

# CONNECTED18

## Coordinating End-to-End Early Alerts

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# What Is a Coordinated Care Network?



## People

Advisors, administrators, faculty, career services, financial aid, counseling, tutoring services, residence life

## Process

- Note-taking and sharing standards
- Referral and transition policies
- Coordinated support and communication processes

## Technology

- Tracked communications
- Shared documentation of service interactions
- Case management
- Progress reports and alerts

# Navigate in Practice

## Defining Early Alerts and Revisiting Available Features

**Early-Alert System:** *An early-alert system may be defined as "a formal, proactive, feedback system through which students and student-support agents are alerted to early manifestations of poor academic performance (e.g., low in-progress grades) or academic disengagement (high rates of absenteeism)."*

### Navigate Features That Support Early Alerts



#### Progress Reports

Proactively request feedback from faculty on individual student performance in a course



#### Alerts

Advisors, faculty, and student support staff can create an alert to draw attention to a student who may potentially be at risk



#### Cases

Configure specific alerts to automatically open a case. Once a case has been opened, the sender and recipient can add information to the case, view progress, and close the case

## Not News

# Early-Alert Systems Are Neither New nor Uncommon

**15+**

Approximate number of years since institutions first started to use early-alert systems

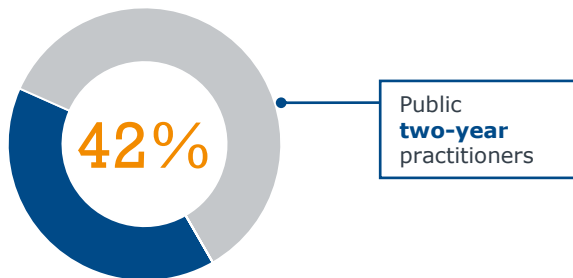
**93%**

of two- and four-year institutions of higher education report they use some type of early-alert system

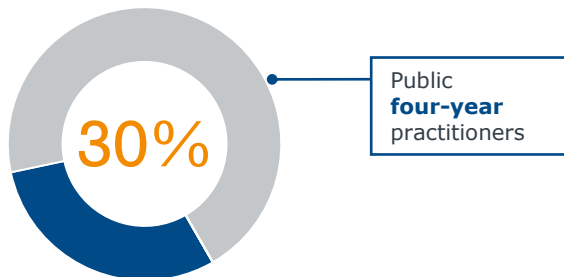
# But Seen as a ‘Mixed Bag’

Ubiquitous but Unpopular?

**Percentage of Practitioners Who Believe Early-Alert Systems Are “Minimally Effective”**



Public  
**two-year**  
practitioners



Public  
**four-year**  
practitioners

## Early-Alert Systems Seen as Mixed Bag

*September 2018*

“Despite becoming well-established tools over the past decade at colleges and universities hyper-focused on improving student performance and retention, state-of-the-art early-alert systems haven't been embraced at every institution.”

**INSIDE**  
HIGHER ED

# Early-Alert Pipeline Is Twisted and Leaky

Multiple Points of Handoff Complicate Effective Early-Alert Management

**Not as Straightforward as They Seem**

## Expectation



# Early-Alert Pipeline Is Twisted and Leaky

Multiple Points of Handoff Complicate Effective Early-Alert Management

Not as Straightforward as They Seem

**Reality**



**Faculty submits early alert**

**Early-alert program impact is quantified**

?

*How, where, and when do I submit early alerts?*

**Faculty**

?

*How do I review and triage early alerts?*

**Staff**

?

*What do I do with this email from Academic Support?*

**Students**

?

