CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS, AND MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Chair Silva declared a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 8:03 am. Trustee Schmalansee motioned to approve the June 21, 2022 minutes, and was seconded by Trustee Pyrtel.

The motion to approve and accept the minutes passed with the following roll call vote: Trustee Lish – YES; Trustee Pyrtel – YES; Trustee Sanz – YES; Trustee Schmalansee – YES; Trustee Vincent – ABSENT; Chair Silva – YES.

Trustee Wendy Vincent joined the meeting at 8:11 am.

Trustee Silva shared that she and Courtney Jackson met to discuss topics for the committee meetings for the year. The framing questions for the Student Success Committee are: how does a college become student ready, who are our students, what do they need, and how does the college address those needs? Presentations will emphasize students’ voices and will include qualitative and quantitative data. The committee will focus on the foundational ingredients that are essential to understand before we can discuss longer-term success.
metrics such as completion rates. Meeting agendas will include a focus on credit-bearing and non-credit workforce development programs.

NEW MEDICAL ASSISTANT CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Courtney Jackson introduced Dr. Lynne Davis to present the Medical Assistant Certificate Program. Dr. Denise Garrow-Pruitt is the program director for the Health Studies, which is where the new Medical Assistant Certificate program would live. This Certificate program was included in the most recent strategic plan (Strategic Direction Two: Increasing College Participation, Goal 5: Maintain enrollment despite downward projections, and Strategy 5G: Develop new academic programs).

Dr. Garrow-Pruitt explained that Medical Assistants are healthcare professionals who work in both doctor’s offices and hospitals. Clinical duties include checking vital signs, taking medical histories, preparing patients for exams, drawing blood, performing EKGs, giving injections, and administering medications all under the direction of a physician.

Dr. Pruitt provided an overview of the 26-credit curriculum, noting that the majority of classes will be offered online. Dr. Davis explained that there are two pathways that the Medical Assistant Certificate is being built into – Nursing and Medical Imaging.

According to the Greater Boston Regional Workforce Planning Blueprint, Medical Assistant is one of the top healthcare occupations facing an employee shortage that requires more than a high school diploma, but less than bachelor’s degree. Approximately 1,500 Medical Assistants are employed in the Metro South/West region of Massachusetts, with 238 average annual openings. The starting wage for a Medical Assistant is approximately $40,000.

Dean Davis opened the discussion to questions from the Trustees. Trustee Schmalansee clarified that this committee would be voting to approve this program to be sent to the full Board of Trustees for approval. Trustee Lish asked about how we would use this program for fundraising, especially with those donors whose giving mission is around healthcare rather than education, and this could be a new opportunity for financial support for the school. President Podell replied that pathways are key to what we’re promoting with the new building, which is of high interest to donors, and the program has been previewed ahead of its approval. Trustee Silva commented that the timing for this program is great in terms of demand, as Medical Assistants are key to care teams, especially with nursing shortages. She also highlighted the importance of the pharmacology and soft skills courses.

Dean Davis asked Dr. Garrow-Pruitt to discuss the credentialing process for the pathways. The credentials being offered for the Medical Assistant program will be a national credential through the National Healthcare Association. Students can sit for a national exam after completing their coursework to obtain a Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA).

Trustee Silva motioned that the Medical Assistant Certificate program be presented to the full Board of Trustees at the December 13, 2022 meeting for approval, and was seconded by Trustees Pyrtel and Vincent.
The motion to approve and send the Medical Assistant Certificate program to the full board for approval passed with the following roll call vote: Trustee Lish – YES; Trustee Pyrtel – YES; Trustee Sanz – YES; Trustee Schmalansee – YES; Trustee Vincent – YES; Chair Silva – YES.

DISCUSSION ON THE DECISION TO (NOT) ENROLL IN COLLEGE

Courtney Jackson introduced Associate Dean Richard Williams to talk about students who never make it to our doorstep. Associate Dean Williams shared that the biggest competitor to students enrolling at MassBay is not other colleges, but choosing to not go to college at all. Approximately 38% of Fall 2020 applicants ultimately enrolled at MassBay, while 38% did not enroll anywhere. The question is why students aren’t coming to college? The decline in enrollment can’t be attributed to demographics alone. Some research suggests that public opinion has shifted and some question if the return on the investment in college is worth the cost. In addition to concerns about the value of higher education, reasons for not enrolling in college were not just about money and affordability, but also time, stress, and pressure.

WHAT SUPPORTS THE DECISION TO REMAIN ENROLLED AT MASSBAY?

Courtney Jackson introduced Jean Supel who shared research with students who were part of the 2021 SUCCESS program and some of their needs, obstacles, and strengths. Students were asked about obstacles they faced in terms of reaching academic goals. The lead answer was academic obstacles, followed closely by belonging, emotional health, financial/work, and physical health obstacles. Another question asked about student areas of improvement with a focus on academics. Most responses were around improving study habits and time management skills. One thing that stood out was that 50% of respondents wanted to improve academic motivation. Knowing what motivates students to stay could be fruitful in helping and supporting our students. In terms of where students need more support, the top responses were around working while attending college, public speaking, and fear of failure. Belonging came up again with 1 in 3 respondents finding difficulty in meeting new people. Additionally, 1 in 4 were unsure of college procedures, which speaks to community cultural wealth and navigational capital, which is the ability of how to work a system. We could look at how to help students with different types of resources. Finally, students identified their strengths as having people skills and connections, time management or organizational skills, and motivation.

