INCREASING GRADUATION RATES FROM THE GROUND UP

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- As a result of this activity, the participant will be able to analyze barriers to high school graduation.

- As a result of this activity, the participant will be able to summarize strategies to increase graduation rates.

- As a result of this activity, the participant will be able to implement strategies to increase graduation rate for students with disabilities.
BARRIERS

What are your biggest barriers in the following categories?

• School
• Parental Involvement
• Community

TTYP:

Turn to your partner and discuss. Be prepared to share.
All barriers can be summed up with a lack of expectation.
Making authentic connections impacts dropout rates: David Kollar at TEDxCrestmoorParkED
ABC OF GRADUATION

Attendance

Behavior

Course Completion
HOW CAN WE GROUP THESE?

Let’s look at the identified barriers and see if they fit into Attendance, Behavior, and Course Completion?
ATTENDANCE STATISTICS

According to the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities

www.ndpc-sd.org (slides 9-12)

Missing one day a week of school from Kindergarten through Junior year is equal to missing two and a half years of school.
ATTENDANCE STATISTICS

Being tardy half an hour each day of school from Kindergarten through sophomore year is equal to missing almost a year and half of school.
ATTENDANCE STATISTICS

• 30% of high school students are truant

• 20% of middle school students are truant

• 14% of elementary school students are truant
ATTENDANCE STATISTICS

A teacher can predict with 66% accuracy by the 3rd grade if a student will drop out by their attendance and literacy level.
Who Can Read on Grade Level After 3rd Grade?

- 64% of kids with good attendance in K and 1st (missed 9 or fewer days both years)
- 43% of kids with at-risk attendance (missed more than 9 days both years)
- 41% of kids chronically absent in K or 1st (missed 18 or more days one year)
- 17% of kids chronically absent in K and 1st (missed 18 or more days both years)
ATTENDANCE STATISTICS

When a child enters the 9th grade, regular attendance is a more accurate indicator of high school graduation than 8th grade test scores.
WHAT IS GOOD ATTENDANCE?

CHRONIC ABSENCE: 18 or more days

WARNING SIGNS: 10 to 17 days

SATISFACTORY: 9 or less days

www.attendanceworks.org
ATTENDANCE STRATEGIES - PARENTS

• Be informed of documentation requirements to enroll in school (proof of residence, immunizations, personal information)

• Be informed of your child’s school calendar

• Attend open house so that children can become familiar with environment and teachers

• To decrease anxiety about school, talk to teachers and counselors for resources and strategies
ATTENDANCE STRATEGIES - PARENTS

• Be mindful to take children to school unless they are truly sick. It is important to encourage children to push through minor complaints such as headaches and stomachaches.

• Try to schedule doctor appointments after school or during breaks.

• Have an alternate form of transportation in case a child misses the bus or the car won’t start.
ATTENDANCE STRATEGIES- PARENTS

ESTABLISH A ROUTINE

• Complete homework and pack backpack

• Lay clothes out for next day

• Have a regular bedtime

• Have a morning schedule
ATTENDANCE STRATEGIES

• Have a policy

• PR - get the word out to parents
  • Be specific and strategic
  • Local Radio Stations, Flyers, Community Leaders, Business Owners

• Incentives-
  • Short term and long term
  • With caution – goal is to build intrinsic reward

• Consequences
ATTENDANCE STRATEGIES - ELEMENTARY

• Share policy and handouts at open house

• Make contact with parent and establish rapport immediately

• Share statistics and what they mean
  • If a child misses ten days in kindergarten, first, and second grade, that is equal to a month and a half of early literacy instruction.
ATTENDANCE STRATEGIES- ELEMENTARY

• Make contact with parents when a student misses more than 1 day

• Offer recognition and incentives: weekly, monthly, by grading period, and year long
  • Write with a pen, hat in class, shoes off, extra recess, special activities

• Consequence: loss of incentive
ATTENDANCE STRATEGIES- MIDDLE SCHOOL

• Share policy and handouts at open house and through parent portals

• Make contact with parent and establish rapport immediately
  • Encourage frequent and meaningful communication means (ex: email)

• Share statistics and what they mean
  • Once a student enters the 6th grade, absenteeism is an indication a student will drop out of high school.
ATTENDANCE STRATEGIES - MIDDLE SCHOOL

• Make contact with parents when a student misses more than a day
• Serves as notification and established rapport is being continued

• Make attending school a meaningful experience

• Encourage sports and club activities

• Offer recognition and incentives – electronic devices, special activities
HIGH SCHOOL –
WHAT DO WE ALREADY HAVE?
ATTENDANCE STRATEGIES- HIGH SCHOOL

• Share policy and handouts at open house and through parent portals

• Make contact with parent and establish rapport immediately
  • Encourage frequent and meaningful communication means
    (ex: email)

• Make contact with parents when a student is absent
  • Serves as notification and established rapport is being continued
ATTENDANCE STRATEGIES - HIGH SCHOOL

• Make attending school a meaningful and safe experience
• Encourage sports and club activities
• Offer incentives/consequences –
  • Example: extended Lunch with alternative of detention
OPEN COMMUNICATION

• The most important piece to solving the attendance problem is communicating about what is causing the problem.

