

Implementing Culture Change and Student Support Programs in Rural Postsecondary Educational Institutions

August 2025

The Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC) received a grant from the ECMC Foundation to expand *Caring Campus* among rural postsecondary educational institutions (PEIs) around the United States. IEBC interviewed leaders from these PEIs to better understand the challenges and advantages of implementing culture change and student support programs in their institutions. Additionally, faculty and staff at PEIs that are implementing *Caring Campus* were surveyed. This document provides the findings from those two efforts.

Part One: Background

Challenges Faced by Rural Postsecondary Educational Institutions

Rural postsecondary educational institutions (PEIs) face a number of challenges unique to their geographic location. As will be presented below, not all rural PEIs face all of these challenges and many have turned them into benefits.

One of the challenges is the smaller tax base, which affects resources available to the PEI and related decisions. Recent cuts to public funding of postsecondary education at the state level adds to this stress; the impact of which is disproportionate among rural PEIs. Lack of knowledge among residents about the benefits of a postsecondary education and negative attitudes toward postsecondary education among rural residents, generally, has an impact on enrollment. This is compounded by the limited number of available students and the need for students to travel further than their non-rural peers. Rural communities may have limited access to the internet and the means to access it. Rural PEIs also face difficulties attracting qualified staff, faculty, and leaders.

For many, the issues of being rural are confounded with being relatively small. Respondents tried to disaggregate the impact of these two and focus their responses on the challenges and advantages of being rural.

Caring Campus

Students come where they are welcome and stay where they feel cared about. If students don't feel connected to the PEI they attend, they are far less likely to persist and succeed, regardless of the academic interventions and support services the school has provided. As the Aspen Institute notes, "A culture of caring has become a hallmark of excellent community colleges."

The Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC) created *Caring Campus* based on research that shows students who feel more connected to their PEI are more likely to be retained, persist from semester to semester, and complete their academic goals. Increasing connectedness, therefore, can go a long way toward increasing the likelihood of maintaining enrollment.

IEBC has a proven method for creating a *Caring Campus* that ensures all students feel connected to their college and university. Over 150 colleges and universities are implementing *Caring Campus* around the country and they are seeing improvements in course retention and success and term-to-term persistence. Research demonstrates achievement gaps are being closed dramatically.

With little to no resource commitment beyond the initial IEBC coaching, *Caring Campus* drives behavior changes that improve and enhance the many student success initiatives already being implemented at PEIs around the United States. Using a unique coaching model, faculty and staff create implementation plans for behaviors that are easily implemented intentionally and campus-wide. Cabinet and department leadership commit to supporting, monitoring, and celebrating these behaviors. These groups work together to institutionalize *Caring Campus* behaviors across the college. *Caring Campus* goes immediately to scale after one or two semesters of coaching.

Caring Campus, however, is about more than student success. It is a culture changing endeavor that makes everyone—students, faculty, staff, and leadership—feel more connected to the institution. This results in greater employee satisfaction, sense of belonging and appreciation, and ownership of their role; all of which create a caring culture in the way these groups deal with each other.

Part Two: Leadership Interviews

Method

To be included in the study the institution had to be a rural PEI implementing *Caring Campus* for both faculty and staff. The three institutions included in the study represent multiple states and include two two-year community colleges and one four-year regional public university.

We interviewed the president and another leader from each PEI. In two of the PEIs, the second leader also was the *Caring Campus* liaison for the endeavor. Potential leader respondents initially were contacted by Dr. Brad C. Phillips, IEBC president/CEO, to encourage participation. The study lead then set up individual appointments for one-hour videoconference interviews. Respondents received a copy of the interview protocol in advance to facilitate timely completion of the conversation.

All interviews started on time and took one hour or less. The interviews were casual and friendly. With permission from the respondent, each interview was recorded. The interviewer also took notes during the conversations.

Findings

In this section we present the findings of the six interviews. It is notable that the advantages and challenges of leading a rural PEI, and implementing student success and culture change efforts, were linked, universally, to the sense of community in rural settings. Across the interviews, respondents identified three salient aspects of the ways in which the links to community are operationalized: the nature of the rural community setting, the PEI as a community center, and the PEI as an economic driver for the community.

Community Settings

Respondents were unanimous and emphatic in their conviction that the rural community setting is one of the most—if not the most—salient factors in defining the rural PEI.

First, respondents noted that the notion of community extends beyond the students, faculty, staff, and leadership on campus. The community at rural PEIs includes the families, businesses, local government, and organizations found in the surrounding area. Relationships with these are bidirectional. These groups, which exist beyond the boundaries of the campus, influence and are a part of the culture of the PEI. And the folks at the PEI must consider these groups when implementing programs.

PEI leaders note the need to be transparent and authentic in every communication and action. They note that if community members detect any sense of phoniness, the sense of mistrust of higher education immediately comes to the fore. Relationships in the community are central and the PEI must be a part of those relationships. One respondent noted, “everyone sees everything.”

A couple of respondents noted the ways of doing business are different in the rural setting. They are more likely to seal an agreement with a handshake; any contract or other documentation is merely support. These include links to local high schools for outreach efforts, participation in community events, community participation in campus events, hiring, and more, “When a business leader told me that if we produce qualified graduates the jobs will be there for them, I had to take him at his word. Of course, he came through.”

Community settings also are perceived as caring in a number of ways. These include feeling responsible for one’s neighbors, participation in community activities created to assist those in need, and supporting youth who might need assistance in defining and achieving their goals. Supporting youth is understood by PEI leaders to include outreach to high schools and other high school programs (e.g., dual enrollment), creating economic opportunities for young adults and educating students about these opportunities, and often being a center for youth events.

