

## SECTION 4

# PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER: AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH TO COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL COUNSELING



## 4.0 Putting it all together: An integrative approach to comprehensive school counseling

The first NJSCI (1991) recognized the need for multilevel programs and integrated the themes of leadership, advocacy, collaboration, teaming, and systemic change that are infused in the current ASCA National Model. Many of the programs suggested in the original NJSCI are now mandates in New Jersey Administrative Code. Currently, classroom and whole-school programs and services support the school counseling program's mission, serving as a point of collaboration for school counselors. In order for the comprehensive school counseling program to be integrated into the total school, it cannot operate in isolation. Some of the mandates that affect school counseling include the requirements that a school/district develop and adopt:

- an Intervention and Referral Services program in regular education
- core ethical values as a basis for student codes of conduct, part of Character Education
- school crisis plans
- a district prevention plan
- a guidance and counseling program

Some examples of district integration of mandates follow.



### 4.1 Character Education

(contributed by Dr. Phil Brown, Executive Director - the New Jersey Center for Character Education - NJCCE)

1. There is a natural connection between the goals of developmental counseling and character education (CE). Here's why:
  - CE serves as an umbrella to help organize and promote preventive approaches: e.g., drug and alcohol prevention, bullying prevention, positive discipline, social skill development
  - The Core Curriculum Content Standards require and provide hooks for skills and cumulative progress indicators both specifically (Health, Phys. Ed., etc.) and generally, through connections to ethics, conflict resolution
2. The new Administrative Code on Student Conduct (NJAC 6A:16, and especially 16-7 – Student Conduct) provides a basis for establishing a process and structure to reinforce agreed upon core ethical values. In fact, core ethical values such as respect, responsibility and caring offer cognitive (language arts, math, science), affective and behavioral dimensions.
3. Opportunity for district/building leadership to knit a fabric in which character education is seamlessly connected to learning and school life:
  - taking a systems approach
  - using group process skills
  - making ties to other learning supports (e.g., I&RS, “problem-solving lab”)
  - enabling mental health services in the schools
4. The NJCCE at Rutgers University is available to assist with the planning and implementation of comprehensive character education programs. Joining the NJCCE's Character Education Network Listserv will provide a monthly update on the latest professional development opportunities and resources.

Sign up at [www.nj-charactered.net](http://www.nj-charactered.net)

## 4.2 Intervention and Referral Services



### NJAC SUBCHAPTER 8. INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL SERVICES 6A:16-8.1

#### Establishment of intervention and referral services

(a) District boards of education shall establish and implement a coordinated system in each school building for the planning and delivery of intervention and referral services that are designed to assist students who are experiencing learning, behavior or health difficulties and to assist staff who have difficulties in addressing students' learning, behavior, or health needs. District boards of education shall choose the appropriate multidisciplinary team approach for planning and delivering the services required under this subchapter.

1. The intervention and referral services shall be provided to aid students in the general education program, and
2. The intervention and referral services, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:46- 18.1 et seq. and this subchapter, may be provided for students who have been determined to be in need of special education programs and services.
  - I. The intervention and referral services provided for students with learning disabilities shall be coordinated with the student's Individualized Education Program team, as appropriate.

#### 6A:16-8.2 Functions of intervention and referral services

(a) The functions of the system of intervention and referral services in each school building shall be to:

1. Identify learning, behavior, and health difficulties of students;
2. Collect thorough information on the identified learning, behavior, and health difficulties;
3. Develop and implement action plans which provide for appropriate school or community interventions or referrals to school and community resources, based on the collected data and desired outcomes for the identified learning, behavior, and health difficulties;
4. Provide support, guidance, and professional development to school staff who identify learning, behavior, and health difficulties;
5. Provide support, guidance, and professional development to school staff who participate in each building's system for planning and providing intervention and referral services;
6. Actively involve parents or guardians in the development and implementation of intervention and referral services action plans;

7. Coordinate the access to and delivery of school resources and services for achieving the outcomes identified in the intervention and referral services action plans;
8. Coordinate the services of community-based social and health provider agencies and other community resources for achieving the outcomes identified in the intervention and referral services action plans;
9. Maintain records of all requests for assistance and all intervention and referral services action plans, according to the requirements of 34 CFR Part 98, 34 CFR Part 99, 42 CFR Part II, N.J.S.A.
- 10.18A:40A-7.1, N.J.A.C. 6A:16-3.2, and N.J.A.C 6:3-2.1;
11. Review and assess the effectiveness of the provisions of each intervention and referral services action plan in achieving the outcomes identified in each action plan and modify each action plan to achieve the outcomes, as appropriate; and
12. At a minimum, annually review the intervention and referral services action plans and the actions taken as a result of the building's system of intervention and referral services and make recommendations to the principal for improving school programs and services, as appropriate.

