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| 1. **Visibility and Student Resources** | | |
| **Provide clear, visible statements in the school that speak to the value and importance of college for all students, such as:** | | |
|  | * Wear college memorabilia (t-shirts, sweatshirts, jewelry, etc.) on designated days. | |
|  | * Display teachers’ college degrees in classrooms. | |
|  | * Post college success stories on bulletin boards in classrooms, offices and hallways. | |
|  | * Teachers speak to students about your educational journey and engage students in conversations about college as an option for them. | |
|  | * Have students create displays showcasing their college and career aspirations and display them in the library or other public spaces during parent events. | |
|  | * Post information about colleges and careers on bulletin boards and on the school website. | |
| **Designate a ‘College Month’ during which you:** | | |
|  | * Host a college and career fair and/or college and career speakers/presentations. | |
|  | * Focus on different colleges each day in announcements. Include college trivia questions (e.g. Which Arizona University has the Lumberjack mascot?), interesting college trivia facts and figures. | |
|  | * Take students on college field trips – real or virtual – try: <https://www.youvisit.com/education> | |
|  | * Invite alumni to speak with students about their college experiences. | |
|  | * Encourage students to create college banners, pennants and so on for display during the month. | |
|  | * Give away college swag to recognize desirable behavior during the month. (e.g., A drawing for a university t-shirt, with only students with no missing assignments for 2 weeks are eligible to win.) | |
| 1. **Strategic Implementation and Evaluation** | | |
| **Create buy-in for your college-going goals:** | | |
|  | * Publish goals and benchmarks, along with progress towards achieving them (on your website, in newsletters to parents, on visuals displayed in strategic places on campus). | |
|  | * Encourage faculty/staff to demonstrate confidence in students and their belief that each and every one is capable and worthy of achieving their dreams. | |
|  | * Include students in goal-setting and measuring progress toward meeting established goals. | |
|  | * Share academic benchmark goals with students and plan with them how to reach those goals. | |
|  | * Discuss with students the importance of the ACT and SAT for college admission and scholarships. | |
| **Provide professional development that helps faculty and staff understand the nature and value of a College-Going Culture and how to create it:** | | |
|  | * Stay abreast of important “college knowledge.” (<http://www.avid.org/dl/res_research/research_collegeknowledge.pdf>) | |
| 1. **Inclusiveness** | | |
| **Establish systemic school-wide processes, procedures, places and times that allow all students to reflect on their abilities and interests, explore potential post-secondary pathways, and share the ideas and goals they have for their lives after high school and how to reach them:** | | |
|  | * Establish advisory periods, career exploration classes, or incorporate lessons into core classes, to provide the opportunity to introduce all students to exploration resources that allow them to take an interest inventory, research careers and set career goals. <https://azcis.intocareers.org/materials/portal/home.html> | |
|  | * Make all students aware of the career options that are open to them with a college degree and those that are closed without a degree, by incorporating these discussions into class-time. | |
|  | * Guide all students in completing a Pre-ECAP based on their career interests identified from an interest inventory and use that information to help them choose appropriate courses in high school. | |
|  | * Develop advisory groups/periods with curriculum that helps students develop behaviors for success including SMART goal setting, and time management. | |
|  | * Rather than asking students to think, talk and write about “what they want to be when they grow up,” ask them “what problem in their life, community or in the world, they are concerned about and would like to solve.” From there, explore careers that might combine this passion with the students’ interests and strengths. | |
| **Write a powerful Vision Statement that includes a commitment to supporting all students’ highest possible achievement.** | | |
|  | * Post your school’s Vision Statement clearly both inside and outside the school and on the school’s website. | |
|  | * Engage all staff in creating and facilitating strategies and activities that will help the school actualize school vision. | |
|  | * Familiarize stakeholders with the specific strategies and activities being undertaken to achieve the school’s vision. | |
|  | * Use website announcements, newsletter articles, social media posts and other communication resources to stress the important role of families in creating and maintaining a college-going culture. | |
| **Take intentional steps to ensure all students feel cared about at school:** | | |
|  | * Institute a mentoring/advisory program where teachers intentionally work towards positive, guiding relationships with students. | |
|  | * Monitor absences and ensure that parents of students who are absent without a valid excuse will expect to hear from the school. Identify problems, trends and barriers to school attendance and look for remedies. | |
|  | * Recognize staff members who excel at helping students feel connected to the school. | |
| 1. **Academics** | | |
| **Infuse high expectations and a college-going culture in the classroom through rigor, fostering greater independence in students, the courage to take risks and persistence through failure:** | | |
|  | * Inform parents and students of the school’s expectation that all students enter high school on track to succeed in college and careers, and reassure them of the opportunities to make that happen. Reflect that expectation in every activity and interaction. |
|  | * Display student work (in classrooms, in public areas, on the website, at meetings and at any other opportunity). |
|  | * Hold award ceremonies and acknowledge not just accomplishment, but effort and improvement. Display and recognize Academic Achievement awards prominently. |
|  | * Encourage all students to take advanced classes in both middle school and high school. |
| **Infuse college-themed activities in core classes, such as:** | |
|  | * Integrate college-going-related conversations and activities into classrooms regularly. |
|  | * In English classes – have students write letters to colleges/universities requesting promotional information or college swag. |
|  | * In English or Career Exploration classes - Facilitate a virtual college visit, then have students write an essay about it that incorporates both facts and feelings/opinions. |
