

A logo consisting of a central blue circle connected by lines to five other blue circles of varying sizes, arranged in a network pattern.

NORTHERN ILLINOIS REGIONAL
P-20 Network

**2015
COLLEGE CHANGES EVERYTHING
CONFERENCE**

July 16, 2015

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

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

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

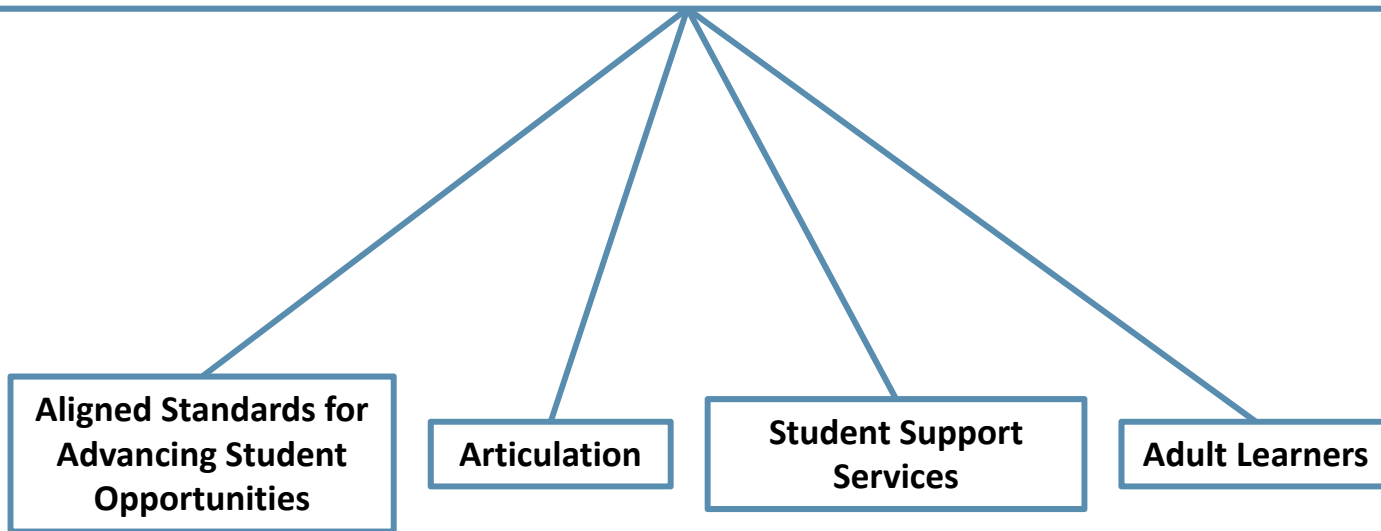


Process

- 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



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

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