### **6A:16-8.3 School staff and community member roles for planning and implementing intervention and referral services**

(a) The district board of education shall establish guidelines for the involvement of school staff and community members in each building's system of intervention and referral services, which shall, at a minimum:

1. Identify the roles and responsibilities of the building staff who participate in each building's system for planning and providing intervention and referral services, including the roles and responsibilities of staff members who identify learning, behavior or health difficulties;
2. Identify the roles and responsibilities of other district staff for aiding in the development and implementation of intervention and referral services action plans; and
3. Identify the roles, responsibilities and parameters for the participation of community members for aiding in the development and implementation of intervention and referral services action plans.



### 4.3 Integrative Programs

## Lumberton Township Developmental Counseling Program

### Theme I Coping with Change

**Consulting**

Dare Program  
Scheduling for High School  
Parents  
Staff Administrators  
District Resource Officer  
Mental Health Agencies

**Counseling**

**Small Group**  
Memory Gang  
Banana Splits  
Coping with Illness  
in the Family  
Elephant in the  
Living Room  
Progress Group  
Students on the Move  
New Students Group  
SAM-Students of  
Active Military

**Classroom Group**  
Welcome to  
Walter School  
Welcome to Bobby's  
Run School  
Welcome to  
Middle School  
Counselor Intro.  
Lessons  
Personal  
Transitions 8th

**Coordinating**

RBRHS--BCIT  
Open House  
Presentation

### Theme II Developing Positive Relationships

**Consulting**

Natural Helpers  
School  
Parents  
Staff  
Resolution  
District Resource Officer  
Mental health Agencies

**Counseling**

**Small Group**  
Making Friends/  
  
Social Skills  
Anger Management  
  
Conflict Management

**Classroom Group**  
Getting Along 1<sup>st</sup>  
  
Getting Along II 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Peer Relationships 3<sup>rd</sup>  
  
Responding to  
Bullying 4<sup>th</sup>  
Anger Management 5<sup>th</sup>  
Conflict Resolution 6<sup>th</sup>  
Dealing with  
Harassment 7<sup>th</sup>

**Coordinating**

**Resources**  
Positive  
  
Climate  
Conflict  
  
for Teachers  
Health  
Curriculum

### Theme III Personal Growth

**Consulting**

Career Education  
School  
Parents  
Staff  
Administrators  
District Resource Officer  
Mental Health Agencies

**Counseling**

**Small Group**  
Self-Esteem  
ADHD Support Group  
Study Skills  
Impulsive Behavior  
Stress Management

**Classroom Group**  
I Can Do Hard  
Things K

**Coordinating**

Positive  
  
Climate  
Character Ed.  
Career  
Awareness



## ROXBURY HIGH SCHOOL - PREVENTION PLAN

### Protective (P) or Risk Factor (R)

### Program/Class/Activity

**Grade 8**

- P Raising career/educational aspirations
- P Decision-making
- R Disaffected/Transitions
- P Improve family bonds
- P Peer group membership
- P Role models/mentoring

- Dream Career/Reality Career
- Parent/student/counselor planning meeting
- Welcome Ice Cream Social/Senior-led Tours
- Parent Wish List
- My Career Sweat Shirt Activity
- Varsity Athletes Eighth Grade Visits

**Grade 9**

- R School transition
- R Transitions/Lack of Connections
- P Raising career/educational aspirations
- P Time management/study skills
- P Conflict Resolution
- R Anger/Violence
- P Peer Group Membership
- R Coping /social skill deficits
- P Awareness of abilities/skills

- High School and Me Microlab
- Orientation: Senior and teacher Survival Tips
- Making High School Count Program
- Making High School Count Program
- Health Curriculum/Conflict Resolution Training
- Health Curriculum/Project Peace
- Health Curriculum/Ropes Course
- Health Curriculum/CRT/Project Peace
- Learning Styles Inventory

**Grade 10**

- P Making good decisions
- P Relate abilities/interests to goals
- P Sense of self-efficacy
- R No path to future/dropout
- R Lack of meaningful role
- P Bond to school-helping others
- R Social skill/coping deficits

- PSAT/Goals Group
- Holland SDS/Shadowing Program
- 4-2C Group Guidance
- VoTech Assembly/Tour
- Tour Leaders/True Colors
- Tour Leaders/True Colors/Peer Leaders
- True Colors/Team Lens