DISCUSSION ON PROMOTING STUDENT SUCCESS THROUGH BASIC NEEDS SUPPORT

Courtney Jackson introduced Dr. Liz Blumberg Vice President for Student Development and Dean of Students who led her team in a presentation on supporting students’ basic needs. Dr. Blumberg described the goals of Student Development, to support students through academic advising, career services, counseling services, veteran services. Student Development also provides opportunities for connection and a sense of belonging by providing opportunities to meet other people, develop leadership skills, get involved in the campus community. Student Development helps students with challenges inside and outside the classroom, helping students remain focused on their academic work.
Staff listened to students and heard that students did not have enough access to basic needs like food, shelter, and money. The decision was made to start with food insecurity with the goal of removing barriers and decreasing the shame and stigma associated with asking for help. The College established the Student Nourishment & Care Committee (SNACC) which includes faculty, staff, students, and community members.

Dr. Blumberg introduced Sean Fortney to discuss food insecurity initiatives. The Food Scholarship Program started with the Campus Meals program in 2019 which provided free food to students on campus. The program evolved through the pandemic to include Amazon Gift Cards, then Imperfect Foods, Peapod, and more recently to gift cards to grocery stores near the student. The program spends $48,000-$60,000 per year. Evaluation of the program shows that participants are retained at a higher rate compared with students who are eligible for the program but did not receive support.

Sean Fortney described other initiatives, including the Mobile Market - fresh produce delivered to campus by the Greater Boston Food Bank every month and offered free of charge. The entire community is involved to reduce stigma. Over 1,159 people and 133,000 pounds of food have been served between 2016-2020 at all 3 campuses. Grab-n-Go Snack Bins are located in 9 high-traffic areas and offices throughout campus to reduce stigma and increase interest and engagement while keeping students as nourished and supported as possible. The MassBay Meals Program are free pre-made meals provided with no restrictions for anyone to reheat and enjoy. Temple Beth Elohim and Daniel’s Table approached MassBay to help serve students. Pre-2020, 319 meals were served every semester, and that’s grown to 934 meals since Spring 2022.

Sean Fortney introduced Josh Cheney to talk about additional services offered to help students with basic needs. Student Development partners with the MassBay Foundation to administer a few grants including the Single Mother Grant funded by the MetroWest Women’s Fund, which covers emergency financial need by mothers with assistance with food, shelter, and utilities. The College also has an Emergency Fund, and awards Technology Grants. The Childcare Assistance Fund was established by the student government association back in 1992 to subsidize the cost of childcare while enrolled in classes. The Textbook Fund supports students with the cost of textbooks. This semester, 300 students applied and were awarded between $25-$75. Transportation has also proven to be a struggle and this fund assists students on getting to campus, which can often be timely and costly. Another service is providing period and hygiene products from Dignity Matters. Products are available in all bathrooms on all 3 campuses. Anyone can take them, no questions asked. Hope & Comfort provides supplies such as toiletries and detergent.

Trustee Schmalansee asked Associate Dean Richard Williams as what point can students access support services? Associate Dean Richard Williams responded that these services are available to all students at all times, with advisors actively reaching out, not just being available. Advisors are reaching out to students during the orientation and the onboarding process before they begin classes to make plans. Dean Sue Maggioni added that MassBay has also contracted with uAspire, which is available to all students prior to enrollment to assist with FAFSA completion and provide counseling, and they already have a strong relationship with the financial aid office.
Trustee Vincent asked if MassBay is keeping in contact with the 38% of applicants that don’t come to college to keep them aware of what resources and programs MassBay has available. Richard Williams replied that MassBay is trying to do more outreach from the moment of application through enrollment, and is trying to put students in that role to increase accessibility.

Trustee Sanz asked about the channels being used to contact potential students. Jeremy Solomon responded that we reach potential students through email, Facebook ads, and Google ads. Trustee Sanz asked about the return from that outreach and asked about texting. Jeremy Solomon agreed, saying that both emails and texting are currently part of the portfolio.

Trustee Silva asked about targeting those in their early 20s who are already in the workforce and more cognizant of the economics and also the potential value of a degree or certificate. President Podell responded that MassBay works with our local MassHire. President Podell also mentioned that Maura Healey advocated for MassReconnect during her campaign, which would offer free community college for anyone 25 years old or older who didn’t have a credential.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Silva proposed the motion to adjourn the meeting. It was moved by Trustee Vincent and seconded by Trustee Sanz. The motion was approved, and the meeting adjourned at 9:50 am after the following roll call vote: Trustee Lish – YES; Trustee Sanz – YES; Trustee Schmalensee – YES; Trustee Vincent – YES; Chair Silva – YES.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, February 14, 2023.