**Arizona Western College/Northern Arizona University Vertical Planning Session with Yuma School District Representatives**

Participants from Arizona Western College and Northern Arizona University met with representatives from the Yuma School District on March 5-6th, 2020 to brainstorm how vertical planning could enhance college and career pathways for increased student success. Using the four pillars for the American Association of Community Colleges Guided Pathway framework (see attachment 1), like-school and vertical team groups examined what they were doing, what was working, identified gaps, and identified challenges that needed to be address for successful student matriculation to and through college.

Over the two days of meeting/planning, participants included representatives from student services, school district counselors, college advisors, and faculty from AWC, NAU, ASU, and UA, including the AWC Faculty Senate President, the AWC Interim Guided Pathways Director (Marco Diaz) , and AVID coordinators for both AWC and NAU. There were no senior or executive leadership participation and their voice was missed in the discussions.

**Findings:**

1. The institution has a group of people working on guided pathways implementation. A position has been dedicated to lead the work. The absence of senior and executive level administrators’ involvement is evident in gaps related to the planning phase of the framework.
2. The **Scale of Adoption Assessment** has not been completed to reflect the implementation work completed to date.
3. Their implementation plan needs a clear strategy to address developmental education reform at scale.
4. The data elements to determine success of the Guided Pathways implementation is not clearly defined and communicated to employees. How will AWC know that Guided Pathways is working?
5. The implementation plan would benefit from broad-based faculty involvement. The professional learning was well–received by faculty and they are eager to be involved. The senior and executive level should utilize the recently trained faculty who participated in the March 5-6 workshop to garner buy-in and support with remaining faculty.
6. Cascading messaging to address smaller departments and programs and how they will be impacted should be utilized as this is communicated to employees.
7. There is a genuine commitment for student success using the guided pathways model with a focus on college and career success from the vertically aligned team. The participants felt the work is worthwhile, that there is a need for vertical team communication around guided pathways, and a student need for this support.
8. Teams worked to identify strategies that were in place and were working, as well as human resource and physical/fiscal resources that they had and that were needed. Finally, anticipated barriers to success were called out.
9. Teams created a short-term action plan that could be addressed in 6-9 months that would move this work along. The following actions are called out in alignment with the four pillars: Clarifying the Path, Getting on the Path, Staying on the Path, and Ensuring Students are Learning

**Recommendations from AVID for Higher Education**

1. Develop a strategy to expand faculty involvement in Guided Pathways implementation campus wide.
2. Provide basic Guided Pathways 101 training to all employees through professional learning opportunities co-facilitated by senior administration and faculty leaders.
3. Develop a coherent plan to scale developmental education report strategies to support pillar #2 (Getting on the Path) of the Guided Pathways framework.
4. Complete the Scale of Adoption Assessment for the AWC/NAU/YUMA partnership.
5. Determine the data measures for success. What is the report card for success and who will monitor this and communicate to faculty and staff?
6. Build on the Short-Term action plan by adding responsible parties, data elements, and performance measures for each item.
7. Communicate updated short-term action plan to all stakeholders especially faculty. When possible utilize faculty to communicate and obtain buy-in for short-term action plan.

**Short-Term Action Plan Recommendations based upon the Guided Pathways framework (based on the feedback from the session AWC/NAU vertical planning team and Yuma District Representatives**

**Pillar 1: Clarifying the Path**

* Leadership and key implementors need to gather and present data from successful Guide Pathway programs/models to faculty and staff to support next steps and solidify the high school and college partnership.
* Outline data points that need to be owned and monitored by high school and college partnership leaders to ensure effectiveness of work and desired impact on student success.
* Identify funding needs, where funds are most effective, where there is a need, and how to reallocate funding that is not being effectively used.
* Set up human resources to strategically align and communicate information (plan, progress, next steps) vertically throughout the year.
* Professional learning to address culture changes that will more effectively support scaling up process for student success.
* Identify pathways that will be offered, align faculty resources to support these academic pathways, and analyze student scheduling needs to ensure courses are offered when students need to take them.

**Pillar 2: Getting on the Path**

* High school pre-college work is a start to matriculating students to college better prepared for college and career success; however, there are gaps, as this does not address all students that consider a college pathway to career success. How can all students’ preparedness be addressed and communicated?
* College success work does provide mentors and counseling; however, there are still gaps in reaching all students with career exploration and planning that will help identifying career pathways.
* College staff are dedicated to supporting students; however, professional learning support, resources, and funding allocations needed to be more effectively utilized.
* Offered pathways need to have multiple on and off ramps that will support students career development.
* There is a need for:
  + Increased intervention and collaboration to address all students.
  + Embedding intervention strategies into a high school success course for all students, not just those in an AVID elective.
  + More intentional embedding of career exploration and planning in college first year experience courses/programs/services
  + Increased outreach to business partners to plan for and to connect students to career possibilities. Faculty need a strong understanding of how to leverage business partnerships for student success.
  + Additional funding to support time for communication internally to plan effectively and ensure faculty and staff have the understanding to effectively implement and monitor success of guided pathways.
  + Scholarships connected to student success/achievement that will help students get on the pathway.

**Pillar 3: Staying on the Pathway**

* Develop monitoring and reporting processes/tools that allow advisors to see what programs each student is on, how they are progressing, and possible support needed.
* Make advising mandatory (face to face or virtually) and allow release time to increase faculty involvement.
* Make student progress easy to access and available to faculty/staff supporting student success.
* Ensure that students know on and off ramps for pathways that will support student persistence and completion.
* Engage more faculty to be involved in advising and how they can support guided pathway strategies both in their classrooms and through student support outside the classroom.
* Increase funding for additional advisors (professional and faculty) and training/professional development.

**Pillar 4: Ensuring Students are Successful**

* Provide professional development opportunities for faculty/staff to enhance academic strategies that support student success in all disciplinary content areas, to understand how they can support guided pathways, and to analyze data that monitors class performance.
* Implement tools for data analysis that faculty and staff can use to monitor student performance.
* Support faculty and staff to learn data analysis tools with both physical and fiscal resources.
* Continue to address and support an “all in” culture needed to nurture and sustain transformational changes.
* Analyze assessment needs to shift culture and to support student performance.