It was noted that most community members started from a position of trust and it was up to the PEI to make or break that trust. One leader noted their predecessor was not trusted by the community and was seen as an outsider who did not understand the day-to-day life of the students and their families. This respondent spent a considerable amount of time when first hired meeting casually with community leaders, attending community social events, and engaging in a variety of behaviors that demonstrated they were interested in being a part of the community, personally as well as professionally.

Implications for implementing culture change and student support efforts. The culture of rural communities must be taken into consideration when implementing culture change and student support initiatives. PEI leaders must become a part of the community to maintain trust. Rural communities are experienced as inherently caring and the PEI must match this with their own culture. If any of these are not understood or taken for granted, the PEI risks losing valuable community support for any and all efforts.

Community Centers

Many rural PEIs are the cultural, artistic, and gathering centers for their communities. There often are limited opportunities in rural areas for community members to enjoy concerts, speakers, festivals, celebrate holidays, and more. The PEI fills this gap. In one community, there are no movie theaters and the PEI provides access to films.

The PEI media center often is the most up-to-date place for community members to access a variety of resources. Library cards are available to the entire community and not just students. Free internet access and available hardware (tablets, computers, etc.) can be the only link to the world wide web for many community residents.

Respondents report that rural PEIs serve as community centers for essential services, generally and in times of crisis. Local radio stations operate out of the PEI and broadcast emergency alerts and services. The physical plant at many rural PEIs has been used to house residents whose homes were destroyed by natural disasters. Food banks, elder support programs, medical and dental clinics, and more have been provided at the PEIs.

Implications for implementing culture change and student support efforts. Rural PEIs fulfill a variety of non-educational roles in their communities and regions. PEIs fulfill some roles that are essential and others that are ancillary. However, all of these position the PEI as a center for the rural community. To successfully implement endeavors such as student support efforts and culture change, PEI leadership can take advantage of the roles their institution fulfills by being trusted and consistent partners and by demonstrating the values they are attempting to realize at their institutions.

Community Economic Drivers

Leadership at rural PEIs were unanimous in their description of the institution as a key economic driver in their community. Respondents noted they are more important partners with local economic development councils, government, and industry leaders than non-rural PEIs.

Respondents noted that they are affected by, and have an effect on, the local economy. They must be more sensitive to the needs of local industry and are seen by the community as responsible for a considerable amount of the training that occurs for the local job market. For example, one PEI was responsible for bringing new industry to the region when the longtime industries, textiles and furniture, left; creating large unemployment issues. Leadership fulfilled an important role convincing new industry owners and consortium they could ensure training programs that met their needs. They turned the local economy around into a successful industrial center. Another PEI works closely with a regional medical center to ensure they have adequate numbers of trained personnel in a variety of fields and disciplines; including a new somnology (sleep medicine) center, for which the PEI also assisted with medical center accreditation for the program.

Community members, especially potential students, often find unexpected value in a postsecondary education. The PEI must educate the local community about the many benefits of a certificate or degree at the personal, community, and regional levels if they are to fill the needs of local businesses and industries.

Implications for implementing culture change and student support efforts. Because rural PEIs fulfill a central role in the economic success of their regions and communities, it is essential they demonstrate that they are concerned with the well-being of their students and employees. This well-being must be communicated in meaningful ways including being responsive to, and responsible for, changes in the business landscape. Rural PEIs also must create a culture of care for their own employees. Finally, rural PEIs cannot assume their value is widely understood and must undertake efforts to educate both sides of the economic partnership: potential employers and potential students. As noted elsewhere, authenticity is key.

Behaviors Supporting Successful Implementation

The Community College Research Center (CCRC) at Teachers College, Columbia University produced a research report that identified seven behaviors PEI leaders employ to successfully implement student support and culture change endeavors such as *Caring Campus*.¹ We asked respondents for their thoughts about how these behaviors are implemented differently among rural PEIs.

Communicating the vision. One respondent noted that this is highly dependent upon how leadership, faculty, and staff view their students. It is easy to view rural students as deficient and unprepared when they arrive at the PEI. However, this deficit standpoint undermines the ability to communicate a vision of a caring culture and student support. Multiple respondents noted that the tighter community can make it easier to communicate the vision, which also is made easier by the relatively fewer number of people to reach.

Modeling behavioral commitments. This is especially salient among rural PEIs because everyone—on campus and off—is watching leadership. One respondent noted, “Things are slower and the community knows if you’re truly who you say you are. There is less noise.” That is, authenticity is obvious to the community watching PEI leadership behaviors because administrators (and others) are part of the community and their behavior is not filtered. There is no difference between on-campus and off-campus behavior.

Aligning new and existing work. Because of limited resources, it is essential to make decisions about modifying existing work and not simply adapting the new. Tough questions must be asked. Community transparency also has an impact on this alignment because the broader community often has an emotional tie to the PEI and, sometimes, to what was in place before the PEI was founded (e.g., one PEI was built on land donated by a longtime ranch family with strong historic and current ties to the community). It helps to clearly show how the new work already is a part of existing practices whenever possible; that it is an extension or expansion of what is known.

Establishing effective human resource practices. This begins with finding the talent, which can be a challenge. If the PEI goes too far afield in hiring, it can send a message that the local community is not good enough. Therefore, there is a greater need to grow their own talent and develop leadership. This also creates a need for highly effective onboarding practices. Also, because of limited number of leaders, faculty, and staff there is more need for cross-training. This

¹ Barnett, E.A., Cho, S., & Lopez-Salazar, A. (2023). *Implementing Caring Campus: Strategies College Presidents Use to Improve Culture and Support Reform*. New York, NY Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University.

can be an advantage because more people know what is going on in multiple departments and committees.

