

# Forum on Retention

February 11, 2026

Sponsored by — Pharos Resources

Presenters — Matt Boisvert and Rachel Phillips-Buck



## ***Building a Retention Culture That Works: From Strategy to Transformation***

**Overview:** When mission-fit students leave before graduation, your institution loses both the opportunity to partner with them through their full transformation and tuition revenue that can sustain your mission. Strong retention isn't just an outcome metric—it's fundamental to fulfilling your calling to students while maintaining the financial stability needed to serve future generations.



**7:00 – 8:00 Forum Breakfast — Regency Foyer**

**8:00 – 8:15 Welcome & Introductions**

### **8:15 – 9:30 Session 1: IDENTIFY At-Risk Students Early to Make Data-Driven Decisions**

Retention begins with early identification using both analytics and insight to spot students who need support before they struggle.

- Understanding leading and lagging indicators that predict student risk
- Leveraging data analytics and predictive modeling (like Pharos Spark) for actionable intelligence
- Recognizing the compounding nature of success debt
- Integrating early alert systems and faculty feedback tools

**9:30 – 10:15 Refreshment Break — Regency Foyer**

### **10:15 – 11:45 Session 2: CONNECT Meaningfully: Creating a Culture of Student Belonging**

Connection is the foundation of retention success—students must feel seen, valued, and convinced that your campus community is genuinely invested in their success and wellbeing.

- Understanding why connection matters: the neuroscience of belonging
- Building touchpoint relationships that transform student outcomes
- Creating environments where every student experiences belonging
- Leveraging technology to track and strengthen relational retention

**11:45 – 12:00 Q & A**

**12:00 – 1:00 Buffet Lunch — Regency Foyer**

### **1:00 – 2:15 Session 3: SOLVE Collaboratively: Removing Barriers and Creating Pathways**

After identifying risk factors and creating connections, institutions must break down departmental silos and address the systemic barriers that prevent students from succeeding.

- Identifying barrier processes that exist in every institution
- Breaking down silos to serve students holistically across campus
- Establishing cross-functional collaboration for effective problem-solving
- Using technology to streamline intervention workflows and increase capacity

**2:15 – 3:00 Refreshment Break — Regency Foyer**

### **3:00 – 4:15 Session 4: MEASURE for Impact: From Data to Decisions to Results**

Demonstrating retention success requires tracking what matters, proving ROI to stakeholders, and using data to continuously improve your approach.

- Tracking essential retention outcomes that tell your institutional story
- Connecting measurements to accreditation requirements and strategic goals
- Using digital platforms to capture touchpoints and intervention effectiveness
- Celebrating retention wins and communicating impact to boards and donors

**4:15 – 4:30 Wrap Up**

**6:00 – 8:30 Connections Dinner — Ballroom B/C/D**

Thanks to Our Sponsor