**Grade 11**

- R Lack of meaningful role
- R Social skills/coping deficits
- P Bond to school/helping others
- P Relate abilities/interests to goals
- P Raise educational/career aspirations
- R No future plan/dropout
- P Relate abilities/interests to goals
- P Pathways/Future Plan

- Tour leaders/student guides
- Peer mediation/conflict resolution
- Peer leadership
- PSAT/Goals Groups/College Wish List
- Making College Selection Count Program
- Making College Selection Count Program
- Strong Interest Inventory or COPS
- English Class:Personal Essay Workshop

**Grade 12**

- P Mentoring/Close Relationship
- P Family bonds
- P Raise educational/career aspirations
- R Lack of meaningful role/goal
- P Relate abilities/interests to work
- R Transitions/family Stress
- P Decision Making
- P Pathways/Choices

- Teacher & Counselor Recommendation
- Parent/Grandparent Brag Sheet/Senior Profile
- Making College Count Program/Senior Survey
- Strong Interest Inventory or COPS
- Strong Interest Inventory or COPS
- College Freshmen/Parents Panel
- CAPS Family Evening Program
- College Guest in Residence Program

**School-Wide**

- P Acceptance/tolerance
- P Self-awareness/relationships
- R Distant/hostile relationships
- R Alcohol/drug use
- P Conflict resolution skills
- P Multiethnic awareness/acceptance
- P School bonding/citizenship
- P Positive school climate
- P Raise educational/career aspirations
- R Lack of future plans/goals
- P Self-efficacy/responsibility
- P Meaningful roles in community

- You Don't Know Me Till You Know Me* Drama
- English Class: Role Reflections
- Improbable Players Performance/Discussions
- Improbable Players Performance/Discussions
- Conflict Resolution Team demos
- Memorial Day assembly/student coalition
- Memorial Day assembly program
- School Climate Survey/Focus groups
- Teacher Course Recommendation Day
- 4-2C Educational Planning Groups
- Four Year Plan Update
- Peace Project

<b>CLIFTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS CHARACTER &amp; VALUES PROGRAMS K-5 2003-2004 School Year</b>			
<b>PROGRAM.</b>	<b>GRADES</b>	<b>TMNING SOURCE DELIVERED BY</b>	<b>OUTCOME MEASURE</b>
Social Decision Making/ Problem Solving*	1-5	ESP staff Classroom teachers	Annual District developed questionnaire (optional/DEP Goal)
Giraffe (stick your neck out)	5	ESP staff ESP Counsleors	Class project, otherwise none
Bullying prevention	K-5	ESP staff ESP staff & teachers	None
Peer mediation	1-5	ESP staff Building teacher	None
<b>PROPOSED 2004-2005</b>			
Child development program .Homeside .Class meeting "Friends" K -5	Classroom teachers & ESP staff	Program initially & District thereafter	Pre/Post school climate student survey
*all schools			

<b>CLIFTON ATOD &amp; SCHOOL VIOLENCE PROGRAMS</b>		
<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Delivered by</b>	<b>Program description</b>
K-5	Classroom teachers	“Chemical Health Education” curriculum - includes life skills, conflict resolution. (funded in part by SDFSCA)
	Classroom teachers	Social Problem Solving Program curriculum - included in the Chemical Health curriculum. (funded in part by SDFSCA)
	Teacher advisors	Peer Mediation Program conducted during lunch and afterschool by trained students to resolved student-student conflicts. (funded by SDFSCA)
	Boys & Girls Club staff	Schools Out Program -latchkey program based in elementary schools including alternative activities, homework help, and ATOD prevention activities. (Funded by Municipal Alliance and program fees)
	School teams	Parent Assistance Committees develop plans and modifications for students experiencing academic and/or behavioral difficulties, including parent consultation. (Funded in part through SDFSCA)
	Educational Support LDTC	Educational Support Program ,as part of the PAC, provides intervention, parent & teacher consultation, and related services for academic problems. (Funded in part through SDFSCA)
	Educational Support Counselors	Educational Support Program, as part of the PAC, provides counseling intervention, parent & teacher consultation, and related groups such as anger management for behavior and/or family related problems. (Funded in part through SDFSCA)
	Classroom teachers Educational support staff Building administrators	Schools Attuned (to neurodevelopmental differences) Program - assists teachers in understanding learning differences requiring classroom modification but not Special Education. Supports the PAC process. (Funded in part by SDFSCA & Title I)
	Educational Support Counselor (SAC) Educational Support staff & classroom teachers	Parenting Education classes conducted on a regular cycle for specific grade levels. (Funded in part by SDFSCA) True Colors program -teaching teachers to identify learning styles & personality type/temperament as they interact with their students.
	Clifton Police Juvenile Officers DARE trained	DARE program -conducted in 1st grade 5 classrooms offering drug abuse resistance education and developing a rapport with students.



