Panel Members

• Eric Weldy - Vice-president, Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, NIU
• Tom Choice - President, Kishwaukee College
• Julie Schaid – Associate Dean, College Readiness and School Partnerships, Elgin Community College
• Travis McGuire – Superintendent, Hinckley-Big Rock

• Moderator - Marilyn Bellert, Associate Director, Center for P-20 Engagement NIU
Regional Collaboration to Raise Educational Attainment

The *Illinois P-20 Council’s* goal is to increase the proportion of adults in Illinois with high-quality degrees and credentials to 60% by the year 2025.

The *Northern Illinois Regional P-20 Network* collaborates to increase college and career success for our students through regional action toward the 60/2025 goal.
## Participating Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Colleges</th>
<th>School Districts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College of DuPage</td>
<td>Naperville 203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College of Lake County</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elgin Community College</td>
<td>Elgin U-46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harper College</td>
<td>Arlington Heights HS 214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barrington HS 220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Palatine HS 211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Valley Community College</td>
<td>Seneca Township HS 160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kishwaukee College</td>
<td>DeKalb 428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rochelle HS 212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sycamore 427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McHenry County College</td>
<td>Huntley 158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock Valley College</td>
<td>Rockford 205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sauk Valley Community College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waubonsee Community College</td>
<td>Hinckley-Big Rock 429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plano 88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Education Agencies and Organizations

- IL Board of Higher Education
- IL Community College Board
- IL State Board of Education
- Advance Illinois
- Early Childhood Action
- IL Business Roundtable
- IL P-20 Council
- IL Workforce Investment Board
- Northern Illinois University
- Northwest Educational Council
- for Student Success
- University Center of Lake County
Process

• Two CEO meetings per year
• Monthly meetings for each of the four work groups with 70 participants from 20 institutions
• Leaders from NIU and community colleges co-chair each working group
• Coordinated facilitation and support for all groups by the backbone organization, NIU’s P-20 Center
• Research to drive decisions has been a hallmark and first step for each group’s action agenda
• Coordinated print and electronic communications
Northern Illinois Regional P-20 CEOs Monitor and Direct Four Work Groups

- Aligned Standards for Advancing Student Opportunities
- Articulation
- Student Support Services
- Adult Learners
Eric Weldy – NIU Perspective

Benefits of a Regional Network
• Improved students’ readiness for college and careers
• Comprehensive approaches
• Shared problems need shared solutions

Challenges
• Ambitious agendas require dedicated support
• Delivering results – on time
Student Support Services
Eric Weldy, NIU and
Flecia Thomas, McHenry

Goal: Coordinate student support systems across institutions to ease transitions and increase success

• Build a comprehensive region-wide system of support services, including early intervention
• Generate a P-20 menu of financial literacy activities for students and families
• Pilot a regional peer mentoring initiative for 400 high-need students and 80 trained peer mentors
Student Support Services

• Student Support Services work group, a think tank of experts from across the region
• Surveyed existing services to identify gaps
• Developing recommendations for regional action to strengthen the transition support services
• Organized peer-mentoring conference in June
Tom Choice – Kishwaukee College Community College Perspective

Benefits of a Regional Network
• Sharing successful models
• Inspiring improvements
• Access to research - survey instruments on 10 topics, 2 policy papers, 3 lit reviews to identify best practices, report on education attainment, current and emerging jobs reports

Challenges
• Staffing
• Change fatigue
Adult Learners Work Group
Meryl Sussman, NIU and
Joanne Kantner, Kishwaukee College

Goal: Increase higher education enrollment of adult and non-traditional learners

• Identify gaps in bachelor degree completion programs; establish at least 3 new programs
• Document best practices in use of prior learning assessments
• Share successful approaches to recruiting and retaining adult learners
• Develop a model for better serving adult learners through regional collaboration
Adult Learners Work Group
Observations and Activities

• Meeting the 60x2025 goal requires increasing the enrollment of adult learners. Goal: Increase of 30,000 students across the region
• Surveys identified gaps where programs are needed
• Issue: implementing new programs can take years
• NIU and five community colleges just launched a 2+2 business degree; more are in process
• Prior Learning Assessment policy recommendation:
  • Develop a regional PLA pilot initiative with transparent institutional policies, defined assessments, common fees, consistent transfer of credit, and training for staff
Julie Schaid – Elgin Community College Perspective

Benefits of a regional network

• Sharing best practices
• Partnerships for grants
• Large-scale research
• Pull in the university perspective as part of the continuum

Challenges

• Commitment of personnel
• Potential duplication with community college’s college readiness partnerships
• Multiple readiness initiatives at state and national levels
• Geography
Alignment of Standards Work Group
Laurie Elish-Piper, NIU and
Julie Schaid, Elgin Community College

Goal: Align high school and higher education curriculum and credit programs, so that 100% of students graduate high school with 9-12 college credits and/or a professional certificate

• Compile baseline data on educational achievement across the region
• Analyze economic and workforce data
• Create standards-aligned dual credit courses
• Develop a model to deliver early college courses across district boundaries
Alignment of Standards

• Baseline data shows 44% of residents in the region hold post-secondary degrees or certificates, but numbers range from 25% to 56% in the CC districts.

• Fastest growing job sectors: health care, green industries, advanced manufacturing, biotechnology, and information technology.

• Detailed reports by CC district for discussion with local employers and workforce development agencies

• Challenge: development of standards-aligned courses for dual credit and developmental education
Travis McGuire
School District Perspective

Benefits of a Regional Network
• Sharing best practices regardless of district size
• Opportunities for district personnel to participate in regional policy development
• Identification of partners for grant projects

Challenges
• Commitment of staff time and energy
• Acting on ideas that improve readiness in a small district with limited resources
• Meeting the diverse needs of districts and colleges
Articulation Work Group
Anne Birberick, NIU and
Melinda James-Waubonsee

Goal: Create seamless transitions from cradle to careers

• Define guided pathways to degree completion across all three levels
  • Increase the # of degree completion programs
  • Increase the # of reverse transfer agreements
• Recommend replacing the current IAI process with competency-driven articulation
• Increase faculty engagement in implementation of new Illinois Learning Standards and the PARCC
• Establish formal relationship with the P-20 Council
Articulation Work Group

• Degree completion program in business launched
• Reverse transfer agreements with 12 colleges
• White paper: Recommendations for improving the IAI Articulation process by emphasizing learning outcomes in decisions, using national models
• Parallel: Illinois state committee to work on new high school graduation requirements that emphasize competencies
• Regional e-portfolio network established
• Presentation of regional activities to the P-20 Council
A high school superintendent said

“Every meeting I go to is full of bad news. What we are doing here is really positive. What a relief!”

- February 10 CEOs meeting, Regional P-20 Network
For more information --

www.niu.edu/p20network

Marilyn Bellert
815 753 8051
mbellert@niu.edu