

The "Roundtable" Roundup



www.pasfaa.org/wpacsr

Membership Information:

This is the updated contact information for Roundtable Participants:



College Success
contact list 11-8-16.p

Attendance:

There were 33 folks in attendance at the November 8, 2016, Roundtable meeting at Allegheny Intermediate Unit 3.

Rachael Banks, PSU Greater Allegheny; Jasmine Berena, Seneca Valley HS; Tyler Butler, Pulsus Digital; Megan Colt, Chartiers Valley HS; Amy Davis, AIU3; Stacy Dempsey, Holy Family Academy; Wendy Dunlap, PHEAA; Linda Ebel, Citizens School of Nursing; Denise Fisher, Pittsburgh Technical College; Eva Gelman, CollegeQuest; Erin Grimm, AIU3; Stephanie Hendershot, Robert Morris University; Chalis Henderson, Univ. of Pittsburgh; Rebecca Kurtz, SummerBridge; Lisa Lenhart, Jewish Family and Children's Services; Justin McCaskill, Pulsus Digital; Kim McCurdy, PHEAA; Grace Oxley, Homewood Children's Village; Shari Payne, Waynesburg College; Sean Riffle, Pittsburgh JobCorps; Antonietta Riley, City High School; Karla Romero, Slippery Rock University; Mike Rose, CCAC South; Lori Rue, DeLoJe LLC; Michael Schleidlin; Pittsburgh JobCorps; Peggy Schmeidecke, La Roche College; Ryan Scott,

Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh; Maureen Shaw, Clairton HS; Heather Stevens, Youthworks; Marcia Sturdivant, NEED; Bishnu Timsina, Jewish Family and Children's Services; Michael White, Slippery Rock University.

Old Business:

Committee Reports

Technology: Our LinkedIn page is up and running. If you have not joined, and you have a LinkedIn page, please look us up at WPA College Success Roundtable or email me at kmccurdy@pheaa.org so I can invite you to join the group. We encourage all of the members to utilize this page to distribute resources to the group-at-large or to start discourse around a topic that might be of interest to the group.

Transition: The committee is going to pull together a resource for high school and college students to guide their transition process to college. They would like to include scholarship information and resources for guiding students toward postsecondary options. They have asked the group for their input on a brief survey. Please complete the online survey [here](#) and pass it along to colleagues in your network. Please complete the survey by January 20. We will be sending a reminder out closer to the College Success Forum as well.

Adult Learner: The committee is planning on meeting after the Roundtable today and will have a report for the next meeting.

Financial Literacy: The committee is in a holding pattern until next week. Kim is meeting virtually with Rep. Roebuck (Chair of the House Education Committee) and Rep. Costa to discuss a packet of information provided to them regarding free financial literacy resources (pulled together by the committee) available throughout the commonwealth that schools could use to fulfill any legislation which would

require financial literacy be taught in high school as a graduation requirement. Currently, HB328 is no longer active and will have to be reintroduced after January 1. Based on the meeting with the Representatives and what we hear about the reintroduction of the bill, we will determine whether a financial literacy rally would be worth our efforts. If we move forward, the rally would be held during April to coincide with Financial Literacy Awareness Month. Here is the package of materials provided to the Representatives.



Packet to
Representatives on fi

There was a suggestion to reach out to school districts for their support (including transition coordinators or special education teachers, curriculum coordinators, and career education coordinators). Erin Grimm at AIU3 said she can help us do this. Rep. Dan Miller also has a fair in March where speakers are allowed to present sessions to legislators so this could be a good forum to utilize.

CSF 2017: The College Success Forum will be held on January 31, 2017, at Robert Morris University in Moon Township, PA. The committee has met to establish a timeline and has put out a call for sessions (attached here). Please submit a suggestion or pass this along to anyone who may be interested in presenting. Even if you cannot present, if you can think of a topic that might be of benefit to the attendees, let us know, and we will find someone to present. The deadline to submit a proposal is Wednesday, November 16. The committee will select the topics and get a save the date email out in early December. Registration will be available after Christmas. More to come!



CSF Call for sessions
2017.pdf

New Business:

Early FAFSA Panel: Our panelists included Megan Colt, Collegiate Counselor from Chartiers Valley High School; Wendy Dunlap, Access Partner from PHEAA; and Stephanie Hendershot, Director of Financial Aid from Robert Morris University.

The following is a brief summary of the conversation and perspectives offered:

From a PHEAA perspective – 4 weeks into cycle – we have more FAFSAs on file as the same time in the cycle last year, with about half of those being first-time filers. There is an increase in applications for families with higher income levels. We seem to be missing some of the lower income families who would usually come to a FAFSA completion session. Probably because of the timing – they just aren't ready to file yet.

Shari Payne from Waynesburg said it doesn't seem freshman students in lower incomes are taking advantage of the early process – the group this process was to benefit most. The word is out, but may not be to everyone yet.

Mike Hambrick at North Allegheny said with his large senior class, the students are actually pushing the counselors to complete transcripts. He has some students who have applied to 48 schools and some who haven't done anything yet.

Megan said, at CV, almost 50% of her students have applied to at least one college; a little less than half of her senior students have filed a FAFSA. Some schools are linking FAFSA with counseling for admissions so that is one benefit of having the processes at the same time. CV said there was increased attendance at the FAFSA completion night. If students haven't applied, she asks them why are they waiting? One response is they just don't have time or they don't know where (which schools) to file yet?

