Intervening and Advocating on Behalf of Underserved Middle School Students

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Learning Objectives

• Examine effective strategies to engage underserved middle school students in the college and career process

• Understand how to establish and utilize support staff such as College & Career Readiness (CCR) Coaches to cultivate college-going and career ready students within the learning community

• Learn best practices for collaboration with community and educational partners to support college and career readiness initiatives in middle schools
My Middle School Educational Journey was . . .

- Scenic route
- Congested
- Extended Vacation
- Stop & Go
- Bumpy Road
- Stop Signs
- Guided Tour
- Smooth Sailing
- No Traffic
- Uphill
- Delayed Flight

- Sinking ship
- Hang gliding
- Adventure Tour
- Foggy
- Foggy, but clearing
- Detour
- Searching
- Rolling a Rock Uphill
- Stepping Stones
- Fly by Night
Why Middle School Students?

• College readiness and career preparations should begin in middle school (Camblin, 2003; Wimberly & Noeth, 2005; Radcliffe & Bos, 2011; Balfanz, 2012)

• Only 1 in 10 8th graders are prepared to go to college when they graduate from high school (ACT, 2008)

• The middle school experience for underserved disadvantaged students strongly impacts their potential for graduating from high school and pursuing post-secondary opportunities (Balfanz, 2012)
Why Middle School Students?

More Importantly . . .

- Nationally, less than half of African American and Hispanic students graduate on time (Radcliffe & Bos, 2011)

- Greater disparity for minority males graduating on time (CollegeBoard, 2012)
MIDDLE SCHOOL
About Fort Worth ISD

- Largest school district in Tarrant County
  - 83 elementary schools
  - 29 middle schools and 6th grade centers
  - 18 high schools
  - 16 specialized campuses
FWISD Student Profile*

Total Enrollment 84,588
• Bilingual/ESL 29.1%
• Economically Disadvantaged 77.1%
• Limited English Proficient (LEP) 30.5%

District Demographics:
• Hispanic 62.8%
• African American 22.7%
• White/Anglo 11%
• Asian/Pacific Islander 1.3%
• Native American 0.1%

*As reported by the 2012-2013 Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS)
we’re doing everything ON PURPOSE

MOTTO
Singleness of Purpose

MISSION
Preparing students for success in college, career and community leadership.

VISION
FWISD: Igniting in Every Child a Passion for Learning

VALUES
1. Student Achievement
2. Leadership Development
3. Stakeholder Collaboration
4. Respect for Diversity
5. Equity in Access
6. Perseverance and Commitment
7. Continuous Improvement
Strategies to Engage Middle School Students

1. Middle School Success Interventions Program
2. Parent Engagement Activities
3. College & Career Readiness Coaches
4. GO Centers
5. Programming for Middle Schoolers
6. Community and Higher Education Partners
Cultivating a Culture of College and Career Readiness through Innovative Learning Opportunities and Intentional Interventions

1. AWARENESS
2. ADVISING
3. AVOCATING
4. INTERVENING
MSSI Program Overview

• Program intentionally identifies underserved students who are at most risk of dropping out of school by providing them with interventions that promotes their on-time graduation.

• College and Career Readiness (CCR) Coaches help students explore college and career interests that match their future aspirations

• Students interact in GO Centers, a resource room that provides students and their families access to the vast array of post secondary opportunities.

• Strong community partnerships and collaborations offer greater impact in providing specialized services
United Way Funding for MSSI

- Initiative funded by the Education Council of United Way of Tarrant County

- United Way has committed to funding the program for 10 years (renewed annually)

- MSSI began in 2010-2011:
  - 2010-2011 funding for 8 school locations
  - 2011-2012 funding for 7 school locations
  - 2012-2013 expanded to 2 additional school locations (10 total)
  - 2013-2014 expanded to 1 additional school location (11 total)
  - 2014-2015 expanded to 1 additional school location (12 total)

- School selections are based upon income/disadvantage status, dropout rates, and percentage of students at risk
MSSI Assessment Objectives

Annual:
• Increase school engagement
• Decrease Absence Rate
• Decrease Core Course Failure Rate
• Decrease Discipline Referral Rate
• Decrease overall Early Warning Index Score

Long-Term Impact:
• Increase Promotion Rate
• Increase Graduation Rate/Decrease Dropout Rate
MSSI Targeted Students

Targeted At-Risk Students
(100 per campus)

