

Attachment 11

Strategies for Preparing At-Risk Youth for Postsecondary Success District Administrator Protocol

This protocol is designated for district administrators that are NOT involved in direct program implementation but may influence decisions about the program (e.g., Director of High Schools, Assistant Superintendent, person in charge of district credit recovery/dropout programs)

I. Background

- a. Tell me a little about your professional background leading up to this position.
- b. What are your main responsibilities?
- c. How long have you been involved with insert name of program and how, if at all, does engaging in the program affect your role?

II. Program Description

A. Vision/Goals

- d. What are the district's/charter management organization's (CMO's) overall priorities related to high schools? How does dropout prevention fit into those priorities?
- e. Does the district/CMO implement any dropout prevention/college readiness programs in the district/CMO? If so, please describe.
 - a. To what extent do the district's/CMO's supports for at-risk students include dropout recovery efforts? Please describe.
6. Are there other programs for at-risk youth in the district/CMO? If so, who runs those programs
7. Are there other programs in the district/CMO that work with the insert name of program?

B. Target Population

8. What are the characteristics of the target students for the dropout prevention/college readiness/dropout recovery programs in your district? Probe for: demographics, achievement levels, motivation
9. How does the district/CMO identify students who are in need of academic and social supports?
 - a. What data/specific indicators (e.g., an "early warning system") does the district use to identify if a student is at risk of dropping out or at risk of not going to college?
10. Is the district/CMO involved in the process for determining which services should be provided and how/by whom?
11. How does the district provide support to insert name of program?
 - a. Financial
 - b. Staff time
 - c. Facilities
 - d. Other resources

C. Program Strategies and Practices

12. What kinds of academic and social supports are in place for at-risk students across the district/CMO? Probe for: counselors, social workers, advisories, supplemental services, differentiated instruction, summer school/additional periods, credit recovery.
13. What specific supports and services are available to students to help them make postsecondary plans (e.g., college fairs, campus tours, speakers; help with resumes, job applications, getting references)?
 - a. What challenges and barriers do you face in providing this support?

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14. Once at-risk students are identified, how do you ensure that they are getting the right types of supports given that their needs could be both academic and social?
 - a. Is there a system and/or person in place to monitor student use of academic and support services on an ongoing basis?
 - b. Are students at different risk levels monitored differently, and if so, in what ways?
 - c. Does the district/CMO/school/program use a case management program? If so, please describe how it works.

D. Use of Data

15. In what ways does the district/CMO use data to monitor and revise programs and supports for at-risk youth?
16. How, if at all, does the district/CMO hold the program/schools accountable for implementation? Probe on benchmarks such as:
 - Attendance
 - Attitudes towards academics
 - Engagement in schoolwork
 - Persistence
 - Course-taking patterns
 - Achievement
 - Expectations to attend college
17. To what extent does the district help schools understand and use student performance data?

III. Outcomes

18. In what ways do you think the academic/social supports in the district/CMO are effective in addressing individual student needs?
19. In your opinion, in what ways does the insert name of the program need to improve?
 - a. What ways can the district/CMO be more effective in addressing individual student needs across the district/CMO?

Middle School

20. Do feeder middle schools work with high schools to identify at-risk students before they begin their transition to high school?
21. *[For programs that include MS students]* Are most at-risk middle school students in the program able to successfully transfer to high school? Probe for evidence.

High School

22. Does the district/CMO have the capacity to track the progress of students once they enter a post-secondary institution (e.g., *enrollment, persistence and graduation from a 2-year or 4-year college*)?
23. Is the district/CMO able to identify program graduates who have attained industry-recognized certification or employment at a living wage?

IV. Partnerships

24. Are there partners the district collaborates with to support at-risk youth? If so, which partners do you work most closely with? (Ask only the relevant set of questions in this following section.)

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Community Organizations, Social Services, Local Business

25. How does the district work with these partners? How did the partnerships form? Probe on:
 - a. Community Organizations
 - b. Social Services
 - c. Local Employers/Businesses
26. What have these partnerships been successful in accomplishing? What have been the challenges to developing or maintaining these partnerships?
 - a. How have the partnerships changed over time?
27. Are there any policies or funding requirements that have facilitated or impeded these partnerships?
28. Are there ways you wish that partners were more involved with the program?

IHEs

29. What kinds of postsecondary partnerships does the district currently maintain? How did the partnerships form? Is there an MOU with district?
 - a. In what ways does the postsecondary partner support the district? *Probe for primary responsibilities and services, financial support, help with networking, etc.*
 - b. What factors support a productive partnership with postsecondary institutions? What have been the challenges to developing or maintaining these partnerships? How have the partnerships changed over time?
30. Are there any policies or funding requirements that have facilitated or impeded these partnerships?
31. Are there ways you wish that the IHE was more involved with the district?
32. How does the K-12 system typically coordinate with IHEs and around what goals/purposes?

V. Policy Contexts

33. Do specific district or state policies or structures hinder or facilitate the district's ability to serve at-risk youth? Please provide examples of the impact.
34. Are specific policy changes necessary to improve the district's effectiveness in serving the target population? Are efforts underway to create those changes? Please be specific.
35. Is the state working towards an integrated K-12 and postsecondary data system? If so, when will that data become available? What's your understanding of how such a system might help you in running your program?

VI. Wrap-Up

36. Is there anything else about the program and its successes or challenges that you think we should know?