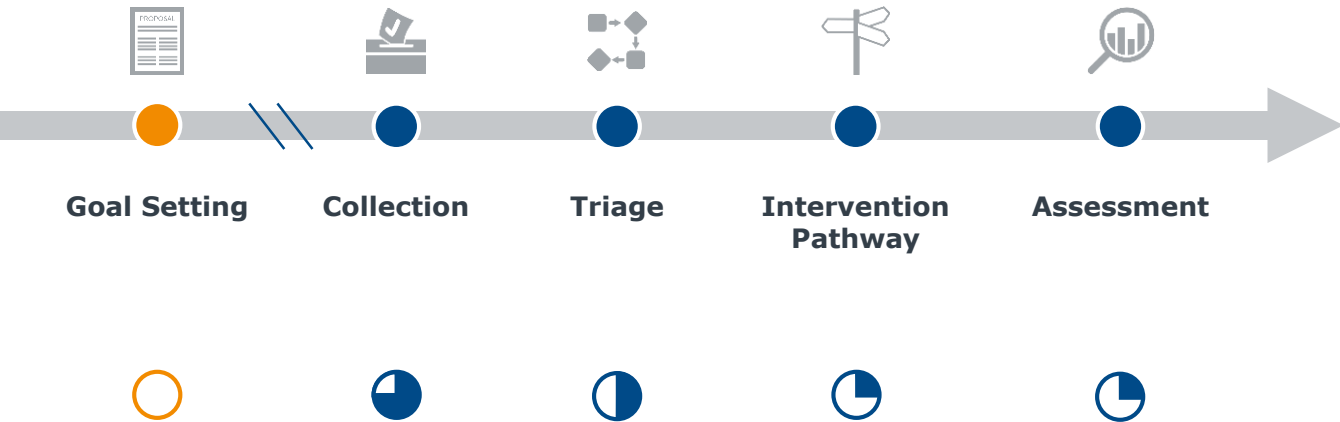
*What was the impact of our program?*

**Administrators**

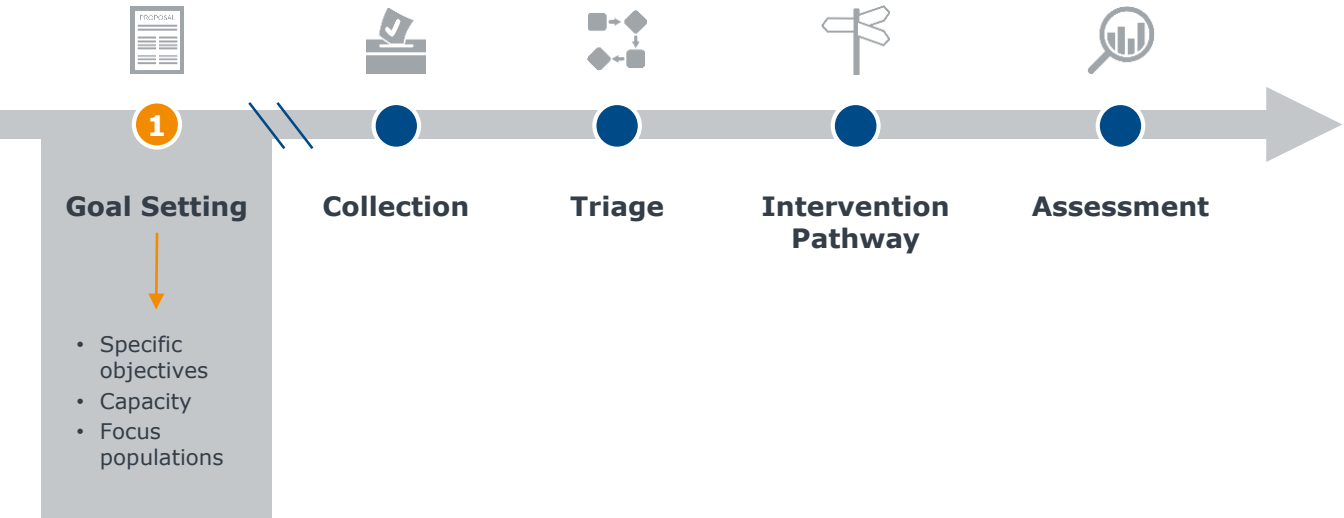
# Coordinating End-to-End Early Alerts

Managing Every Stage of the Early-Alert Pipeline to Improve Student Outcomes

## Stages of the Optimal Early Alert-Management Pipeline and Likelihood You're Already Doing This Well







# A Crucial Missed Step

## Early-Alert Programs Require Planning to Be Effective



### The Problem

Most early-alert programs **lack a clear focus** or objective



### The Effect

Early-alert programs **overload faculty and staff time**



### The Consequence

Early-alert programs become **ineffective** and lose value and buy-in; students do not receive necessary support

## Key Failures of Early-Alert Programs



### Not Strategic, Resource-Sensitive

- Not always focused on most high-risk courses or students
- Do not account for staff capacity to request, collect, triage, and address early alerts



### Difficult to Evaluate

- Lack of objective hinders ability to measure impact, make improvements, and communicate value

# Avoid 'Failing to Plan, Planning to Fail'

## Clearly Define Program Objectives

### Key Criteria for Early-Alert Program Design



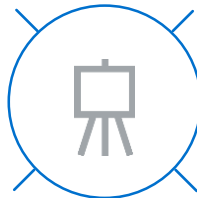
#### Define Program Objectives

What is narrow program objective?  
How will this inform your focus population?



#### Determine How to Evaluate Impact

What specific metrics and outcomes you will use to evaluate early-alert program impact?



#### Consider Available Resources

What is your staff's capacity to successfully manage early alerts?  
How can you configure early alerts to support follow-up?



#### Assess Buy-In

To what extent will you be able to gather actionable early-alert data?

# Consider the Big Picture

Most Successful Early-Alert Program Objectives Map to Institutional Goals

## Align Your Early-Alert Program to Strategic Institution-Wide Goals



WAYNE STATE  
UNIVERSITY

*Strategic goal:*

Close the black-white student graduation gap



Early-alert program focus population:  
**students in Warrior VIP program** (program for students of color)