Intentional Interventions

Innovative Learning Opportunities

General Student Body
Cultivating a Culture of College and Career Readiness

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

One-on-one advising with college & career curriculum; academic monitoring; community support referrals

Educational, career, and personal & social growth advisement sessions; college & enrichment tours; community partnership mentoring; IROC summer camp

GO Center visits, College and Career Days/Weeks, school-wide promotion of college & career readiness initiatives, classroom presentations, student workshops
Targeted Student Identification

- At-risk 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students
  - 100 students per school caseload

- FWISD Early Warning Index (EWI)
  - Core course failure
  - School attendance
  - Discipline referrals
  - Texas Education Association (TEA) 13 indicators for student dropout out (grade retention, pregnancy, failed state assessments, etc.)

- School Administration and teacher referrals

- Students are tracked from enrollment into the MSSI program, to high school graduation, and into post-secondary.
Parent Engagement Activities

Targeted At-Risk Students (100 per campus)

Intentional Interventions

Innovative Learning Opportunities

General Student Body
Cultivating a Culture of College and Career Readiness

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

- Personalized communication (telephone calls, emails, correspondences)
- Parent conferences
- Parent Survey
- Parent Workshops/ Presentations
- Family Support Referrals

- Parent Awareness Campaign about College & Career Readiness
- Parent Meetings
- College and Career Day
# Parent Engagement Activities Schedule

## 2013 FALL SEMESTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE LEVEL</th>
<th>AUGUST</th>
<th>SEPTEMBER</th>
<th>OCTOBER</th>
<th>NOVEMBER</th>
<th>DECEMBER</th>
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<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>Introductions/Go Center Awareness Campaigns</td>
<td>• Parent Engagement Pledge&lt;br&gt;• Welcome Back to School Activity (Parent &amp; Student)</td>
<td>• Student Success Progress check-ins&lt;br&gt;• Parent Information Session/Workshop Option #1&lt;br&gt;• Evaluation: Parent Focus Group Option #1&lt;br&gt;• Parent Awareness Campaign</td>
<td>• Student Success Progress check-ins&lt;br&gt;• Believing the Dream Curriculum: H4- Changes&lt;br&gt;• Parent Information Session/Workshop Option #2&lt;br&gt;• Evaluation: Parent Focus Group Option #2&lt;br&gt;• Parent Awareness Campaign</td>
<td>• Student Success Progress check-ins&lt;br&gt;• Parent Awareness Campaign</td>
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<tr>
<td>7th</td>
<td>Introductions/Go Center Awareness Campaigns</td>
<td>• Parent Engagement Pledge&lt;br&gt;• Welcome Back to School Activity (Parent &amp; Student)</td>
<td>• Student Success Progress check-ins&lt;br&gt;• Parent Information Session/Workshop Option #1&lt;br&gt;• Evaluation: Parent Focus Group Option #1&lt;br&gt;• Parent Awareness Campaign</td>
<td>• Student Success Progress check-ins&lt;br&gt;• Believing the Dream Curriculum: H4- Why College?&lt;br&gt;• Parent Information Session/Workshop Option #2&lt;br&gt;• Evaluation: Parent Focus Group Option #2&lt;br&gt;• Parent Awareness Campaign</td>
<td>• Student Success Progress check-ins&lt;br&gt;• Parent Awareness Campaign</td>
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<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>Introductions/Go Center Awareness Campaigns</td>
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<td>• Student Success Progress check-ins&lt;br&gt;• Parent Awareness Campaign</td>
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The Role of the CCR Coach

CCR COACH ENGAGEMENT
- LEAD ADVOCATE and CASE MANAGER
- STUDENT SUPPORT ADVOCATE
- RESOURCE ADVOCATE and COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS EDUCATOR

Targeted At-Risk Students (100 per campus)

Intentional Interventions

Innovative Learning Opportunities

General Student Body
Cultivating a Culture of College and Career Readiness

RESOURCE ADVOCATE
STUDENT SUPPORT ADVOCATE
LEAD ADVOCATE and CASE MANAGER

FORT WORTH ISD
COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

Fort Worth
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
College & Career Readiness Coach

- Full-time employees of FWISD
- 187 contracted days; earn additional pay for summer employment
- Bachelor’s degree required; Master’s degree preferred
- Do not have to be certified teacher or counselor (attract professionals from other disciplines such as student personnel, social work, and family sciences)
- Work at the school location; may have flexible schedule to accommodate before and after school activities
- Support school counselors and other student support professionals
Supports the School Counselor

