WACAC Share, Learn, and Connect
Session Information

Working Together for Mutual Benefit: How School Based Counselors, Independent Counselors, and Non-Profit Organizations Can Do It.

DESCRIPTION

School based counselors, independent counselors, and community based organizations have a lot to offer to each other. A panel of counselors representing these groups will share how they successfully formed collaborative relationships with each other and what programs they are offering to serve their students’ needs. Participants will walk away with tips on communication and outreach methods as well as a sampling of counseling programs.

QUESTIONS FOR PANELISTS

1. Share briefly about your school or organization and your role in your organization.
2. What influenced you to collaborate with the school or organization? And why this particular school or organization?
3. How did you approach this counselor or organization?
4. What programs have you run or are you currently running in collaboration with this counselor or organization?
5. Provide tips for counselors wanting to collaborate in similar ways. Be specific and address appropriate and effective communication methods.

PRESENTERS

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NOTES
Malibu High School is a grade 6-12 middle and high school in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District. It is the only public high school in Malibu. There are 1,120 students enrolled with 670 students in grades 9-12. The current senior class totals 165 students. While most of the students come from the Malibu community, others come from Santa Monica, Topanga, Los Angeles and Oxnard to attend the school, with 14% of the students attending with out-of-district permits. Due to the lengthy shape of the city of Malibu, many students who reside in Malibu also drive more than 20 miles to attend Malibu High School. Hence, Malibu High School has a “commuter” culture, making it difficult for many families to participate in large group and evening programs.

**ONE-ON-ONE ESSAY REVIEW SESSIONS**
- Students receive 30-minutes of individual essay review from an essay specialist or independent counselor.
- All sessions take place during the school day; interested students sign up for a session and miss part of a class period.
- Counselor comes once a week and meets with 6-7 students in one day.
- Sessions begin in October and go through mid-November.

**COLLEGE GUIDANCE GROUP COUNSELING**
- Designed to provide early outreach to select group of Juniors planning to pursue 4-year schools.
- Through collaboration with 11th grade teachers, program targets mid-range students (2.5-3.3 GPA) with academic potential and motivation but who lack the necessary support to get the information they need.
- Independent counselor contributed to creation of counseling curriculum and will lead at least half of the sessions.
- Group meets once a week during the lunch period so students don’t have to miss class.
- Program will run for 13 sessions which includes two individual sessions with the school-based college counselor and an extended capstone activity.

**COLLEGE ESSAY WORKSHOP FOR ENGLISH TEACHERS**
- English teachers want to help students with the college essay writing process but are not familiar with college essays.
- Independent counselor specializing in essay writing will lead a workshop for the English department so that teachers are better trained to help students with their essays.
- This workshop will take place during a regularly scheduled department meeting in March.

**COLLEGE NIGHT**
- Traditional College Night program with break out sessions.
- Independent counselors served as presenters for break out sessions.

**TIPS FOR COUNSELORS SEEKING COLLABORATION**
- School based counselors must recognize that you cannot do everything you want to do alone; welcome the help.
- Outside organizations or counselors should present ideas specifically and clearly to the school-based counselor and should include what role the school counselor is expected to play in the collaborative project.
- Be respectful of the other’s time and existing programs.
- Get to know the community that you are trying to collaborate with.
- Have ideas planned out before requesting a meeting with the potential collaborating colleague or organization.
SUMMARY

School based college counselors and independent college counselors have the same goal: supporting students to increase access to higher education. By building collaborative relationships, counselors can offer increased and improved advising to the students in our communities and schools.

