Peralta Community College District
Early Alert Working Group Meeting
Minutes
April 28th, 2015
District GS Conference Room

Meeting convened at 3:35 pm.
Attendees: Adela Esquivel-Swinson, Calvin Madlock, Cleavon Smith, Isela Santana, Nikki Ellman, John Saenz, Karen Croley, Lasana Hotep and Ranell Holmes.

PeopleSoft Early Alert
An early alert system needs to be implemented to comply with SSSP regulations. Previously an early alert system was used where the instructor would select on the roster the student name that needed to receive services. The student would then receive a letter, but there were no other follow-up actions. This was before PeopleSoft was implemented and it was deemed not very effective.

PeopleSoft has an early alert functionality; however, it is not currently active. The link to report students for early alert can be found in the faculty census roster. It includes check boxes were faculty can select the appropriate early alert activity. The group suggested renaming some of the boxes and adding a comment box.
The group will determine what needs to happen on each situation after the instructor sends the notification. Clear guidelines need to be developed for the faculty to stablish what actions to take prior to sending the notification. In addition, the group will determine how to follow up with the student and close the loop back with the instructor. It was noted that the early alert must be connected to the class roster and not the census roster.

It was mentioned that it is often a challenge to communicate with students if they are absent from the class. The instructor may try to communicate via email, but students either do not check their Peralta email or they do not know how to use it. Students need to receive more training on how to use their Peralta email and ensure that the Peralta email system is properly working. To address this issue, the IT department is taking actions aimed to improve communication with students. They are currently working on a mobile application where student would be able to receive push-notifications and text messages. The timeframe to have this implemented and have it available for students has not been determined. IT is also aiming to transition from outlook to Gmail.

The group also discussed the possibility of having a checklist using the three C's. Students would be able to see the checklist in their student PASSPORT account. The checklist will be cleared once the student completes the service.

There was a suggestion to have a designated faculty/retention specialist work with all the students identified as early alert. The group can make the recommendation to have SSSP Funds to pay for this instructor/retention specialist. This person will contact the student, meet with them, and refer them to the appropriate service.

It needs to be determined who will be receiving the initial notification. The group discussed various options:
*   Send the notification only to the counselor/retention specialist. The counselor will be contacting the student and then refer the student to the appropriate service; or
*   Send the notification to both the student and the counselor/retention specialist and include instructions in the comment box. It was asked if the student would be directed to contact the counselor or if the counselor would be contacting the student
There might be cases where it would be unnecessary for the student to meet with the counselor/retention specialist; therefore, the student should be just referred to the service needed. This will require faculty to get familiar with all the support services available for students.

Counselors will be invited to the next meeting to discuss to whom the notification needs to be sent to. Regardless of the action that is taken, the group needs to also come up with a process of how the information will go back to the instructor.

It was asked what instructors could do if the student is the one who identifies that he/she will need assistance for the class. Is there a way that students can communicate this to the instructor even before the semester starts so they can be referred to the service? This is a bigger conversation that needs to happen in the near future.

Currently, students who are in their second semester of progress probation get a notification that they will be losing their priority registration for the upcoming semester. This will have a greater impact beginning Fall 2016 since students who have not met the college's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards for two consecutive terms will no longer qualify for a BOGW waiver. Student Services is working with a team on a campaign to make students aware of this new regulation.

A basic early alert system can be piloted for the Fall 2015 term. At BCC, they are starting with the learning communities and then plan to extend it to EOPS and DSPS. If these groups experience any issues with the system, they can be addressed before they move to something of a greater magnitude.

Early alert implementation- First steps:
- Adela and Cleavon will work together to develop the guidelines for faculty. The guidelines will be reviewed by this group and other communities
- Recruit faculty from different disciplines to pilot the early alert system. It can be also piloted with the learning communities and small groups
- Edit the early alert activities on the system check boxes
- List of actions that will be taken after the notification is send
- Identify a way to "close the loop" after the student responds to the alert
- Develop a basic early alert system for the pilot project and then make improvements based on the received feedback

Later in the process the group will need to determine when and how often instructors can select students for early alert. The consensus is that it would be too early to have instructors select students before the census date. It might be more suitable to have it between the second to the fourth week of classes. However, it needs to be taken into account that some students can be doing really well at the beginning of the semester and then experience performance decline towards the end of the semester. More discussion is needed.

The group asked if they could use SARS so that the services provided to early alert students can count towards SSSP funding. The staff that has access to SARS could record the service and coded as a follow up service or they can create a new code. However, it needs to be determined who would be inputting this data. More discussion is needed.

Ranell will create a sandbox environment to test the system. Ranell will provide an update at the next meeting on how soon he can get the sandbox.

The timeline to implement the pilot early alter system is September 2015.

Adela will send the group an article on *Best Practices in Early Alert Programs* from a University that is also using PeopleSoft.

Adjourn
Next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 12th from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm.
Meeting adjourned at 4:41 pm.