GradeLevel	Delivered by	Program description
6-8	Classroom teachers	"Chemical Health Education" curriculum - includes life skills, conflict resolution. (Funded in part by SDFSCA)
	Classroom teachers	Cycle course (Live. Learn & Earn1 - 7th grade life skills course for all students designed to meet NOICC standards. (Funded & in part by SDFSCA)
	Teacher advisors SACs	Peer Mediation Program conducted during lunch and afterschool by trained students to resolved student-student conflicts. (Funded in part by SDFSCA)
	Teacher advisors	Peer Tutoring Program conducted during lunch and afterschool by students who help other students in their school and neighborhood elementary. (Funded in part by SDFSCA)
	Boys & Girls Club staff	Pathways to Success Program - latchkey program based in both middle schools including alternative activities, homework help, and ATOD prevention including the Smart Moves Program based on Botvin's curriculum. (Funded through a NJ Dept. of Health prevention grant) activities. (Funded by Municipal AUiance and program fees)
	School teams	Pupil Assistance Committees develop plans and modifications for students experiencing academic and/or behavioral difficulties, including parent consultation. (Funded in part through SDFSCA)
	School Counselors	Developmental School Counseling program - a structured set of activities delivered by the Counselors in classrooms and groups [see attached description]. (Funded in part through SDFSCA)
	Classroom teachers Building administrators	Schools Attuned (to neurodevelopmental differences) Program - assists teachers in understanding learning differences requiring classroom modification but not Special Education. Supports the PAC process. (Funded in part by SDFSCA & Title I)
	Student Assistance Counselor (SAC) SACs & Teacher advisors	Student Assistance program provides intervention, referral, and followup after treatment. (Funded in part by SDFSCA) NJ Middle School Peer Leadership program - developing school-based action plans for improving climate, etc. (Funded by the New Jersey Departments of Health & Education)
	SACS, Counselors, & classroom teachers	True Colors program -teaching teachers to identify learning styles & personality type/ temperament as they interact with their students.

Grade Level	Delivered by	Program description
9-12	Classroom teachers	“Chemical Health Education” cumculurn -includes life skills, conflict resolution. (Funded in part by SDFSCA)
	Teacher advisors SACs, Peers	Peer Mediation Propun conducted during lunch and afterschool by trained students to resolved student-student conflicts. (Funded in part by SDFSCA)
	Teacher advisors Peers	Peer Tutoring Program conducted during lunch and afterschool by students who help other students in their school. (Funded in part by SDFSCA)
	School teams	Pupil Assistance Committees develop plans and modifications for students experiencing academic and/or behavioral difficulties, including parent consultation. (Funded in part through SDFSCA)
	School Counselors	Developmental School Counseling program -a structured set of activities delivered by the Counselors in classrooms and groups [see attached description]. (Funded in part through SDFSCA)
	Student Assistance Counselor (SAC)	Student Assistance program provides intervention, referral, and followup after treatment. (Funded in part by SDFSCA)
	Teacher advisors Peers	ERASE (End Racisirn & Sexism Everywhere) -peer led program to combat racism & sexism through peer, cross-age teaching and awareness activities.
	Coaches/SACs	Athlete’s Awareness Program -conducted by coaches, SACs, team physician to educate athletes about steroid and performarice enhancing substances and to detect the use of substances.
	SACS, Peers	TATU (Teens Against Tobacco Use) program -educating fellow students about risks of tobacco use, conducting related activities.
	Health Department’s Health Educator	Smoking Education alternative to sus~ension -offering an educational alternative to suspension for first time smoking offenses for students conducted at the Clifton Health Department by their Health Educator.
	Hall/Bathroom aides	Bathroom smoking monitoring -to eliminate smoking in bathrooms through increased patrol of open facilities.
	Senior citizens	CHAMPS (Clifton High Adult Mentors Program - conducts intergenerational activities and mentoring between high school students and retired citizens.
	Clifton Juvenile Officers Community Police Officers	Cops on campus -offering school based plain clothes officers at at the high school and on campus to reduce trespassing, smoking, and violence on school grounds.