SAMPLE PROJECT OUTLINE

College Dream Team and Stepping Stones Programs

a. Purpose of programs: To offer increased, personalized college advising to 10-11 grade students to better prepare them admission to 4 year and 2 year colleges.

b. Who was involved: High school college counselor, independent college counselors, community organizations

c. How did it happen:
   - The high school college counselor reached out to independent counselors at a WACAC conference.
   - The counselors met to discuss ways they could work together to provide increased services.
   - The program was led by the high school counselor and the independents served as additional help, support and information.

d. Who were the students:
   - 10-11 graders.
   - Dream Team students were on track academically for 4 year colleges.
   - Stepping Stones students were on track for 2 year colleges with the plan to transfer.

e. How we ran the program:
   - Meetings were held at lunchtime, afterschool or during free periods
   - Students met in small groups or one-on-one to learn about how to best prepare for their upcoming college applications.
   - Students were given a series of weekly presentations covering relevant college admission topics.
   - Students also scheduled regular one-on-one meetings with the participating counselors to track their individual progress.
f. Outcome: Positive Results for All
   - Students: Benefitted from improved college support and services. Increased college knowledge and application readiness. Exposed to a variety of future college resources.
   - High School Counselor: Able to better serve her students by having more time for her own college counseling, more experts/resources available to her students and time to expand her college program.
   - Independent Counselors: Able to better serve their communities by working with students directly through the high school and building relationships with the students and counselors to better advise students in the future.

TIPS FOR COUNSELORS WHO WANT TO COLLABORATE

- Independent Counselors: Be respectful of the high school environment and the existing college counseling program.
- School Based Counselors: Be open to collaborating with other counselors you feel could add to the college counseling services available to your students
- Reach out to each other at college conferences and other counselor events.
- Reach out through phone and email.
- Be respectful of the other counselor’s time.
- Establish a phone or in-person meeting
- Learn about the other person and their counseling practice/program
- Suggest ways to contribute or collaborate
- Examples: presentations/workshops on specific topics, essay editing sessions, college application help, college search activity, etc.

Let’s work together to offer additional college counseling services for our students and families.

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Working Together for Mutual Benefit:  
Long Beach Poly HS & UniVarsity

Our goal is to leverage each of our strengths and resources to provide support for the Long Beach Poly students, families, and counselors.

Programs and Workshops

Parent Partnership Day
An annual event with approximately 15 presenters covering all areas of interest to high school parents: College Admissions, Community College Option, Playing Sports in College, Financial Aid, How to Work with your Teen, etc.*

Internship for UCLA Counseling Certificate program
Identified a group of students who needed assistance creating college lists. Independent counselor worked individually with juniors (Mar-June) to come up with criteria and determine schools that might be a good fit. Went back in the fall to review lists and help with apps and essays where needed. Also identified students to take advantage of programs such as Operation Jump Start. Worked closely with counselor to share information.

Weekly Workshop with Girls Soccer Team
Coach released girls from Friday practice by grade. We created age appropriate sessions over a 10 week period. Approximately 3 meetings per grade level. Goal was to make them aware of choices for playing college soccer, and have them start the process of researching schools.
   Age appropriate sessions (Frosh, Soph, Jr)
   NCAA recruiting presentation
   GPA game*
   College Personality Quiz (USN&WR)
   College Knowledge worksheet*
   Websites (College Prowler, Inside College, Unigo)

Summer Workshops
Jointly created parent and student workshops*

Ongoing “College Knowledge” sessions*
20-30 minute optional sessions for counselors. Recap of WACAC Annual Conference and college trips, with notes.

Standardized Test Proctoring
Added resource for PSAT’s, CHASSE, and AP tests. Also recruited parents to help.

Tip for Independents: be generous with your time. Public schools need a lot of support. Some tasks will be very boring and time consuming. (Have you ever proctored an AP test?)

Tip for Counselors: be open to receiving help. Most independents are knowledgeable and ethical. Find a project that is not getting done.

*Sample documents available

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PLEASE JOIN US FOR THIS EXCITING EVENT!