NATIONAL LOUIS  
UNIVERSITY

*Strategic goal:*

Build out support, retention of first-time full-time students



Early-alert program focus population:  
**first-time, full-time students**

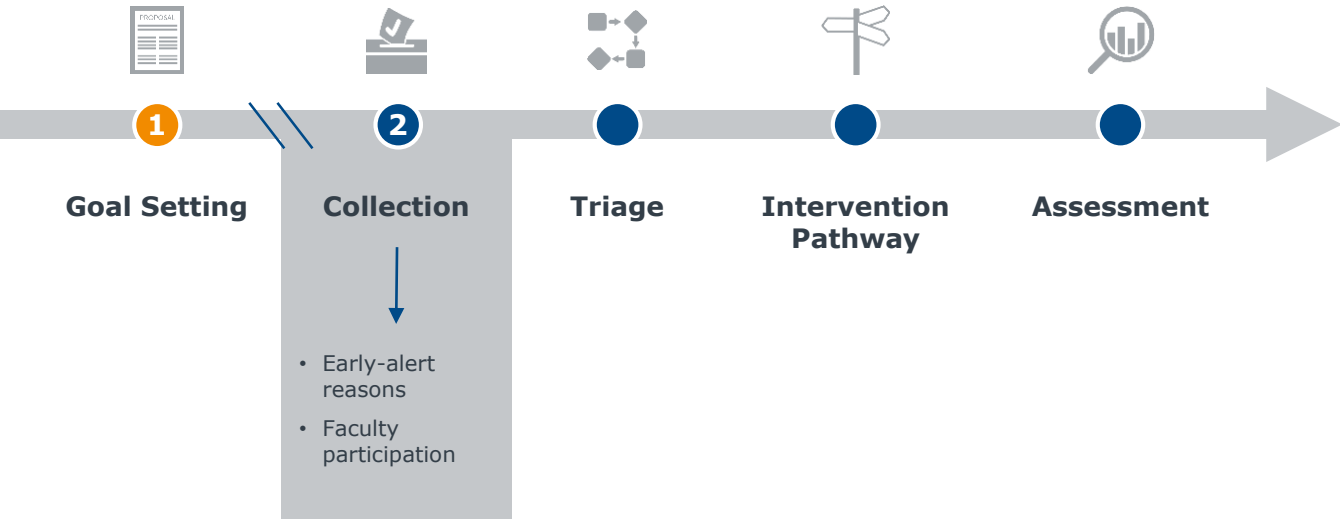
UTSA®

*Strategic goal:*

Improve student performance in key courses



Early-alert program focus population:  
**students in success-marker courses** with a targeted major



# Formalize Early-Alert Reasons

For Maximum Impact, Create Short List of Descriptive Early-Alert Reasons

## Targeted Early-Alert Reasons:

- ✓ Streamline faculty decision-making process; avoid choice indecision
- ✓ Allow staff to match student with best intervention, support staff
- ✓ Improve ability to focus efforts
- ✓ Simplify impact analysis



Early-alert reasons should be **insightful, actionable, measurable**

## Sample Early-Alert Reasons:



- 1 Assignment concern
- 2 Attendance concern
- 3 Student should seek tutoring
- 4 Student should withdraw from course
- 5 Student not paying attention or sleeping
- 6 Poor grades
- 7 More than academic issue

# Evolve from Acceptance to Buy-In

## Provide Clear Structure for Ease of Participation

### Six Strategies to Build Faculty Engagement



Set **expectations** at the start of the term



Focus communications on **impact** and not compliance



Ask for faculty input on reporting dates , send **reminders** before due dates



Allow faculty up to **a week** to respond



Ask chairs to **nudge** nonresponders



**Close the loop** when early alerts are resolved

### Diverse Institutions Seeing Impressive Results



Danville Community College

**85%** faculty participation in various progress report campaigns



**94%** faculty participation in progress report campaign for TRIO students



**100%** faculty participation in progress report campaigns for math and anthropology courses



**98%** faculty participation in various progress report campaigns

# Illustrate Impact

## Focus Communications on How Early Alerts Help Student Success Efforts



### Messaging Should Come from Academic Leaders

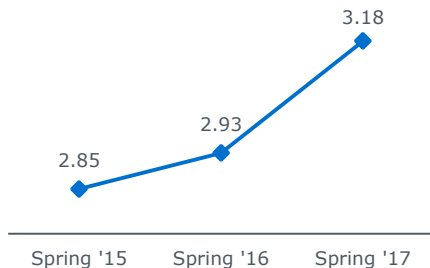
- AVP for Student Success presents information about early-alert program and its impact on student outcomes at New Faculty Orientation and Graduate Teaching Assistant orientation each year
- Department chairs and deans contact faculty who fail to submit necessary early alerts (not central support office or academic advisors)



### Messaging Should Showcase Specific Impact

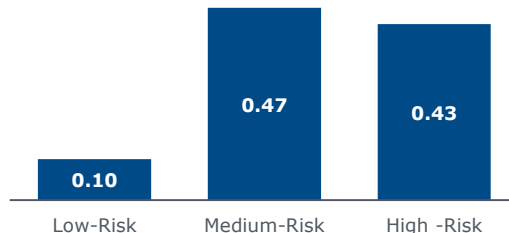
- Focus messaging on how early alerts activate Coordinated Care Network and improve grades, retention

#### Improvement in Average ENG 123 Course Grade



#### Average Grade Change from Midterm to Final in ENG 123

*Low-Risk, Medium-Risk, High-Risk Students*





# Determine Optimal Time to Collect Early Alerts

Select Dates That Allow You to Gather Actionable Information

## Progress Report Calendar

Targeting First- and Second-Year Courses



1

### Week 2

- Absenteeism

2

### Week 4

- Absenteeism
- Participation
- Assignments

3

### Week 8

- Absenteeism
- Participation
- Assignments
- Midterm grade of C or below

4

### Week 10

- Absenteeism
- Participation
- Assignments
- Midterm grade of C or below
- Finals concerns
- Students close to earning an A



