

Walmart Brighter Futures 2.0: College Sustainability Plan Kirkwood Community College

I. Best/promising practice(s) identified during the project.

- A. Industry Sector Boards: Kirkwood is leading five Industry Sector Boards. These boards are driving the development of occupation pathway mapping, training pathways, and workforce strategies to meet regional workforce needs. They include: Advanced Manufacturing, Financial Services/Insurance/Customer Services, Health Care, Information Technology, and Transportation and Logistics. Businesses represented on these boards provide students in pathway training business tours and interviews which create a direct pipeline for students to obtain employment post training. The operation of these Industry Sector Boards is reinforced in the Federal Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Kirkwood is beginning to develop plans in partnership with the Regional Workforce Investment Board in the continuation of these boards.
- B. Marketing and Recruitment: Kirkwood manages Skills to Employment, which is co-located with IowaWORKS, the home of the regional workforce system. The IowaWORKS one-stop center is our primary mechanism for recruiting students into available training pathways. This facility operates with an integrated model emphasizing skill development needs of the available workforce. This model enables Kirkwood to connect with unemployed and other IowaWORKS members, assess their service needs, and enroll them into training programs that align with their career interest.
- C. Braided Funding: Kirkwood is committed to evaluating the needs and career interests of potential students and helping individuals enroll in training that can help them achieve their academic goals. Kirkwood staff across multiple college divisions enroll students into a program or co-enroll them into multiple programs based upon the students' needs. This requires the braiding of federal, state, grant, and Kirkwood funds. Kirkwood has developed systems to track funding obligations and expenditures. Staff is now exploring how to most effectively integrate these processes into the implementation of the Career Pathway Database.
- D. Support Services: Kirkwood has established policies and procedures to issue students assistance to address barriers to completing training and obtaining employment. Over time, staff identified needs most commonly elevated by students that there is currently not a social service agency in the area to address. The primary goal is to help students navigate available resources in the community. Should there not be a community resource, Pathway Navigators can assist students in requesting support to help them complete training and obtain employment. We have developed a support service request form, policy language, and a checklist of required documentation needed to substantiate the need.

II. Rationale for institutionalizing the best/promising practice(s) identified above.

- A. Industry Sector Boards: Kirkwood started leading Industry Sector Boards in 2010 with the vision that business engagement would be necessary to effectively develop training pathways that would address workforce skill demands in the region. Kirkwood was a leader in drafting Pathways for Academic Career Education and Employment (PACE) legislation that calls for community colleges in

the state to implement sector boards to guide training pathway development. PACE legislation, passed in 2013, allows Kirkwood to use state funds to conduct Industry Sector Board work. In addition to state legislative support, the Federal Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act also emphasizes the need for local Workforce Investment Boards to utilize Sector Boards to effectively meet local needs. Kirkwood manages the WIOA program and, therefore, staffs the local Workforce Board. The Workforce Board and the Industry Sector Boards will work in concert to address workforce needs.

- B. Marketing and Recruitment: Kirkwood's Skills to Employment division is co-located at the IowaWORKS one-stop center. We work directly with the local Regional Workforce Development Board on service delivery and metrics. We are currently working on the planning associated with the new WIOA legislation and expect an even greater level of partnership across workforce development, education, economic development, and community partners. IowaWORKS' one-stop center will continue to be a viable location for Kirkwood to recruit students in high-demand training pathways. The plan will likely include the development of strategies to reach customers outside of the one-stop center as well.
- C. Braided Funding: Kirkwood, like many higher education institutions, obtains resources from a variety of sources that often have set restrictions on how those funds can be used. While we honor these restrictions, these can oftentimes limit our ability to effectively help students to complete training. For this reason, we take a bigger picture view of the resources available and match resources to the students' needs. This often results in students co-enrolling into two programs and coordinating services provided by multiple staff to increase efficiencies and best serve the student. We continue to work on implementing this strategy across the institution as a means to make progress on our retention and completion goals.
- D. Support Services: State PACE legislation allows the college to use funds to assist students to overcome barriers and complete training. The goal of our model is to find a balance between helping students navigate academic resources, employment services, and support services, all of which are important to helping students to complete training and obtain employment. The team will continue to monitor and evaluate if modifications are needed.