**SCHOOL COUNSELOR**
- Career Day
- Education GO Get It Week
- 6 Guidance Lessons on Career Awareness & College Readiness Skills
- Complete Career Interest Inventory (8th)
- 2 Guidance Lessons on Financial Aid/Scholarship Opportunities

**CCR COACH**
- Selection of 6th Graders to participate in summer job shadowing with local businesses
- Selection of 7th & 8th graders to participate in IROC Summer Camp
- Organize campus tours and enrichment field trips
- Supervise and manage GO Center
- Promote school wide college & career campaigns
GO Centers

Go Centers are resource rooms that exposes students to the vast array of post secondary opportunities. Students can do:

- College applications/ research
- Scholarships
- Financial Aid/ FAFSA
- Career Exploration
- SAT/ACT (ReadiStep)
- Receive G-Force Help
- Attend Presentation
Programming for Middle Schoolers

- GenTX/Education GO Get It! Week
- Middle School College & Career Expo
- College & Career Days
- College campus tours & enrichment field trips
- IROC Summer Camp
- Beyond School Walls Program
- Community Mentoring
A Texas state-wide campaign to inform students and their parents of the benefits of higher educations and how to prepare for it academically and financially.
Middle School College & Career Expo

College, business, and community representatives interact with over 5,500 8th grade students to expose them to information that will help them with their future success.
College & Career Days

Opportunity for Business and Community leaders to share their expertise with students about their personal college experience and professional career path.
College Campus Tours

Student are able to have a firsthand experience to what college life is really like as they tour academic buildings, research libraries, residential halls, and eat in dining halls.
IROC Summer Camp

IROC! (I’m Ready for the Opportunity of College!) is a 3 week summer camp that helps middle school students investigate their potential for college attendance and career exploration. Students are exposed to various collegiate campuses, business environments, and community service projects while using the national Kids2College curriculum. They also take summer enrichment course at a local community college.
Beyond School Walls Program

Beyond School Walls is a mentoring program that expands a student's post-secondary perspective by spending one-on-one time with their mentors during the school day in the workplace.
Community Mentoring

Business and community leaders discuss with students their future aspirations over lunch.
Community Mentoring

Community members provide hands-on-opportunities for our students
Community and Higher Education Partners

MIDDLE SCHOOL
## Educational Partners

1. Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce
2. Big Brother Big Sisters
3. Boys and Girls Club - Education Talent Search
4. University of North Texas Health Science Center
5. Cassata High School
6. Odyssey Ink, Inc.
7. UNCF
8. Tarrant County College District - (Trinity River, South, Northeast)
9. Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County
10. Texas Christian University
11. Career Planning Time (CP Time Magazine)
12. Underground RSVP
13. FiNeSee Consulting
14. Fort Worth Library
15. Bobby Bragan Youth Foundation
16. Morningside Children’s Partnership
17. The Parenting Center
18. Generation Hope
19. University of Texas - Arlington
20. Texas Wesleyan University
21. North Texas Education Authority (NTHEA)/ Higher Education Serving Corp.
22. Texas Woman’s University
23. Paul Quinn College
24. Tarleton State University
25. University of North Texas-Denton
27. National Association of College Admission Counseling (NACAC)
28. Family Pathfinders (Siemer Family Foundation)
The Impact We are Having on Students!

MS students’ comics of presentation conducted by the CCR Coach
# MSSI Program Participation 2010-2015

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<th>Unduplicated Student Participation</th>
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# Decreased Absence Rate

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<th>%</th>
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<td>551</td>
<td>61</td>
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MSSI Students’ School Engagement

Adults in my life are helping me to go to college or get a job

Pre-test: 67.89  
Post-test: 78.94

Adults in my life are helping me to go to college or get a job

Pre-test: 67.89  
Post-test: 78.94
# MSSI Parent Engagement

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Performance Targets</th>
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<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5 (as of 12-8-15)*</th>
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<td>% Target</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Parent Presentations</td>
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<td>26</td>
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Note: All parent goals have since increased (years 4 and 5) due to program growth and expansion.
Contact Information

Dr. Anita Perry, Director of Academic Advisement
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Dr. Stacy M. Burrell, Coordinator of Academic Advisement
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QUESTIONS?

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