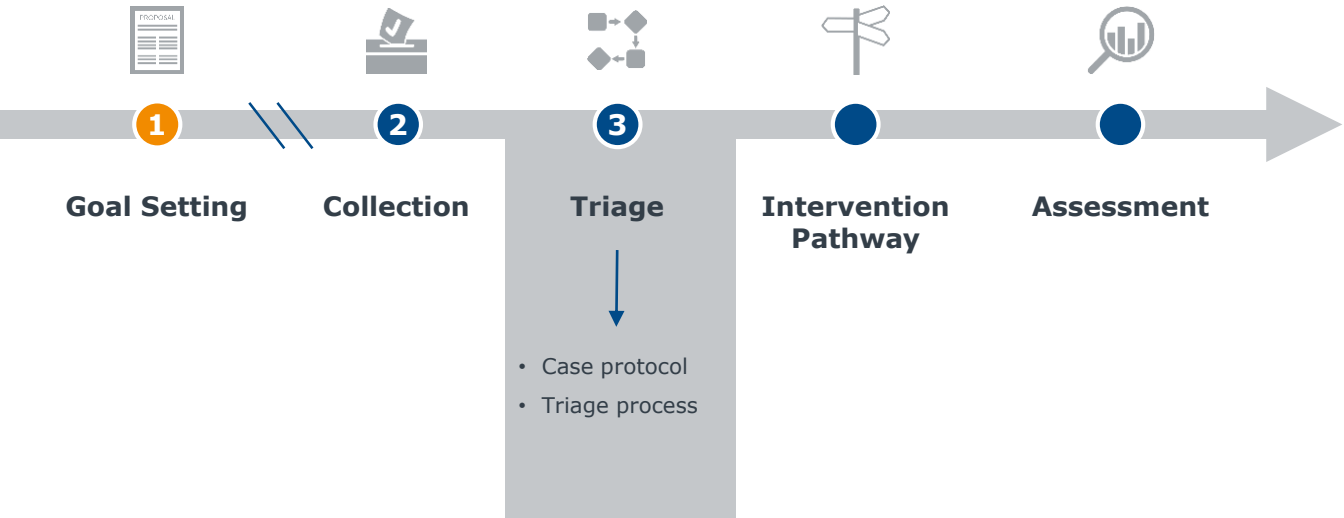
Seek faculty feedback on early-alerts calendar



Consider staff capacity during selected times



Ensure calendar allows for actionable intervention



# What Are the Benefits of Turning Early Alerts into **Cases**?



Facilitate a **coordinated** response when multiple offices, steps are involved



Improve the overall **student experience** by providing timely, synchronized, and comprehensive guidance



Allow for quantitative **evaluation** of early-alert program, interventions

# Which Early Alerts Should Generate Cases?

Think Critically About Capacity When Determining Case Protocols

## Cases Help to Improve:



Coordination between units



Student experience



Tracking

**...But They Are Not Always Necessary**

## Considerations for Early-Alert-Generated Cases



**Do you have capacity to address all generated cases?**

Only open cases that staff can address in a timely manner



**Will follow-up likely involve multiple units?**

Cases coordinate multiple points of contact in Navigate



**Does actionable follow-up require direct contact with the student?**

Do not open a case if you can directly send student relevant resources



**Do you have use for reporting?**

Do not open a case unless you have a specific use for data or reporting

# Establish an Early-Alert Triage Process

## Available Resources Inform Three Common Approaches



### Central Command

- Early alerts go to applicable inbox within a student support office, and the director reassigns to staff daily
- Director monitors case-response progress daily



### Individual Advisors

- Each advisor reviews or is auto-assigned early alerts (and/or cases) for students in his or her pool



### Student Self-Service

- Navigate is configured so that specific alert reasons are automatically triaged (e.g., tutoring alert results in student receiving email with tutoring center hours, no case)

#### *Benefits*

- ✓ Strategically match student need to advisor or staff expertise and capacity
- ✓ Maximize early-alert follow-up due to oversight

#### *Drawbacks*

- × Building Coordinated Care Network requires time investment and commitment to collaboration

#### *Benefits*

- ✓ Provides advisors greatest visibility, control
- ✓ Reduces number of individuals involved in follow-up

