

## Attachment 10

### Strategies for Preparing At-Risk Youth for Postsecondary Success Guidance Counselor/School Social Worker Protocol

*Tailor/select questions based on guidance counselor's description of responsibilities and degree to which he/she plays an integral part in the program's implementation activities.*

#### I. Background

1. Tell me a little about your professional background leading up to this position.
2. What are your main responsibilities as a guidance counselor?
3. 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

4. What are the program's major goals/priorities? How, if at all, has this vision evolved or changed since you have been involved?

##### B. Target Population

5. What are the characteristics of the target students for this program? Probe for: demographics, achievement levels, motivation
  - a. How did you determine what your target population would be?
  - b. Has your target population changed over time? If so, how and why?
  - c. Do you believe the "right students" are being targeted for support?
6. How do you identify students who are at risk of dropping out or not going to college?
  - a. What data/specific indicators (e.g., an "early warning system") does the program use to identify students at risk of dropping out of high school or at risk of not going to college?
7. Is participation in the program compulsory for certain students?
  - a. How does the program recruit students?
  - b. Specifically, what recruitment activities does the program engage in (e.g., trips to feeder schools, open houses, etc.)?
  - c. Have these activities and/or recruiters changed over time? If yes, how and why?
8. What is the process for determining which services should be provided and how/by whom?
9. Are there requirements for entering the program? For staying in the program? If so, how do these requirements affect students' access to program services?

##### C. Program Strategies and Practices

10. From your perspective, how would you describe the system of supports available at this school for at-risk students?
  - a. What is your role in relation to this system?
11. What specific advising strategies/activities do you implement as part of this program to prevent dropouts? Probe on: student outreach, academic advising/course selection, progress monitoring, college admissions information, ACT/SAT taking, college knowledge opportunities.
  - a. What challenges and barriers do you face in implementing these strategies?

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12. Does the district/CMO/school/program have a credit recovery system that enables students who lack sufficient credits for grade promotion or on-time graduation to make up those credits?
  - a. Who is eligible for participation in the program? Do all students who need credit recovery have access to the program?
  - b. Describe the main components of the credit recovery program.
  - c. What are the main successes of the credit recovery program and evidence thereof? Main challenges?
13. What specific advising strategies/activities do you use as part of this program to improve at-risk students' chances of graduating college and/or career-ready after high school? Probe on: student outreach, academic advising/course selection, progress monitoring, college admissions information, ACT/SAT taking, college knowledge opportunities.
  - a. What challenges and barriers do you face in implementing these strategies?
14. Once at-risk youth 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.
15. If your school uses online learning as a strategy to serve at-risk youth, what are some of the benefits and challenges to this approach?

### III. Use of Data

16. Once individual at-risk youth are identified, what data do you use to track their progress (e.g., attendance, grades, course failures, discipline records, referrals, etc.)?
17. Who is responsible for tracking the data on identified students? How are the data analyzed? To what extent does that analysis influence decisions about the services that students receive?
18. Describe your district's electronic data system for storing student data.
  - a. What kinds of data does it capture (e.g., attendance, test scores, demographics, schedules, grades, ELL status, intervention program participation)?
  - b. Is the same system used for both middle and high school students? Do you have access to incoming 9th-graders' data before they start high school?
  - c. Who has access to these data (e.g., district staff, school leaders, teachers)?

### IV. Capacity and Sustainability

19. Given your role and responsibilities in the program, what are the challenges to your being effective in sustaining this program?"

### V. Outcomes

20. In what ways do you think the academic and social supports at your school are effective in addressing individual student needs?
21. In your opinion, in what ways does the program need to improve?

#### *Middle School*

22. Do you work with your feeder middle schools to identify at-risk students before they begin their transition to high school?

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23. [For programs that include MS students] Are most at-risk middle school students participating in the program able to successfully transfer to high school? Probe for evidence.

### *High School*

24. What have been the most significant impacts on students as a result of their participation in the program? Probe on:
- Attendance
  - Attitudes towards academics
  - Engagement in schoolwork
  - Persistence
  - Course-taking patterns (e.g., advanced courses)
  - Achievement
  - Expectations to attend college
25. Are you able to track the progress of students once they enter a postsecondary institution? *[If yes]* What data do you lack (e.g., enrollment, persistence and graduation from a 2-year or 4-year college) and how do you use this information?
26. Are you able to identify program graduates who have attained industry-recognized certification or employment at a living wage? *[If yes]* How are these data obtained?

## **VI. Partnerships**

27. Do you work directly with any of the partners engaged in the program? If so, which partners do you work most closely with? (Ask only the relevant set of questions in this following section.)

### *Partnerships with community organizations*

28. How did the partnerships form?
29. What have these partnerships been successful in accomplishing? What have been the challenges to developing or maintaining these partnerships?
- How have the partnerships changed over time? Why were these changes made?
30. Are there any policies or funding requirements that have facilitated or impeded these partnerships?
31. Are there ways you wish that partners were more involved with the program?

### *Partnerships with IHEs*

32. How did the partnerships form?
- In what ways does the postsecondary partner support the program? Probe for primary responsibilities and services, financial support, help with networking, etc.
  - What factors have made for a productive partnership with postsecondary institutions? What have been the challenges to developing or maintaining these partnerships? How have the partnerships changed over time?
33. Do high school students have opportunities to take advanced coursework at or through these postsecondary institutions (e.g., dual enrollment)?
- Can high school students earn college credit or certification?
  - Are there eligibility requirements (e.g., GPA, assessments) for dual enrollment?
  - How are students informed of access to college courses? How are they supported academically while taking those courses?

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34. Are there ways you wish that the IHE was more involved with the program?

### *Social Services*

35. What types of activities, if any, does your program provide to educate families on supporting their children in school and preparing them for college?

36. What are some successes and challenges the program has faced working with families?

### *Local Employers/Businesses*

37. What type of support, if any, does the program receive from local businesses?

- a. If part of their support includes internships/employment, how are students held accountable for their participation and/or performance?

## **VII. Wrap-Up**

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