## Phillipsburg Elementary/Early Childhood Counseling Curriculum Schedule

Standard	Week	Week of	Topic/Lesson
Health 2.4 P/S A	1 2	9/13 9/20	What is a Counselor & Feelings Ferdinand and the Bullies (appreciate differences)
Character Ed Lifestyle 4 Acad.A,B;Car.A,C	3 4 5 6	9/27 10/4 10/11 10/18	Lying Leo (honesty) Study Skills (Bear Puppet) Study Skills(with posters) Study Skills-homework
Health 2.3 Acad. A,B;Car.A,C.	7	10/25	Red Ribbon Week
Lifestyle 4 Acad.A,B;Car. A,C P/S A-C;Acad. B,C	8 9 10 11	11/1 11/8 11/15 11/22	Listening Skills (with posters) Anger Management Accepting Differences Self-assessment
Health 2.2	12	11/29	Citizenship
Health 2.2 Acad.A,B; Car. A,C Health 2.2	13 14 15	12/6 12/13 12/20	Communication (Voice/tone) Blocks to Communication Decision Making Model
Lifestyle 3.1 Acad.A,C;Car.A,C;P/S A,C	16 17 18	1/3 1/10 1/17	Generate Alternatives Generate Consequences Role Plays using Decision Making Model, Alternatives & Consequences
Character Ed	19	1/24	Responsibility
Lifestyle 3.1 Acad. A,C;Car.A,C;P/S A-C	20	1/31	Problem Solving
Lifestyle 4 Lifestyle 4 P/S A-C	21 22 23	2/7 2/14 2/21	Violence Prevention Kit Peer Relationships (Puppets) Violence Prevention Kit Cooperate or Refuse
Life style 4 & Health 2.2 Acad.A,C;Car.A,C;P/S A-C	24 25 26	2/28 3/7 3/14	Conflict Resolution Conflict Resolution (Puppets) Conflict Resolution (p23 book)
Lifestyle 3&4 & Health 2.2	27 28	3/21 3/28	Social Skills Point of View (Perspectives)

P/S A-C	29	4/4	Point of View(True Story of the 3 Little Pigs)
Acad.A;Car.A-C;P/S A-C	30	4/11	Self-Esteem
Lifestyle 3&4	31	4/18	Stress Management
Lifestyle 1	32	4/25	Careers Introduction
ALL	33	5/2	Application
	34	5/9	Career Exploration
Lifestyle 1	35	5/16	Career Exploration
Lifestyle 1	36	5/23	Interviews
ALL	37	5/30	Self Assessment
P/S A, C	38	6/6	Closing Activity

## ROXBURY HIGH SCHOOL 4-2C NJDOE Best Practice 4 Year Program for Career and College Planning

<b>Grade 9</b>	<b>4-2C Plan</b>	<b>Time Line</b>
Mail	Counselor Welcome Letter	July
Orientation	Senior Advice	August
Class Assembly	Making High School Count	September
Small Groups	Educational/Career Goal/Activities	Fall
Social Studies Classes	Freshman Fridays Check-in	Fall
English Classes	Four Year Plan	January
Small Counseling Groups	Course Selection	February
Testing Week	COPS Career Interest Survey	March
Health Class Unit	Project Peace/Conflict Resolution	Spring

<b>Grade 10</b>	<b>4-2C Program</b>	<b>Time Line</b>
Counselor Session	Educational/Career Goal Update	Fall
History Classes	PSAT Overview	September
Small Counseling Groups	College Planning and PSAT	October
English Class	Four Year Plan Update/Course Selection:	January
Small Counseling Groups	Planning/Course selection	February
Testing Week	Harrington O'Shea Career Interest Survey	March
Class Assembly	Career and Goal Setting Motivational Speaker	Spring
English Classes	Internet Searches on Careers/Colleges	Feb./March

<b>Grade 11</b>	<b>4-2C Program</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Counselor Session	Goals/Individual Plans	Fall
Social Studies Classes	PSAT Preparation	September
Small Counseling Groups	PSAT Planning	October
CCM	Morris County Regional College Fair	October

Media Center	Mini College Days	Fall/Spring
English Class:	Course Planning	February
Small Counseling Groups	Course Selection/SAT/ACT	February
School Wide	College Admission Professional Seminar	March
Class Assembly	Making College Selection Count	March
Parent/ Student Evening Workshops	Introduction to College Planning Parent/College Freshman Panel	March May
Exposition Center	NACAC National College Fair	May
Counselor Session	Postsecondary Planning	Spring

<b>Grade 12</b>	<b>4-2C Delivery</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
English Classes	Educational and Career Plan Update	Fall
Small Groups	Parent Brag Sheet/Senior Profile Transcript/Application Process Internet Explorations	September
Parent-Senior: Evening Programs	College 101 College Applications and Essays Financial Aid Parent/College Freshman Panel	September October January May
Individual Session	Strong Interest Inventory	Year
CCM	Morris County Regional Fair	October
Media Center	Mini College Days	Fall/Spring
English classes	Senior Survey/Freshmen Advice	June
Class Assembly:	Making College Count:	June
Mail/Email Survey	College/Career Follow up: 1 and 4 years	July

## 4.4 Diversity, Equity, and Access

The New Jersey framework envisions that all students benefit from comprehensive school counseling programs “to use their unique talents, abilities, interests, cultures, and multiple intelligences.” This vision is not meant only for students with financial, social and political resources. To provide equal access to educational opportunities and success, programs must strive to assure equity, access, and support for all students-- those of color, with disabilities, male and female, gifted, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, poor, ill, undernourished, of other nationalities and cultures, and undocumented .

