

DAS President's Report to the Peralta CCD Board of Trustees for February 26, 2013
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Thank you Mr. President, and good evening trustees, chancellor, district administration center staff, college presidents, colleagues and members of the public.

Given the state's recent Student Success Task Force recommendations and the increasingly intent focus on completion as a primary measure of success, many constituents are seeking answers to the question, "how can student support be implemented to improve completion?" You may recall that Peralta formed its own Student Success Task Force to identify components of those recommendations that can be applied to our students in helpful, rather than restrictive, ways. We expect to hear about some of those local strategies before the end of this semester.

Last month the RP Group issued a research report entitled, *Student Support (Re)Defined: Using Student Voices to Redefine Support*¹, based on responses that were collected during spring semester 2012 from nearly 900 students attending a total of 13 colleges around the state. Students were asked what ***they*** think supports their educational success, paying special attention to the factors African American and Latinos cite as important to their achievement.

Student Support (Re)Defined is a 3-year study that aims to understand how, in an environment of extreme scarcity, community colleges can deliver support both inside and outside the classroom to improve success for all students. The report is a summary of discoveries from the RP Group's Year 1 examination of student support and it is written for those interested in advancing students' success, from policy-making boards like yours to the students themselves.

Student Support (Re)Defined is organized around a cluster of 6 success factors that students say are important to their success as community college learners. These 6 factors are: ***directed, focused, nurtured, engaged, connected*** and ***valued***. The report addresses findings around each action verb with a set of factor-specific questions we can use to guide our exploration of why these factors matter and how we can incorporate them into our emerging student success strategies. Last week, the District Academic Senate (DAS) began its exploration by selecting a few of these questions for meaningful, results-driven discussion at each of our meetings for the remainder of the semester.

Since some of the questions pertain to institutional priorities, perhaps there are ways to incorporate them into your policy discussions. Here are two questions that seem most appropriate for that purpose:

Valued: In what ways can the institution make explicit to students, particularly historically underrepresented and first generation students, that someone at [our] college[s] cares about them and their success?

Engaged: What professional development and ongoing support do faculty need to ensure that they are using engaging, student-centered pedagogical approaches in their courses and programs?

A few success factor questions that are specific to faculty and what we can do to better support student completion have larger implications, among them designing classrooms that lend themselves to providing the kind and quality of attention students need. As Peralta Federation of Teachers (PFT) President Goldstein mentioned earlier this evening, one important adjustment will be having manageable class sizes with enrollment maximums set for sound pedagogical, and now student success, reasons.

Clearly, when students need additional attention to succeed, not many can get that kind of attention in classrooms filled to fire code capacity. In the coming weeks, the DAS and the PFT will be discussing

how our joint concerns can result in class size maximums that meet teacher and student needs while also meeting our enrollment targets.

The RP Group anticipates that this first phase of student perspectives will offer concrete strategies for community college educators to consider and keep the dialog around redefining support services focused on the students in all phases of the research project. Next week, March 8, at Berkeley City College, the RP Group will offer the 7th in a series of networking events intended to uncover successful completion agenda programs. These are programs that develop and implement initiatives to address the persistence, acceleration, and completion of underprepared and underrepresented students. To register for the event visit the link that will be included in the written version of this report (<http://3csn.org/3csn-events-for-spring-2013/>).

That concludes my report for tonight. Thank you for receiving it.

ⁱ <http://www.rpgroup.org/content/reports-presentations-and-resources>