

Program Evaluation

National Collegiate Preparatory Public Charter High School

In May of each school year the school leadership team and Board members of National Collegiate Prep conduct a retreat to discuss the school year and make recommendations for the next school year based upon performing a needs assessment of the school. In preparation for the retreat, the members of the leadership team meet with their respective department members to develop a needs assessment and make recommendations for the subsequent year. One should note, since the inception of National Prep, this has been the practice we have used for School Improvement planning and implementation. As evidenced by the attached agenda, every aspect of the school is reviewed such as Curriculum and Instruction, Discipline and School Culture, School Operations, Program Development, School-wide Initiatives, and STEM initiatives. As a result of the retreat, it was determined that our focus for the SY 2013-14 would be as follows:

- Improved performance on DC CAS in reading and math
- Improved performance on PSAT, SAT, and ACT
- Improved GPA
- Improved attendance and punctuality
- Middle States Accreditation
- Five Year Charter Renewal

The majority of our student population reside in Wards 7 and 8. The student population in both wards is largely African-American and 70% of the families in these communities are comprised of single-parent households. In addition, 91% of our students receive free or reduced lunch. These factors paint a clear picture of the potential for widespread academic failure for our students. Without meaningful and urgent academic intervention, our students would be well on their way to continue a life of poverty with limited opportunities for economic self-sufficiency.

During this retreat, we set goals specific to address the areas of concern and need for improvement listed above in the following ways:

- 1) The 9th grade cohort: 90% of our students will be on track to graduate within 4 years.
- 2) The 10th grade will improve in their DC CAS scores 10% in reading and 7% in Math
- 3) 11th and 12th grade teachers were provided instruction to become certified SAT instructors. It is our expectation through this professional development that we will increase in our SAT and PSAT scores. We expect to see a 10 percent increase in performance of the SAT.
- 4) We also expect to see an increase of Grade Point Averages by 10% through the use of Academic Counseling and constant intervention.

The team also discussed our program and initiatives that Title I funds and other consolidated funding sources that were used to fund programs were discussed. While all of our goals listed above are not funded by Title I funds, we evaluated our entire program for efficacy. Below are programs and positions that Title I sources are partially used to fund:

The Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Student Affairs Coordinator, Outreach Coordinator, and Discipline and Academic Affairs.

Curriculum and Instruction

Curriculum and Instruction is responsible for

- 1) Supervision and facilitation of all academic instruction and curriculum development.
- 2) Supervision of teachers,
- 3) Professional development and support for teachers to appropriately develops lesson plans for classes
- 4) Works with the Chief Academic Officer to determine appropriate methodologies to develop and expand academic achievement.
- 5) Provides Achievement Network (ANET) training to teachers for DC CAS Prep class (5th block)

While this program maintains high performance in student achievement to include a 97% graduation rate, for the 12th grade and 100% on track to graduate rate for the 9th, 10th, and 11th grades, the team believed that additional support was required to improve upon our standardized testing scores of the DC CAS, PSAT and SAT scores of our students. Through Curriculum and Instruction, a 5th block period was devised to provide additional support for students to increase in their standardized taking skills. We believe through the support of ANET our DC CAS scores will increase by 10% in reading and 7% in math. Additionally, during 5th block 11th and 12th grade students are provided with PSAT and SAT skill building. Teachers were trained and became certified instructors in order to properly instruct skills to students needed to be successful in taking these tests. It is our belief that through this program, our students in the 11th grade will improve their PSAT scores by 5% and 12th grade students will improve their scores by 10% on the SAT.

Student Affairs Coordinator

This position is responsible for:

- 1) Coordination of student crisis intervention and emotional issues
- 2) Coordination of parent involvement activities

While we found some aspects of this position supportive to our student body, we felt that we were not addressing the very serious emotional needs of our students. In addition, the school leadership team believed that we were not properly counseling students and parents regarding academic programs, thus there was confusion for students and parents regarding their requirements to graduate on time. After performing careful evaluation of our Student Affairs Department, we determined that we would use our school Social Worker to support the emotional needs of our students and we would merge our Student Affairs Office and Academic Advising departments. This merger would allow for student programs, activities and academic advising to be done in the same office thus offering continuity for students and parents about the expectations. Accordingly, we created the Office of Academic Counseling and Special Programs. We believe this change will support the curriculum and instruction office in the following ways:

- 1) Provide accurate academic counseling to students and parents so both parties understand the requirements to graduate on time.
- 2) Work with Curriculum and Instruction to set up red flags of students of concern regarding grades and issues with classes, thus assigning students to extended day classes geared toward offering additional academic tutoring so students can successfully pass classes.
- 3) Combining Student Affairs with Academic Affairs

We believe through the development of the Student Affairs Coordinator position, we combined two related programs together which has resulted in a more efficient program for students and parents to understand with more ease. Moreover, it is our belief that we will see an increase in student success in classes and a 5% decrease in the student summer school population as students will be more successful during the school year.

