

Lost Now Found The Sequel

Woonsocket High School
Woonsocket, Rhode Island

Who Are We?

- ▶ Woonsocket High School/
Woonsocket Area Career & Tech Center:
- ▶ 1486 students
- ▶ 64% of these students are eligible for subsidized lunch
- ▶ 8% receive ESL/Bilingual education services
- ▶ 22% receive special education services
- ▶ 51% of students have chronic absenteeism

Graduation Rate:

- 59.7% graduate in four years
- Current year grade rate
- An additional 4.1% graduate within 5 years
- 19% dropout of school
 - 1.6% actually receive their GED
- 135 incidents of suspension per 100 students

Why did we need a transition program?

▶ ACADEMICS

- ▶ Vast difference between Middle School Concept and High School Reality
 - ▶ Higher Expectations: Shift from social promotion to promotion based on credit achievement
 - ▶ Environment: Shift from team approach to a more independent atmosphere at the high school.
 - ▶ Shift from a contained learning atmosphere to student ownership of educational pathway

▶ Transient Population

- ▶ Students leave only to return weeks or months later
- ▶ Students come to us with little idea how to be successful in high school
- ▶ Apathetic attitude towards education
- ▶ Students lack parental support
 - ▶ Students do not know why education is important
 - ▶ Students need mentoring
 - ▶ Students with little interest in being successful in school
 - ▶ Students engage in risk taking behavior
 - ▶ Students focusing on sport team rewards, rather than seeing the big picture.
 - ▶ Students lack a sense of identity and direction

▶ Lacking life experiences

- ▶ We live in the Ocean State and kids haven't seen the ocean

How did it happen? Come to fruition

- ▶ In 2014, when Principal Henderson was appointed, he made Freshman transition a school-wide priority.
 - ▶ Attended Career Choices conference in Boston
 - ▶ During each 2014/2015 faculty meeting, he would dedicate a portion of the time to Focus on Freshman
 - ▶ Show teacher resource videos
 - ▶ Along with Assistant Principal of Academic Affairs Brian Bouley, Principal Henderson attended Focus on Freshman 2015.

- ▶ At the end of 2014/2015 school year, Principal Henderson asked for volunteers to teach the new Freshman Class, Success 101. He had 25 volunteers from the ranks.
 - ▶ 15 teachers from all disciplines were given the classes and attended PD during the summer months.
 - ▶ All faculty attended an informational workshop on the first day of school.
 - ▶ Continued support with weekly CFT and a Lead Success 101 Teacher

Year Two

- ▶ 15 Teachers
- ▶ 5 newbies
- ▶ 2 came of FOF 2016
- ▶ Class size & teaching multiple sections
- ▶ More speakers!
 - ▶ Meeting social/emotional needs
 - ▶ Alumni
- ▶ Attempts made to personalize course
- ▶ Building momentum within the school

Honeymoon

- ▶ Summer Professional Development with Diane
 - ▶ What does the program look like?
 - ▶ How do we utilize the material?
 - ▶ What does the first month look like?
- ▶ Freshman Orientation on the first day of school.
 - ▶ First time freshmen only
 - ▶ Signing the commitment to graduate banner
 - ▶ Cookout with the teachers and Scavenger Hunt
 - ▶ What does it mean to be a freshman?
 - ▶ Motivation to be successful
 - ▶ Upperclassman served as mentors
- ▶ Class begins
 - ▶ Getting to know your students is top priority
 - ▶ Increasing students' positive sense of self
 - ▶ Create a sense of community
 - ▶ Positive adult interaction
 - ▶ Fostering greater connection to career opportunities

Newlyweds

- ▶ Deviations from pacing guide meeting the needs of our students
- ▶ Pros/Cons

Reflection

- ▶ Where are we in implementation?
- ▶ What will we do with what we learned?