III. Fiscal implication(s) for institutionalizing the best/promising practice(s) identified above.

- A. Industry Sector Boards: Leading sector boards requires staff time and commitment to developing business relationships, facilitating shared interest among businesses in the industry, and keeping the interest and goals of the board moving in between meetings. Kirkwood has a number of staff across the institution leading each sector board. The staff positions are co-funded by Kirkwood and other revenue sources. The goal of each board is to move from a staff-led board to a board that is led by a chair and vice chair position. These positions are filled by businesses who serve on the sector board. The Advanced Manufacturing Sector Board has already moved in this direction. The remaining four boards will do so in time.
- B. Marketing and Recruitment: There is limited to no fiscal implications to further developing the partnering relationship with the IowaWORKS center. Federal WIOA legislation will drive the Regional Workforce Investment Boards' development of a unified plan. We fully expect that this will positively impact the marketing and recruitment efforts that we work from today.

- C. Braiding funding: Braiding funding streams requires solid tracking tools. Kirkwood has made an initial investment in the development of a Career Pathway database which staff began implementing in July of 2015. Users of the system are evaluating opportunities to enhance the system. PACE legislation is supporting this development. Our goal is to share the system with other colleges in the state to effectively manage and track students in career pathway programming. This endeavor will help the college generate some funds.
- D. Support Services: Kirkwood started the development of career pathway programming in the fall of 2011. This is one of several programs that aim to positively influence student retention and completion. The college is making an investment in Foundations of Excellence, a systemic review of the institution's metrics, programming in place, and how the college programs and divisions work together to drive results. We expect that this process will help us develop a more comprehensive approach to supporting student success.

IV. Partnerships/sponsorships established during the project that should be continued.

- 1. Kirkwood developed relationships with over sixty businesses through Industry Sector Board work. Kirkwood plans to maintain these relationships and build new relationships with businesses to grow business engagement in sector strategies.
- 2. Building training pathways requires the partnership of business, program developers, faculty, and deans. We have developed relationships with the deans and faculty of relevant training pathways, which has proven to aid the institution's response to the training needs of the industry. We will continue to invite the deans and relevant faculty to sector board meetings.
- 3. We have developed relationships with two key staff on our main campus. One, a Financial Aid advisor, and another, a Career Services staff member. These two individuals have been appointed to work with students who enroll in a pathway program. They participate in all Next Steps events that we hold on the main campus. The purpose of the event is to help students explore two things: (a) services available to assist them in their job preparation and search, and (b) next steps in their training pathway post completing a short-term certificate. These staff are valuable resources to our students.

V. Internal institutional collaboration during the project that should be continued.

- 1. The staff who lead an Industry Sector Board began meeting quarterly to support each other in the work. All staff who lead a board will begin using a system to track business interactions and services. This will increase the institution's customer service to each business and elevate themes in training needs across businesses in the same sector. This group is also working to develop a common dashboard of metrics to consistently evaluate our effectiveness across sectors.
- 2. Developing training pathways requires cross-department work. We have developed good working relationships across HSED, Continuing Education, and Credit Training, and will continue to develop these relationships to strengthen articulation into credit training.
- 3. Staff who operate several programs (TRIO, Project Start Finish, and KPACE) have been meeting to evaluate how the programs can partner to best support students. These staff will continue to meet

and explore short-term options that are of value to students. The institution will begin the systemic review through the Foundations of Excellence process.

4. Partnership with Financial Aid and Career Services, as previously mentioned.

VI. Integration timeline for identified activities.

Key Activities:

1. Referral, Intake, Assessment, and Advising/Counseling
 - a. Continue to work with IowaWORKS to identify and enroll students into short-term training using the unified planning process being led by the Regional Workforce Board (per the lead of the Regional Workforce Board).
 - b. Allow Foundations of Excellence to inform the institution of ways to identify students, which students, and service strategies to support retention and completion (October 2015 and ongoing).
2. Basic Skills and Literacy Training
 - a. Continue to develop/strengthen services to assist HSED students to explore training in a high demand pathways while in HSED training (current and ongoing).
 - b. Develop a process to connect the credit Pathway Navigator with HSED graduates who continue into credit training (November-December 2015).
3. Job Readiness
 - a. Continue to evaluate the effectiveness of Journeys with the existing cohort and determine how to proceed for spring cohorts (October 2015-March 2016).
 - b. Plan for and integrate career services throughout training pathway (October 2015-Spring 2016).
4. Wraparound Services/Completed Middle-Skill Job Training/Employment Placement and Wage Gain
 - a. Continue to monitor students' support service needs and adjust policies and procedures as needed (ongoing).
 - b. Enhance Career Pathway Database to track braided resources to support student needs (October 2015-Spring 2016).
 - c. Continue to engage Industry Sector Boards to create employment pipelines for graduating students (ongoing).