




Makin' Graduation Happen

Academic Success through
Portage Prep Program & Freshmen Transition Program


Background

- Where Connie comes from ...
- Where Terry comes from ...

Why do we care about these students?

- SES
 - Home life
 - Educational history - moving, etc.
 - Transition to high school
 - What was the need in Portage?
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What are the different programs we have?

- Freshmen Transition
 - Learning Lab
 - Staffed by regular education teacher
 - 10 students max
 - Meet daily
 - Online options for both credit recovery and initial credit for required classes
 - Inadvertent mentoring by teacher
 - PPP (Portage Prep Program)
 - PAA (Portage Academy Of Achievement)
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What do you need to make it happen?

Administrative support and buy-in

Recognizing the needs of at-risk students

Qualified staff to carry it out

Good working relationships with teachers, counselors, etc. - also need the buy in!

Educational resources: computers, credit recovery program, own classroom

Older students model what needs to be done




What didn't work?

- When a structured study hall was all we had...
- Students decided to go for a GED
- Used to have waiting list to get into Portage Academy of Achievement



Student Profile - who gets in?

- One or more years behind their age group in the number of high school credits attained
 - I have 13 juniors with 4 credits, 7 credits, 7.75, 8.5, 9. They should have at least 10.
 - Two or more years behind their age group in basic skill levels
 - 16 juniors that did not have at least 1 math credit. Last year I had seniors with 1 or 0 English credits. I currently have 2 sophomores that do not have high enough skills to pass Algebra 1. They probably wouldn't qualify for special education.
 - Habitual truants
 - Adjudicated delinquents
 - Parents
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Selection process

- Teacher recommendation
- Credit deficient list
- Credit list: those with low English or math credits
- Student request
- Transfer students: homeschooled, were in an at-risk program at previous school
- All new PPP students meet with the Assistant Principal
- Voluntary. Students need to show a “want” to improve in order to get in

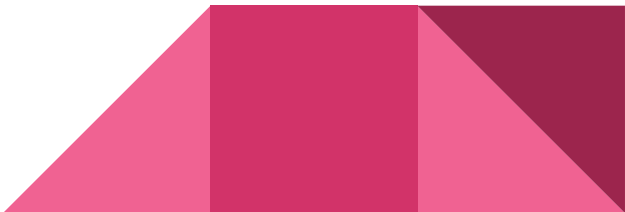


Roster

2016/2017

- 20 seniors all year
- 2 seniors for 1 semester
- 18 juniors all year
- 4 juniors 1 semester
- 2 sophomores 1 semester
- 4 students doing math with me that are not in PPP
- 1 senior tutored at the jail every other week for 6 months. He earned diploma on 4/27

2017/2018

- 25 seniors
 - 11 juniors
 - 9 sophomores
 - 3 with severe anxiety
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Portage Prep Program

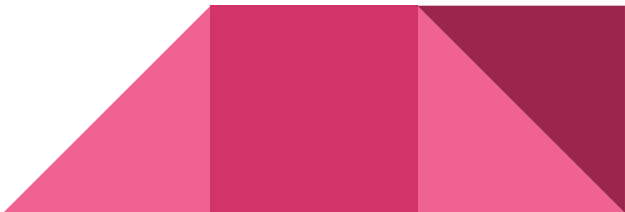
- [Syllabus](#)
- [Daily point sheet](#)
- [Get to know me interest inventory](#)
- Final exam prompts
- 1- full time teacher
- 1- 5.75 hour aide
- 10-18 students per class period
- In September, all PPP students meet with counselors to review credits
- Campus visit to Madison College
- Lots of help given to students applying to colleges, for scholarships, jobs, etc.
- Several students use the room as a safe place when anxiety attacks occur.
- Rather than staying home, students come to school and sometimes stay with me all day instead of getting a truancy when having a bad day.
- Collaborate with counselors 2-3x a week

PPP - Program Data

	# students S1/Year	1st semester credits earned	GPA S1	GPA S2	Cumulative GPA change
13/14	19/19	3.568	2.028	1.975	.178
14/15	31/37	2.80	1.617	1.805	.121
15/16	37/45	2.939	1.496	1.643	.126
16/17	38/47	4.02	2.137	2.137	.297
17/18	38/45	3.36	1.872		.218

**** 16/17 Algebra/Geometry class. Earned 2.0 credits

Students in for full school year make the most gains



Credit Recovery Options

1. E2020
 - a. Core classes
 - b. Health, P.E.
 - c. Electives: Sociology, Psychology, Employability Skills
2. Book work- AGS series, From School to Work
3. Essential skills/summative assignments
 - a. English
 - b. Social Studies
 - c. Some electives
4. Summer School
 - a. Essential skills
 - b. E2020



Why does it work?