Creating relevant structures. It is essential to be intentional and strategic. There is little room for error or adopting a fix-it approach. Rural PEIs don't have resources to spare. Clarity and transparency are highly important so everyone knows the structures that are in place to support students and advance culture. In other words, leaders at PEIs have to go beyond creating the structures and ensure everyone is aware of them.

Staying in touch. It is generally agreed that it is easier to stay in touch at rural PEIs because the PEI also serves as a cultural center for the community or region; and there are more opportunities to run into people casually. It was noted by leaders with experience at non-rural PEIs that adjunct faculty also are interested and willing to be more involved than at non-rural PEIs.

Celebrating wins. As with other strategies, resources are key. There isn't less celebrating than at non-rural PEIs. But, every celebration and what is celebrated has to matter. Celebrations also tend to be more inclusive, which can reduce the sense of verticality in the organizational structure of the PEI.

Conclusion

Although rural PEIs face a number of challenges unique to their setting, leaders report meeting these challenges in innovative ways. Furthermore, they take advantage of what they experience as benefits of being in a rural community.

Key to building successful efforts is the relationship between the PEI and the community and region. Leaders report many ways in which relationships are crucial to implementing a wide variety of endeavors, including culture change, student support, and even the passage of local bond efforts. Respondents note that the PEI must be a trusted community center and economic development partner; and they also must understand the rural community setting in all of its complexity.

Rural community members are willing to give the benefit of the doubt to their local PEI, despite a prevalent mistrust of higher education. However, it is the responsibility of PEI leaders to communicate the value proposition of a postsecondary degree or certificate; as well as the economic value of the PEI to the region. On campus and in the community, leadership must behave in ways that do not violate that trust and that reinforce the campus culture they wish to create.

Finally, if culture change and student support efforts are to succeed, the PEI must be transparent and honest in community relations. Leadership can foster these relationships by being a part of the community. Following through on leadership's word is at the heart of these relationships. And it is essential that leaders do not adopt a deficit model when considering how to support students, potential students, and the community-at-large.

Part Three: *Caring Campus* Faculty and Professional Staff Surveys

In this section we present the results of national surveys of faculty and professional staff at rural postsecondary educational institutions (PEIs) that are implementing *Caring Campus*.

Method

Faculty and professional staff at *Caring Campus* PEIs were contacted using a variety of media to inform them about the survey and encourage them to participate. Faculty and professional staff received different surveys, customized to the *Caring Campus* behavioral commitments and techniques for making them intentional and campus-wide. As an incentive to complete the survey, respondents were put into a drawing for a gift card if they were willing to provide contact information to be notified if selected.

Summary

In this section we summarize the results of the faculty and professional staff surveys separately. Complete survey responses can be found in the Appendix.

Survey responses from faculty and professional staff were very positive about their *Caring Campus* coaching experience, implementation progress, and expectations for impact on their role at their college or university, campus culture, and student success. It also should be noted that these rural PEIs are, for the most part, early in their implementation phase. This means there has not been ample opportunity to implement all the behavioral commitments and campus-wide activities, which can take time and planning.

Caring Campus Faculty Survey

Faculty perceive benefits of participating in *Caring Campus* with all respondents (100 percent) reporting they appreciate being included in *Caring Campus*. All respondents also report they understand the relationship between students feeling connected to the PEI and their educational success.

The *Caring Campus* coaching experience is viewed positively. All but one respondent reported their *Caring Campus* coach was knowledgeable about the issues, coaching sessions were a good use of their time, and they were treated with respect and valued as a faculty member in the coaching sessions.

All but one respondent also found that *Caring Campus* helps confirm the value of faculty at their PEI. They also state they will be a leader and advocate for *Caring Campus* at their institution. Faculty are firm in their belief that *Caring Campus* will lead to improved sense of connectedness for their students. These indicate a strong positive belief that their efforts will be fruitful.

Survey items with the lowest rate of agreement are related to implementing the *Caring Campus* behavioral commitments. This includes the extent to which behavioral commitments are being implemented successfully and as planned. As noted above, this likely is due to these PEIs being in early stages of implementation. More than one respondent noted the survey comes early in their *Caring Campus* experience.

Most respondents report high levels of support from the leadership at their college or university. This support is realized via modeling behavioral commitments, committing resources, and integrating *Caring Campus* into campus events and activities. By far, faculty are least likely to notice leadership talking about *Caring Campus* with others. Faculty are most likely to notice *Caring Campus* being on meeting agendas.

Faculty report fairly strong implementation of the *Caring Campus* behavioral commitments. These include learning and using students' preferred names, welcome to the course activities, clear and comprehensive syllabi, and assigning and assessing early and often. Better than two-thirds of faculty report practicing situational fairness and compassionate coaching, which often meets with the most resistance among faculty. Least likely to be implemented was a commitment to meet with every student to get to know them. This can be a demand on faculty time, especially among adjunct faculty.

Behaviors supporting *Caring Campus*, an indication of institutionalization and sustainability, are being implemented at these PEIs. Many of these, if not already occurring, are planned for the future including convocations and campus-wide rollout, professional development, and branding (e.g., t-shirts, videos, newsletters, and branded welcome events for students).

