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Building Successful Academic and Behavioral Programs for At-Risk Youth: Low and No Cost Options

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Building Successful Academic and Behavioral Programs for At-Risk Youth: Low and No Cost Options

— Jeannette Hallam, EdD —
Assistant Principal
East Coweta High School

Who we serve at my school

- At my high school we serve 2,804 students daily
 - 865 Freshmen
 - 703 Sophomores
 - 603 Juniors
 - 633 Seniors
- We serve a diverse group of students
 - 38.5% of students are in the free/reduced lunch program
 - 8.9% of students are served in Special education
 - 22.3% of students are served in Gifted classes
 - 1.0% of students are English language learners

Who we serve (continued)

- Diversity of our Student Body
 - 49.5% males
 - 50.5% females
 - 63.1% White
 - 23.1% Black
 - 13.8% other Ethnicities
- Mobility of our student body
 - 12.5% mobility rate per year

Our Staff

- 146 Teachers
- 5 Guidance Counselors
- 2 Media Specialists
- 2 School Resource Officers
- 2 Communities in Schools representatives
- 6 Assistant Principals
- 1 Principal

Our accomplishments in student achievement

- We raised our graduation rate to a record level for the 2014/15 school year.
- Almost all of our subgroups also showed drastic gains in their graduation rates

4 year grad rates 2015 (change from 2014)

Asian/Pacific Islander = 95.5% (up 0.5%)

Black = 86.6% (up 23.9%)

Hispanic = 80.8% (down 0.2%)

White = 89% (up 8.2%)

Multi-racial = 85.7% (up 3.3%)

Students with Disabilities = 62.3% (up 21.4%)

Economically Disadvantaged = 79% (up 12.5%)

Two Areas for School Improvement

- Relationship Building (no cost)
 - This is important for all staff members of a school
 - Vital for taking the next steps in student achievement
 - Students may do it for you, but not themselves
 - Another level of accountability for a student and support in meeting goals
- Changes in Policies and Procedures that restrict student growth
 - Flexibility is key - try things a different way
 - Use data to determine needs and areas for focus
 - Use teamwork to brainstorm solutions to those problems
 - Use research to determine appropriate solutions to implement

How do you start building appropriate relationships with students?

- Get to know your students and their interests
 - What are their goals?
 - What steps have they taken toward their goals?
 - How can you support them in their goals?
- Let the students get to know you
 - Do you have similarities?
 - What is your story?
 - What were your struggles in school?
 - What are your goals and what are you doing to achieve those goals?
- Notice things about the student
- Celebrate each other's successes

Building appropriate relationships (cont.)

- Teacher versus friend
 - Stay away from: social media, phone calls, etc with students (don't blur the lines for the student)
 - Be stern but compassionate
- Ask questions and listen to answers
- Show them respect
- Make contact with parents or other guardian (positive first)
- Hold high expectations, but provide support

Tier I Interventions - Things we do for all students

- Mentoring program
 - Two approaches (benefits and drawbacks)
 - Topics for sessions
 - icebreaker to get to know one another
 - goal setting ([see form](#)) and self-evaluation/reflection on progress
 - graduation requirements
 - teaching of school wide expectations
 - mental health awareness
 - cyber safety
 - Share expectations with staff ([mentoring pledge](#))

Tier II - Group interventions for at-risk students

- Credit repair (low cost)
 - For students who failed a course
 - Teacher assigned prescription
 - Grade changed to a 70 upon completion
- Credit recovery (low cost)
 - For students who failed a course
 - Students retake the entire course online
- Saturday School (low cost)
 - Intercession to prevent students from failing a course
 - Teacher assigned prescription
- Online learning communities (low cost)
 - For students significantly behind on credits

Group Interventions (Cont.)

- Peer mentoring/ tutoring (no cost)
 - Gives peers leadership opportunities
- Communities in Schools collaboration (low cost)
 - Provides support to meet students' non-educational needs as well as educational needs
 - Food program
 - Mentoring
 - School Supply closet
 - Housing resources
 - Medical resources
 - Anger Management Courses
 - Job Fair (for students and parents)
 - Apply to College Day

Group Interventions (Cont.)

- Positive Behavior Supports (low cost)
 - [High-Fives](#) (student recognition)
 - Free Ice Cream
 - Sports Tickets
- Administrative coaching (no cost)
 - [Select at-risk students](#)
 - discuss goals beyond high school and current needs
 - meet weekly or monthly, depending on needs
 - currently working with Seniors, but will expand to 10th grade and 9th grade
- Purple Blitz tutoring (no cost)
 - identify students who have failed multiple state tests or classes and have several risk factors

How do we identify students to serve with Tier II?

- Look at data (high school examples)
 - 4th year students behind on credits
 - Students failing multiple state assessments
 - 1st year students failing courses
 - Students with several risk factors (ED, MV, SWD, medical diagnosis, etc.)
- Teacher data collection
 - Class profile data ([see form](#))
- Teacher recommendation
 - [Saturday School form](#), Credit Repair
- Parent recommendation

Tier III Interventions - SST

- Interventions based on individual student needs beyond Tier I and Tier II interventions
 - Interventions are determined based on a detailed analysis of student performance over time and in comparison to like peers
 - At times, partial achievement testing, IQ testing, physician recommendations, and other information is requested to make informed decisions
 - Goals are set for the student and interventions are planned, monitored and adjusted.
 - If this process does not produce results with several adjustments, a referral to Tier IV can be made.

How to use data to determine priorities for change

- Look at multiple sources of student and staff data
 - use growth model data to determine teacher strengths
 - use behavior data to determine trends and needs
 - type of referral (changes over time)
 - excessive referrals by teacher
 - multiple referrals for one student
 - use data to determine students in need of additional interventions
 - test scores
 - risk factors
 - credit deficiencies
 - use data to determine professional learning priorities and effectiveness
 - Observation data
 - Teacher input, survey data
 - Student survey data

How to use data (cont.)

- Use data for 9th graders to find trends from different Middle Schools
 - Helps inform vertical planning
- Use data from a student exit survey to determine why students are dropping out of school
- Use data from parent surveys to determine changes
 - school climate
 - interventions
- Use data from staff surveys to determine changes
 - what areas to focus on for school improvement based on qualitative and quantitative data
- Analyze suggestions from students

Questions?

Please feel free to contact me for a copy of this presentation with links to our documents.

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