At the end of the conference, nearly all of the South African delegation met to reflect on the experience. They highlighted eight points:

a. ***Defining dimensions of equity***
    The five dimensions of equity presentation by Everett College was commended. It was felt that it was important for South Africa to develop a more complex notion of equity which included race but also other categories. They found the applied and practical approach in many presentations very enlightening.

b. ***Importance of articulation and pathways into the workplace***
    Colleagues felt that SA universities could learn a lot from DREAM on how to engage with TVET colleges and start conversations around creating pathways across the post school system and into the workplace. We needed to develop a shared vocabulary that focused on guided pathways. We need to find new ways of reconnecting universities and students with the system.

c. ***Leadership Role and Integrated Student Support***
    Active involvement of the University leadership is critical if any of the student support initiatives undertaken at an institution are to be successful in yielding the desired outcomes. But there needs to be ''leadership all the way down''!

    Student success should not be viewed as a fragmented process. The Integrated Student Support pre-conference workshop demonstrated the practical ways on how to implement a student support system that is holistic in an institution and informed by academic advising (human capacity, data and technology integration). It included how to choose the Leading Team (and who should be part of the team), defining the overall institution vision and goals on student success (and how to communicate these effectively to the institution community), identifying some of the key variables to consider when setting-up this system (i.e. variables focusing on the various stages of the student life) and how to setup monitoring and evaluation processes for this approach. The workshop and other sessions emphasised the need to be purposive, holistic and inclusive in how one organizes for student success.

d. ***Active student participation***
    This was a strong theme of the conference, mentioned in relation to designing a student support system but also in its ongoing implementation.

e. ***Insights into the use of data analytics***
    One seasoned attender of AtD noted that presentations of data analytics was the best yet. Comments included:
    - the most useful perspective gained was on how data and analytics are used for large scale systemic change. *Redesign, reinvent and reset* - was the most useful session in this regard. It made the case for using the intelligence flowing from analytics to examine performance. From this the next tier of analysis focused on how the design of the institution and educational process either militated against or abetted success. This is where the reinvent comes in - examining systematically what needed to change and then approaching the change programmatically. The model is replicable at any institution and in any sector. Many of the parallel sessions illuminated tools, processes and approaches to achieve the overall systemic change;
    - There are common challenges among the US and SA institutions when it comes to ensuring the quality of the input data (i.e. cleaning of the source data). More resources and expertise are required to ensure that the student data used in informing-decision is accurate;
    - "Number crunching should be done with a purpose" – design with the end in mind.

It was noted that USA Community Colleges have the advantage of low staff student ratios.

f. *Developing academic advising in South Africa*
The importance of this theme, highlighted already at previous conferences, was underscored and elaborated.

g. *Willingness and eagerness to use various strategies to address student success*
Various innovative approaches were discussed on how to improve low throughput rates, and these ranged from approaches focusing on student academic development, funding and social approaches. Additional issues raised were:
- Use multiple forms of teaching and learning engagement with students;
- Engage with food and housing insecurity.

h. *The sense of a movement*
"What particularly struck me was ATD as a 'movement' working for student success. It almost felt 'evangelical' (can't find a better word) but in a positive way. Here was a large group of peers who felt passionate about their students' welfare and driven to work for their success. It reminded me a little of the mood in ASP/AD conferences of the late 80s/90s.   I feel that nationally we have lost some of the fire in SA, although it's clearly palpable in Siyaphumelela".