- Building relationships
- Buy in
- Visibility
- Safety - emotionally, academically, physically




Where do they go?

- Back to full time regular classes - push them out of the nest
- Study hall on their own
- Consult only
- PAA



Freshmen Transition

- ACP Conferences - students care, parents care, but what next?
 - Coming from student mentality of “middle school doesn’t count”
 - Opportunity for a fresh start - different climate, different staff
 - Students known to struggle ... but resources only for upperclassmen
 - 8th grade team (core teachers, counselor) identified ...
 - Need for a “school mom”
 - Organizational issues
 - Don’t qualify for special ed OR intervention before referring
 - Multiple failures in classes
 - Attitude of defeat
 - Must attend school regularly & have minimal discipline concerns
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Freshmen Transition: Who?

Initially looked at risk factors:


- Poor attendance
- Failing grades - multiple D/F
- Family crisis
- Referred to but did not qualify for special education
- Social/emotional/medical issues
- Free/reduced lunch
- Below average performance on assessments
- Discipline problems
- Drug & alcohol issues
- Criminal behavior
- Poor peer relationships
- Retained or considered for retention
- Significant credit deficiency



Freshmen Transition: Group Format

Meet 2 days/week (MTh group, TF group) - 25 min during study hall

Focus on

- Building “community” between student and staff as well as each other
 - Skill building: how to study, how to organize, how to advocate for self/help, how to deal with stress and/or anxiety, how to prepare for tests
 - “Case management” - consult with teachers, work on discipline, run interference on needs, counseling needs/issues
 - Quiet time - less distraction in smaller group
 - Reading and math skill building
 - Parent connection
 - Academic success in high school!
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Freshmen Transition: Data

36 students identified

Ended up being bottom $\frac{1}{3}$ of 8th grade class, regular ed students

GPA: range of 0.465-2.428 cumulative for grades 6-8; all but one with multiple F's

At start of school year, 2 transferred out, 2 had significant behavior concerns that would be addressed 1:1 ... yield of 32 students, 16 per group (10 girls, 22 boys)



Freshmen Transition: Group Time

Started with a survey - 1st group

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Z0JyJEgxFhSN1qGwneHZ6f6TJk4-uEPrvUZhilofgQQ/edit>

Planned to meet for just the first quarter BUT ...

Developing routine is key

Grade checks, help with assignments, connecting with resources, FOLLOW UP


One meeting was a “chat with the principal”

Have activities ready for the “impossible” days



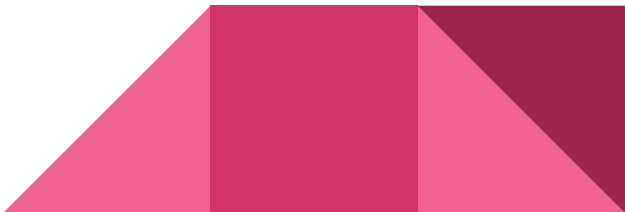
Freshmen Transition: Data

Of the 32 ...

- 12 transferred out between 4 and 9 weeks due to all passing grades (9 finished semester that way)
 - 2 ended up coming to both groups because they both needed and wanted support
 - 4 had ongoing attendance concerns affecting both program and their grades
 - 3 additional students joined in along the way with mixed results
 - Of the remaining 16, 7 had still had multiple F's (only 3 worse than MS)
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Where do we want to go next?

For Freshmen Transition:

- Use first 4 weeks for building foundational skills; PLAN ON meeting up until winter break
 - Build in additional instruction and support for mathematics and English in particular
 - More focused efforts on “how to be a strong student”
 - Regular feedback to parents and teachers of students in the group
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Questions?

THANK YOU!!

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