Helping to Improve Your School’s Graduation Rate

Maria Grovner
Education Program Specialist
January 27, 2016
Session Overview

• Georgia’s Graduation Rate Statistics

• School and Community Perspective

• Early Interventions

• Basic Core Strategies

• Making the Most of Instruction

• Panel Discussion of Strategies
Georgia’s Graduation Rates

- 2015 – 78.8%
- 2014 – 72.5%
- 2013 – 71.8%
- 2012 – 69.7%
- 2011 – 67.4%
School and Community Perspective

• Systemic Renewal

• School Community Collaboration

• Safe Learning Environment
Strategies

Safe Learning Environment

• Engagement
  • Relationships
  • Respect for Diversity
  • School Participation
• Safety
  • Emotional Safety
  • Physical Safety
  • Substance Use
• Environment
  • Physical Environment
  • Academic Environment
  • Wellness
  • Disciplinary Environment

Systemic Renewal

• Identifying educational improvements
• Removing organizational barriers
• What are some research & evidence based practices that you can implement?
Strategies: School - Community Collaboration

- Volunteers & Funding
- Community Advocacy Groups
- Partnerships/Collaborations
- Community Volunteer Programs
- Community Work Experience
- Community Presentations
- Community Service Learning
- Community Resource Sharing
- Work Based Learning
- Business Advocacy Groups
- Business Internships
- Business Mentoring
Early Interventions

• Family Engagement

• Early Childhood Education

• Early Literacy Development
Strategies

Early Childhood Education

• Review past academic and attendance history
• Co-facilitate parenting workshops with elementary and middle school personnel
• Parenting resources...What can be done in elementary school to help with graduating from high school?

Early Literacy Development

• A book-rich literate environment
• Teacher read-alouds
• Students reading aloud to others
• Shared reading
• Phonological awareness instruction
• Phonics instruction
• Reading comprehension strategy instruction
• Writing strategy instruction
• Variety of reading and writing activities
• Time for reading and writing
Family Engagement Strategies

• Toolkit for High Schools
• Parent Engagement Toolkit (America’s Promise)

• Transitioning to High School
  • Create a summer freshman academy program involving students and families to support transition from 8th to 9th grade.
  • Engage in more proactive outreach efforts to make families aware of high school coursework requirements and what teens need to accomplish in order to graduate on time.
  • Hire parent liaisons to maintain ongoing communication with parents of ninth graders experiencing academic challenges to help connect them to academic and other support services.

• Access relevant out-of-school support services, such as tutoring or mentoring, that can support their student’s academic work.
  • Provide information about support services for students to youth-serving organizations, faith leaders, neighborhood leaders, libraries, and physicians.
  • Ensure that information and referral services, such as 2-1-1, have information about support services for students that indicate the specific challenges each service addresses – academic, behavioral, college or career preparation, etc.

• Access relevant out-of-school support services, such as tutoring or mentoring, that can support their student’s academic work.

Basic Core Strategies

• Mentoring/Tutoring
• Service Learning
• Alternative Schooling
• After School Opportunities
Strategies

Mentoring/Tutoring

- Resources for Mentoring Programs
- GCPS Community Based Mentoring Program
- How to Build a Successful Mentoring Program
- Ideal target students: 9th graders experiencing academic challenges or based on reports from 8th grade.

Service Learning

- Preparation and Planning: Do a needs assessment and identify multiple course standards.
- Action: Make sure the project is academically engaging and meets a need in the community.
- Reflection: Evaluate and analyze the results, and document the changes.
- Celebration: Honor teachers and students for their efforts.
Strategies

**Alternative Schooling**

- A maximum teacher/student ratio of 1:10
- A small student base not exceeding 250 students
- A caring faculty with continual staff development
- A school staff having high expectations for student achievement
- A learning program specific to the student’s expectations and learning style
- A flexible school schedule with community involvement and support
- **NOT NECESSARILY FOR STUDENTS WITH BEHAVIOR ISSUES**

**After School Opportunities**

- Academic offerings—homework assistance, tutoring, hands-on learning, reading and writing enrichment
- Enrichment and accelerated learning—exposure to visual and performing arts, field trips, character education, critical thinking skills, foreign languages, and technology
- Supervised recreation—organized sports and sports education
- Community service—connects students to the community.
- **21st Century Community Learning Centers**
  - nschult@doe.k12.ga.us (Nathan Schult)
  - Grant Competition opens up in August 2016 to be used for 2017-2018
Types of Alternative Schools

- The Alternative Classroom, designed as a self-contained classroom within a traditional school, simply offering varied programs in a different environment.
- The School-Within-a-School, housed within a traditional school, but having semiautonomous or specialized educational programs.
- The Separate Alternative School, separated from the regular school and having different academic and social adjustment programs.
- The Magnet School, a self-contained program offering an intensified curriculum in one or more subject areas such as math or science.
- Schools of Choice, offering different specialized learning opportunities for students usually in a magnet school.
- Last-Chance Schools, designed to provide continued education program options for disruptive students.
- Remedial Schools, having a focus on the student’s need for academic remediation or social rehabilitation.

Which type will work best for your population?
Making the Most of Instruction

• Professional Development

• Active Listening

• Educational Technology

• Individualized Instruction

• Career and Technology Education (CTE)
Strategies

Professional Development

• Long-term programs embedded in the school year

• Active learning activities such as demonstration, practice, and feedback

• Collaborative study of student learning

• Administrative support for continuing collaboration to improve teaching and learning

Active Learning

• Cooperative Learning

• Learning Styles

• Multiple Intelligences

• Project Based Learning
Strategies

Educational Technology

- Educational Technology is more than just connectivity and is more than using a PPT with the students.
- How is technology being incorporated into the curriculum?
- What grants can be written to assist in getting technology for your school? (iPads, Kindles, etc.)
- Technology Specialists sharing resources with students and teachers
- Helps to keep students engaged and active in learning
- What educational technology can you use in your program to assist?

Individualized Instruction

Differentiated Instruction

- Problem-based learning and reciprocal teaching
- Peer tutoring
- Cooperative learning
- Hands-on learning
- Journaling
- Projects
- Role play
- Simulation
- Inquiry
- Strategies That Differentiate Instruction
- 18 Teacher Tested Strategies on Differentiated Instruction.
Career & Technical Education

- Career Guidance
- Work-Based Learning
- Career Pathways
- Postsecondary Education

CTAE Completers
Grad Rate
- 2013-2014 – 88.9%
- 2012-2013 – 88.4%
- 2011-2012 – 87.20%
- 2010-2011 – 90.3%
Guest Panelists

**SMALL**

- Wilkinson County
  - Dr. Yasmin Whirl, Counselor
  - 93 of 100 Graduates
  - **93% 2015 Graduation Rate**
  - 94% students FRL
  - yasmin.whirl@wilkinson.k12.ga.us

**MEDIUM TO LARGE**

- Fayette County
  - Lakisha Bonner, Counseling Director
  - 1599 of 1738 Graduates
  - **92% 2015 Graduation Rate**
  - 9.12%, 10.18%, 15.21%, 33.41%, 42.16% students FRL
  - bonner.lakisha@mail.fcboe.org
February 10:
ALL Levels… Understanding the Counselor’s Role in Building School Morale
2:00 PM

Feb. 17:
New Middle School Counselors Academic Achievement Initiatives
11:00 AM

Feb. 17:
New Elem Counselors-- Using Art in Your School Counseling Program
2:00 PM

Feb. 24:
Middle School Counselors Empower & Inspire to Avoid the Drama
11:00 AM

Feb. 24:
New High School Counselors… College Entrance Exams Resources for Your Students
2:00 PM