School counselors are uniquely qualified to advocate for all students, especially for those facing enormous institutional obstacles to educational access and achievement. Starting with our own beliefs and biases, multiculturally competent school counselors can increase awareness of differences among students, develop proactive system-wide programs to help close the achievement gap, and empower students and staff to build inclusive caring learning communities within their buildings. This section will be an ongoing project for New Jersey’s school counselors.

### PARSIPPANY TROY HILLS

This section was written by Becky Clark, Knollwood School, and Fran Greb, Montclair State University, and was published in *Teaching Tolerance*

#### Culture Chats

Inviting the parents of our Afghani students for breakfast during Ramadan, a month of dawn-to-dusk fasting for Muslims, showed our lack of understanding of one of the many cultures in our public school. My colleagues and I wondered, “How many other cultural missteps have we made?” How could we avoid similar errors and create a more inclusive school environment where people of all backgrounds would feel comfortable?

We had a vision of developing a cadre of learners who understand the cultural diversity of their community and apply this knowledge in practice. This seemed like a daunting task, because nearly 40% percent of our students speak a language other than English at home. We developed a plan through the collaborative efforts of the school counselor, the English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher, and a professor at nearby Montclair State University.

Initially we surveyed the entire student body to determine countries of origin and languages spoken at home. Then we welcomed the parents to a Back to School Night with multilingual signs. We watched as parents smiled while pointing to the sign written in their own language. This simple gesture acknowledged the value of their presence. Next, we invited parents of similar cultural backgrounds to attend daytime or evening: “Culture Chats.” Our intention was to gather information about cultures, needs, expectations, and perspective on education, as a way of breaking down barriers and building bridges.

Our Culture Chats included parents from Afghanistan, India, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Taiwan, South Korean, Russia, the Philippines, Macedonia, and the Ukraine. By asking them to teach us, we affirmed their role as contributing members of the school community. Following each Culture Chat, students shared cultural information with the entire school community at assemblies. To our surprise, the initiative also built bridges within cultures. We overheard the students saying, “I didn’t know there were so many people from my country in this school,” and parents sought out each other’s phone numbers. As the year progressed, we noticed increased presence of these parents at school events.

The intercultural theme carried over into staff development. We conducted an in-service program to sensitive faculty members to their own diversity through interactive experiences that they could replicate in the classroom. The extent of the sharing in these activities far exceeded the usual teacher interaction. As with our students and their families, we learned that people love to tell their own stories and that others are eager to listen.

To extend the impact, we developed a booklet of the information gathered during the Culture Chats. Now each teacher has a handbook describing the social customs and educational practices of the cultures within our school. From our initial concerns about a cultural *faux pas*, the connections continue to grow.

## **KNOLLWOOD SCHOOL ACTION PLAN**

**VISION:** A community of learners at Knollwood School that understands the cultural diversity of its students and applies this knowledge to educational policies and practice

**GOAL:** To gather information on the cultural backgrounds of the students in the school community and utilize this information to create an inclusive environment which respects diversity.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Increase parent involvement from all segments of the community
2. Break down barriers and develop a home-school connection with families who might not otherwise be visible
3. Promote student achievement: by
  - a. Increasing parent involvement
  - b. Elevating self esteem through participation in culture celebrations
  - c. Providing a vehicle for school-wide recognition of cultural contributions
  - d. Encouraging a stronger voice or presence of all members in the school community.
  - e. Assisting teachers with development of understandings and skills needed to work within a culturally diverse community.

### **POSSIBLE BARRIERS:**

- Time constraints
- Language and cultural barriers
- Trust

### **STRATEGIES**

1. Survey school population for information on countries of origin and language spoken at home.
2. Create welcome signs in representative languages for Back to School Night.
3. Identify major nationalities and countries represented in the school.
4. Invite parents from targeted populations to attend meetings to discuss their cultures, needs, expectations, and perspectives on education.
5. Schedule evening and daytime meetings to accommodate parents' schedules.
6. Develop school assembly to showcase the nationality that was previously discussed at parent meetings.
7. Students from designated cultures prepare the assembly presentations with the ESL teacher's and counselor's support.
8. Conduct teach in-service to increase cultural sensitivity through modeling of activities that can be replicated in the classroom.



