



## **Student Success Task Force Draft Recommendations – CIO Feedback**

### **(1) Increase College and Career Readiness**

- Collaborate with K-12 to jointly develop common core standards for college and career readiness.

This is a long-term, proactive goal that the CIOs support. Career counseling is a missing component that needs to be recognized and included. English and math are the two areas that need to be emphasized in terms of course alignment. CIOs support articulation of math and English from the K-12 to the CCC, but emphasize that the K-12 levels need to be higher than they are currently. Such articulation should result in better results in terms of assessment and placement. If students come to the CCC's ready to enter college this will have a very positive fiscal impact as it will reduce the rationing of course offerings.

However, accomplishing this goal will require significant time and needs to be done at a state-wide level, not local. At present, most CIOs do not feel that there is a strong relationship between K-12 administrators and faculty members. There is a significant gap between K-12 and CCC curriculum as well as students' expectations and self-perception of college readiness. There will be potential union resistance, push back from faculty in terms of academic freedom, and as well as difficulty in establishing benchmarks, common standards and competencies. Finally, the time and other resources needed to accomplish this goal may not be in place or readily available.

### **(2) Strengthen Support for Entering Students**

- Develop and implement common centralized diagnostic assessments.
- Require students to participate in diagnostic assessment, orientation and the development of an educational plan.
- Develop and use technology applications to better guide students in educational process.
- Require students showing a lack of college readiness to participate in support resources.
- Require students to declare a program of study early in their academic careers.

Generally, the CIOs support the recommendation in this area, with the exception of a strong disagreement that students must be required to declare a major early.

With respect to a common centralized diagnostic assessment, CIOs see this as student friendly if this is a truly portable assessment tool so that a student only assesses once and can use this for any CCC in the system. However, there does not appear to be any truly diagnostic assessment tool currently available. Additionally, local research at LBCC demonstrates that assessment tools, such as Accuplacer, are actually not very good at placement as compared to other metrics such as grades in junior and senior high school courses (in the case of English). Therefore, in order for this to be successful, it must be shown that the assessment accurately places students.

CIOs agree that students should be required to assess, orient and develop an education plan. However, there should be local control to establish exceptions. CTE students may need special considerations. Not all students need an educational plan. Additionally, this recommendation will require resources to implement. There would need to be a decision as to whether or not this is done by counselors or if others (academic advisors, for example) could do this. This will have a negative impact on the 50% rule, either way.

CIOs support technology to better guide students. These same technologies could relieve some of the pressure on counselors and could provide valuable data for course scheduling. There was some disagreement about whether or not there should be common software solutions. Some CIOs supported common technology standards, but not common software. Others supported a system-wide degree audit application. Some saw this a movement toward standardization and centralization that was not necessarily viewed as positive. A concern was voiced that technological solutions may create an access issue for low-income students. Finally, there was the criticism that technology will not solve all issues and that our students still require high touch solutions, as well as the concern that technological solutions require significant resources for implementation and maintenance.

Whereas CIOs agree that students need to be college ready, the recommendation that requires student who lack readiness to participate in support resources did not receive strong support. This is due mainly to how lack of readiness would be determined,

and, more significantly, how colleges would be able to provide “required” student success courses when there is already a severe lack of available courses sections given current funding.

The last recommendation of encouraging students to declare a program of study upon admission and requiring this by the end of the second term met with opposition by most CIOs. The greatest concern was that CIOs felt this did not offer the flexibility students need to be able to frequently change their program of study. They felt this limited the ability for students to discover and experiment. As a requirement, those students that are self-directed will have no problem, but those that are unclear will be disadvantaged by having to declare something they don’t understand, want, or intend to do. This may actually make them less successful.

In sum, the CIOs, support this second area of recommendations. They feel students do need more support when entering and that assessment, orientation, and SEPs will increase completion. There was a number of CIOs that felt the overall goals could and should be developed at the “top” but that there should be local control in terms of planning and implementation. However, the majority of CIOs saw this as an unfunded mandate that will result in significant push back from counselors. Finally, there was clear support for flexibility. CIOs felt that SEPs need to be able to be changed frequently, students need to be able to explore, and majors should not be required upon admission.

### **(3) Incentivize Successful Student Behaviors**

- Adopt system-wide enrollment priorities reflecting core mission of community colleges.
- Require students receiving Board of Governors fee waivers to meet various conditions and requirements.
- Provide students the opportunity to consider attending full time.
- Require students to begin addressing Basic Skills deficiencies in their first year.