#### *Drawbacks*

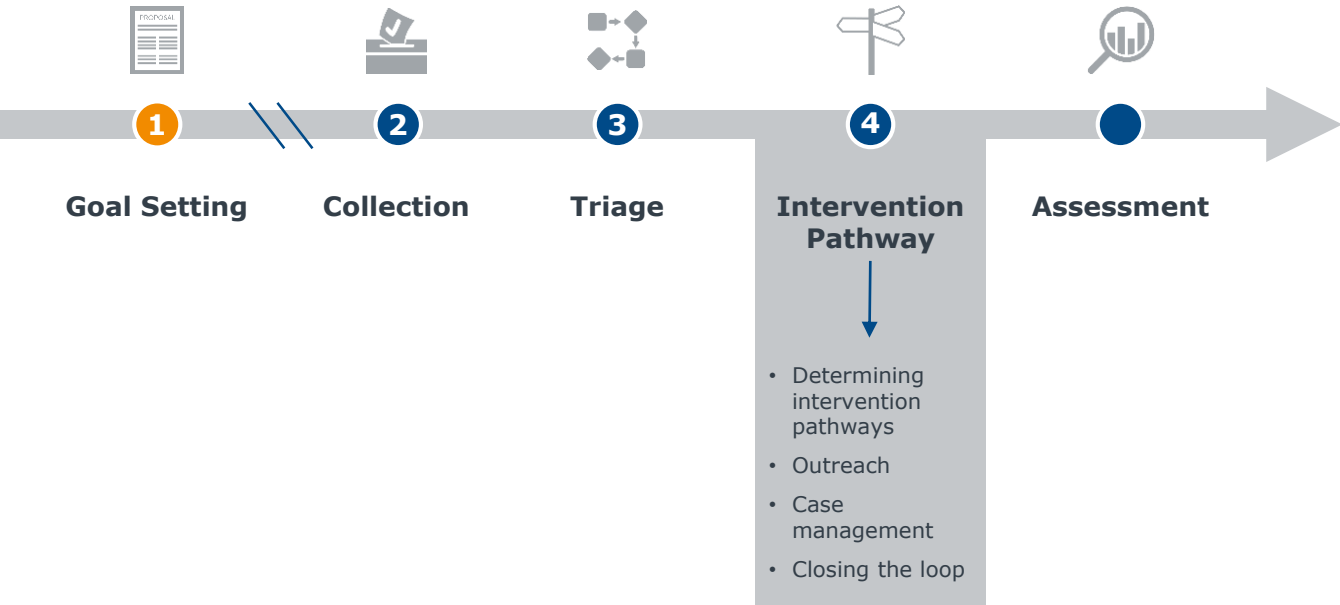
- × Can overburden advisors

#### *Benefits*

- ✓ Allows for larger volumes of early alerts
- ✓ Provides bandwidth to address more complex early alerts

#### *Drawbacks*

- × Less personalized
- × Can put onus on student
- × Additional time to track progress



# Determine Right-Answer Response Early Alerts

## Intervention Pathways Serve as Blueprint for Right Steps

### Why Determine One Intervention Pathway for Each Early-Alert Reason?

- 1 To improve staff **efficiency** by streamlining the work that gets the biggest return for the smallest amount of time
- 2 To ensure the **consistency** of care delivered to students across advisors, units
- 3 To improve the **effectiveness** of interventions by arming staff with clear, operational steps

### Response to Same Early Alert Not Consistent

*Sample Advisor Response to "Assignment Concern"*



Lindsey

Emails student supplemental academic resources



James

Emails student to set up appointment, meets with student, helps student prepare to speak with instructor



Tyler

Doesn't email student, refers student to tutoring

# What Possible Reasons and Interventions Exist?



## Pathway Creation in Practice

### All Possible Early-Alert Reasons



### All Possible Interventions

- Writing or grammar skills need improvement
- Poor attendance
- Not punctual
- Low scores on assignments or tests
- Not prepared for class
- Poor participation or engagement in class
- Missing online assignments or discussions
- Missing or late assignments or test
- Family emergency or other
- Has not purchased textbook
- Unprofessional clinical or fieldwork demeanor
- Study skills or time management skills need improvement
- Reading comprehension skills need improvement
- Student is doing well in class
- Financial concern
- Notified student of satisfactory progress
- Met with student to discuss academic plan for improvement
- Student now has textbook(s)
- Recommended tutoring and provided contact information for tutoring center
- Advised student to communicate with professor
- Reviewed online course expectations
- Reviewed class expectations
- Provided technical support with Blackboard
- Discussed number of absences and punctuality issues
- Reviewed time management techniques
- Recommended meeting with research librarian and provided contact information
- Reviewed scores and discussed follow-up
- Student is non-responsive after multiple attempts
- Student has withdrawn from course



# What Appropriate and Achievable Pairings Exist?



## Pathway Creation in Practice

### Reduced List of Early-Alert Reasons



### Reduced List of Possible Interventions

- 
- Writing or grammar skills need improvement
  - Poor attendance
  - Not punctual
  - Low scores on assignments or tests
  - Not prepared for class
  - Poor participation or engagement in class
  - Missing online assignments or discussions
  - Missing or late assignments or test
  - Family emergency or other
  - Has not purchased textbook
  - Unprofessional clinical or fieldwork demeanor
  - Study skills or time management skills need improvement
  - Reading comprehension skills need improvement
  - Student is doing well in class
  - Financial concern
- Notified student of satisfactory progress
  - Met with student to discuss academic plan for improvement
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  - Provided technical support with Blackboard
  - Discussed number of absences and punctuality issues
  - Reviewed time management techniques
  - Recommended meeting with research librarian and provided contact information
  - Reviewed scores and discussed follow-up
  - Student is non-responsive after multiple attempts
  - Student has withdrawn from course