9. Convene an international festival for the entire school community to showcase representative school cultures. Festival can include entertainment, food, artifacts, and presentations.
10. Meet with all classes to discuss the impact of the cultural study and gather information for future programs.
11. Conduct parent survey for feedback on reactions to program and suggestions for future work.
12. Continue program through creation of a parent advisory committee of represented cultures. Advisory committee will serve as liaison to the wider community.
13. Continue to gather information about new families who move into the community.
14. Reach out to community through personal phone contacts to insure involvement.

**EVALUATION:** Assessment of goals was conducted through collection of qualitative data including

1. Interviews and discussions with students.
2. Parent questionnaires
3. Field notes of cultural chats
4. Observation of parent presence at school events.

**Student interviews:** The school counselor and the university liaison interviewed students in grades 1-5 using a class meeting format. Findings indicate that knowledge of specific cultures included the following statements.

1. "The Koran tells us about the religious teaching of Islam."
2. "Children in China attend larger classes than at our school."
3. Our school has many more cultural groups than many students realized.

Examples of sensitivity to cultures include the following statements.

1. "We are all humans, the same on the inside."
2. "The world is a better place when we understand each other."
3. "Remember to take pride in your own culture."

**Parent questionnaires:**

1. Parents stated that they were happy to speak with members of the school community through the Culture Chats.
2. Parents stated that this opened communication for them and their families.
3. Parents felt that they were valued members of the community.
4. They expressed that since these meetings they feel comfortable, welcome, and proud to live in this educational community.

**Field Notes of the Culture Chats** included sharing of personal immigration stories and life in their countries of origin. Additionally, parents shared their wants, aspirations, and needs for their children based on their cultural perspective. Information was shared that would help teachers understand the different cultural expectations. Parental involvement at school functions including PTA meetings, family field, trips, educational workshops, and the international festival increased for members of the targeted community.

## **CLIFTON SCHOOLS**

### **The All-a-Day Festival**

A dramatic demographic shift occurred within a five year period whereby a population of predominantly Western and Eastern European origins shifted to include significant numbers from Mexico, South American, and Central American countries, as well as the Middle East and Asia including India.

A small Violence Prevention Grant from the New Jersey Department of Education was used to create a Multicultural Awareness Festival on a Sunday afternoon on the grounds of Clifton High School. The festival included ethnic food booths from groups in the areas listed above, while in the auditorium, students performed various folk dances and cultural rituals from their countries of origin throughout the day.

The purpose of this day was to increase tolerance through understanding and awareness that, while different, we are also very much the same. This festival was eventually incorporated by the city into its annual Community Picnic.

### **CASA Poster Contest**

The Municipal Alliance, originally a foundation established by the City Council and Board of Education, Clifton Against Substance Abuse (CASA) encouraged students from diverse backgrounds to participate in Safe and Drug Free Schools Month activities through a Poster Contest. Students and their parents were invited to City Council chambers on a Saturday to receive their award at a special reception. Posters were then hung Council Chambers for the remainder of the month and the artists' names were proudly listed next to each poster.

The results demonstrated a dramatic increase in participation by a more diverse and representative population. As students were called to receive their awards at the reception the list of names reflected more accurately the diversity of Clifton's community.

### **One-Stop Registration Center**

With large numbers of students registering for school each year, some of those parents were not in a position to take time from work to bring students for ESL screening, to arrange bussing and transportation, and to have immunizations reviewed. A One –Stop Registration Center was established in late summer and during the opening days of school.

Bilingual registration staff were employed across an array of languages and medical staff, ESL screening, transportation, and scheduling for the middle schools and high school were provided during a single visit.

In addition, extended evening hours were scheduled so that parents whose employers did not provide time off or personal days, would not be forced to make a difficult choice between income and registering children for school. Additional coordination with the Health Departments and Immunization Clinic provided immunizations for students without medical coverage. This allowed for a more orderly opening of school. Students without English proficiency began the school year in placements where bilingual/multilingual staff were available to communicate with them.

Brochures, registration forms, and announcements were translated into the most common world languages represented by students in the community. Relatives in the community who brought new immigrant family members to the One-Stop registration center expressed trust and friendship with school staff, saying, "This is my friend...."