Faculty report the most important part of *Caring Campus* was collaborating with their peers and learning from them. Issues that remain unclear for faculty are related to implementation processes and procedures, and also to leadership support. These are likely to be clarified with time as implementation progresses. Faculty are most hopeful about the potential for *Caring Campus* to have a positive impact on students and result in culture change at their institution.

Caring Campus Professional Staff Survey

As with faculty, professional staff also perceive benefits of participating in *Caring Campus* with all respondents reporting they appreciate being included in *Caring Campus*. All respondents also reported they understand the relationship between students feeling connected to the PEI and their educational success.

The *Caring Campus* coaching experience is viewed positively. All but two respondents reported their *Caring Campus* coach was knowledgeable about the issues and that they were treated with respect and valued as a professional staff member in the coaching sessions. Over 85 percent of respondents believe *Caring Campus* coaching was a valuable use of their time. Similar response rates were found for the extent to which *Caring Campus* confirmed the value of professional staff at their college or university. Almost all believe they will be a leader and advocate for *Caring Campus* at their institution.

Survey items with the lowest rate of agreement are related to implementing the *Caring Campus* behavioral commitments. This includes the extent to which behavioral commitments are being implemented successfully and as planned. There is some concern about colleagues' excitement about *Caring Campus*. Again, this likely is due to the fact that these rural PEIs are in the early stages of implementation.

Most respondents report moderately strong levels of support from the leadership at their college or university. Approximately two-thirds of respondents note leadership engage in a variety of

supports including modeling behaviors, committing resources, including *Caring Campus* in events and activities, and talking about *Caring Campus* with others. Professional staff are least satisfied with their ability to obtain release time to engage in *Caring Campus* activities. This is followed by committing resources for branding (e.g., t-shirts, videos, newsletters, and branded welcome events for students). Although low compared to other supports, neither was exceptionally low (41 and 48 percent, respectively).

Professional staff report strong implementation of the *Caring Campus* behavioral commitments. Ninety-five percent or more report professional staff at their college or university are wearing nametags, approaching students around campus instead of waiting for students to approach them (the ten-foot rule), and improvements to welcome week. Warm referrals are reported by 90 percent of respondents. Least likely to be implemented was a commitment to detailed and accurate directories (82 percent likely to implement).

Behaviors supporting *Caring Campus* are being implemented at these PEIs, an early indication of institutionalization and sustainability. Professional staff report high implementation rates for convocations and campus-wide rollout for *Caring Campus* and the development of a *Caring Campus* logo. Professional staff are least likely to report changes to formal recognition of staff including instituting or revising professional staff recognition programs and staff appreciation days. It should be noted that when low implementation rates are reported, professional staff acknowledge these are planned for the future.

Professional staff report the most important part of *Caring Campus* was collaborating with their colleagues. They also appreciate specific techniques and behavioral commitments to improve the student experience and campus culture. They value the increased sense of connectedness resulting from *Caring Campus* implementation. As with faculty, issues that remain unclear for professional staff are related to details about implementation processes and procedures, and also leadership support. Professional staff are most hopeful about the potential for *Caring Campus* to have a positive impact on students and result in culture change at their institution. Because *Caring Campus for Professional Staff* is implemented before *Caring Campus for Faculty* at most institutions, professional staff also report hopefulness about the impact of faculty implementation.

Conclusions

The responses from faculty and professional staff at rural PEIs are similar to those at PEIs around the country that are implementing *Caring Campus*. A vast majority of respondents report *strongly agree* or *agree* to the survey items, which were stated in a positive way. Negative attitudes and responses are outliers from the broader sentiment.

Respondents report they benefitted from their *Caring Campus* coaching sessions and believe their college or university will be a better place having implemented the behavioral commitments. This is true for the institution's culture of caring as well as having a positive impact on student metrics such as course retention and success, term-to-term persistence, degree completion, and transfer.

Concerns are not unique to rural PEIs. These are related to successful implementation campus-wide, leadership support, and honest and transparent implementation, institutionalization, and sustainability. For these rural colleges and universities, this is related to early implementation and likely will improve with time.

Reports of implementation progress among faculty and professional staff also mirror those nationally. *Caring Campus* behavioral commitments are being implemented with varying degrees of success. However, implementation rates are strong. Professional staff behavioral commitments are more likely to be implemented than faculty behavioral commitments. For some respondents, this is because implementation is just getting underway at their institution.

Responses to open-ended survey items were mostly positive. Faculty and professional staff believe in the core aspects of *Caring Campus*: improvements in campus culture and student success. Negative responses leaned toward constructive suggestions for implementation at their institution or by IEBC in the future.

Caring Campus is having considerable positive impact at rural PEIs according to faculty and professional staff. And these impacts are likely to continue and grow with time.

Appendix
Caring Campus Faculty and Professional Staff Survey Results

Caring Campus Faculty Survey

Twenty-two faculty members from six PEIs and fifty-six professional staff members from eight PEIs responded to the surveys.