# Establish Your Intervention Pathways

## Pathway Creation in Practice

### Final List of Early-Alert Reasons



### Determined Intervention Pathways

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| • Student is doing well in class                                   | → | • Notified student of making satisfactory progress in course |
| • Low scores on assignments or tests                               | → | • Met with student to discuss academic plan for improvement  |
| • Refer to tutoring: please provide specific details in comment    | → | • Recommended tutoring and provided contact information      |
| • Missing in-class assignments, online discussions, or tests       | → | • Reviewed class expectations with student                   |
| • Not prepared for class   | → | • Discussed number of absences or punctuality issues         |
| • Attendance or punctuality issues                                 | → | • Met with student to discuss non-academic concern           |
| • Nonacademic concerns: please provide specific details in comment | → |  |



Limit scope of intervention to what is **consistently achievable**

# Staying on Track

## Elements of Intervention Pathways



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**Student  
Outreach**



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**Technology-  
Enabled  
Coordination**



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**Closing the  
Loop**

## Effective Student Communication Step One in All Intervention Pathways

### Communication Strategies to Drive Student Response



#### Improve Your **Subject Line** and **CTA**

Include a clear CTA in the subject line so students immediately know what they need to do



#### Write for Your **Audience**

Focus tone on students and their goals; avoid jargon and ensure readability



#### Create a **Communications Calendar**

Establish a formal timeline for student outreach to ensure sufficient contact



#### Diversify Your **Channels**

Contact students by more than email—consider texts, phone calls, etc.

# Optimizing Care Coordination

## 18.1 Care Unit Release Was a Big First Step in Breaking Down Silos

Before



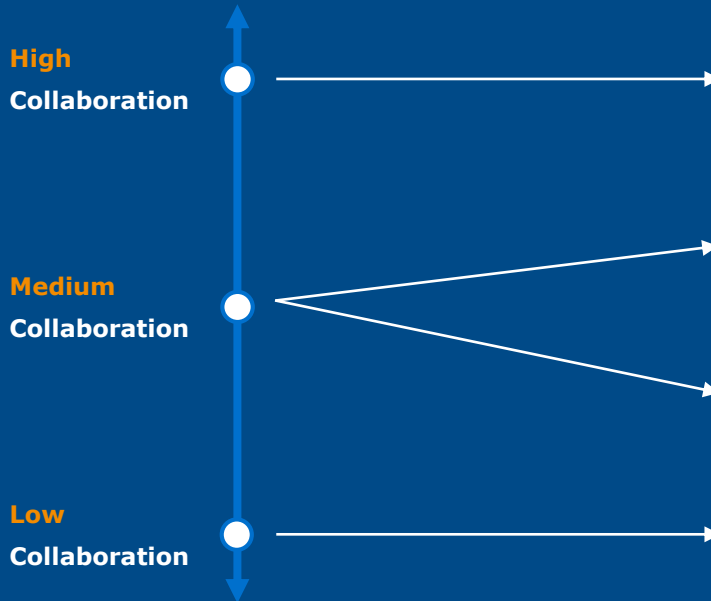
Now



# Supporting Coordinated Care

## Collaboration Level Determines Case Management Options

System **Configured** for One Level of Case Collaboration



Units **Operate** Within One Level of Collaboration

**Broad** Case Management



**Limited** Case Management



**Care Team** Case Management



**Referral-Only** Case Management



# Case Management in Practice

Establish the Best Case Management Approach for Your Institution

## High Collaboration

### Broad Case Management



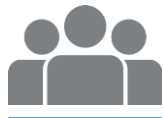
This structure allows you to provide the **highest degree of collaborative, multidisciplinary care** via case management. This model requires comfort with making case information available to all units and individuals across your Coordinated Care Network, which may render it suboptimal for instances where information is private or sensitive.

# Case Management in Practice

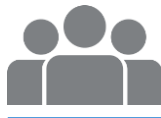
Establish the Best Case Management Approach for Your Institution

## Medium Collaboration

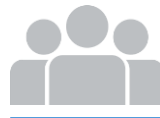
### Limited Case Management



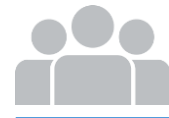
Advising



Tutoring



Career Services



Financial Aid



This structure allows you to provide **high-impact care in one or more particular areas of focus** via case management. New Navigate capabilities allow members to configure permissions and access to appointment information and summary reports to restrict sensitive information to a single support unit. However, with this model, cases and alert information is still shared between all individuals in the units with case management privileges.