2ND ANNUAL
PARENT PARTNERSHIP DAY

Saturday, February 5, 2011
8:30am – Noon
@ LB Poly High School

AGENDA
8:30–8:50  Snacks/Coffee/Water for sale by AVID
9:00–9:50  Session I
10:00–10:50  Session II
11:00–11:50  Session III
11:50–12:30  Snacks & Drinks for sale by AVID

EACH ATTENDEE CAN CHOOSE 3 WORKSHOPS
8:30–8:50  ELAC Meeting – Teacher’s Dining Room

WORKSHOPS
• SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH (ENGLISH & SPANISH SESSIONS)
• COLLEGE 101: ARE YOU READY?
• LONG BEACH CITY COLLEGE HONORS PROGRAM
• HOW PARENTS CAN FACILITATE THEIR STUDENT’S CAREER DEVELOPMENT
• COLLEGE ADMISSION FOR THE STUDENT-ATHLETE
• WARNING SIGNS PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD WATCH FOR
• FINANCIAL AID – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW
• THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE OPTION
• DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE ACT & SAT
• THE ART OF SETTING LIMITS
• HELPING YOUR CHILD WITH MATH
• THE POWER OF LISTENING
• MANAGING PARENTAL ANGER
• THE ROAD TO CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

COMMENTS FROM LAST YEAR’S EVENT
• “Great job!”
• “Fabulous!”
• “Loved it!”
• “Great Program!!”
• “This was GREAT! Very well organized!”
• “The topics were varied and applicable to the high school parent”
• “Thought the range of offerings was very broad and very comprehensive”
• “Very informative—good set-up of time and info”
Example of a school visit report presented to high school counselors

Willamette University, Salem, OR
visit date: 11-9-10, 11-10-10

Location
Urban. Right across the street from the state capitol. But lots of trees and a stream that runs through campus. Beautiful campus

Weekend
Skiing/snowboarding, shopping, Portland (40 min away), beach (1 hour away)

Sports
D3. Football and women’s rowing are strong

Intramurals/Clubs
Very large participation in athletics/intramurals

Professors/Class size
29 or fewer students per class. Very supportive professors

Freshman Support
Freshman College Colloquium seminar

Academics
Politics. But also English, psychology, econ, chemistry & biology.
Lots of internships (60% of students do them)
Rich environment for student/faculty research
Required “modes of inquiry” – qualitative thinking, quantitative thinking, analyzing arguments, creating in the arts, interpreting texts, thinking historically, understanding the natural world, and understanding society. + 4 writing centered courses.
Every senior does a thesis

Academic Climate
Good mix of students who like to study and those who are more relaxed and enjoy other activities

Study Abroad
Comprehensive. 70% participate

Other
It does rain a lot here
interviews in so. cal over the summer with a group of schools (Reed, Whitman, U Puget Sound, Lewis & Clark, Willamette)
Becoming more diverse-24% underrepresented, 12% first gen
Looking for bright students who have potential
have a fall fly-in program for underrepresented
Have a very large exchange program with a Japanese university
Very strong ties with local community
College Search

Task: use different websites to find information about college X. Suggestions: College Board, specific college website, Common App website.

College:

Website:

Women’s soccer coach’s name:

Coach’s email:

NCAA Division:

Conference:

Location of school (city, state):

Is this school in an urban, suburban, or rural area?

How many undergraduate students?

How many total students?

Percent of students accepted:

Midrange SAT or ACT scores:

Do they use the Common App?

Anything interesting/unique you learned?
The GPA Game: Understanding Selective College Admissions Activity

Student Profiles: Put GPA in large lettering on front side of paper, and student profile on the back.

4.0 GPA
You took a strong academic program.
You forgot to change the name of the college when word-processing the essay that was sent to several different schools.

3.7 GPA
You attended an enriching summer program between junior and senior years.
You decided not to take AP classes (even though your school offered them) because you wanted to protect your grade point average.

3.5 GPA
The topic of your essay was sports as a metaphor for life.
You're an eagle scout.
You're an all-region in basketball.

3.3 GPA
Your intended major is Greek.
You participated in NO extracurricular activities.
You attended an enriching summer program between your senior and junior years.

3.0 GPA
You applied early decision to your first-choice college.
Your intended major is psychology.
You plagiarized an American history paper and got caught.

