



Rebuilding An Academic Student Success Model:

From Program Pillars To Polytechnic-Wide Impact

A model for creating the conditions that help students *Navigate, Belong, Learn, & Thrive*





The Academic Success Team

From reactive student support to proactive academic success

Coordinated • Proactive • Student-centred • Connected

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Our Work

Building capacity across learning environments

- Faculty partnerships
- Academic skills
- UDL & accessibility
- Belonging & inclusion
- Retention & systems change

Helping students navigate, belong, learn, persist, and thrive.

Rooted in equity. Guided by UDL. Committed to student success.

A Quick Poll to See Who's in the Room



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We'll use *Mentimeter* throughout the session
to gather ideas and feedback.

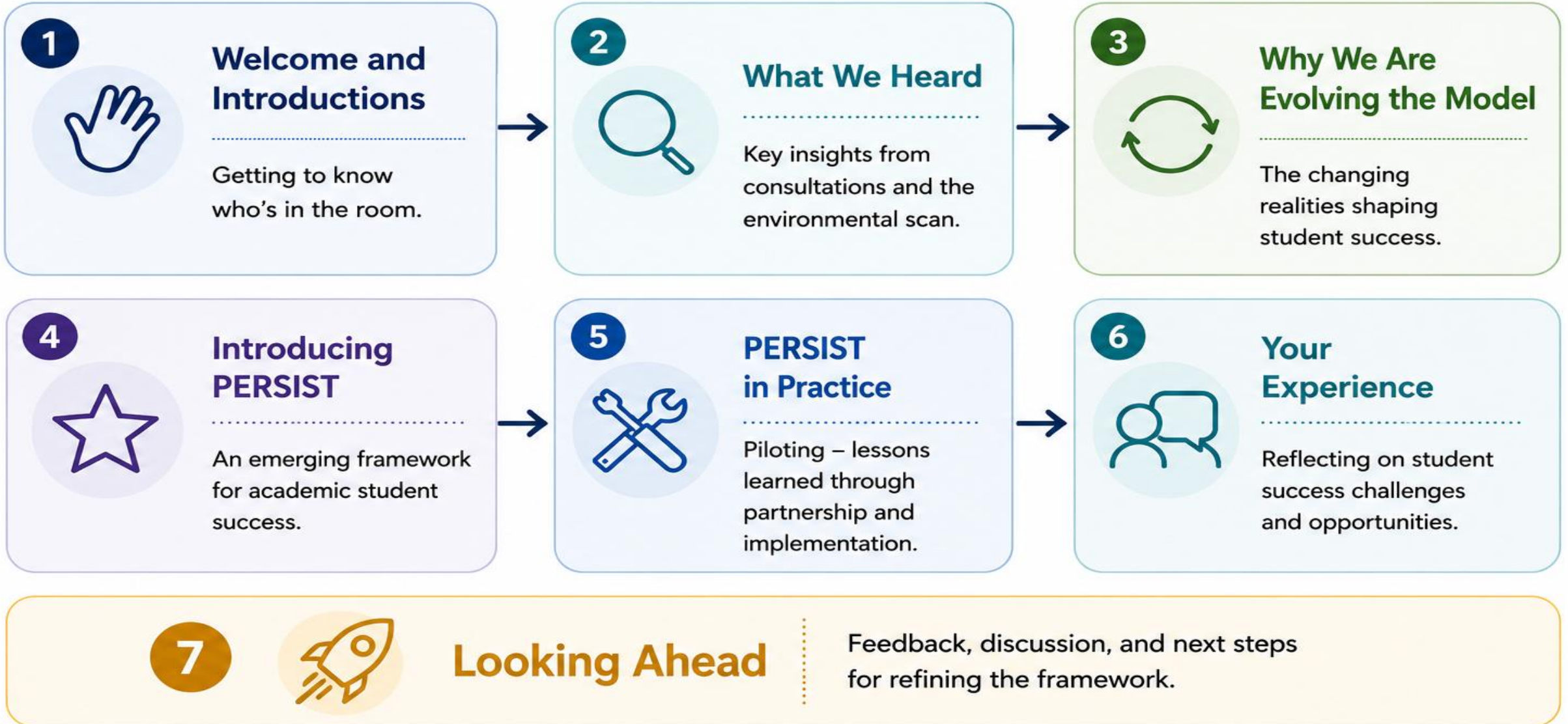
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Today's Conversation



What Are We Seeing?



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Who We Connected With And What We Heard

Community Consultations & Environmental Scan

WHO WE CONNECTED WITH



Faculties

FBCIC
FHS
FCSIS
FASCET



Service Areas

Student Life	Tutoring & Learning Centre
Career Services	Black Student Success Network
Athletics	Indigenous Initiatives
Counselling & Wellbeing	Registration
Student Conduct	Admissions
Accessible Learning Services	International Student Services
Library Learning Commons	



Students and Faculty

2 student focus groups
2 peer leader focus groups
Online survey
2 faculty focus groups

HIGH-LEVEL FINDINGS



Student success is systemic, not individual

Persistence is shaped by systems, not motivation.



Relationships and belonging drive retention

Students stay when they feel connected.



Academic support must be embedded and proactive

Support works best when built into learning.



Equity and sustainability require intentional design

Equity and sustainability need deliberate design.

