Why are we integrating IT at Seattle Colleges?

Context: Several years of declining enrollment and subsequent funding decreases have created unprecedented pressures across the Seattle College district. Given various external circumstances, there is no expectation of significant budget improvement in the foreseeable future.

In addition, the three Colleges evolved many processes and systems independently, presenting difficulty for students, faculty and staff who must interact with more than one college. In an already challenging environment, these issues present barriers to enrollment. The Board of Trustees and the Chancellor have directed the Colleges to focus on standardizing our services to stabilize and/or increase enrollment.

Standardization will allow IT services to support one system or software program for each major function instead of 3-4 systems across the district. This will free up significant staff resources and budget funds which we can then redirect to other needs which are currently uncovered or poorly provisioned.

How will this impact students at Seattle Colleges?
Students:
- Will find it easier to get direct service from staff, who will no longer have to dedicate draining time and effort to navigating confusing information and using sub-par IT equipment and services.
- Will find it easier to apply, enroll and register with standardized systems.
- Will find information more easily.

How will this impact Seattle Colleges staff and faculty?
Staff and faculty:
- will find that technical issues will be routed to the correct group or individuals who can resolve them, and that they will be resolved in a timely manner.
- will find the IT equipment and services more functional for their daily work, via improved hardware replacement cycles, improved networks speed and reliability, and additional software.
- will have multiple channels to provide feedback or request new services.

How will IT integration impact IT staff, managers, and directors?

IT staff:
- will work be able to work more closely and collaboratively with fellow staff who have overlapping and complementary expertise.
- will be encouraged to work collaboratively across all subgroups of the IT team whenever the need arises, without the need to navigate gatekeepers or hierarchy.
- will receive more technical and soft skills development training because funds will be freed up.
- will be increasingly empowered in decision-making wherever possible.

IT managers:
- will be free to focus on providing the best service with their teams, instead of navigating conflicting roles and responsibilities within IT across the district.
- will be supported in expanding their team management, project management and leadership skills via coaching and professional development opportunities.
- Will be able to easily shift expertise where it is needed based on projects and demand.

IT Directors:
- will have system-wide responsibilities and oversight in their service areas.
- will collaborate on system-wide planning and resource use for all of Seattle Colleges.
- Will professionally impact all students, staff and faculty in all Seattle College locations instead of just one campus.