

A black and white photograph showing a diverse group of people, likely students and faculty, smiling and looking at something off-camera. They are dressed in professional or semi-professional attire.

Walmart Brighter Futures 2.0: College Sustainability Plan Seattle Colleges

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

- A. Foundational Health Care Bridge Course
- B. Bolstered navigation and completion supports
- C. Start Next Quarter intake tool
- D. Career Hub job seeking and recruitment tool

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

- A. The Foundational Health Care Bridge Course provides an introduction to medical vocabulary, an overview of career options in the health care field, and a glimpse at the rigors of health care training programs for students who are interested in the field but may not yet have the skills or direction to succeed in a health care training program. Students who take the class are better prepared to make time and cost-effective decisions about their preparedness for, and interest in, a particular health care pathway. Additionally, given that many of our health care training programs have limited capacity, success in the course, as well as instructor feedback, help inform admissions decisions that increase the likelihood of success for those enrolled. The curriculum has been shared with Walmart Brighter Futures 2.0 partner colleges as well as community colleges across the country.
- B. Institutionalizing several completion and navigation supports will have a lasting impact on students' ability to persist and complete. Professional development around coaching models and self-efficacy training, for example, was offered to all navigators at the Seattle District, with approximately 20 participants and training materials provided for future use. The grant has leveraged other completion agenda resources such as completion coaches, End Next Quarter workshops that help students understand how to finish strong and navigate the job market, and orientation materials for new navigators. The Competency Documentation tool, which was presented at the 2015 *Innovations* conference, has been a powerful tool in helping students delineate and speak to their competencies. We will continue these enhancements to ensure completing a program and embarking on a career is as transparent and streamlined a process as possible.
- C. The Start Next Quarter website is a primary intake tool for our college district, reaching and providing funding options for low-income individuals. Further work to increase the sustainability and efficacy of this tool includes increased marketing at sites working with low-income populations, as well as enhancements to further streamline the intake experience, for example, through refinement and launch of an online workforce training application embedded into Start Next Quarter. This enhancement will allow students to apply for workforce programs immediately upon learning they are eligible for funding.
- D. Through this project, a dormant job seeking and recruitment tool was revitalized, rebranded, and re-launched and now has over 3,000 students, nearly the same number of employers (2,800), and

around 325 job postings active in the portal. Career Hub has the potential to be a widely integrated tool that serves our career services offices and students as a one-stop shop for employment and career services needs. In a similar vein, employers have traditionally had three points of contact with our district—one at each college. Career Hub offers the opportunity for a single point of contact to access the entire student job-seeking pool, as well as on-campus recruitment and relationship-building events.

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

- A. Given that the Foundational Health Care Bridge Course was a one-time curriculum development project, the only fiscal implications for its institutionalization are the costs of running the course each quarter. The curriculum development project was a somewhat unprecedented collaboration of faculty from across the three-college district, however, that other programs may wish to replicate. Costs associated with future cross-district course development processes will primarily be for faculty stipends.
- B. Professional development for the college and career navigators working with low-income students also has few budget implications. Given the training materials now in-hand, and the availability of veteran navigators to coach new navigators, the primary costs are related to staff time and training/orientation time for new navigators.
- C. Key costs associated with enhancing the Start Next Quarter survey tool include development of marketing materials for distribution in the community and at service provider locations, as well as the cost to finalize and launch the embedded online workforce training application. Given the income generated through expansion of Start Next Quarter to colleges around the state, there are some funds available to carry forward this work.
- D. Maintenance of the Career Hub job seeking and recruitment tool is relatively minimal, at \$5,000 annually. Going forward, this cost may be shared by each college's Career Services department. Funds will be needed, however, to continue/ramp up promotion of Career Hub to industry employers, for example, through our new Industry Partnership Navigator position. Ongoing maintenance and enhancements to the portal, such as a process to upload students to Career Hub automatically, and any usability enhancements, will also require allocation of funds.

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

The Seattle Colleges have a long-standing and robust partnership with the nonprofit organization, Seattle Jobs Initiative (SJI). SJI is a partner in providing low-income individuals training that leads to jobs in growing local industry sectors, as well as a research team providing insight into industry and educational trends that inform college-level decision making. Through the Walmart Brighter Futures 2.0 project, SJI has greatly supported our efforts to track and report student employment following graduation through the connections between SJI navigators and Seattle Colleges students. SJI has also provided training for our navigators around career coaching models and self-efficacy development in students, and has provided guidance on longer-term solutions to employment placement tracking.

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

One of the most promising examples of internal institutional collaboration to come out of this project is the Foundational Health Care Bridge Course. As a district wherein each college has its own unique identity and curriculum development processes, a successful collaboration with division faculty from each college is a model to be replicated.

Similarly, the Career Services directors from each college came together to refine, launch, and promote the Career Hub tool. Despite several years in which the tool was used only minimally by one campus, as well as disparate levels of funding and staffing at each of the Career Services offices, this project helped provide the impetus for a unified tool.

VI. Integration timeline for identified activities.

The Foundational Health Care Bridge course will be ongoing, offered on a quarterly basis.

The online workforce training application embedded into the Start Next Quarter intake aims for a spring 2016 launch and roll out.

Students will be auto-loaded into the Career Hub job search tool by spring 2016, streamlining the job search process and ensuring a critical number of users—both students and employers—on the site. Usability enhancements for Career Hub are ongoing, with the first round by winter 2016. Enhancements will include a new user interface and new job placement data and reports.