

Minnesota Principals Academy-Action Learning Project

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FUEL-How to develop a program which helps students who fall through the cracks

Abstract

This Action Learning Plane project focuses on improving the effectiveness of a pre-existing safety net program at Tartan High School. The FUEL program (For Us Education is Limitless) is a program aimed at helping students who fall through the cracks. We specifically wanted to address those without significant skill gaps and behavioral issues yet who still failed courses in their Freshmen and Sophomore years.

In terms of our safety net programs we initially put significant resources toward reading interventions. We hired two reading specialist and established a robust system to intervene for students reading below grade level. The FUEL program came about when access to ALC dollars became available, this though did dictate in some ways how the dollars were used. The FUEL program intended to serve students who without any interventions would predictably end up at the ALC due to credit deficiencies.

The structure of FUEL is that the students have a course called the FUEL Elective which is based on the AVID (Achievement Via Individual Determination) Elective class. Student focus on the study skills, goal setting and receive a "secondary parent" so to speak. In addition to the FUEL elective students are scheduled in a FUEL English Class and a FUEL Social Studies. The coursework for these core classes is the same the only difference being that the class sizes are smaller, 15-17 students.

Tartan Demographics

- FRP 41.1%
- Sped 15.5%
- LEP 3.3%
- AM Indian 1.7%
- Asian 14%
- Latino 9%
- Black 16.4%
- White 58.8%
- 1,694 Students

Current & future Safety net structures

- AVID
- Reading Strategies
- SLOP
- General History
- Supported Science
- Titan Academy
- Mandatory Summer School
- Check & Connect

Goals

The goal of FUEL is to work with academically struggling students in their Freshman and/or Sophomore year so that in their Junior and Senior years they are on track and do not leave for our ALC programs. Students master the basic skills and habits necessary for successful credit attainment.

Issues which required a program reset

- Communication
- Alignment between elective and core course
- Lack of PD
- Clear vision for the program
- Clear entrance and exit criteria
- Articulation of the agreements made with staff prior to agreeing to teach FUEL
- Clear identification of the students to be served

What FUEL can support and where

<u>Need</u>	<u>Support</u>	<u>Where delivered</u>
Academic Persistence	Top 20 skills	Elective class
Academic Habits and goal setting	FUEL elective Check & Connect	Elective class,
Organization	Binders & Agenda's	All FUEL classes
Small class sizes	basic structure of FUEL classes	All FUEL classes
Cooperative Learning	FUEL core classes	Core FUEL classes

Steps taken to reset

- Strictly define who you are serving and why
- Articulate assumptions and agreements
- Assess your resources; human capital, PD and Money
- Set clear entrance and exit criteria as well as systems to support the movement of students
- Create communication and feedback systems