2.8 GPA
Your intended major is biology.
You wrote an essay that everyone passed around the office because it was so good.
You're the first in your family to attend college.
You're a varsity athlete.
You made a “D” junior year but wrote to the college to explain the extenuating circumstances.
You've taken a strong academic program.

2.5 GPA
You direct the gospel choir at your church.
You are quiet and don't know your teachers well enough to ask for a recommendation.
You've participated in community service.
You've taken a strong academic program.
You're from a single-parent household and must work to help with expenses.

2.3 GPA
You're a legacy at the college to which you're applying.
You did not write the optional essay for your college application.
You've participated in some community service.
Your last name is Bush and the college library is named after your grandfather.
Working Together for Mutual Benefit: How School Based Counselors, Independent Counselors, and Non-Profit Organizations Can Do It

Presenter: Sarai Koo, CEO and Founder of MAPS 4 College

MAPS 4 College (MAPS) is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that exists to provide comprehensive programs and services designed to help students develop necessary competencies to graduate from high school, succeed in college, excel professionally and live a life with character and excellence.

MAPS acronym stands for:
- Motivate to strive for excellence,
- Achieve to help the community-at-large,
- Personal commitment to transcend perceived limits,
- Speak the truth; change the world.

Examples of Collaborative Work

Spring to College on April 10, 2010
In collaboration with the City of Baldwin Park and Baldwin Park Unified School District

City provided: location, food, equipment, and staff
School provided: Two to three district-wide robo calls and access to promote the event
Community or In-kind: music, bags, pens, presenters, gift cards,

Time: 9 am - 5 pm
Estimated Total Cost: $30,000
Estimated Cost for MAPS 4 College: $250 (toner)

This event was the first time 250 parents and students attended a community-wide event that focused on college access and success.

Several speakers included: Former Senator Gloria Romero and State Senator Dr. Ed Hernandez, Mayor Pro Tem Marlen Garcia, Councilmember Monica Garcia, Councilmember Ricardo Pacheco,
Councilmember Susan Rubio, School Board Member Hugo Tzec, Actress Nikki SooHoo from The Lovely Bones and Bring It On: Fight to the Finish, and much more.

Bilingual Parent Workshops:
"Cash into College," - tips on financial aid and seeking scholarship tuition

"Helping Your Child Succeed in Life" - a panel of first-generation college students and professionals

Student Workshops:
"Creating a Reality from a Dream," - a panel of guest speakers that will share real-life examples of gaining desirable careers;

"Mapping Out a Path to College," - a session with college counselors and how to complete the applications and admissions process

College Preparatory Mentoring Project - 2010-2012

In 2010, MAPS 4 College received a two-year community action grant from AAUW (American Association of University Women) to work in collaboration with the City of Baldwin Park and Baldwin Park Unified School District to work with female students from attend Baldwin Park High School and Sierra Vista High School.

Cohort 1: Eight female high school students from Baldwin Park High School and Sierra Vista High School have become part of a year-long project where they will receive college preparatory training and mentoring.

Cohort 2: Recruiting process for this cohort group just began. Cohort 1 group as part of their leadership training leads this initiative.

The project goals are to:
- Increase the target group’s college entrance exam scores on the official ACT test to the ACT’s College Readiness benchmark requirement;
- Expose students to an integrated approach to learning math, science, English, and reading; and
- Introduce young females to college majors and career opportunities in science, math, and technology fields

Other Goals:
- Provide school students with information and knowledge about admission requirements;
- Serve as a listening post to high school students who find it difficult to adjust to the pressures of determining life after high school;
- Help students set goals for themselves that will enable them to prepare for college and the workforce;
- Offer mentoring and coaching of college bound students so that their transition from the familiarity of the home environment to the unfamiliarity of college is plausible; and,
- Collaborate with local organizations, churches, and other programs that will encourage youth to find their purpose.

