Supporting Low Income Students

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Who’s in the room?
Warm Up

What challenges have you observed low-income students facing in your school/district?
EXPECTATIONS

• **Dialogue**: Examination of our system/organizational practices and guiding beliefs

• **Outcome**: Increased awareness, sensitivity, and effective action for designing services for students
MISSION

EMERGE prepares high-performing students from underserved communities to apply to, attend, and graduate from top-100 colleges and universities that provide highly supportive communities and limited financial burden.
2016

2 Districts

46 High Schools

900 High School Fellows

332 College Scholars
Hispanic/Latino - 60%
African American - 23%
Asian - 11%
White - 4%
Other - 2%
Build on the strengths and gifts of each child

Provide all students from any socio-economic background the same opportunities for success after high school

Instill in every student the belief that they can achieve more than they think possible

Assure that every adult in the system is committed to the successful completion of some form of higher education for every child

DEFINING SUCCESS

Spring Branch ISD believes that a great school system:

- builds on the strengths and gifts of each child,
- provides students from poverty the same opportunities for success after high school as students from non-poverty homes,
- instills in every student the belief that they can achieve more than they think possible, and
- assures that every adult in the system is committed to the successful completion of some form of higher education for every child.

By 2017, SBISD will double the number of students completing a technical certificate, two-year degree or four-year degree.

Spring Branch T-2-4

GOAL

36%

72%
SBISD by the Numbers

African American = 4.5%
Hispanic = 58.6%
White = 28.1%
American Indian = 1.0%
Asian = 6.2%
Pacific Islander = 0.1%
Two or More Races = 1.5%
Economically Disadvantaged = 57%
Limited English Proficient (LEP) = 34.6%

Lowest SES
Lowest T-2-4
What challenges have you observed low-income students facing in your school/district?
EMERGE: Challenges We’ve Observed

Myths Perpetuated
• Low income students can’t afford top tier colleges.
• Low income students can’t get accepted into top tier colleges.
• Low income students can’t handle the work once they are accepted into a top tier college.

Managing Community Climate
When the mission of EMERGE and target group served challenges the personal opinions of portions of the larger district community.
SBISD: Challenges We’ve Observed

Low-Income Students are Disproportionately Underserved & Underprepared
• Academically for K-12 & post-secondary
• K-12 & post-secondary opportunities (GT, Pre-AP, AP, Dual Credit, etc.)

Decreased Resources & Increased Need
• Recapture (Robinhood) Payments to State of Texas
• Layoffs (460-600:1, Student:Counselor)
• No title funds for high schools
• Dependence on partnerships to serve target community

Organizational Climate Impacts Customization for Students
• Genuine desire to meet needs of population, lacking effective approaches
• Representation of teachers and campus/district leadership
• Individual beliefs interfere with progress
**OBSERVATIONS**

Examination of phenomenon prior to interpretation. Observing is the act of noticing, with your senses, the details, events, and patterns around you.

**INTERPRETATIONS**

Explanation of the meaning of observations. Interpreting assigns meaning to acts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Families of low-income students do not attend events at school</td>
<td>• Low income students’ parents don’t care about their education</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• We plan events at times that conflict with family commitments (meals, work, childcare, etc.)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Families do not receive communication in their primary language</td>
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## Testing Interpretations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpretation</th>
<th>Testing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Families of low-income students do not attend events at school</td>
<td>• Survey parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Offer same event at various times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Families do not receive communication in their primary language</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Now What?

What is one observation/interpretation that you can test between now and the end of the school year?

Who must you enlist in order to test?
Supporting Low-Income Students

• Each student is his/her own story
• Cycle of poverty is hard to break
• Impact of a mentality of poverty vs. lacking resources
• Systems contribute to student aspirations or lack thereof
• Our own biases inform the interpretations we hold