## ROXBURY HIGH SCHOOL

### Increasing Access to Higher Level Courses

School counselors at Roxbury High School became increasingly aware of the need for a way to encourage students to take more challenging courses, particularly Honors and Advanced Placement level courses in mathematics and science. Support would need to be in place so that students rising to the challenge could succeed academically. The current practice allowed parents to sign a waiver for their student to take a higher level course. This practice frequently resulted in student discouragement, lower grades, or withdrawal from the course because students were not prepared for the new challenges. These frustrations did not encourage students to try to move up a level again in the future.

School counselors spoke with students informally regarding their reasons for dropping out of higher level courses after they had been “waivered” in. Many spoke about the difficulty of moving into class with students who had been in honors courses before and knew what to do to succeed. One student said, “I never had to do homework every night or write a paper on my own outside of class.” Another student commented that current honors students in his class had the advantage of being in previous honors classes and knew the “drill.”

Teachers expressed their concern about the impact on the class when a student entered their higher level courses unprepared for the reading, writing, and research requirements as well as the personal effect on the student who struggled or did poorly. They wanted to encourage students to move up, but they expressed the need for a support system for the students who were unprepared for the rapid pace and intensity of the class.

Counselors reviewed the numbers of students who moved up a level and then dropped back down soon after changing their schedule. Finally counselors interviewed Honors and AP teachers, parents, and, lead teachers and department supervisors to gain a perspective from the various stakeholders involved.

#### **GOAL:**

Increase the number of students in higher level courses, especially Honors and Advanced Placement, especially students from underrepresented groups by

1. Encouraging students to try new courses
2. Providing a support system and “safety net” for students moving up
3. Increasing the level of teachers’ and parents’ awareness of the importance of higher level courses for access to higher education, better jobs, and for scholarships, especially mathematics and science.
4. Providing opportunities for new students to develop needed skills while remaining in the higher level course.

**PLAN:**

1. Teacher and counselor check-ins 2-4 times per marking period.
2. Increased opportunities were created for tutoring and mentoring in the department resource rooms (Departmental offices and learning centers were open every period for students to seek help and tutoring. English and Mathematics rooms were also open before and after school. The resource rooms were staffed by teachers on their duty period.)
3. A new Student Course Petition was designed to help the student develop a plan for success as part of the petition as well as input from the old and new teacher and department lead teacher or supervisor. Students were required to consult with their old and new teachers' and their parents and to write a "Plan for Academic Success" before the petition was reviewed.
4. A data base of all students petitioning to move up a level was accessible to counselors and teachers to check on their progress and to analyze trends in courses.
5. Information was expanded during course selection and four year program planning about the importance of higher level courses at all levels (Basic Skills to regular, regular to college prep, college prep to Honors and Advanced Placement)
6. Counselor liaisons were established with each department to encourage communication about the classes and to follow up on teachers' concerns
7. Information on multiple intelligences, advanced study skills and higher level thinking skills was provided for students, parents, and teachers.
8. A Course Recommendation Day was created in late January. Classroom teachers had the opportunity to share their course recommendation with each student and to sign the student's Course Recommendation Form. Students carried the form to each class. The ninth period teacher collected the forms and brought them to the Guidance Office for the counselor.
9. New counseling strategies were implemented using the HELPING modal and solution focused brief counseling techniques for students moving up.

**RESULTS**

Year 1: 266 petitions submitted; 261 petitions approved for 1 student dropped down or out of the higher level course for reasons unrelated to the difficulty of the course. At the end of the semester and the end of the year all students achieved a grade of B or higher. Many students achieved A's.

Year 2: 146 petitions submitted; 146 approved. No students dropped down or out of the higher level course. At the end of the semester and the end of the year, all students achieved a grade of B or higher. Many students achieved A's.

An additional effect of the new program was shown in the increased number of recommendations to higher level courses when teachers were required to make recommendations for the following year. *This resulted in:*

- increased numbers of students in more challenging courses
- increased numbers of first generation students and students from underrepresented groups in higher level courses
- additional sections of higher level courses
- greater numbers of students taking AP exams
- greater numbers of students eligible for the National Honor Society

Teachers said they gained new insights from the program, viewed students from a variety of perspectives, and took time to discuss course recommendation options with students prior to making decisions. This not only increased the numbers of students moving into higher level courses but also expanded and assured the support offered by classroom and resource room teachers to help them succeed.

Teachers expressed satisfaction with the Student Plan for Academic Success. At first some teachers were concerned that the students would not follow through on the plan. However, this fear was quickly eliminated. *Strategies included:*

- writing a study calendar with specific times to study
- participating in study groups
- extra help in the department resource room or with the classroom teacher
- tutoring
- exam review sessions
- help in writing or redrafting papers
- review sessions on previously taught mathematics skills
- weekly check-ins with the teacher
- help in notetaking
- help in writing lab reports
- study buddies in the class
- guided study halls