DCAN Web Support Series

Leveraging Parent
Engagement

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- Relationship Building
- Programming/Resources
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Shift in Culture

Shift in Culture- Parent

- You now have the listening ear from parents that you typically did not have during the school year.
- Several platforms disseminating information for families to get and stay informed
- Parents are actively seeking updates and resources regarding their students that are now home.
- There may be several upcoming opportunities to engage parents

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Shift in Culture- Schools

- Use this window of opportunity to develop parental systems that you can carry into the academic year
- Create a platform of communication in which your information, programming and resources are easily accessible
- Make partner connections to leverage all the systems that are in place to update and inform parents of the happenings at your school (e.g. announcements at townhalls, updates on websites, etc)

Parent/Adult Support

Parent/Adult Support

Parent/guardian: legal or biological mother/father/ or adult responsible for the care of the minor

Adult Support: Any adult over the age of _____ that the student confides in and/or will support with their journey through secondary and postsecondary endeavors

***This person is not always the parent and can be designated by the parent and student to remain in contact on the happenings with the student.

Parent/Adult Support

Potential Support Advocates

- Parent/guardian
- Grandparents
- Aunt/Uncle
- Older sibling (potentially in college)
- Older cousin
- Friend of the family
- Mentor

*This person should be approved by the parent and students to be effective.

Be sure to keep the parent/guardian informed but if they are not able to support and guide the students during these transitional years, try to connect with an adult that can.

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Relationship Building

Relationship Building

Relationships with your students and parents are very similar to the relationships that are fostered in our personal lives.

When you reflect on the relationships in your personal life that you have and what you expect from others, you embodying those principles when you build relationships with your students and families?

Are you taking the time to connect with them where they are, identify their potential needs, or are we just informing them of what we feel to be important in that moment?

7 Keys to Building an Effective Relationship

1. Become A Great Listener. ...
2. Ask The Right Questions. ...
3. Pay Attention To The Whole Person. ...
4. Remember Things That Are Important To Others. ...
5. Be Consistent And Manage Emotions. ...
6. Be Open And Share When The Time Is Right. ...
7. Be Genuine, Confident, Humble, Trustworthy, Positive, And Fun.

-Fast Company

Relationship Building

Keep in mind the balance of give and take when you consider what you need from your parents/adult advocates.

What you feel may be in important may not be that important to them... Not because it doesn't matter but simply because there may potentially be more pressing issues at hand.

The 1st assumption is that parents/adults do not care when they are not invested but in many cases it's that they do not understand and do not feel like they are in a position to be helpful with this process.

Programming/Resources

Programming/Resources-Key Factors

- If you conduct "drive-by" programming, you're going to get "drive-by" results. Do not wait until the last minute to plan, market, and host programming.
- Culture-shift is not easy. There will be pushback in the beginning but by setting the new norm and standing firm on what that norm is, people will conform.
- Capitalize on the structures in place to include the structures that you are seeking to implement.
- Use this window of opportunity to build the new norm

Programming/Resources-Key Factors

- Create a system to get and consistently update contact information for students and parents (e.g. quarterly, biannually, or annually)
- There will always be opportunities/issues that present itself in an abrupt manner that must be addressed accordingly but you should have some consistent standing programming/opportunities available throughout the entire year and for all grades not just seniors or graduating students.

Resources

- Be all encompassing… So this means you need to stay abreast of the resources that available for your students and families
- You want to keep your families informed on not only what you have to provide but also other resources that are available and accessible across the metro. The more informed you are the stronger the tie between you and the family.

Resources

- Khan Academy [Parent Webinars](#)
- [COVID313.org](#), a guide for Detroit families in response to COVID-19
- [MI Student Aid Lounge and Learn on Facebook Live](#)
- [Black College Expo Online](#)
- [Skillman High School Senior FAQ Media Kit](#)
- [Metro Detroit Parent and Student COVID-Resource sharing Facebook Group](#)
- [UWSEM COVID-19 Fund](#)
- [OneGoal curated online resources](#)
- [Federal Student Loan Payments Will Be Suspended Through September 30](#)

Communication

Update Contact Information

1. Use this time to update parent information. Instead of asking parents to show up or listen to recordings. Have them sign-up to receive information. This will allow you to collect update phone numbers and email addresses
2. When you connect with students do the same. Ask for updated phone numbers, emails address, and social media platforms. This would be a great time to get updated address information and parent/adult advocate information as well
3. Provide a place where they can update their information at any time and not just upon request. This could potentially be an ask of your district to house on the district website as a highlight or feature to receive updated information regarding the school

Communication

Scheduling

1. Create open office/support time for students and parents to EASILY make appointments/meetings for their students.
2. Just because we are out of schools does not mean all parents are out of work. Many of our parents if not unemployed are working on the front lines as essential workers in this pandemic. You have to be sure that you are accommodating by hosting night and weekend opportunities to connect as you did when you were in an active school year.
3. Do not wait until the last min to update families about coming events. Be consistent. If you host on a Friday, considering hosting consistently on Fridays (e.g. biweekly, monthly etc).
4. It takes time to build momentum, so gather contacts, send reminders, encourage to invite other students/parents of the school

Communication

Follow-up

1. Create a protocol for follow-up BEFORE you host your events or meetings.
2. Have you links ready and encourage to sign-up before the end of the meetings.
3. Know what systems will be in place. Take advantage of having the parent before you by being prepared.
4. Have the parent make student appointments. The student may not but their parent will and will potentially stay on the student to ensure they are in attendance.

Communication

Building Systems for 2020-21

We are in a scramble for this year because this pandemic has truly caught us by surprise... But in knowing this what should we be doing to prepare for next year as it relates to parent involvement and connection.

1. Update contact information now and create a system of contact updates to connect with families for the new year

2. Though the focus is the graduating seniors, it may be effective to incorporate Junior parent meetings at this time as the new year will hit our students fast and hard.

3. Convene your student support team, postsecondary advisory councils, leadership, etc to discuss and plan a draft calendar of what next year looks like in terms of connecting with families and the events you hope to host to keep them engaged.

Questions???