

School College Work Initiative Regional Forum Report

May 29, 2003,
Northern College, South Porcupine Campus

Partners: District School Board Ontario North East
Northeastern Catholic District School Board
Northern College of Applied Arts and Technology

Proposal: A regional forum for secondary school Business, Mathematics and Information Technology teachers to meet with College staff from the various programs.

Focus: A full day session was planned for both groups, May 29, 2003. The intent was to provide an overview of both systems for participants to broaden their awareness of the programming available at the college level as well as describe changes that have occurred as a result of secondary school reform initiatives.

Planning: Three main planning sessions were held before the event. At each session the planning committee discussed the makeup of the day and gradually formed a clear vision for the expected outcomes of the day.

The planning reflected the following goal:

To strengthen the ties between the community college staff and the secondary school teachers and administrators, with a focus on facilitating decisions related to career and post secondary opportunities.

Focus areas for discussion included:

Course alignment between the college and secondary schools.
Establishment of accurate and meaningful communication strategies to address immediate issues as well as ongoing practice.

Planning sessions were held:

February 25 2003, April 11, 2003 and May 15, 2003.

Members of the planning committee included:

District School Board Ontario North East	-	Karen Prentice-Oxby Wendy Adams Margaret Fleury David Lee Bob Mack John Colins Mary Ann Martin Des Quinn
Northeastern Catholic: Northern College:		

Format of the day:

Welcoming remarks by the President of the College and the Directors of Education of the respective school boards.

Northern College Perspective:

Purpose and context of the day.
Information about Northern College and its' programs.
Address by the College registrar.

Secondary school Perspective:

Overview of secondary school reform including assessment and evaluation changes.
Review of the Math, Business Studies and Computer courses from grades 9 to 12

Question and Answer period:

Lunch:

Tour of the College facilities:

Small group discussion facilitated by 3 college and 2 secondary school representatives . These discussions focused on Course content alignment, required background and how to bridge the secondary school experience and the college experience. (focus questions are attached)

Closing

Results of the day:

There were 35 secondary school participants from 11 secondary schools across Northeastern Ontario covering the region from Hearst to New Liskeard a distance of approximately 700 km. There were 20 college faculty and staff representing the three major campuses of Northern College. The total in attendance was 55 educators.

The day was well received by all participants. Although most in attendance cited the afternoon small group discussions as the most useful part of the day there is a recognition that the review of the programming in both institutions was necessary during the morning. The tour was well received as many of the secondary participants had never been at the college.

The results of the small group discussion indicate that they were extremely beneficial to both groups. The following recommendations are a summary of the collective group discussions:

Recommendation 1:

That college and secondary staff consult, compare curriculum and design processes that will result in smooth transitions to the college level. Small group discussions will permit the focusing on specific issues.

Recommendation 2:

That a plan be formulated to facilitate regular communication between the two groups: secondary school staff and college faculty.

Recommendation 3:

That the college and the secondary schools promote partnerships between the two groups and encourage visits by both staff and students to each others institutions.

Recommendation 4:

That a similar forum be organized for Guidance and English teachers.

Follow-up:

It is evident from the comments of the day that the session was very beneficial in terms of accomplishing the initial goals. It was our intent to strengthen the ties between the two groups and if we can follow-up on the initial contacts we will have accomplished that goal.

In terms of establishing course alignment between the secondary schools and the college, we have established a need for work groups to continue the dialogue that began May 29, 2003. Participants themselves have recognized that establishing meaningful communication processes between the two groups will result in better post secondary opportunities of the students in Northeastern Ontario.

We would like at this time to thank the School College Work Initiative for the funding that made this session possible. We are pleased with the results and intend on continuing the communication that was initiated. A follow-up meeting with the steering committee was held June 11, 2003 with unanimous agreement that the day was a resounding success.

Appendix A

SCHOOL/COLLEGE/WORK INITIATIVE

MEETING HELD AT

NORTHERN COLLEGE

JUNE 11, 2003

PRESENT:

Bob Mack
John Collins
Mary-Anne Martin
David Lee
Mario Avoledo

Karen Prentice-Oxby
Margaret Fleury
Wendy Adams
John D'Alessandri
Denise Morrissette

The general consensus of the faculty from Northern College and the high school teachers was that this workshop was a great start for faculty to get together. There is a lot of work ahead for both groups. The morning session could have been compressed but now that the introductions have been made there should be more concentration on faculty to meet. The afternoon session was excellent. There was a strong desire for both parties to keep in contact.

Northern College has an articulation agreement, with the high schools, for Computer Applications I. In August the College offers an introductory course to students to upgrade their skills in Computer Applications. There is also an opportunity for students to challenge Computer Applications in September where the College charges \$20 for this exam. The mark they get on the challenge exam is the mark, which appears on their transcript (in theory).

The School Board, with the College's assistance, will prepare a proposal to send to the Ministry to apply for funding to continue the "partnership" between the School Boards and the College. Deadline for funding is June 27th.

High school teachers will try to spend a day in class at Northern and vice versa. It is important for the teachers, from the different areas, to be aware what is happening in the college system or the high school system so that correct information can be given to students. If high school students are exempted from courses, because of articulation agreement, they might be able to take all gen. ed. courses in the first semester or take second year courses and fast track in their programs. Universities are starting to recognize more college courses and guidance counsellors should be made aware of this as

well as articulation agreement that Northern College has with certain universities. No formal agreement has been signed with Carleton University but they do recognize our courses in the Architectural programs.

RECOMMENDATION

A newsletter, with information on what Northern College is planning on doing in the future, articulation agreements with universities, testimonials from past graduates, be sent to parents and guidance counsellors. Northern College's website will also be updated with this type of information.

Northern College Open House is scheduled for Wednesday, October 15th, 2003. At the guidance counsellor's session, Bob Mack and a representative from the school board, will be available to provide information on the partnership agreements between the high schools and the college.

RECOMMENDATION

Northern College will forward three (3) copies of course outlines for Mathematics and Communications, textbooks as well as the final exams or tests for these courses. The high schools will do the same. Faculty from the different areas will meet in their schools to discuss the content of the course outlines. On Friday, September 26th faculty from the high school and the college will meet at Timmins High and Vocational School to discuss Mathematics and Communications curriculum.

It is important for college and high school teachers to get together to discuss course content for Math or English courses. In these individual groups, faculty can decide whether a challenge exam or an articulation agreement will be best suited for those subjects. Discussion will also be held on what pathway high school students need to follow in order to be able to apply to college especially where Mathematics is a prerequisite course.

RECOMMENDATION

Bob Mack and Karen Prentice-Oxby to meet to discuss the funding proposal and other "projects" that may be possible in the upcoming year.