Students are still missing the link to the SG form. Maureen at Clairton brought up that their students have fee waivers for the SAT and don't

show up to take the test because of issues with transportation. They lose their waiver and then have to pay for the next test. Marcia at NEED said curriculum in schools (for low-income and/or minority students) isn't what it needs to be prior to senior year to allow students to take the test sooner; There seems to be a correlation between not taking SATs and applying for schools and financial aid. Shari at Waynesburg said schools should encourage students to file applications for admission even if they haven't taken SATs; they can begin the process and the school will help them finish the process; it gets them in the applicant pool as well as a special communications pool. Clairton encourages students to submit four applications by Halloween.

Wendy brought up letting students know that even if they have applied for the FAFSA if they haven't applied for admissions, they won't get an award letter from a school. Pittsburgh Technical College (PTC) said if they receive a FAFSA they will send an award letter to the student without an admissions application. This is something most of us haven't heard before.

Schools are encouraged to send early award letters but are not required. Most schools' systems aren't ready on October 1 for processing. Tuition rates need to be set early. At this point, it was mentioned that Point Park and St. Vincent already have award letters out. There will be estimated wording on the award letters; need to have conversations with students about this. Also distinguish Merit scholarship v. financial aid award letter.

Suggestions for process improvements: When glitches come up (FSA ID or IRS DRT) there is a lack of motivation to complete the process when they come up against a barrier. Certain populations will need hand-holding.

It was brought up that parents think you can file the 17-18 FAFSA with 2016 information if it is less than 2015. That is not true. Parents and students must report their 2015 income information on the FAFSA, regardless if any changes will occur this year. When the family decides which school the student will be

attending, they need to contact the financial aid office as well as PHEAA to complete a reduced income appeal.

One suggestion for the FAFSA - Student v. parent information sections – can they change the colors of screens – to make it very clear whose information goes on which portions. The current colors aren't drastically different and leads to a lot of confusion.

Also, could the Feds put a link to some of their FAFSA videos from YouTube at the beginning instead of the links to additional information? Can they produce a FAFSA walkthrough video to include as well (very brief). (PHEAA will pass along these suggestions to the Feds).

It was also mentioned that privacy should be considered for families at public completion sessions. Schools or organizations wishing to have a FAFSA completion event should contact PHEAA or one of their local college financial aid offices to set up a session.

Who files the FAFSA? [Here is a chart that may help](#). Grandparent information is never reported on the FAFSA.

Also, here is a FAFSA checklist and FSA ID information for your use.



Creating an FSA ID FAFSA Checklist.pdf
Tips & sheet.pdf

Service Project 2016-17: Rachael Banks from PSU Greater Allegheny has agreed to chair this project. Many suggestions were provided regarding our project and how to identify needy students. Building on the great work our group did last year, the committee will meet and inform us at the next Roundtable meeting on exactly what the project will be and how we can all get involved. Committee members include: Erin Grimm, Maureen Shaw, Antonietta Riley, Heather Stevens, Grace Oxley, Marcia Sturdivant, and Debra Smallwood. If you would like to join the committee, please contact Rachael at rjb54@psu.edu.

PACAC Update: Loren could not be at the meeting, but she asked me to share the following Camp College 2017 information with you: We are fielding options for a possible host location. The university would need to be somewhat close to the city and be able to accommodate 60-65 students from Tuesday, July 18-Thursday, July 20. For those unable to host, but interested in perhaps conducting a session, more information will follow in the coming months. Interested parties should reach out to Loren Morgan at lmorgan@centralcatholicchs.com.

Also, PACAC is offering a host of webinars in the upcoming months. I will add them to the calendar of events below. You can visit PACAC.org for more information and registration information as it becomes available.

November 2016 is National College

Application Month: President Obama declared this proclamation a few days ago. Please read the full story [here](#).

Facility Space? Amy Davis from AIU3 hosts a STEM Design Challenge in March or April every year and she is looking for a new location to host the event. If you have a ballroom or place to host 400 students, please contact Amy for more details at amy.davis@aiu3.net.



Mark Your Calendars

PACAC Webinars – for more information and registration information, please see pacac.org.

- **The Challenge of Testing: How to Guide and Prepare Your Students for the New SAT/ACT;** Wednesday, December 7; 11 a.m. – noon
- **Loans and Grants and Discounts, Oh My! Helping Your Families Understand Financial Aid;** Wednesday, January 11; 3 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- **I'm 17 – and I'm Not Hemingway! A Realistic Approach to College Essays;** Wednesday, February 8; 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- **There's a Path for Everyone: Options for Students with Differences;** Wednesday, March 1; 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- **How Important Is My Major? The Many Roads to Career Success;** Wednesday, March 22; 11 a.m. – noon
- **Teacher Recommendation Letters: Developing Great Advocates for Your Students;** Wednesday, April 5; 3 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Additional Upcoming Events

-**Tuesday, January 31, 2017** – College Success Forum, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.; Robert Morris University, Moon Township, PA

- **February 9-10, 2017** – National College Fair in Pittsburgh – DL Convention Center

Future Meetings

- **Next meeting is: Tuesday, January 10, 2017; 10 a.m. – noon; University of Pittsburgh – Greensburg, 150 Finoli Drive, Greensburg, PA 15601**

-Monday, March 6, 2017; 10 a.m. – noon; LaRoche College

-Tuesday, May 16, 2017; 10 a.m. – noon; Penn State Greater Allegheny

*Please note the March meeting date has changed since the last Roundup information was sent out.

Thanks again to Allegheny Intermediate Unit 3 and Amy Davis for hosting our meeting. We appreciate your support and willingness to provide us with meeting space!