

**Delaware College Access Network
(DECAN)
Meeting Notes for June 09, 2009
Board Room, DSEA Building**

Welcome/Introductions

Dr. Joseph Pika, Chair of DECAN, welcomed committee members and asked for a round of introductions. We were honored to have Representative Teri Schooley, join us for this meeting.

The highlights of the May 06, 2009 DECAN meeting were sent via e-mail prior to the meeting. No edits or corrections were received.

Presentation

Janet Hughes and Barbara Lange of Janet Hughes and Associates provided an overview of the newly redesigned YES YOU CAN Website and a progress report on the work commissioned through the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) Grant. A navigation chart was distributed that illustrated the Yes You Can site architecture including both primary and secondary navigation. The goal of the redesign was to change the website into the board portal that was intended. Much of the redesign incorporated content suggested by stakeholders including the DECAN Subcommittee. Two new categories were added to address content that did not otherwise fit into the existing structure: Community Corner and College Planning Resources. Other items were added in categories previously defined by the existing architecture. The launch of the redesigned portal will occur in the fall of 2009 and will coincide with a video promotion entitled “Your Path to Success.”

Recruitment of students is an ongoing challenge. It is hoped that our partners can help spread the word and help to engage students. There are 1400 students listed as friends of YES YOU CAN on the MySpace page. My space is a social networking site used predominantly by students age 14-18. The terms and conditions of MySpace require parental consent for any user under the age of 18. The content is monitored for appropriate content. 70% of the hits to the YES YOU CAN website came from links on the MySpace site. Facebook, another social networking site that caters more to older students, will be added. DECAN members asked how the site services “high need” students who may not have access to technology. A case of interactions with such a student was described. It was also noted that the emphasis on Facebook misses a portion of our targeted population in middle school. These students, grades six through eight, range in age from eleven to fourteen. In response to a question about how Delaware’s efforts compared to those in other states, Janet Hughes described how SREB states often seek them out to present at conferences/seminars/webinars. Delaware has been seen as the leader in the use of social networking sites to reach out to K-12 students.

Committee members also asked how this work would align with the Student Success Plans and Guidance Counselors training. This provided a great transition to our next presenter, Mr. Dennis Rozumalski.

Mr. Dennis Rozumalski, DOE, provided an update on the status of the SREB Counselor Modules and an overview of Career Cruising and its use for electronic Student Success Plans (SSPs). He explained that Delaware joined with several other states in an SREB-led effort to develop training modules specifically for guidance counselors with the goal of encouraging college attendance in low income households. The modules are undergoing their second revision with feedback from the field. Video tapes are being produced that demonstrate counselors working with parents and students. The modules can be used as stand alone or in any combination with most of the work being conducted online. They were developed with a level of rigor to qualify for graduate level credit for those who elect that option.

Mr. Rozumalski explained that the cost of the annual software fees for Career Cruising, the delivery mechanism most schools are using for the Student Success Plans, is covered for this year and next through the CACG Grant. While the annual expense for the software license is \$89,000, the use of the tool to deliver three mandatory surveys that used to cost \$70,000 to conduct makes the additional cost to the state only \$19,000. Mr. Rozumalski provided a “tour” of the Career Cruising tool and how its various components guide a student through an interest inventory and a skills inventory that is then used to match student interests and skills with careers that require various levels of education. The tool then allows a comparison of years of education required, cost of education, potential income/earnings, typical work days, etc. for various careers. Once deciding upon a career path, students are provided information regarding the courses that should be taken in high school to prepare for the education required by the student’s aspirations. Students can even compare institutions of higher education using various factors such as cost, size, location, extra curricular activities, etc. The tool can also be used to target information related to particular events tied to education and career aspirations to those students who have indicated interest in them. For example, if a construction company wanted to advertise a summer internship opportunity, the administrator in the school would be able to send a mass e-mail to all students who indicated an interest in the construction field. This tool could also be used to identify Delaware students who are interested in going on to higher education so that the institutions could more effectively provide outreach and information. Glen Davidson, Curriculum Director for Lake Forest School District, attested to the value he saw in the use of the Student Success Plans and the Career Cruising online tool. The real question before us is how can we sustain the use of the tool beyond the period covered by the CACG grant?

Alan Phillips, Chair of the **Data Subcommittee** of P-20 Council, provided an overview of an existing tool on the DHEC website that automates the management of scholarships and grants administered by the state. The tool actually imports data from the DOE and the FAFSA application and sets up individual accounts for students who have achieved an award. For example, a student may earn up to \$6,000 in grades 6 and 10 from the

Michael C. Ferguson Scholarship based upon their performance on the Delaware Student Testing Program. They may earn \$1,000 in grades 8 and 10 for performance in the areas of reading, writing and mathematics. This tool helps to manage these funds and any others that the student may earn. This is a tool that would certainly help DECAN in our efforts to assist families with financial aid information.

In closing, Dr. Pika commented that the meeting today provided an overview of the products of our labors over the past several months. He stated that it is important that we continue to monitor our progress, sustain our efforts and look for ways for the projects to connect and reinforce one another. He told committee members it is often difficult to schedule summer meetings around vacation and that our next meeting would be scheduled in the fall sometime in September. Dr. Pika thanked everyone for their hard work and adjourned the meeting.

NEXT DECAN MEETING:

TBD

**You will be contacted to select a date in the
fall-September timeframe.**