CIOs overwhelmingly felt that the last recommendation in this area, requiring students to begin basic skills instruction in their first year, was by far the most important recommendation for improving student success. CIOs recognize that the majority of students are basic skills students, however, there is concern that colleges will become nothing more than basic skills instructional organizations teaching only pre-college English and math. Further, there is research that demonstrates that students need to take a mix of courses, basic skills and college-level, and that such infusion leads to better success. Additionally, we need to promote this type of infusion in the CTE areas. Finally, we need to clearly identify courses that students should NOT take until they have reached college level English and/or math.

With respect to system-wide enrollment priorities, there was mixed support. There was support that in principle enrollment priorities could be used to best match limited resources to help students reach their milestones and achieve their goals in a timely manner. There was concern that this may lead to over-regulation or a system-wide mandate that is not locally accepted as appropriate. It was suggested that is data supports change, the system may create a mandate for change, but still allow control in what and how to change. There was a concern that common definitions of special populations is still lacking. Additionally, special population priority enrollment, such as EOPS and DSPS, needs to be studied to see if this is actually working and do these students meet the same standards as other population. Finally, there was the concern that enrollment priorities will determine WHO we serve and there is concern that this is done from the “top” down without local control based on the particular communities we serve.

CIOs supported the recommendation that BOG fee waiver students be required to meet the same conditions as those that receive state/federal financial aid.

There was mixed debate concerning the recommendation to encourage students to attend full-time. Whereas CIOs do not argue with the data that demonstrates full-time attendance is linked to greater success, the vast majority of our students are working and even those that take 12 – 15 units may not finish in a timely manner when our offerings are so limited that they cannot get the courses they need when they need them. There was the concern that this may increase indebtedness as students take out student loans to be able to attend full-time. On the other hand, students that attend full-time and limit outside work can be more involved in student life, and this increased engagement also improves student success. Finally, there was the comment that we need to educate students that full-time is 15 units, not 12 units, per semester, if the student expects to finish in two years. Additionally, this will require more counseling, which is creates further 50% law issues and overall funding issues.

In sum, the CIOs feel strongly that students need to begin basic skills remediation as soon as possible. They also concur that students receiving BOG fee waivers be held to the same conditions/requirements as students receiving federal and/or state financial aid. However, there is considerable concern with state-wide enrollment priorities as relates to access and local concern. There is also concern about a requirement to encourage student to attend full-time. CIOs feel that the mission of the community colleges is being changed via enrollment priorities as well as requiring basic skills instruction immediately. Whereas this may be pointing us in the right direction, there was concern that we need clarification as to what exactly is our mission and what exactly is the role of the CCCs in terms of basic skills instruction.

#### **(4) Align Course Offering to Meet Student Needs**

- Focus course offerings and schedules on needs of students.

CIOs were in agreement that course offerings and schedules need to meet students' needs. However, CIOs were not clear on how this would be implemented beyond what is already occurring. For example, how would eSEPs drive the creation of a schedule? How does this allow for students to change their minds? There was the comment that the state should not dictate course offerings and that this may be perceived as the Chancellor's Office overstepping their scope of responsibility by entering into enrollment management. This plan could drive colleges to only offer math and English. Finally, there was the concern that students' needs versus student wants must be differentiated and this will require more guidance as many students come in with unrealistic expectations of what they can achieve academically.

CIOs felt strongly that the current wording of the recommendation is too restrictive. Specifically, there should not be statute amendment to restrict funding to only CDCP non-credit courses as this would eliminate some vital, albeit boutique, programs of study such as the acquired brain injury programs. Additionally, the CIOs disagreed that apportionment should only be claimed if scheduled courses are part of student ed plans. There was significant concern that this could not be implemented.

One revision idea that received significant support from CIOs with respect to this recommendation was to allow credit students and fee-based students into the same class. If the credit students were allowed to enroll first, with remaining seats take by fee-based, and with fee-based students paying the full-cost of instruction, this may be of great value to some of the CTE, arts, and PE areas. This would allow colleges to focus on all students' needs (students who need credit and those who do not).

Finally, there was again concern about the mission of CCCs. One opinion voiced was that colleges should go back to the junior college mission and further we should prepare students for transfer to UC which would allow us to do away with local board and be governed under the UC structure with college being the mandatory delivery site for lower division instruction and all upper-division instruction at the UCs. This rather audacious proposal was an outside of the box idea to address the concern that the SSTF recommendations are really too little and too late to fix a broken system. We need to go beyond tinkering.

#### **(5) Improve the Education of Basic Skills Students**

- Support the development of alternatives to traditional basic skills curriculum
- Develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing basic skill education in California.

