The “Roundtable” Roundup

Speakers:
Tanya Baronti from the United Way provided an update on their survey of student service organizations. United Way will share this information with the Heinz Foundation.

Reuben Mills from the Pennsylvania Department of Education shared current PDE initiatives. He followed up by email with additional information concerning questions discussed during our retreat. Reuben appreciated that a number of our members reached out to him with further information about certain items of discussion. Please see below for Reuben’s email response:

How do we keep Pennsylvania students in PA to attend post-secondary school?

This is an area that the Secretary has been focused on for the past year hence our many discussions around reducing college debt and the burden this places on our students. We recognize that according to the National Student Clearinghouse only 65% of PA high school graduates enroll in postsecondary education within 16 months of graduation… yet less than 60% of those students ultimately earn a degree or credential within 6 years (Clearinghouse). We strongly believe that some of our initiatives being developed will increase the number above and keep our students in the commonwealth. Some of those initiatives include:

- Articulation agreements between industry stakeholders, private licensed schools and our Higher Education Partners
- Under PA’s ESSA Consolidated State Plan, local education agencies may use Title IV Part A and other Federal funding to support college and career exploration and advising. This includes hiring guidance counselors and other support staff to help students and especially underrepresented students to have information and tools they need to

Attendance:

The following people attended the July Roundtable Retreat at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary:

Danielle Ball La Roche University
Tanya Baronti United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania
James Bender CCAC
Cheryl Biggs NEED
Joanne Borgesi ETS
Jarrett Boxley Clarion University of Pennsylvania
Janay Coleman The Pittsburgh Promise
Amy Davis Allegheny Intermediate Unit
Linda Ebel Citizens School of Nursing
Denise Fisher Pittsburgh Technical College
Julie Fontana PHEAA
Russell Graham Grand Canyon University
Erin Grimm AIU3
Katie Koncar Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Amy LaSota Bidwell Training Center
Sherryl Lisco La Roche University
Patricia McCarthy IUP
Kimberly McCurdy PHEAA
Melony Ohalek Sallie Mae
Natalie Olup Rosedale Technical College
Shari Payne Waynesburg University
Mike Rose CCAC South
Peggy Schmiedecke AAUWPACU
Marcia Sturdivant NEED
Kyle Wyche University of Pittsburgh
Ashley Zahorchak YWCA - Greater Pittsburgh
gain awareness about funding and how to access PA Colleges and Universities.

- The expansion of College Symposia 2 which supports the work of guidance counselors equipping them with more information about PA colleges and universities while also providing tools around financial aid and scholarships.
- The PA College Application which was discussed at the event.
- Providing more opportunities to create dual enrollment programs between high schools, community colleges and 4 year institutions.
- Working with PASSHE and GEARUP. Next year there will be more than 2300 students participating in GEARUP and attending our state institutions.
- We need to talk with our legislators about the importance of setting aside more dollars for financial aid and other need based programs.
- The importance of working with TAOC and helping more students to take and pass IB programs, Dantes and CLEP exams which further strengthens the relations between our CC’s and four year colleges to reduce debt even further.

**Wendy Dunlap and Kim McCurdy of PHEAA** presented the group with ways to effectively communicate through email and text. Studies show you have only eight seconds to grab someone’s attention. Attendees discussed how they manage emails, text and other forms of written communications.

**Committee Reports**

**College Success Forum:** College Success Forum at RMU had over 100 attendees and we received positive feedback on the attendee survey. The next CSF is scheduled for January 28, 2020 at the same location, Yorktown Hall, RMU. Please reach out to Kim McCurdy at kmccurdy@pheaa.org if you would like to present a session at the upcoming CSF.

---

**Future Roundtable Meetings**

- **September 10, 2019** – University of Pittsburgh - Greensburg
- **November 12, 2019** – Waynesburg University - Southpointe
- **January 14, 2020** – La Roche University
- **February 28, 2020** – Student Transition Forum – Allegheny IU
- **March 17, 2020** – Rosedale Technical College
- **May 12, 2020** – Citizen’s School of Nursing