1. I appreciated being included in Caring Campus.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
77.27% 17	22.73% 5	0%	0%

2. I understand the relationship between students feeling connected to my college/university and their educational success.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
90.91% 20	9.09% 2	0%	0%

3. Our Caring Campus coach was knowledgeable about the issues we discussed.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
77.27% 17	18.18% 4	4.55% 1	0.00%

4. The Caring Campus coaching sessions were a good use of my time.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63.64% 14	31.82% 7	4.55% 1	0.00%

5. I was treated with respect and valued as a faculty member in the Caring Campus coaching sessions.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
72.73% 16	22.73% 5	4.55% 1	0.00%

6. Caring Campus helped to confirm the value of faculty at my college/university.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
59.09%	36.36%	0.00%	4.55%
13	8		1

7. I will be a leader and advocate for Caring Campus at my college/university.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
81.82%	13.64%	4.55%	0.00%
18	3	1	

8. Our behavioral commitments are being implemented successfully.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
50%	40.91%	4.55%	4.55%
11	9	1	1

9. The Caring Campus work is valuable to my college/university.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
72.73%	22.73%	4.55%	0.00%
16	5	1	

10. Our college leadership is committed to supporting Caring Campus at our institution.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
72.73%	22.73%	0.00%	4.55%
16	5		1

11. Our behavioral commitments will lead to improved sense of connectedness for our students.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63.64%	31.82%	4.55%	0.00%
14	7	1	

12. Our behavioral commitments are being implemented as planned.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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40.91% 9	50% 11	4.55% 1	4.55% 1
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13. A group of faculty are meeting to implement Caring Campus.

Yes	No
86.36% 19	13.64% 3

14. Caring Campus helped to confirm the value of making connections in the classroom.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63.64% 14	36.36% 8	0.00%	0.00%

15. My colleagues are excited about Caring Campus.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13.64% 3	72.73% 16	9.09% 2	4.55% 1

16. Our campus leadership is supporting Caring Campus in the following ways (select all that apply)

Committing resources to support Caring Campus activities	77.27% 17
Providing professional development linked to Caring Campus behavioral commitments	72.73% 16
Putting Caring Campus on the agenda at meetings	81.82% 18
Including Caring Campus in convocations, staff development days, or other events.	68.18% 15
Talking about Caring Campus with others	18.18% 4
Providing release time for professional staff to engage in Caring Campus activities	41.07% 23
Other ways not noted above, please list	9.09% 2

- Too early, nothing has started yet
- I believe we want to SAY we're a "Caring Campus" without needing to actually BE a caring campus.

17. Which of the following Caring Campus behavioral commitments have been implemented at your campus:

	Implemented Fully	Implemented Partially	Not Implemented
Welcome to the course activities	13.64% 3	54.55% 12	31.82% 7
Learning and using students' preferred names	18.18% 4	59.09% 13	22.73% 5
Clear and comprehensive syllabus	22.73% 5	50% 11	27.27% 5

	Implemented Fully	Implemented Partially	Not Implemented
Meeting with every student to get to know them	13.64% 3	40.91% 9	45.45% 10
Assignments and assessments early and often	13.64% 3	59.09% 13	27.27% 6
Practicing situational fairness and compassionate coaching	9.09% 2	59.09% 13	31.82% 7

18. Which of the following are occurring or have occurred at your campus (check all that apply):²

	One Time Event	Multiple Occurrences	Planned for Future
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² Percentages may add to more than 100% because respondents could select more than one option (e.g., their school might already have done these one or more times and have more planned for the future).

Convocation or campus-wide rollout for Caring Campus	23.81% 5	4.76% 1	71.43% 15
Developed a Caring Campus logo	5.56% 1	7.84% 4	83.33% 15
Professional development for faculty related to Caring Campus	9.52% 2	31.82% 14	71.43% 15
Obtained t-shirts, pins, or other items branded with Caring Campus	10.53% 2	12.50% 6	63.16% 12
Created a Caring Campus video	19.05% 4	13.73% 7	76.19% 16
Disseminated a Caring Campus newsletter	5.26% 1	15.79% 6	94.74% 18
Held welcome events for students that were branded with Caring Campus	0.00%	19.05% 4	80.95% 17

19. What was the most impactful part of participating in Caring Campus for you?

- Communication with all students, not just my own.
- learning different ideas from other faculty members
- Being able to collaborate with colleagues on the value of students at our institution.
- conversations
- Gaining ideas for ways that faculty can implement Caring Campus in their classes.
- Learning that there are more instructors that think the same way I did about caring campus.
- Hearing about activities and ways other faculty are implementing caring campus
- The focus on people and caring in general to make meaningful change
- Networking with Colleagues and Discussing How to Best Implement Caring Campus Practices.
- Seeing the things that everyone notices about caring.
- The most impactful is seeing how we are already doing most of these commitments.
- The training event that I attended
- Letting me know that what I've been doing all along is making a real difference with students.
- Interacting with colleagues
- Being recognized by administration.

- Having the opportunity to meet with other faculty from across all of our campuses to engage in meaningful work to improve student success and engagement.
- Meeting other colleagues, sharing, and hearing caring moments experienced was the most impactful for me.
- Learning more about the relationship between faculty and students.
- Working with colleagues and hearing their ideas about how to better support students.
- The lack of caring from our administration.
- Learning new things that I have not thought about it before
- Meeting with like-minded faculty who care of student success and planning for future implementation.