CIOs agreed and supported both of these recommendations. First, in terms of alternative to traditional basic skills curriculum, there needs to be a consistent definition and distinction between acceleration and compression. Additionally, we need to trust and use the best practice data that is readily available from all over the nation in moving forward new approaches. This is an area where CIOs can lead and be innovative. There was support for the Chancellor's Office to be provide support in this area in terms of collecting data, distributing data, establishing point people and/or task forces. CIOs agreed that we need to be hiring instructors that are trained to teach adults. We may wish to modify MQs such that adult learning theory is required.

With respect to a comprehensive strategy for addressing basic skill education, the overwhelming majority of CIOs supported a clear delineation of where non-credit and credit levels begin and end. A majority of CIOs supported that credit should not extend lower than two levels below college-level.

CIOs also agreed that if the comprehensive plan is that CCCs will take on adult ed in basic skills that this needs to be funded. Additionally, CIOs agreed that CCCs are most likely the best place for basic skill instruction. There was concern that with non-credit instruction there could be issues with students still needing financial aid but not able to obtain it and that colleges may restrict offerings since non-credit is not funded at the same level.

CIOs agreed that a comprehensive strategy must be developed, must be funded, and that California assure that all adults have access to instruction in math and English.

#### **(6) Revitalize and Re-Envision Professional Development**

- Create a continuum of mandatory professional development opportunities.
- Direct professional development resources toward improving basic skills instruction and support services.

CIOs agreed that "mandatory" professional development activities will not be met with acceptance from faculty members. This language is too restrictive and needs to be modified or the recommendations in this area will meet with so much resistance that they most likely will not move forward at all. Additionally, there may be significant challenges with bargaining units if professional development becomes mandated and very prescriptive.

However, the concept of revitalizing professional development is overwhelmingly supported by CIOs. Given that CIOs will be participating in a joint spring conference with the Academic Senate, there is majority support that this area of SSTF recommendations be an area for break-out sessions at the conference.

Areas of opportunity were identified. For example, the definition of FLEX should be revisited. Modules of basic skills development should be developed. This is another area where CIOs can and should provide leadership.

#### **(7) Enable Efficient Statewide Leadership & Increase Coordination among Colleges**

- Develop and support a strong community college system office.
- Set local student success goals consistent with statewide goals.
- Implement a student success scorecard.
- Develop and support a longitudinal student record system.

CIOs support a strong community college system office that is responsive and supportive rather than controlling and requiring constant reporting. Colleges need to be empowered to do more with less regulation. Colleges would like more outreach efforts, for example, state legislators should visit campuses and the system office could provide more coordination and direct contact with elected officials. The system office needs to focus on advocacy not intrusive oversight.

CIOs were not in total support of setting local goals consistent with statewide goals in terms of student success. The key question was not that of alignment but rather WHO and HOW the statewide goals would be determined.

Finally, there was general agreement that the student success scorecard recommendation is supported by CIOs.

#### **(8) Align Resources with Student Success Recommendations**

- Consolidate select categorical programs.
- Invest in the new Student Support Initiative.
- Promote flexibility and innovation in basic skills through alternative funding mechanism.
- Do not implement outcome-based funding at this time.

CIOs both supported and opposed these recommendations. In terms of categorical consolidation, there was support in that this would allow for more integrated CIO/CSSO collaboration and would facilitate planning as well as addressing local needs. However, coordinated planning is also a major challenge. There was concern as to what exactly would be consolidated and whether or not basic skills initiative (BSI) funds would be included.

There was general support for a new Student Support Initiative if this is new, additional funding and if there is general acceptance of the means of distribution. Specifically, CIOs wanted more information on the metrics that would be used particularly since CIOs were unclear as to how state-wide goals would be determined.

CIOs in general supported flexibility in terms of basic skills funding but were not sure what this recommendation really entailed.

Finally, CIOs agree that performance based funding needs to wait. CIOs agreed that we need baseline data before any implementation of this kind should occur. There is concern that this could be another method of more regimentation and may decrease local autonomy and decision making.

IN SUM, the CIOs feel that overall this set of recommendations places emphasis on student success and contains many recommendations that CIOs support. CIOs have significant concerns with regard to implementation of nearly all of the recommendations. One of the overriding concerns is the lack of resources to successfully implement the majority of the recommendations. CIOs feel strongly that basic skills instruction is an area of top priority at every college. Furthermore, CIOs have self-identified "seamless transition from K-12 to CCC to CSU/UC" as their #1 priority goal.