FALL SPEAKER EVENT: COLLEGE SUCCESS MATTERS & COLLEGE SUCCESS LEARNING COMMUNITY LAUNCH

On October 30, 2018 at the School District of Philadelphia, over **30 colleges/universities** as well as many other nonprofit stakeholder gathered to discuss the pressing issue of college degree completion for underserved students in the Philadelphia region. A special thank you to our keynote speaker, Dr. Tia McNair, from the Association of American Colleges and Universities, for kicking us off and challenging our campuses to be **student ready**.

PRESENTATIONS AND RESOURCES:

- [Resource Guide: Strategies to Encourage Student Completion](#) - created by PHENND graduate student intern Keisha James of Villanova University
- [Presentation](#) from Dr. Tia McNair and additional [resources](#) from AAC&U.
- College attendance and persistence [data dashboards](#) from the School District of Philadelphia (find a high school and click on the college/career tab) - for more information you can reach out to Ted Wills (twwills@philasd.org) or Lucas Westmaas (lwestmaas@philasd.org) from the Office of Research and Evaluation.

DISCUSSION NOTES

Following our speakers, participants broke into four groups, based on themes from questions gathered during registration, and from previous focus groups of college access and success stakeholders.

HOW DO WE IDENTIFY, MEASURE AND TRACK OUTCOMES FOR LOW-INCOME/FIRST GEN STUDENTS ON OUR CAMPUS?	
Challenges: • How to collect student level data in an ethical and sensitive way? • Varying definitions – Pell Eligible, self-identification as first gen, etc. • What about students that did not complete the FAFSA? • How to identify outcomes based on multiple factors? • How to capture data from students that leave?	Strategies/Ideas: • Hiring staff (student support professionals, student success counselors, etc.) • Working with Registrar to track student data. • Exit surveys of faculty about students who leave.

HOW DO WE CONNECT STUDENTS TO RESOURCES AND SUPPORT TO HELP THEM DEAL WITH "OUT OF CLASSROOM" CHALLENGES?	
Challenges: • Lack of reliable transportation. • Meeting financial need without the full needs cap. • Inconsistent advising. • Students working two to three jobs on no sleep. • Extra tuition costs.	Strategies/Ideas: • Advising students to purchase SEPTA pass with financial aid. • Getting jobs on campus that are less demanding while working. • Places where students work (Starbucks, UPS, etc.) have scholarships. • Systems that have students see a lot of different folks on campus before dropping.

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HOW DO WE CREATE A MORE WELCOMING AND CULTURALLY-AWARE CAMPUS?

Challenges:	Strategies/Ideas:
- Many students that are not the "majority" do not feel welcomed, experience culture shock, and some leave. - Students who are applying and gaining admission to graduate level degrees are mostly white. - Policies concerning who can come into the student center can be unwelcoming. - Creating opportunities to discuss racial slurs on campus by faculty and students. - Institutions are not willing to change the culture of their campus.	- Office hours with faculty/staff to discuss campus challenges. - Leadership support. - Asking for meaningful staff (experienced) & money to support the shift in culture at the Universities - Three Step Cultural Awareness trainings (mimic that of IDEAL @ Temple) - Creating Trainings on this topic & Bridging the gap between revenue from students enrollment & retention; how dropping out of school hurts their bottom line for University.

HOW DO WE MORE EFFECTIVELY SUPPORT UNDER-PREPARED STUDENTS ON OUR CAMPUS?

Challenges:	Strategies/Ideas:
- Students not asking for help because of perceived stigma of accepting resources. - Lack of understanding of degree requirements - Having the finances to persist – financial aid implications. - Students questioning their belonging in the classroom. - Support for students in remedial math courses. - Low expectations of students by faculty.	- Working with students to understand the financial implications of dropping a course. - Connecting students with student and faculty mentors. - Working with faculty to understand why students struggle. - Creating a sense of belonging and trust in the campus community.

NEXT STEPS

Sharing of Best Practices: PHENND will host a series of webinars and/or in-person meetings related to each of the four questions discussed during the event. These will be designed to be one-offs -- meaning that you can pick and choose which presentation to attend based on your interest.

College Success Learning Community: Separately from these series of informational presentations, we want to create a high-touch small cohort of campuses that will work more strategically with PHENND on improving outcomes for underserved students on their campuses. This group will work together as a cohort and also get one-on-one support from PHENND throughout the year. This will have an application process for selection due to our limited capacity. This part is in development and will not begin in earnest until next school year with an application and selection process in the spring.

College Success Network

Four Questions PHENND hosts three presentations a year related to each of these four areas				College Success Learning Community
Data (Jan, May, Sep)	Financial Resources (Jan, May, Sep)	Culture & Climate (Feb, Jun, Oct)	Teaching & Learning (Feb, Jun, Oct)	Google classroom; one-on-one support from PHENND
Attend as interested $25/presentation for non-PHENND member campuses				Application process
Everyone receives Monthly Newsletter and invitation to Annual Event				

Monthly Newsletter: Everyone participating in the above series of webinars/meetings organized around the four questions and/or the Learning Community will get a monthly newsletter from PHENND with links to new publications and other useful information related to college success. We will also aim to sponsor one large, convening each year.

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