20. Some questions or issues about Caring Campus that remain for me are:

- Is faculty implementing our caring campus initiatives?
- is it going to work?
- I still worry about ALL campus faculty changing their ways
- How can we encourage buy-in from all faculty and track implementation - especially with adjunct faculty
- How to effectively assess the impact of the behavioral commitments
- I am not entirely sure what it is in its entirety due to the communication from administration.
- Are release time and compensation planned?
- This hasn't been implemented as of yet. I am curious about the response of other faculty members and my role in encouraging the commitments.
- I am concerned about the some of the negativity that faculty are talking about in regards to Caring Campus.
- The university administration is not taking the lead in implementing the caring campus agenda.
- What support will be available to new and continuing faculty in the program?
- It's a bummer because I believe that Caring Campus is a good organization; we just aren't doing the appropriate work to benefit from it.
- The best ways to share and encourage other faculty to participate

21. What are you most hopeful about when Caring Campus is implemented at your college/university?

- That students feel welcomed at our campus.
- connecting with other faculty members
- I am most hopeful that more faculty than not will buy-in fully with the implementation of the behavioral commitments.
- change across campus
- To have students feel cared about and connected to the college.
- That the students will feel more connected to our campus
- Faculty and students will feel more connected to campus as a whole
- A change in culture and how people approach and converse with each other
- That all colleagues will work together for implementation.
- That it spreads a sense of community

- Seeing the positive change in students and the work they submit.
- That it will be utilized to help students and not simply as another initiative or only to boost enrollment numbers.
- Other faculty making these connections
- Student buy-in
- Our faculty will form connections with students and colleagues.
- I look forward to improved student success, retention, and graduation rates.
- Student success
- It will be received respectfully.
- I hope it will help with our retention and time to degree
- I don't think it'll be implemented. SWOCC thinks they can do things their way and not follow the research behind CC.
- To make students, faculty and staff well cared and valued
- That it will be widely embraced and become part of the culture.

22. Comments, suggestions, or feedback about Caring Campus:

- would love another presentation
- keep working
- keep up the good work
- Consider offering four work sessions (instead of three) prior to sharing process and progress with administration.
- unsure at this time
- This is an excellent initiative to rally everyone around. The focus on caring and acting in a caring way are essential to all components of success at any institution.
- Having and "I don't know" option on many questions would help the integrity of your survey.
- Need regularly scheduled meetings, release time, compensation
- The survey doesn't reflect the fact that our campus is in the planning stage. This will skew the data for implementation of behavioral commitments.
- I am so excited that TVCC was chosen to receive this grant!
- Having access to a supportive caring campus website dedicated to continued learning and sharing personal experiences would be incredibly valuable.
- Should have been implemented earlier.
- Thanks for the wonderful training!
- Thanks for sending this survey. This is an example of checking-in that our admin doesn't do/want to do.
- All is good and it was a great thing for our campus and students and faculty and staff and community
- This is a wonderful program

Caring Campus Professional Staff Survey

1. I appreciated being included in Caring Campus.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
64.29%	35.71%	0%	0%
36	20		

2. I understand the relationship between students feeling connected to my college/university and their educational success.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
76.79%	23.21%	0%	0%
43	13		

3. Our Caring Campus coach was knowledgeable about the issues we discussed.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
62.50%	33.93%	1.79%	1.79%
35	19	1	1

4. The Caring Campus coaching sessions were a good use of my time.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
51.79%	33.93%	12.50%	1.79%
29	19	7	1

5. I was treated with respect and valued as a classified professional staff member in the Caring Campus coaching sessions.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
64.29%	35.71%	0%	0%
36	20		

6. Caring Campus helped to confirm the value of classified professional staff at my college/university.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
53.57%	35.71%	7.14%	3.57%
30	20	4	2

7. I will be a leader and advocate for Caring Campus at my college/university.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
58.93% 33	35.71% 20	5.36% 3	0%

8. Our behavioral commitments are being implemented successfully at my college/university.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
33.93% 19	55.36% 31	10.71% 6	0%

9. The Caring Campus work is valuable to my college/university.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
62.50% 35	35.71% 20	1.79% 1	0%

10. Our college leadership is committed to supporting Caring Campus at our institution.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
48.21% 27	44.64% 25	7.14% 4	0%

11. Our behavioral commitments will lead to improved sense of connectedness for our students.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
51.79% 29	42.86% 24	5.36% 3	0%

12. Our behavioral commitments are being implemented as planned.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
28.57% 16	55.36% 31	16.07% 9	0%

13. My colleagues are excited about Caring Campus.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17.86%	57.14%	23.21%	1.79%
10	32	13	1

14. A group of professional staff are meeting to implement Caring Campus.

Yes	No
92.86%	7.14%
52	4

15. Our campus leadership is supporting Caring Campus in the following ways (select all that apply)

Doing Caring Campus behavioral commitments themselves	69.64%
	39
Committing resources to support Caring Campus activities	62.50%
	35
Committing resources to obtain t-shirts, pins, or other Caring Campus items	48.21%
	27
Putting Caring Campus on the agenda at meetings	58.93%
	33
Including Caring Campus in convocations, staff development days, or other events.	62.50%
	35
Talking about Caring Campus with others	69.64%
	39
Providing release time for professional staff to engage in Caring Campus activities	41.07%
	23

- We are now in the midst of aligning efforts to include Caring Campus strategies
- My supervisors aren't doing anything noticeable other than recommending my participation.

16. Which of the following Caring Campus behavioral commitments have been implemented at your campus:

	Implemented Fully	Implemented Partially	Not Implemented
Wearing a nametag	44.64%	53.57%	1.79%
	25	30	1
Detailed and accurate directories	33.93%	48.21%	17.86%
	19	27	10
Warm referrals	48.21%	41.07%	10.71%
	27	23	6

Ten-foot rule	50% 28	44.64% 25	5.36% 3
Improve welcome week for students	73.21% 41	23.21% 13	3.57% 2

17. Which of the following are occurring or have occurred at your campus (check all that apply):³

	One Time Event	Multiple Occurrences	Planned for Future
Convocation or campus-wide rollout for Caring Campus	52.83% 28	30.19% 16	16.98% 9
Developed a Caring Campus logo	60.78% 31	7.84% 4	31.37% 16
Instituted or revised our professional staff recognition program	25% 11	31.82% 14	43.18% 19
Held a staff appreciation day	20.45% 9	38.64% 17	40.91% 18
Improved our campus department directories	36% 18	28% 14	36% 18
Obtained nametags for others on campus	23.53% 12	47.06% 24	29.41% 15
Professional development for staff related to Caring Campus	34.04% 16	42.55% 20	23.40% 11