|  | * In Math classes – analyze data and compute statistics for a college team. |
|  | * Connect individual lesson plans with applications in specific college majors and careers. This may include inviting “guest lecturers” (fire fighters, stock brokers, merchants …) to teach appropriate objectives based on their occupations. (e.g. <https://nau.edu/COE/Gear-Up/CONNECTIONS/> |
| **Engage and train staff in helping develop students’ academic foundational skills, executive function, self-regulation and sense of place and purpose in the school:** | | |
|  | * Demonstrate a growth mindset that allows students to seek or take advantage of help without embarrassment, shame or judgement. |
|  | * Examine formative student achievement data to identify students who need additional support. |
|  | * Assign students with attendance or behavior problems, who might otherwise be expelled or assigned to detention or in-school suspension, to an intensive support class. |
| **Along with preparing students for the content of high stakes and timed tests, familiarize students with practical strategies to succeed in the high stakes testing environment:** | |
|  | * Understand test-taking strategies and explicitly teach them to students. |
|  | * Provide opportunities for students to take timed tests with formats similar to standardized college entrance exams as preparation. |
| 1. **Family and Community Support** | | |
| **Encourage families and community members to support and nurture students’ post-secondary goals:** | | |
|  | * Create a College and Career Center at the school to support college aspirations and invite families to access the staff and resources there. |
|  | * Include parents in CCRA updates and post them on the district website and through other social media. |
|  | * Invite parents to participate in designing policies (attendance, behavior, homework, etc.) that promote high school and post-secondary success. Communicate these policies to the community clearly with examples of “what success looks like” on the website, in newsletters, in posters and in verbal communications. |
|  | * Plan for students’ to share career interest inventory results and related research in class, at a family event or during student-led conferences. |
|  | * Provide information on the importance of attendance and its effect on student success. (e.g. <http://www.attendanceworks.org/> |
|  | * Invite community members with college degrees to serve (volunteer) as college/career coaches - sharing their experiences with students and families about preparing for and attending college. |
|  | * Schedule a workshop to provide students and their families with the College & Career Planning Guide and guidance in completing it. Include information about the types of financial aid available to pay for postsecondary education and ways to reduce the cost of college to families. |
|  | * Invite high school upperclassmen and recent alumni to share their college preparation experience with students and their families, highlighting what they did and wished they had done in middle and high school. |
| 1. **P-20 Collaboration** | | |
| **Develop seamless articulation between elementary, middle and high schools. Ensure that the college-going message is constant as students move through their educational journeys:** | | |
|  | * Schedule regular opportunities for teachers to work in vertically aligned groups to ensure that instruction is aligned across grades. | |
|  | * Assign ‘transition staff’ who help eighth grade students select the appropriate high school courses for their postsecondary goals. Make sure all students and their families know who the ‘transition staff’ are and how to contact them. | |
|  | * Collaborate with the high school to carry out transition activities, such as summer bridge programs, high school student-shadowing days, high school tours, etc. for all eighth grade students. | |
| **Provide access to college/career planning tools that stay with the students through their educational journey:** | | |
|  | * Collaborate with high school personnel to select one on-line student information/career exploration system (e.g., AzCIS, Kuder, Naviance, etc.) that will ensure that students’ portfolios move with them and that their efforts will be acknowledged and built upon as they move from the middle school to the high school. (This is particularly important for non-unified districts). | |
|  | * Help students create electronic portfolios to track all relevant post-secondary materials (Pre-ECAP, personal statements and resumes). | |
| **Develop partnerships with 4-year and 2-year colleges, trade schools, military recruiters etc. to increase students’ awareness of options for post-secondary plans:** | | |
|  | * Co-facilitate/host college-related activities for students and families to raise awareness of, and aspirations for, college. | |
|  | * Produce a scavenger hunt for important information on your school website. (When is the College Fair? What is the school’s vision statement? What is required to be promoted from one grade level to the next? How does one contact the Transition Specialist?) | |
|  | * Ask for donations of college- or career-themed items to be used as giveaways, incentives and/or visuals around campus and in classrooms. | |
| 1. **Sustainability** | | |
| **Ensure that your College-Going Culture will be sustained even if school leadership changes:** | | |
|  | * Participate in the on-line Arizona College Access Professional (CAP) Course to become familiar with resources available to Arizona educators that promote a College-Going Culture. Encourage others to participate. | |
|  | * Ensure that teachers and staff are sufficiently versed on a career information system (e.g. AzCIS) and that using it to engage students in exploration and planning their futures is embedded in your curriculum. | |
|  | * Embed opportunities for career exploration, guidance in completing ECAPS and development of behaviors for success, such as time management, goal setting and growth mindset into the regular school day (consider a schedule that allows for advising periods and advisory curriculum or other ways to embed these topics into specific courses). | |
|  | * Establish a regular schedule (e.g., monthly staff development days) for teachers to meet to discuss how college reading and college awareness is fostered in classrooms. Require each teacher to present at least once on strategies, lessons, etc. they are using, how they know whether they are effective. | |
|  | * Establish a ‘CCRA Team’ at the district, with titles of school and district personal required to serve on it. Write this requirement into the job descriptions for those personnel and evaluate their effectiveness in this role. Assess the efforts of the team as measured by agreed-upon indicators. | |