Taking ownership and making it a Woonsocket Program

- ▶ Success 101 teachers met once a week for 30 minutes in the morning
 - ▶ Outside resources from Success 101 teachers
 - ▶ What's working?
 - ▶ Is the scope and sequence of the Career Choices Curriculum working for Woonsocket?
 - ▶ How to do this with the schedule that we have?
 - ▶ 3 days of 46-minute periods and 1 day of 84-minute block.
- ▶ Principal Henderson met with teachers and gave us the flexibility to make changes as needed.
- ▶ Lead Teacher
- ▶ Facilitate weekly CPT Meetings
- ▶ Point person between Administration and Success Teachers

What does that look like now?

- ▶ Every incoming freshman had Success 101 in their schedule.
 - ▶ Four semester one classes.
 - ▶ 20 full-year classes.
 - ▶ 17 teachers
- ▶ Weekly conferences with students
 - ▶ Current grades
 - ▶ Review of goals & Steps to improve
- ▶ Peer Mentoring Program
 - ▶ Freshman paired with upperclassmen via Advisory
 - ▶ Student to student
- ▶ Academic Ramp-Up:
 - ▶ Work on school work and/or work with peers
 - ▶ Newly created grading policy
- ▶ Creation of curriculum for semester and full year classes
 - ▶ Focus goal: Complete my 10 year plan.
 - ▶ Quarter one goal: Although 10 year plan is key, students need a 10 week plan first.
 - ▶ What does it take to be a successful high school student
 - ▶ Once students know how to be a good student and succeed we look at who they are

Is there a rainbow in Woony?

Success of Success 101: WACTC Guidance counselor Barbara Kafalas reports, "We received a few more applications than we did in the past and I am finding that the students were better informed. In past years, we had many students changing their mind after they submitted an application but this year most students knew what they wanted."

The biggest most positive result of Success 101 in my opinion is that the students are doing better academically. Every year, ninth graders apply to WACTC and really want to come and we know that the program will help keep them engaged in school, but so many of the ninth graders fail and cannot come. This year, their grades are much better and I think we will see fewer failures.

We saw an increase in applications for Child Studies and Health Careers.

I think the students being able to spend 20 minutes in a program gave them a better sense of what the cases is about as opposed to running them through for 6 to 8 minutes as we did in the past. It is a time commitment for all involved, but I think it is well worth it. We appreciate the opportunity to work with Success 101. Thank you for that.

The struggle is real

- ▶ Motivation from start to finish
 - ▶ September the energy and excitement is everywhere!
 - ▶ Working with staff for buy in
 - ▶ Progress Report Q1 Principal Henderson meets with all Success 101 classes
 - ▶ Implementation of schoolwide grading policy
 - ▶ It's the Holidays. Students and staff feeling stressed so, we have students tour WACTC to view programs.
 - ▶ Disruption to the schedule: testing, exam, life
 - ▶ Who's motivating the Success 101 Teachers?
- ▶ Assessing Success
 - ▶ What does that look like?
 - ▶ Did they finish my 10yearplan.com
 - ▶ What happens now?
 - ▶ How do we maintain the connection once ninth grade is over?

What will we look like next year?

- ▶ Because we want all teachers to have an opportunity to teach the class, 4 new teachers will teach the course next year.
- ▶ 2017: 2018 courses
 - ▶ 6 semester one classes
 - ▶ 16 year-long classes
- ▶ Curriculum Binder has been developed
 - ▶ Unit One: Tools for High School.
 - ▶ Meeting with teachers once or twice a week for 30 minutes in the morning

- ▶ Success 102 - 10th grade advisories
 - ▶ Current Success teachers keep students and revisit 10yearplan throughout the year.
 - ▶ Smaller class size for personalization
- ▶ New 9th grade advisory teachers
 - ▶ Meet with them to inform about program

- ▶ Success 201: Did not happen
- ▶ Success 301: URGENT!
- ▶ Still on the table

Commissioner

- ▶ Dr Ken Wagner, RI Commissioner of Education visits Success 101



- ▶ "At Woonsocket High School, Principal Henderson and his team enroll all 9th graders in a "Success" course, where each student creates a 10-year plan of what they want and how they will get there. All students need a skills roadmap - the skills they build now will stay with them even when the destination changes."

Ken Wagner, Ph.D., RI Commissioner of Education

Success 101: Hear their voice