	One Time Event	Multiple Occurrences	Planned for Future
Obtained t-shirts, pins, or other items branded with Caring Campus	41.67% 20	12.50% 6	45.83% 22
Created a Caring Campus video	49.02% 25	13.73% 7	37.25% 19
Disseminated a Caring Campus newsletter	18.42% 7	15.79% 6	65.79% 25
Held welcome events for students that were branded with Caring Campus	20.93% 9	58.14% 25	20.93% 9

³ Percentages may add to more than 100% because respondents could select more than one option (e.g., their school might already have done these one or more times and have more planned for the future).

18. What was the most impactful part of participating in Caring Campus for you?

- Discussion of updating the directory
- covering techniques like warm referrals and 10 foot rule - a good recap
- Working together with colleagues from other departments has been beneficial.
- people
- Coming up with ideas to spread the word.
- getting to know and hear from staff from other parts of the college
- Feeding our students
- I like being part of a team.
- Being the change in the world, helping students feel connected.
- The most impactful for me is knowing that we are working to make our students feel welcome and comfortable.
- Connection with staff, understanding of a shared goal to support students.
- the staff coming together to support our students
- The behaviors and concept
- Seeing our college taking the next step with pride
- A collective awareness that this is important for all employees.
- More interaction with our students.
- Makes staff more aware of their behavior and actions.
- Networking
- Seeing the few others that want to back up the idea.
- Working together as a team to improve staff and student experiences.
- hearing about what other campuses are doing
- Learning how Caring Campus can be implemented
- Vision
- Brainstorming of staff.
- Collaborating with our team to plan for campus initiatives
- Letting the staff plan the implementation
- Staying involved for the betterment of our campus
- Making sure food is available for students. Food pantry and placed in baskets around campus every morning.
- Doing a Google search to find the toolkit and resources for Caring Campus that were not given to us. It was MONTHS after our coaching sessions that these were even found, requiring us to go back to the drawing board and start all over again. We had done no assessments and were only given the behavioral commitments and told to implement them, not realizing there was a significant amount of other work that needed to be done.
- Seeing just how many faculty/staff are determined to provide meaningful interactions with our students and visitors.
- Students appreciate the Welcome week activities
- warm handoff
- Hearing from others around campus and their concerns and what each department does.

- the most impactful part was realizing the quality of time I am putting into assisting students.
- Staff input
- Being able to take basic ideas and making them something to show our students that we care about them
- Seeing the change in our students. I feel like students are more comfortable asking for help and talking to staff and faculty in general.
- Caring Campus implementation has really paved the way for us to sit down and have candid conversations about issues we need to address such as updating our campus directory and making it clear. It also highlighted that issue that we have to do better internally to communicate who does what.
- Creating working groups to strategically implement initiatives.
- Warm referrals
- Being involved from the start to bring awareness to the campus and others
- Seeing how much of Caring Campus we are already implementing.
- Remembering that our students do need the connections to staff and faculty and that the Caring Campus Behavioral Commitments are big step in doing that.
- Helping to make others aware or just something little can make a impact.
- Full awareness of campus needs regarding student success
- Meeting with staff from around the college and working together
- 10 foot rule
- The discussions with staff members across campus and the way we worked together to see the need for and make changes.
- Seeing everyone being more purposeful about the behaviors.
- Watching the Welcome Week first days of class and how the students appreciated being greeted and seeing tents manned by our staff; it was amazing.
- Working towards one goal to benefit the students
- The interaction across campus with staff, faculty and students.
- Impacting current and future students!

19. Some questions or issues about Caring Campus that remain for me are:

- These things help people visiting the campus but not sure that it will contribute to retention.
- There is a disconnect between faculty and professional staff. It seems like faculty should be looped in from the very beginning since much of the ways care is communicated comes from their handling of student concerns.
- The initiation of Caring Campus for faculty.
- how do we get more staff to invest. right now it seems like a very small group is keeping it going.
- Will this continue or will it fizzle out?
- Why isn't top leadership who brought Caring Campus to our institutions NOT participating in and exemplifying the core values?
- Not everyone is on board no matter how hard we try
- How to continue momentum and focus on behaviors versus "caring things or events"

- not being sure that the employees will stick with it
- Will we have a follow-up meeting?
- Is there more behaviors we could be looking at?
- Here for the students
- Very few if any in my office want to participate. Additionally my department is not well made for CC.
- Best way to implement for online students, and adjunct workers.
- Lack of accountability
- We still have some people who need convincing...I'd love ideas on how to encourage 100% buy in.
- What are we doing for faculty implementation?
- I feel like it might lose momentum.
- When providing coaching sessions, it is imperative that your coaches know to provide directives about how to assess current students, staff, and faculty at the beginning, and to fully and completely explain what the Caring campus initiative is. Our coaching sessions, respectfully, provided no context or direction and it was only through research of our own staff that the toolkit and training resources were found online.
- many leaders do not wear name tags but expect everyone else to do this. If we are going to implement things, it starts from the top down
- We still have staff/faculty that do not greet everyone or seem friendly to approach.
- Long term - what does this look like? Once we fix the directories, wear the name tags (or have systems in place to keep them going) - what's next?
- We still need to create a logo and I also wonder about resources when it comes to planning events or purchasing.
- We did not receive the complete training, and the coaches were not as hands-on as they needed to be with our working groups.
- How do we keep the Caring Campus energy alive as the years go by? We don't want it to fizzle out.
- More aware of students experiences
- Enthusiasm has diminished
- Bigger budget to plan more Caring Campus Events
- no one is driving people to participate
- I am concerned the Caring Campus team can continue to make noticeable improvements for our students.
- How to keep the excitement going.
- How people were voted and received staff recognition for Caring Campus spirit at the May luncheon.
- campus buy in

20. What are you most hopeful about when Caring Campus is implemented at your college/university?

- I hope all staff greet the students in the halls. After COVID, they seem to like it, honestly. I want everyone to feel welcome.