The Challenges Being Addressed (What We Learned)



Student Readiness Gaps



Teaching and Learning Capacity



Fragmented Student Experience










Access to Supports



Inefficient Use of Resources

What Students and Faculty Need

Students and faculty are navigating the same complexity — from different positions. **The goal is to make supports, skill-building, and referral pathways more connected, coordinated, and easier to navigate for both.**

 Students Need	 Faculty Need
 Clear pathways to navigate institutional systems and find assistance	 Clear referral pathways for student challenges beyond course content
 Support with learning strategies and academic skill-building	 Practical strategies to scaffold learning support into their courses
 Help managing workload, expectations, and competing priorities	 Proactive tools to support engagement and persistence
 Belonging , peer connection, and a sense of community	 Support in fostering connection inside and outside the classroom



Why We Are Evolving the Model

Institutional Need

As the polytechnic navigates constrained resources and organizational change, there is a growing need for practices that strengthen student outcomes, increase institutional efficiencies and build on faculty expertise.

Coordinated Student Support

The PERSIST framework recognizes that student success is best supported through sustainable, intentional, and coordinated institutional practices and structures.

Centralized Collaboration

The transition to a centralized academic success team within the TLX creates an opportunity to strengthen coordination, consistency, and support across the Polytechnic.

Greater Institutional Impact

By building on faculty expertise and aligning evidence-informed practices, the model improves retention, reduces duplication, and enhances organizational effectiveness.

The PERSIST Model



The PERSIST Framework



Unique Contribution: We bridge teaching, learning, retention, and student support to build sustainable practices that help students succeed.

EQUITY, INCLUSION & CULTURAL SAFETY:

Guiding the design, implementation, and evaluation of all academic success practices.



Faculty Capacity Building

Supporting faculty with consultation, tools, coaching, and resources.



Early Identification & Response

Developing early alert systems, referral pathways, and academic intervention processes.



Systems Coordination

Connecting academic departments and students services to reduce fragmentation.



Embedded Academic Success into Curriculum

Helping programs integrate ongoing orientation, academic skills, belonging, UDL, and culturally responsive practices.



Retention & Persistence Strategy

Identifying barriers and implementing evidence-informed approaches to improve retention and progression.



Evidence-Informed Approaches, Continuous Feedback Loops

Ensuring the strategy evolves through data, insight, and ongoing collaboration.



What This Model Is – and Is Not

PERSIST is a faculty-facing, systems-focused model that works in coordination with — but is distinct from — student-facing services. It helps academic programs strengthen student success by connecting existing supports, coordinating referral pathways, and building on existing strengths without creating new responsibilities for faculty or programs.



What PERSIST Is



Faculty-facing and systems-focused, designed to build capacity



A partner in developing retention strategies and early alert infrastructure



A coordinator of referral pathways to the right services at the right time



A cross-functional collaborator supporting academic units holistically



What PERSIST Is Not



A counselling service or mental health support function



An academic advising or accessibility service



A tutoring or learning strategy support service for students



A case management model with ongoing direct student caseloads



A replacement or duplication of the Student Success Division's core services

Demonstrating the Framework in Practice in the ECE Programs

1. Faculty Partnership & Consultation

Collaborate with faculty to identify program-specific barriers, align supports, and co-design responsive strategies.

2. Referral Pathways & Early Identification

Create clear referral guides and proactive identification processes so outreach happens earlier.

3. Integrated Orientation Infrastructure

Embed ongoing orientation in the program hub, with repeated connections to services, expectations, and navigation supports.

4. Embedded Academic Skill Development

Integrate learning-to-learn, metacognitive, and academic success strategies into the curriculum.

5. Sustainable Peer Leadership

Co-design a program-owned peer support structure focused on belonging, engagement, and continuity.

Key lessons: Student success is driven by coordinated, embedded supports co-developed with faculty and students. Reducing complexity increases faculty engagement, while repeated low-barrier touchpoints normalize help-seeking. No single intervention drives student success.

What Does Faculty Support & Partnership Look Like?

Academic Success Specialists help faculty turn classroom patterns into clear next steps.

1 You Notice

- Missed work or attendance shifts
- Low participation or quiet groups
- Students unsure where to get help

2 We Partner

- Identify likely barriers
- Build early outreach options
- Create simple referral pathways

3 Students Benefit

- Earlier, clearer support
- Less need to disclose barriers
- More consistent learning conditions

In practice:

Missed assignments
to outreach + checkpoints

“Disengaged” students
to varied participation options

Unclear referrals
to warm hand-offs + pathway

Your Experience



Think about a student from the past year whose learning or academic success was affected by challenges.



Discuss:

1



What helped this student?

2



What challenges remained?

3



What could have been embedded into the academic experience to better support this student?

What Could Make a Difference?



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OUR COLLECTIVE GOAL:

Building academic environments where students
navigate, belong, learn, and thrive.

Model in Practice

- One way this model already shows up in my work is...
- The area of the model I would most like to strengthen in my context is...
- Collaborations, practices, or supports that could help strengthen this area include...

Year 1 PERSIST Priorities



Program-Level Support:

- Pilot early alert processes in selected programs
- Develop referral pathways
- Co-create student outreach strategies
- Support implementation planning
- Support program-specific retention and persistence initiatives



Faculty Support:

- Evidence informed curriculum and pedagogy support
- Co-create resources with Faculty responsive to curriculum and pedagogical needs
- Embed learning to learn, metacognition and academic skill development into curriculum.
- UDL and student-centered teaching support
- Program and faculty consultation



Institutional Coordination:

- Desilo academic and service divisions
- Reduce duplication, improve efficiencies
- Improve navigation pathways and awareness, how to (self) refer
- Evaluate and refine retention and persistence initiatives

Looking Ahead



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