RPS – phone), Melinda James (WCC), Jacque Mecklenburg (HBR), SyLinda Menafee (Kish), Debbie Pixton (NIU), Flecia Thomas (MCC)

Notes

Welcome and introductions

Updates

- December 4, 2014, White House College Opportunity Summit
  - Shared NIU Today article
  - Review 6 commitments – half of the six commitments relate to the work of this committee, confirming we are on the right track
    - Develop a comprehensive menu of financial literacy activities for P-20 students and their families
    - Assess student support services to identify gaps and develop needed interventions
    - Embark on a regional peer mentoring initiative for 400 high-need pre-college and freshman students with 80 trained peer mentors
- Meeting with ECON Illinois – Comprehensive menu of financial literacy resources
  - Inventory – The Illinois Shared Learning Environment’s Illinois Open Educational Resources (OER) database has some resources for students and families; we still need to determine if it will meet our needs for a “comprehensive menu” of resources and if not, what is missing.
  - A follow up email to group members will ask for them to identify the person at their institution who can address modified list of questions
  - Beth Metzler of Econ Illinois will be asking similar questions of regional stakeholders, which we will be able to share with the group
- Discuss draft Needs Assessment for Student Support Services Work Group – Assess student support services to identify gaps and develop needed interventions
  - Based on today’s conversation, the survey will be modified significantly; this will be accomplished by some or all of the following
    - Asking for best practices; what three programs at your institution are really helping students be more successful? Please describe and explain.
Or by asking about programs that institutions have documented data that demonstrates their effectiveness (what are the key performance indicators)

- Focusing the questions on current student programs
- Chunking questions differently
- Identifying which areas we think are most crucial and asking questions about only those areas

- The survey will include questions on peer mentoring initiatives, leading into the third commitment

- Peer mentoring – Embark on a regional peer mentoring initiative for 400 high-need pre-college and freshman students with 80 trained peer mentors

  - The needs assessment will ask for institutions to identify someone involved in peer mentoring who would be interested in developing a conference
  - What’s being done on campuses?
  - Once key individuals are identified, a planning subgroup will be formed to plan a conference for the summer for faculty and students

Next steps

- Next meet—January 12, 1-3 pm, Northern Illinois University, Lowden Hall 304
- Preparation for February 10 meeting
- Amy and Debbie will be in touch asking for more information from each institution.

Meeting materials

Documents related to this topic are posted online at www.niu.edu/p20network. Click on the Resources tab and then on the Student Support Services Work Group under Meetings and Materials. Feel free to send links to other documents that you recommend for this group to Debbie Pixton (dpixton@niu.edu).

Always in Mind

Goal – Coordinate student support systems across institutions in the northern Illinois region to ease transitions and increase student success.

Revised Assignments

- Build a comprehensive, coordinated student support system that includes “soft skills” training, orientation courses such as UNIV 101, course advising, career planning, counseling and coaching, financial literacy, financial aid advising, impact of current choices on life, systems navigation, and mentoring.
  - January 2015 – Report on a survey of institutions to assess strengths and gaps in the region’s student support services and identify additional targets for development of regional services.
  - September 2015 – Present project plans to coordinate student services in areas of need.
• Build a comprehensive menu of **financial literacy activities** for P-20 students and families.
  o **January 2015** – Identify existing programs at all levels and needs for development of new programs.
  o **September 2015** – Share a full continuum of financial literacy activities for schools and post-secondary institutions with identified providers and resources.

• Organize a northern Illinois regional **network of peer mentors**, who receive training and support, to increase the success of students in high school and college.
  o **January 2015** – Identify existing programs and best practices in peer mentoring, plus training and support. See ISAC Student Assistance Corps for one model.
  o **September 2015** – Report on a regional conference on peer mentoring held in summer 2015 and next steps to expand and improve peer mentoring.