- Continued collaboration
- Ten foot rule.
- better communication about ways to support our students
- Faculty implementation
- The college will have a more positive and welcoming environment for EVERYONE.
- Building a community where everyone feels welcome and connected
- That students will feel comfortable at our campus
- That we connect more with each other and our students so they can achieve success.
- showing the students that we are here to help them
- These behaviors will align with current strategies like our core beliefs
- Caring Campus Day for the students
- Others will see that they can make a difference in students' lives, regardless of role.
- That the behaviors we have implemented help our student be more successful.
- That everyone embraces Caring Campus with enthusiasm
- Better Enrollment in students and resources.
- Increased retention
- the closeness to all students and helping them
- The warm responses of incoming students
- 10 ft Rule
- Empowering staff leaders.
- That the community sees a difference when they visit our campus.
- Culture shift
- Staying informed and caring about betterment of the university
- I hope that the faculty are successful with their implementation.
- Hopeful in seeing more students being shown that they are not just people here but that they are also family on our caring campus.
- Updated directory and nametags
- It keeps our students happy to have help all around them.
- that the attitude and goals remain!
- Warm referrals being implemented campus wide
- Students will be more comfortable in an environment that they feel cared about
- I hope that it sparks our staff to be more intentional with their day to day interactions with each other as well as the students we serve
- That CC behaviors will become the norm and have a ripple effect on our City as well. It is one thing for students to feel comfortable on campus, but I would like that to spread throughout Kingsville.
- I hope that we will continue to add new staff members to the Caring Campus team. Our campus has embraced Caring Campus, but it is always great to have new people rotate on the committee so we can continue to have fresh ideas.
- A change of culture.
- students feeling at home on campus
- Interaction with everyone and caring mentality across the board of all levels
- Cross Departmental Awareness. Knowing who to transfer calls and emails to.

- That students will think the staff and faculty are the friendliest and most helpful out of all the colleges they visit
- To bridge the gap between students and faculty and staff.
- Connection!
- Better communication with others at the college
- seeing happier students
- My hope is the Caring Campus team is able to continue to be a valuable committee on campus long term.
- Great satisfaction, retention, and personal success and wellness for our students.
- I hope that the vigor and passion for showing our students we care does not wane.
- students remain the main focus
- Bringing Faculty and Staff members together for one mission- a Caring Campus

21. Comments, suggestions, or feedback about Caring Campus:

- The points that were focused on for caring campus were already being implemented in our office. These qualities in people are what we value in our employees and I would hope that was the case across campus.
- Thanks for coming to our campus!
- Great program for our institution.
- more diversity in the voices
- If you are going to bring an initiative to a company/organization and expect staff to adhere to the new policies, you should adhere to them as well (most of top leadership do not).
- This is a great way to connect the entire College for our ultimate goal of student success.
- mostly it's a good program that everyone seems to support
- Great program supporting common sense behaviors that are overlooked all too often.
- Have it in person
- Grateful that we were selected to participate
- Great Program
- I worry that it is not inclusive enough. I would like for more people to be able to attend the working group meetings etc.
- When providing coaching sessions, it is imperative that your coaches know to provide directives about how to assess current students, staff, and faculty at the beginning, and to fully and completely explain what the Caring campus initiative is. Our coaching sessions, respectfully, provided no context or direction and it was only through research of our own staff that the toolkit and training resources were found online.
- Great initiative for student success
- I believe this was a great way to get us focusing on our areas that need to be addressed and get the whole campus involved.
- More support/intentional meetings rather than "checking in" to see how things are going. Guidelines on developing project timelines and implementation plans.
- LOVE IT

- I think Caring Campus was a wake up call to our staff and that now we are so much more aware as to what our students experience and we want to make sure they have a great experience!
- The one thing I feel could be done better is we really did not have any training for all the money our college paid for this program. And we were already doing most everything that was suggested already. All the videos and leaders from the company we hired did was just tell you what other do and gave us suggestions what we could do. It really did not train us on creating a caring campus or have to implement anything.
- Good idea
- Send Caring Campus ideas for events out that other colleges are doing that can be implemented anywhere.
- I think the Caring Campus Program is very well thought out and brought some much needed attention to our staff on improving student services. I think it is easy for some people in the day to day work to forget that the students are our customers and we have a job because they chose to come to SFCC. If they do not feel cared for or have a good experience on campus they will not continue here. I think especially in today's time a caring campus is very needed. I am thankful to have been a part of this program at my campus.
- The caring behaviors should be common sense for everyone; but, since it isn't, the Caring Campus program has been a great way to bring attention to these basic needs of students and employees alike.
- I feel that many who were voted as staff representatives miss too many meetings and that perhaps other staff members who would be more reliable and how more initiative were passed up. We should be held to attend and have a sign in sheet.