What Happened:
Students met a total of 21 times (70 hours total) over a 3.5 month period, consisting of 13 scheduled meetings and 4 unscheduled meetings. Students met Tuesdays twice a week from 5 pm-7 pm for leadership training. Every Saturday, students would either take the practice ACT exam or conducted student-led group discussions on the problems they have missed from 9am to 12 pm. From 1 pm - 6 pm, they would be trained to understand the ACT exam led by a test prep facilitator. Students took five
practice exams and real ACT tests on October and/or December. The real ACT test was used as post-test results.

A test preparation curriculum was ready to be presented; however, it was not implemented due to the design of the grant program to focus on the strengths of the students as well as weaknesses. In the leadership program, students began by defining key words such as leader, manager and leadership, which resulted in an open dialogue of student’s ideas. This activity situated the entire leadership training, which revolved around a discourse of sharing ideas to create new knowledge.

**City Provided:** office space, administrative support, marketing assistance, facility space, and continual support.

**School Provided:** Access to recruit students and phone calls to potential students

**Unanticipated Successes:**
- Let students become actively engaged in the decision-making process
- Students wrote a grant to develop a community-wide middle school to college pipeline
- Two students submitted their personal essays for publication - Harvard Educational Review Journal
- Students launched an outreach and recruitment plan to recruit, interview, and teach their peers for the program.
- Student voices were brought forth through various media outlets, such as city and county newspapers, city council meeting, school board meeting, commissioner meeting, and various high school campuses.

**Tip sheet for other professionals who wish to create similar collaborative projects.**

- **BELIEVE** in ALL STUDENTS! ALL STUDENTS CAN SUCCEED IN SCHOOL, COLLEGE, AND LIFE!
- Find a need (investigate/do your research) I have found that schools do not like the idea of duplicating programs. Therefore, find out what schools, agencies, and programs need. See if you (organization) can "fill-in the gap."
- Before doing anything, have a plan of what you want to do. Develop a program that will benefit students, parents, and community members
- Seek funding or plan to do it for free! Do not expect a new agency to receive funding right away.
- Get support from political and/or governmental groups (meet with the senator, assemblymember, and city officials). Introduce yourself during at school board meetings, city council meetings and other community meetings
- Be genuine and honest with your intentions
- Develop a semi-structured program - allow students to modify the program (action research project)
- Let students OWN the program - make sure the director does not oppress students or others with his/her power
- Find ways to collaborate with agencies, organizations, and businesses. Attend community meetings and speak with community members
- Recruit students and pilot a program (make sure to document EVERYTHING) - notes, observations, video, etc.
- Once the program is complete, compile a report to present to officials
- Remember = Continually be involved with the community (city officials, members in the community, school officials, city officials, etc.)
Corona del Mar Middle and High School is a 7 - 12 public school located in Newport Beach, California. It is part of the Newport-Mesa Unified School District and will celebrate its 50th year of educating students in 2012. The high school has about 1600 students and has a strong emphasis on academics and athletics. A middle school enclave and a new performing arts theater will be built in 2011 - 2012. There is a strong focus on college with over 80% of students aiming at four year colleges, about 15% choosing two year colleges and 3-5% deciding on the military or a technical college. The surrounding area is fairly affluent and well educated, and there is high interest in the college admissions process.

**PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS**

- Monthly night time presentations (College Knowledge Series) have been developed with partners who can provide specific expertise and insight on a topic.
- Partnerships have been developed with clear guidelines about what can be presented. They must provide free information, not advertising.
- Partners are allowed to provide limited and subtle contact information should a student or parent want additional help or services.
- Silent partnerships have also been developed with organizations on our campus, and they provide financial and manpower support.

**TIPS ON CONTACTING A SCHOOL**

- Email is best for a first time contact. Phone calls are often difficult to return. Keep the email short and to the point. Send a follow up email if you don't receive a reply within a week.
- Offer free services such as a guest speaker in a presentation or classroom, doing a lunch time workshop or helping one or more students free of charge.
- Remember that partnering with a school is a privilege and not a right. Be sensitive to the limited time and resources available at a school and the resulting frustration some staff members experience.

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