• Do parents understand the importance of attendance and what it really means to have an attendance problem?

• Is transportation an issue?

• Are there health or medical needs?

• Are there financial needs?

• YOLO
HOW WE CAUSE ATTENDANCE ISSUES

• Lack of rapport with at risk students
• Suspending for behavior issues
• Not creating a safe environment
• Not identifying academic needs
• Policies
TEACHER ATTENDANCE

• Think of the student in your class with average to poor attendance.......  

• Now, imagine he/she is out 3 or 4 days the first three months of school.......  

• You meet with the parent during conferences, attendance gets better.....  

• Thanksgiving comes, you need a personal day to get your house ready for your mother in law

• Flu season hits.....The student gets the flu first and then you. Together the two of you were away from each other for 9 days

• December comes, that student is off the chain and is now suspended for 3 days
TEACHER ATTENDANCE

• Whew....its a new semester

• Student sporadically misses another 3 or 4 days

• You take a day because it is the first time you can get in with that doctor you’ve been wanting to see

• Gosh...if its not the flu, its strep throat......another 2 days for that kid

• Oh boy! It’s May! Your child has field day at their school, so you take another personal day.

• You made it! Time for summer break! IDEAS Conference, here we come!
WHAT WAS THE IMPACT?

- The child’s attendance went from average to poor with a couple of unplanned illnesses
- The student missed about 18 days
- The teacher’s attendance went from average to poor with an unplanned illness
- The teacher missed 7 days
- A combination of 25 days of quality instruction and learning was missed
- That student missed a month of education
- If that happens every year, the student will miss a year and a half of education
WHAT’S THE POINT?

Attendance matters for students and teachers!
ANALYZING BEHAVIOR

• We must truly analyze the data to understand what the behavior problem is.
  • Who are the kids with discipline write-ups and suspensions?
  • Is there a commonality between the behavior kids and the attendance kids? Is there a commonality between the behavior kids and the kids struggling with academics?
  • Is there a correlation between any of the categories?
  • What are the behavior issues?
  • Are we causing some of the behavior issues?
  • Is the child getting what they want by being suspended?
BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES - ELEMENTARY

• Create a school wide positive behavior system that is implemented with fidelity

• Analyze whether problem behaviors are:
  • school wide
  • exclusive to a certain grade level or classroom
  • individualized

• Understanding where the behavior occurs is solving one piece of the puzzle

• Teach and reinforce positive replacement behaviors

• Do not create the stigma that suspension is a way to get out of work
• Analyze whether problem behaviors are:
  • school wide
  • exclusive to a certain grade level or classroom
  • individualized
• Understanding where the behavior occurs is solving one piece of the puzzle
BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES- MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL

- Teach and reinforce positive replacement behaviors
- Do not create or perpetuate the stigma that suspension is a way to get out of work
- Create a mentor program for at risk students
- Create a school within a school
- Pick your battles
BUILT IN BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS

• Involve students in extracurricular activities
• Meet with students (mentor) on a regular basis
• Have at risk students mentor younger students at a feeder school
BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES - TEACHERS

- Analyze the student behavior and know what the function is
  - If it is attention, provide positive attention when the student does what you want them to do
  - If it is escape, they want to be sent to the office and/or suspended

- Pick your battles
  - Nobody wins if both parties aren’t successful

- Discuss the problem away from the students
COURSE COMPLETION

• Children who are below grade level in reading at the end of third grade have a higher risk of dropping out than peers with proficient literacy.

• Children who are barely meeting the grade level standard (scores of 800 on previous testing system CRCT) struggle to pass End of Course assessments in high school.

• Students coming out of 9th grade with fewer than 6 credits are at risk for dropping out.
COURSE COMPLETION - ELEMENTARY

- Ensure literacy targets are met by 3rd grade
- Engage students in meaningful work
- Participate in College and Career Readiness
- Engage students by showing off your college achievements
COURSE COMPLETION - MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL

• Remediate gaps in learning
• Double dip academic needs
• Implement Credit Recovery options
• Create a culture of responsibility
• Create meaningful accountability through group work
COURSE COMPLETION- MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL

• Participate in College and Career Readiness activities

• Engage students by showing off your college achievements
COURSE COMPLETION- TEACHERS

• Be the Mentor and Advocate for “that child”
• Don’t accept “nothing can be done with them”
• Reach out to the individuals and tell them “I see you”
• Don’t let them get down to the wire – Have a plan!
RESOURCES

• http://www.gaspdg.org/article/attendance-did-you-know
• www.ndpc-sd.org
• www.attendanceworks.org
• http://shoresportsnetwork.com/high-school-football-brick-memorial-dominates-neptune-40-28-audio/
• http://wrpolice.blogspot.com/2012/09/do-you-know-your-class-cp-d.html
• https://www.pinterest.com/pin/19414743909598107/
RESOURCES


• https://www.pinterest.com/pin/398779741980738762/