

Managing GP and Engaging the College

Reedley College

Their Approach

Reedley started its Guided Pathways work with a core team of seven—two instructional deans, three instructional faculty, the president, a vice president—who brought lessons back from the training sessions that they were attending as one of the 20 teams included in the first cohort of the California Guided Pathways Project. But they soon realized that a systemic change as big and significant as Guided Pathways design and implementation required participation and ownership by people from every corner of campus. So they created a “transformation team” that tests and then helps disseminate reform efforts to help engage the wider community.

What They Did

The transformation team includes students and representatives from classified staff, faculty, associated student government, the Academic Senate, and other interest groups on campus. It also includes someone from the district office—in recognition that successful Guided Pathways redesign will require changes in some districtwide processes—and members of other campus committees to ensure their efforts are coordinated. To maintain engagement of the broader college community about the Guided Pathways, the transformation team has led events at each opening day since fall 2017. They’ve ranged from a meta-major sorting game (Pathways Family Feud) to a role play where everyone pretended to be students completing an education plan (“We had faculty members walk out saying, ‘I can’t believe we do this to our students’”). Each activity is tested ahead of time and includes a request of participants to identify the challenges students face and suggest how to remove obstacles.

What They Learned

Reedley’s core team found that focusing on what helps or hurts students was key. Putting faculty, staff, administrators, and campus leaders in the shoes of students was especially helpful: The ed plan simulation, where participants gained a visceral understanding of the frustration that students experience, was a major turning point. Core team members say the process—including reviewing student completion data and considering how to mesh new placement requirements into the Guided Pathways design process, among other challenges—has revealed how much work Reedley needs to do to ensure equity. “We learned we have to stay open to things that make us uncomfortable because our students can’t afford to wait until we feel comfortable with change. We have to keep moving forward.”

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