

PROMISING PRACTICES EXCHANGE

Please send your completed forms to Joe Holliday: jholliday@sbctc.edu.

1. Which of the five areas of Strategic Enrollment does this practice address? (Check all that apply)

- Alignment with K-12
- Re-engaging Adult Students
- Onboarding New Students
- Retaining Students
- Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic

2. Name of practice: Seattle Promise

3. Description of practice:

Seattle Promise provides eligible students with up to two years (or 90 credits) of free college tuition at one of the Seattle Colleges and provides personalized support to students from 12th grade through their second year of college. The goal of the practice is to provide Seattle students with access to postsecondary opportunities that promote attainment of a certificate, credential, or degree.

The program is jointly supported by the Seattle Colleges, City of Seattle, and Seattle Public Schools. Looking at the SBCTC Community Engagement Framework, Seattle Promise regularly participated in collaborative and shared leadership for program decision making and improvement.

There are three main strategies employed to achieve the overall goals of (1) increasing the number of Seattle Public High School graduated to enroll in college directly after high school graduation, (2) increasing the number of students who enroll in and successfully complete credits, and (3) increasing the number of students who persist quarter-to-quarter, ultimately completing a credential.

1. Tuition and Equity Scholarship Supports

Seattle Promise students, regardless of GPA, income, or country of birth, who meet all program requirements are eligible to receive up to 90 attempted college credits or two-years of attendance, whichever comes first, at the Seattle Colleges toward a student's first associate degree. Tuition supports are structured as a last-dollar scholarship to most efficiently use other financial aid for which the student is eligible (Pell, Washington College Grant, WSOS, College Bound, etc. are applied toward tuition first, Promise covers remaining tuition costs).

The Equity Scholarship is awarded to students with a 0 Expected Family Contribution, as calculated by the FAFSA or WASFA, to assist with non-tuition related expenses such as books, fees, food, etc.

2. College Preparation Support

Students at eligible public high schools are provided college preparation and support in the form of a program Outreach Specialist. These staff are college employees who are embedded in the high schools. While the program is open to all 12th grade students who will graduate, Outreach Specialists specifically target their supports to historically underserved populations. Outreach Specialists are able to provide culturally-appropriate support to students with applying to the program, applying to one of the Seattle Colleges, and completing their financial aid application. Outreach Specialists also work closely with school staff to help share college placement practices so staff can wrap around students together to assist with their preparation to transition to college. College staff utilize a CRM platform to facilitate regular and just-in-time communications to eligible applicants.

3. Persistence and Completion Support

Students are required to attend structured programming designed to assist with getting on the right path in their first quarter. One of these required events is Readiness Academy, which is an event designed to support students with enrolling in classes after they apply to college and before they graduate from high school. At Readiness Academy, students are guided to enroll full-time (a program requirement) and to choose one English and one math class as a part of their first quarter schedule.

Students are also required to attend a customized orientation, Summer Bridge, in the weeks just before fall quarter begins.

Students who meet structured onboarding milestones are also supported by college staff in the form of program Retention Specialists. These staff provide individualized support at a staff-to-student ratio of 1:100. Students are required to complete a mid-quarter check-in with their Retention Specialist each full quarter, and Retention staff provide just-in-time information to students at those meetings.

Staff use dashboards, the Starfish Student Success platform, and reports from Institutional Research to proactively reach out to students and help them keep momentum with registering for and earning college credits. The program requires continuous, full-time enrollment unless the student receives special exception.

4. Results: What evidence do you have that this practice is achieving desired results?

Seattle Promise retention rates outperform general Seattle Colleges retention rates for fall-to-winter, fall-to-spring, and fall-to-fall measures. In 2019-20, Seattle Promise students persisted fall-to-winter at 86% whereas general Seattle Colleges population hovered at 72% fall-to-winter retention.

Early completion data signals that Seattle Promise participants are also completing at higher rates than the general Seattle Colleges population, with nearly 25% of students completing their degree in 2 years or less, compared to the national 2-year completion average of 13%.

5. Based on your review of the Excellent Practices Rubric, please indicate whether you believe this practice is emerging, promising, or excellent. (Select only one)

Emerging

Promising

Excellent

Name: Melody McMillan

Title: Sr. Executive Director, Seattle Promise

Email: melody.mcmillan@seattlecolleges.edu

School: Seattle Colleges

Submission date: December 9, 2020