Larry Hogan
Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford
Lt. Governor

Ian D. MacFarlane
Chair

James D. Fielder, Jr., Ph. D.
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

TO: Segmental Advisory Council
FROM: Dr. Emily A. A. Dow, Assistant Secretary for Academic Affairs
DATE: May 26, 2020
SUBJECT: Request for Information Regarding Near Completers

Please circulate this memo to appropriate campus personnel.

Legislation was passed in the 2018 session that revised Education Article §11–209. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) is required to maintain a statewide communication campaign to identify Near Completers.[1] Additionally, MHEC is required to create a centralized web-based match program for Near Completers that facilitates the matching of a Near Completer with any institution of higher education at which the Near Completer would be able to complete the degree.

MHEC will utilize the Academic Program Inventory (API) to match Near Completers to existing academic programs in Maryland. The API is available to the public and can be accessed on the MHEC website.[2] As part of the communication campaign, a devoted webpage specific to Near Completers will link to the API.

For MHEC to identify and communicate directly with Near Completers to notify them about opportunities to complete their program of study, MHEC is requesting that all institutions provide a file with contact information for students that meet the definition of a Near Completer. Institutions should identify only students who are eligible (i.e., academically, financially) for reenrollment. MHEC is requesting that this file be submitted by September 4, 2020.[3] Attached is a file that contains the Near Completer record layout for a comma-separated values (.csv) file submission. Institutions should submit this information utilizing the MHEC Secure Data Website.[4] This memo and the record layout are posted on the data website under Near

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[1] Per statute, near completers are students that have earned a minimum grade point average of 2.0 on a scale of 4.0 while in college, and earned at least 45 credit hours if the individual attended a community college or earned at least 90 credit hours if the individual attended a senior higher education institution.

[2] https://mhec.state.md.us/institutions_training/Pages/HEPrograms.aspx

[3] Due to the rapid changes that campuses throughout the state have embarked upon over the past few weeks, we recognize that campus staff, administrators and faculty are under terrible strain to sustain regular operations, including meeting mandated reporting or data collection. Last year, we required institutions to provide this information by June 1. However, this year we have extended that deadline to September 4, 2020.

[4] http://data.mhec.state.md.us This secure website requires authentication, therefore institutions will need to work with their IR office, which has user credentials to submit the Near Completer file. IR must use the MAC2 Unit Record Transfer option for submission.

Completers Initiative.

Institutional participation in this request is voluntary. Institutions that do not wish to participate in this initiative should notify Rhonda Wardlaw, Director of Communications, rhonda.wardlaw@maryland.gov, by September 4, 2020.

MHEC is required to submit a report to the General Assembly on this initiative. If an institution already has a Near Completer campaign or related efforts to encourage Near Completers to reenroll, we request that the institution provide a short narrative (500-1000 words) on that program to be included in the report. This narrative may include information on financial investment into the institution's initiative, data or metrics on the success of the initiative, and other relevant information the institution finds appropriate.

If an institution prefers to submit both Near Completer data and a narrative, please feel free to do so. Submit the data on the MHEC Data Website and send the narrative to Rhonda Wardlaw.

Questions regarding the Near Completer statewide communication campaign can be directed to Rhonda Wardlaw.

Item #	Data Element	Description
	Near Completer Initiative (NCI) **Due September 4, 2020** **One row per student**	
1	Insitution Name	Please provide your Institution's full name not acronym.
2	Insitution OPEID	Please provide the 8-digit OPEID for your institution. (FICE+2)
3	First Name	Provide Student's First Name (No numbers)
4	Last Name	Provide Student's Last Name (No numbers)
5	Non-Campus Email Address	Provide Student's last known non-campus email address
6	Last Known Street Address1	Provide last known address
7	Last Known Street Address2	Provide last known address
8	Last Known City	Provide last known City
9	Last Known State	Provide last known 2 character State ID (ie. MD)
10	Last Known Zip Code	Provide last known 5-digit zip code
11	Name of the Academic Program of Study	Provide the name of the last academic program of study. Do NOT use the numeric value.
12	Most Recent Date of Enrollment (YYYYYMMDD)	Provide the most recent date of enrollment using the YYYYMMDD format (ie. 20200601)