



# Improving College Readiness for All Students

Amanda R. Ryan, March 14, 2011, EDDL 655



## Introduction

There are four distinct dimensions of college readiness: cognitive strategies, content knowledge, self-management skills, and knowledge about post-secondary education (Conley, 2008). This initiative focuses on the last two. Building a strong college-going culture, particularly for students of color, requires collaboration with the community (Yamamura, Martinez, & Saenz, 2010) and parents (Holcomb-McCoy, 2010).

## References

Conley, D. T. (2008). Rethinking college readiness. *New Directions for Higher Education*, (144), 3-13.

Yamamura, E.K. & Martinez, M.A. & Saenz, V.B.. (2010). Moving beyond high school expectations: Examining stakeholders' responsibility for increasing latina/o students' college readiness. *The High School Journal* 93(3), 126-148.

Holcomb-McCoy, C. (2010). Involving low-income parents and parents of color in college readiness activities: An exploratory study. *Professional School Counseling*, 14(1), 115-124.

## Anticipated Outcomes

An increase in college applications, admissions, enrollment and retention for all students regardless of race or family educational background.  
1<sup>st</sup> year: A demonstrated increase exists in number of students who enroll in and attend college after graduation.  
5<sup>th</sup> year: Enrollment and attendance in college is no longer predicted by race or family educational background.

## Goal: To increase the number of graduates of X High School successfully matriculating in a 4 year college.

### Issue

Of the graduates of X High School, a large comprehensive high school in the Portland Metro area, few first generation college students or students of color enroll in and complete the first year of college. Interviews with students have revealed a lack of understanding of the college application, financial aid and enrollment processes as well as apprehension about attending college.

### Description of Goal

Create a targeted college-readiness program, particularly for Latino and first generation college students, to ensure that students are not only cognitively prepared for college but also understand the logistical and psychological elements of the transition to college. We will accomplish this by completing a targeted evaluation of our college-readiness program as part of a needs assessment and utilize this information to create specific programming to prepare students for college.

### Options

Options for delivery include during language arts classes, second period classes, special sessions before and/or after school, or advisory period. Because it is designated as time for college and career preparatory curriculum, advisory period was chosen for delivery of this programming. After school and weekend special sessions will also be held for families.

### Resource Allocation

Implementation of this program will require a shift of how existing staff and volunteer time is spent. Counselors, administrators, advisory teachers and community members will all be involved with program creation, delivery, and evaluation. Extended contract pay will be necessary for faculty members participating in summer program development meetings.

## Implementation Plan

**Spring 2011:** Conduct targeted evaluation of college readiness practices. Interview recent graduates to understand reasons for enrolling or not enrolling in a four year college. Interview current students and families to understand needs.

**Summer 2011:** A committee of counselors, parents, students, and community members meets to develop curriculum and plan parent meetings

**Fall 2011:** Train advisory teachers in curriculum during in-service week. Begin parent and community informational meetings. Implement lessons.

**Summer/Fall 2012:** Evaluate progress and revise programming as needed.