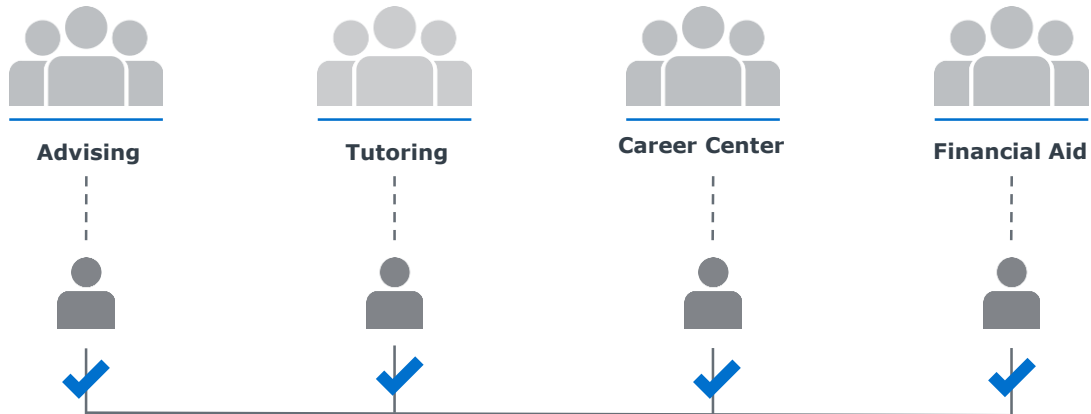


# Case Management in Practice

## Establish the Best Case Management Approach for Your Institution

### Medium Collaboration

#### Care Team Case Management



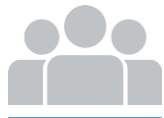
This structure allows you to provide collaborative, cross-unit care with a **greater degree of privacy but requires extensive coordination outside the tool**. In this model, designated representatives from support units have access to case information and help to orchestrate care and follow-up within their respective units despite restricted access to sensitive information.

# Case Management in Practice

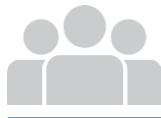
## Establish the Best Case Management Approach for Your Institution

### Low Collaboration

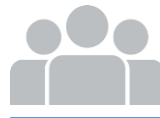
#### Referral-Only Case Management



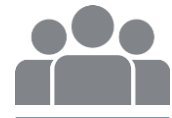
Advising



Tutoring



Career Center



Financial Aid



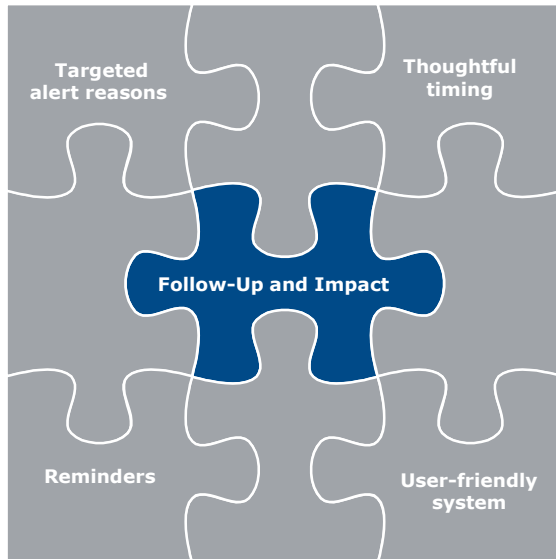
This structure allows you to **optimize for privacy** by using cases to refer outbound to a single office. In this model, faculty and staff use cases to refer students to appropriate offices (e.g., financial aid) and are notified when a case has been received, but are not able to see any notes or details on the intervention or care that follows.

# A Perennial Duty

## All Intervention Pathways Need to 'Close the Loop'

### The Update They'd Like to Get

*Providing Feedback at the End of Intervention Is Central to Sustaining Buy-In*



“Our faculty are deeply invested in student success and they **want to know how the students they identify are supported.**”

“The number one problem with my early alerts processes is that **faculty are unhappy that we don't close the loop** with them.”



“The thing I hear most from my faculty is that they want to get **feedback on how the data they provided was used.**”

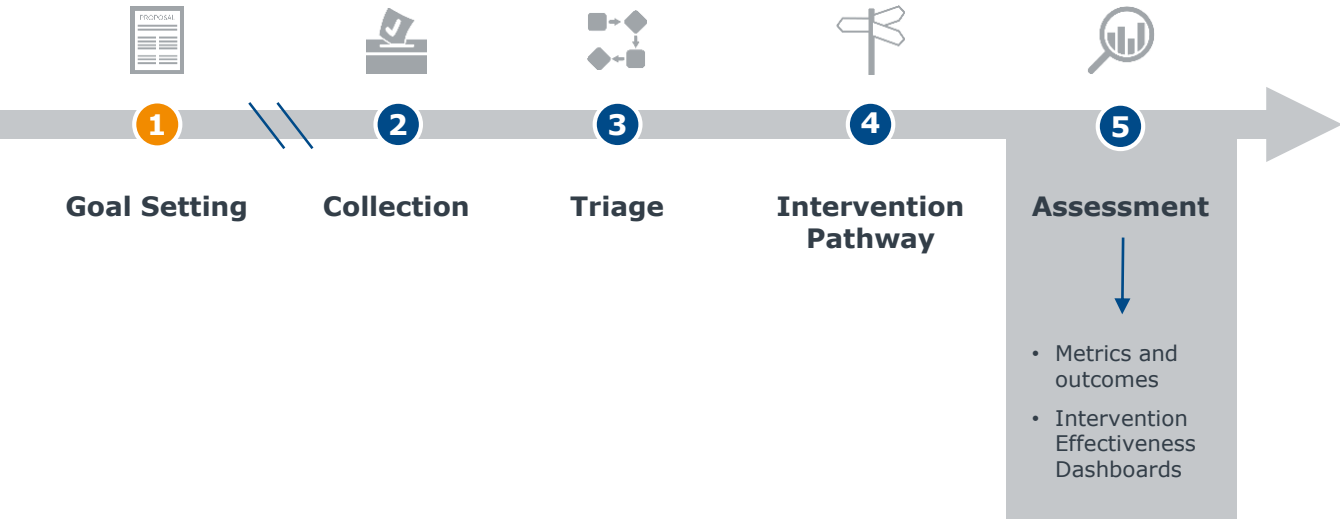
“Being kept in the loop makes faculty feel like the advisor **sees them as a partner** in helping students.”

