The Office of Financial Aid Pathway

Clarify the Path

Like GPS technology that clarifies the path of a driver before the trip begins, Bakersfield College must have the student’s financial destination in mind from the very beginning. The early completion of applications—whether for scholarships, federal aid, or funds for Dream applicants—prepares the way for a smooth journey. When combined with Financial Literacy and Wellness workshops and detailed counseling about the total cost of attendance, a comprehensive plan emerges. The financial destination becomes clear to the student.

Enter the Path

Once the destination is clear, the student must enter a path and start driving. If financial aid funds are not available at the right time or if the student is not receiving clear communications, the journey will fail before it has begun. Early completion of student files, timely disbursement of funds, emergency advances of grants to buy books, and the innovative office-to-student text messaging technology of Campus Logic will help the student successfully enter the path.

Stay on the Path

Even with a clear GPS route, unexpected problems can arise along the way. Bakersfield College must be ready with measures in place to intervene in these challenging situations when “life happens” to students. Such measures include corrective Student Academic Probation, the appeals process, and educational advising, all in concert with the Financial Aid Office’s intrusive counseling and assistance efforts such as emergency loans for DACA students.

Ensure Learning

Of course, all these efforts are useless if the student isn’t genuinely learning. Without the basic necessities for a stable day-to-day life—i.e. food, housing—real learning will not happen. Strategies such as increasing the limit of total financial aid that a student can receive, offering proactive Financial Wellness programs, and using the Achieving the Dream grant program will help Bakersfield College ensure genuine learning. In addition, every staff member of the Financial Aid Office will be equipped and empowered to assist students in need.

A robust, well-equipped Financial Aid Office is absolutely critical for student success. As these four stages unfold, the goals of the Financial Aid Office become clear: eliminate all red-tape and financial barriers, transform the front-end and back-end processes, and introduce a proactive culture that intervenes to ensure students make it to their intended destinations.

Reference:

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