

The George Washington University's Freshman Transition Initiative

## **3-Day Focus on Freshmen Freshman Transition Leadership Institute**

### **Agenda**

#### **General Session – Day One**

##### **The Big Picture: Gathering the Resources to Get Buy-in for Your Freshman Transition Initiative**

What does research tell us about early adolescence and dropout prevention? What is it about being 13 or 14 years old that makes it such a critical time for high school retention? How can you impact high school attrition rates, post-secondary completion, and, ultimately, life satisfaction? This opening session provides not only insights into the issues but also **tools** to generate the buy-in necessary to launch your school-wide Freshman Transition initiative.

Over the next three days, you'll learn strategies for implementing a Freshman Transition initiative using The George Washington University's 10-Step Plan. This sessions kicks things off with Steps One and Two of that process, sharing three **resources** you can use when you return home to **create a vision** of what's possible.

#### **FTLI Sessions – Day One**

**FT1A 11:00 AM**

##### **Leadership Quotient: The Role of the Principal**

Studies clearly show school leadership, starting with the principal, is vital to the success of any new effort. It's like the trickle-down economics of high school redesign. We know you've only got one principal and he/she already has great demands on their time. Learn why he/she is indispensable to the process and gain strategies for maximizing the principal's role through the use of ready-made resources and solid planning.

**FT1B 1:15 PM**

##### **Step Three - Form a Team of Champions: Recruiting Your Coordinating Committee**

Recruit top performers for your coordinating committee and you'll save time and

frustration. This session gives you the strategies and the resources (in the form of responsibility and decision making charts, job descriptions, project timelines, etc.) to make forming your “team of champions” easy. Come ready to learn time-honored techniques for motivating your team to meet its common goal—in this case, implementing a Freshman Transition initiative.

#### **FT1C 2:30 PM**

##### **Step Four - Generate Buy-in for the New Course and the 10-year Plan**

Major changes mean major upheaval, right? Only if you skip this all-important step: Generating buy-in. If you want to institutionalize a new course in your school, you first need to institutionalize it in the hearts and minds of your “stakeholders”—parents, teachers, school administrators, board members, and community partners. Walk away from this session with new techniques and resources to make this process easy.

## **General Session – Day Two**

### **Course Standards for Freshman Transition Classes: Your Compass**

Many redesign initiatives have failed because implementers have tried to go it alone without the benefit of a compass (i.e., standards). No longer! The Course Standards for Freshman Transition Classes point the way and when you take your seat in this session, look around you—you’re certainly not alone!

## **FTLI Sessions – Day Two**

#### **FT2A 11:00 AM**

##### **Step Five - Identify a Curriculum That Will Accomplish Your Course Goals**

Administrators, teachers, and students alike are frustrated by courses that lack focus, content, and results. This is often because they lack the right tools for the job. Asking your teachers to provide a comprehensive Freshman Transition course without a comprehensive curriculum is like asking a contractor to dig a foundation for your new school with a shovel rather than a backhoe. This session gives you strategies for finding a curriculum that will accomplish your Freshman Transition goals and provides an overview of a proven model, the *Career Choices* curriculum.

#### **FT2B 1:15 PM**

##### **Step Six - Recruiting and Retaining Your Most Experienced Teachers**

Having the right tools for the job is only one part of the equation; you also need the right person wielding those tools. This session helps you formalize your recruitment process, outlining the characteristics common to successful Freshman Transition teachers and providing retention strategies.

**FT2C 2:30 PM**

### **Step Seven - Professional Development Strategies for Institutionalizing Your Freshman Transition Effort**

It's not optional, it's a necessity. For course instructors to develop a comprehensive, rigorous classroom experience, they need professional development and course planning time. This session discusses the role professional development must play in your planning process and provides checklists and sample agendas to make the process easy.

## **General Session – Day Three**

### **Steps Eight and Nine - Why a School-wide Initiative is Important and What Results to Expect**

Once all of your 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grade students have finished their Freshman Transition course and have completed their quantitative and meaningful 10-year plan, you'll want to be sure to implement Steps Eight and Nine of The George Washington University's 10-step Plan.

By elevating your Freshman Transition efforts to a School-wide Initiative, you'll have a true whole-school reform effort. This final general session will focus on:

- How to use My10yearPlan.com when updating students' 10-year plans in the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade, including an overview of the special summary page designed to assist every teacher in providing academic coaching and advisory efforts to all their students
- What academic coaching is; you'll also learn some simple techniques you can share with all stakeholders at your school
- Strategies that will encourage all instructors to get involved with the updating of their students' 10-year plans

As you'll see in this session, when the 10-year plan becomes an integral part of your school-wide reform effort, your completion rates (both high school and college) will soar.

## **FTLI Session – Day Three**

**FT3A 10:30 AM**

### **My10yearPlan.com - Online Advisory Tool for Personalized Instruction**

Take your advisories to a whole new level with My10yearPlan.com. See how this online enhancement provides your faculty with a direct link to students' plans for the future and allows students an easy way to update and revise their plans throughout high school.

Spend time developing your initial plans for launching your Freshman Transition initiative using the tools you've received over the last three days.