

Freshman Success Team Quarter Four Academic Intervention Brief: 9th Grade Success Saturday School

Q4 Freshman Success Team Efforts:

- A University of Chicago study has found that freshman on-track rates are the biggest predictor of graduation rates.
- Several waves of student interviews revealed that freshmen on our F list lacked a relationship with staff
- Several also stated they felt ignored in larger classes and unable to access teacher help
- We observed how students' anxiety and work avoidance are overcome by a relationship with a caring staff member.
- Our team's focus is on building trusting relationships, and on individual and small group academic support.

Freshman Success Team Theory of Action:

- We believe that teachers calling home improves communication and student participation leading to better grades
- Students' parents were contacted and students were cordially invited to come to Saturday school because we noticed they were "having a little trouble" (story)

What We Did:

- Saturday school sessions were added through grant funding so they were every week instead of every other week.
- students' parents were contacted and students were cordially invited to come to Saturday school because we noticed they were "having a little trouble"

Overall Evidence/Outcomes:

- We delivered two extra sessions of Saturday School, keeping careful records, with very encouraging results.
- For the first time ever, it became normal for parents to apologize if their student was not able to show at the last minute
- We were able to reclaim attendance funds through students attending after school tutoring
- We believe that these efforts made a big difference for our students and we plan to continue providing these sessions into next year provided we have the funds.

Quarter 4 Freshman Saturday School Data:

- 9th Grade Success Team made **45** separate parent contacts to 9th graders with F's.
- **11** grades went up a whole letter from work/tests done in Saturday school.
- **7** grades went from failing to passing from work/tests done in Saturday school.
- Saturday School made freshmen **2x** more likely to bring a failing class up to passing.
- **11** of our 15 student target group attended Saturday school at least once.
- **84** individual assignments for classes were completed during Saturday school.
- One student was able to raise their English grade from a **37%F** to a **70%C**.

Overall Grade Improvement among freshman

- There were **22 F's** among Freshman semester 1 (before we had 9th grade interventions up and going), but **we only had 13 F's** total semester 2.
- **We were able to accomplish a 40% reduction in F's among freshman from 1st semester to 2nd.**

A brief note about middle school summer school

- This program is very successful at creating students who are prepared to be ninth graders.
- Of those who take summer school during 7th grade, most do not return during 8th grade
- If they do, they retain what they learned last time and will start at a higher level and thus perform even better when they finish.
- They also tend to become ambassadors for Summer school telling their peers "it was actually really fun".
- Furthermore, when we see them as ninth graders, they start out with relationships with Mr. Perri and Ms. DuMouchel, and their minds are simply less rusty from disuse, so they are more prepared to start out ninth grade on the right foot.