NC Student Success Center Goals

1. To implement Guided Pathways (NC GPS) reforms at the 58 colleges with a series of cohorts (each with 15-20 colleges) with institutes, coaches, and practitioner-facilitators
2. To engage the 58 colleges in using the Scale of Adoption Assessment (SOAA) as a tool for benchmarking and change across the NCCCS
3. To leverage resources for additional technical assistance and professional development both for non-cohort and cohort colleges
4. To create an effective networked improvement community (NIC) with a cadre of trained practitioner-facilitators for institutional and cross-college collaboration, collective impact, and continuous improvement

Based on the successes and ongoing work of national completion initiatives in North Carolina, such as Achieving the Dream, Completion by Design, and the AACC Guided Pathways Project, the Center has established a broad support network of stakeholders, including college leaders, faculty, staff and state-level partners. Working with Jobs for the Future and the 14-state Student Success Center Network, the NC Student Success Center is launching the NC Guided Pathways to Success (NC GPS) Initiative. This project will provide the first cohort of 15-20 colleges with targeted technical assistance, professional development, and coaching in a networked learning community. Ultimately, all 58 colleges will have an opportunity to participate and will receive customized services.

The Center’s plan addresses stakeholder priorities, aligns with the NCCCS Strategic Plan, and incorporates national Guided Pathways recommendations from Student Success Center Network, Jobs for the Future, Community College Research Center, and Community College Research Initiatives. To extend its reach, the Center’s plan also includes ongoing college visits, professional development, and collaborations with stakeholder associations—all with the goal of advancing, scaling, and sustaining the Guided Pathways movement in North Carolina.

The greatest challenges to successful implementation of the NC GPS Plan include the scope of the NCCCS and the current state environment. In a state context of 58 institutions with multiple and competing priorities and persistent political and economic challenges, the NCCCS is already engaged in comprehensive student success reforms. These projects include legislative mandates and system-led efforts designed to improve student success: Multiple Measures, Developmental Education Redesign 2.0, Minority Male Success Initiative, Career Coaches, Career and College Ready Graduates, NC Competency-based Education, Credit for Prior Learning, Institutional Research Capacity, and Enterprise Resource Planning, among others.

To help address the challenges of implementation, the Center crafted the NC GPS Strategic Plan 2018-2020. Based on cross-tabulated data sifted from focus groups, surveys, reports, and conversations with presidents, vice presidents, instructors, and student services staff across the state, the plan responds to practitioners’ significant needs for targeted technical assistance, professional development, and organizational development related to Guided Pathways: advising and student support redesign;
program mapping and alignment; equitable outcomes for underserved students; effective transfer; data analytics capability; faculty development; financial support for students and colleges; and demonstrated student learning outcomes.

In its inaugural year, the Center’s work has evolved along a steep learning curve to understand the state context, identify needs, and plan for Guided Pathways implementation. The NC GPS Plan will help leverage student success innovations currently underway at many colleges and will provide much-needed coherence, alignment, and direction for the System.

The plan will provide a way for the System’s 35,000 employees to work collaboratively, sharing their insights, talents, and commitment to equitable outcomes in student learning, success, and completion of credentials. Combined with the knowledge of state and national research and proven strategies, NCCCS leaders and practitioners will be empowered to help greater numbers of North Carolina’s 700,000 community college students gain economic mobility and fulfillment in work that matters.

Proposed strategies

I. Develop a cohort of 15-20 colleges in a coaching and practitioner-facilitator model for targeted technical assistance, professional development, change management, and organizational development in a networked improvement community (NIC)

1. Colleges who wish to participate will complete an application process.

2. Selected colleges will organize NC GPS Teams, comprised of a mix of 6-10 members from Instruction/Academic Affairs; Workforce Continuing Education/Career & College Ready/Basic Skills; Student Development/Student Affairs; Faculty; Minority Male Success Initiative or Special Populations Coordinator; Advising; and Institutional Research. One team member will serve as an NC GPS Facilitator for the college.

3. College teams will participate in NC GPS Institutes (1-2 days each) as follows:
   a. Institute I: Leading for change & improvement science (NICs) (May 2018)
   b. Institute II: Mapping pathways to student end goals (July 2018)
   c. Institute III: Helping students choose and enter a pathway (October 2018)
   d. Institute IV: Keeping students on a pathway (January 2019)
   e. Institute V: Ensuring students are learning (May 2019)

4. Coaches and NC GPS Facilitators will meet with college teams during the institutes and will serve as consultants throughout the cohort timeline.

5. An NC GPS Facilitator from each college team will receive training to serve as a NIC consultant. Facilitators will have preparatory and ongoing professional development in the principles of improvement science, networked improvement communities (NICs), and Guided Pathways essential practices.

6. College teams (and their facilitators) will collaborate in an inter-institutional NIC with access to shared resources and tools for co-learning and continuous improvement across the cohort.
II. Engage the 58 colleges in using the Scale of Adoption Assessment (SOAA) as a tool for benchmarking and change within the NCCCS

1. The Center will host a webinar to launch the SOAA project.
2. The Center will invite colleges to participate and will share instructions on completing the SOAA.
3. College cross-divisional teams will complete the SOAA.
4. Trained providers (coaches) will conduct follow-up calls with colleges.
5. Reports and narratives of the college results will be created with recommendations for technical assistance.
6. Based on results of the SOAA, the Center will provide technical assistance webinars and regional workshops will be provided for all 58 colleges.

III. Provide professional and organizational development in concert with established NCCCS internal professional associations, faculty discipline associations, Advisory Board member organizations, and across all sectors of the System Office

1. Engage Advisory Board members in professional development and training to further the work in their organizations and at their colleges
2. Create workgroups within the Advisory Board and partner organizations and councils to deploy strategies for implementation of Guided Pathways to Success framework professional and organizational development
3. Help organize professional association meetings and conferences, encourage collaboration, and support targeted Guided Pathways professional development with presenters from the JFF cadre of national partners
4. Engage the NC Advising Redesign Team and the NC Community College Advising Association in implementing the Center’s plan for advising and student support redesign for the 58 colleges
5. Engage Career Coaches and Basic Skills Plus practitioners in professional development in NC GPS
6. Create capacity within the System Office leadership and at all levels to further the Guided Pathways framework—infuse and integrate GPS throughout the agency

IV. Engage new Guided Pathways to Success Network of advocates to engage stakeholders state-wide across sectors and to inform the Center and Advisory Board in implementation strategies and policy advocacy

1. Engage the System’s 35,000 full-time practitioners from active professional associations as members of a GPS Network
2. Engage the System’s 700,000 students in substantive advocacy and implementation of Guided Pathways to Success

IV. Align and integrate the Center’s Strategic Plan with the NCCCS Strategic Plan for 2018-2020

NCCCS Goals 2018-2020
- Student Interest and Access
- Clear and Supported Pathways for Student Success
- Economic and Workforce Impact
- Organizational Effectiveness

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