# Scaling Feedback



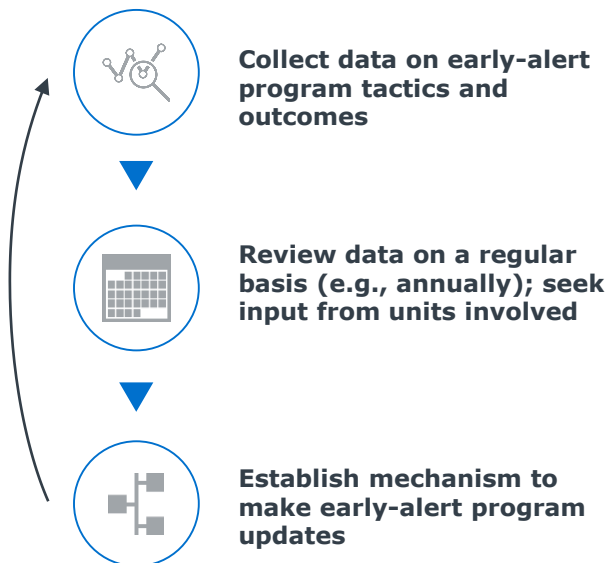
## Offer Follow-Up Within and Outside of the Platform

	<i>Within Navigate</i>	<i>Outside Navigate</i>
<i>Customized</i>	<p><b>Case-Closed Notification</b></p> <p>When a case is closed, faculty member receives an automated email that prompts him or her to log in for more information</p> 	<p><b>Individual Email</b></p> <p>Advisor or early-alert coordinator sends each faculty member a personalized email detailing intervention and if applicable, outcomes</p>
<i>Generalized</i>	<p><b>Case-Received Notification</b></p> <p>Faculty member receives a confirmation email when he or she submits early alert</p>	<p><b>Institution-Wide Communication</b></p> <p>Student success leader sends newsletter that details early-alert program interventions and results</p> 



## Tracking and Assessing Early-Alert Programs

### A Progressive Approach to Evaluation



#### Sample metrics to measure **process**:

- Faculty participation rates
- Follow-up response rates
- Student response rates
- Total time between alert submission and end of intervention
- Number of students who utilized support services

#### Sample metrics to measure **outcomes**:

- Lower DFW rates in selected courses
- Increased retention rate for focus populations
- Improved graduation rate for focus populations
- Increase in average GPA
- Improvement from midterm to final grade
- Student satisfaction
- Faculty satisfaction

# Revisiting the Big Picture

## Quantifying the Impact of Focused Early-Alert Interventions

### How Did Your Early-Alert Program Contribute to Institutional Goals?



WAYNE STATE  
UNIVERSITY

*Strategic goal:*  
Close the black-  
white student  
graduation gap

**5x**

**Participation rate** of  
Warrior VIP students in  
support services,  
compared to general  
undergrads



NATIONAL LOUIS  
UNIVERSITY

*Strategic goal:*  
Build out support,  
retention of first-  
time, full-time  
students

**87%**

First-time, full-time  
students marked at-risk  
who were retained  
through end of Spring  
term after receiving  
interventions

**UTSA**<sup>®</sup>

*Strategic goal:*  
Improve student  
performance in key  
courses

**85%**

Students marked as at-  
risk who **passed the**  
**course** after meeting  
with their advisor

# Introducing Intervention Effectiveness Dashboards



Use EAB's Newest Dashboard to Gauge Early-Alert Program Effectiveness



## Key Features

Intervention Effectiveness Dashboards\* allow you to **compare the changes** in a population or between populations of students within a selected period of time.

Your application administrator must give you the **user permission to access** the Intervention Effectiveness Dashboards before you will be able to see them.

\*Intervention Effectiveness Dashboards are available only to members with access to the Navigate Intelligence.

## One Population, One Time Period



Create a "watch list" of students marked as at-risk via progress report campaign and evaluate their persistence and GPA outcomes

## Two Populations, One Time Period



Evaluate the persistence outcomes of students who were marked as at-risk, one group of whom attended a campaign appointment, and the other group who did not attend a campaign appointment

## Two Populations, Two Time Periods



Evaluate the persistence outcomes to the following term of TRIO students marked as at-risk in Fall 2016 compared to TRIO students marked as at-risk in Fall 2017



# A Robust Pipeline

## End-to-End Early-Alert Management



1

### Goal Setting

- Specific objectives
- Capacity
- Focus populations



2

### Collection

- Early-alert reasons
- Faculty participation



3

### Triage

- Case protocol
- Triage process



4

### Intervention Pathway

- Determining intervention pathways
- Outreach
- Case management
- Closing the loop



5

### Assessment

- Metrics and outcomes
- Intervention Effectiveness Dashboards



# Closing and Questions



Washington DC | Richmond | Birmingham | Minneapolis

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