Outreach Coordinator

This position is responsible for:

- 1) Coordination of student programs to include community services and extracurricular activities
- 2) Implementation of Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

Our outreach coordinator supplies community service opportunities for our students to participate in throughout the year in order to earn the required yearly community service hours. Additionally, this position reaches out to community organizations to bring services and partnerships for the school that offer additional support to our academic programs. While we found this position to be successful in supporting students with community service hours and building community partners, we evaluated the efficacy of our parent involvement program. Our parent involvement program was not as effective as planned. We had low turnout to meetings and programs and we found our parents were not partnering with us to enforce student attendance and tardiness policies. We have improved our system of communicating to our parents regarding meetings and programs in which we seek their attendance. We have held grade level sessions since the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year to discuss issues important to parents and their children. We have also had parents sign for the parent /family policy handbook so they understand the expectations at National Prep. Included in this handbook parents will sign a family compact to agree to attend at least 5 programs or meetings during the school year. We have made more personal phone calls to reach out to parents personally and encourage them to attend these meetings. Additionally, we will increase our home visits to parents that have missed 2 or more meetings during the school year. We believe through these steps we will increase our parent involvement by 25%.

Discipline

This position is responsible for:

- 1) Supervision of all student discipline issues and management of the Code of Conduct.
- 2) Maintaining a safe environment for students faculty and staff

The Dean of Students is responsible for enforcement of the Code of Conduct and teaching students the guidelines of discipline required while attending National Prep. This department has been successful in maintaining a safe and healthy environment for the entire National Prep community. National Prep had an expulsion rate of 2.9% during the 2012-2013 school year. While this rate is lower than many LEA's in Washington, D.C. it is our goal to decrease this rate to 1% during the 2013-2014 school year. The Dean of Students will increase student initiatives to reward a pro-social and positive community to encourage positive behavior. Additionally, there will be increased interventions on conflict-resolution for students. This program will work with the school Social Worker to teach students how to manage their anger through behavior modification techniques in order to avoid situations which can result in student expulsions.

Extended Day Credit Recovery

We evaluated our student success and their achievement in the classroom. We found that there are times our students need more support after class in order to gain success within the class. Further, many times our students come from situations at home that are not conducive to proper study habits. We have developed opportunities after school during our extended school day sessions to provide additional academic supports that are content based. Students that are found struggling and have not met success in a class have an opportunity to take these classes and earn credit in order to stay on track to graduate. During these sessions, student progress is closely monitored by the teacher to determine student success and achievement. These sessions are held Monday –Thursday for 90 minutes. Students attend specific classes twice a week which allows for them to take two classes during the sessions. Sessions are offered for a period of 2 quarters. It is our goal to increase student completion and credit recovery by 10% in order to maintain a graduation rate of at least, 90%.

Curriculum documents are organized by units and are paced to scaffold learning. Each curriculum document includes lesson objectives that are aligned to the outcomes of the Common Core State Standards and provides suggested activities and assessments to ascertain mastery of these objectives. Curriculum documents analyze and deconstruct CCSS for skills and concepts and create learning objectives to support the learning and comprehension of these Standards. In addition, to further support student mastery of each learning Standard, NCP curriculum documents include assessment limits for each standards addressed within a given lesson and sample assignments that are aligned to each Standard. A list of academic resources that support the mastery of each lesson’s learning objective is also provided in each academic document. Lastly, NCP’s curriculum documents outline research-based learning activities to extend lessons for learners who master objectives and resources and suggested interventions for students who require additional support with specific concepts or skills. The curriculum documents are designed to support instructors with creating explicit lesson plans that foster student success.

Many of our classrooms are co-taught in reading and math, and in addition to these co-taught classrooms, students receive instruction and support from two teachers simultaneously. With the goals of improving student achievement, the educational program also provides for two English classes for all freshman students who read significantly below grade level, an honors program, and IB program and we are implementing a new Advanced Placement program.

Initiative: Improve DC CAS preparation by making DC CAS preparation classes a part of an extended school day and removing DC CAS Saturday Academy sessions.

A component of National Prep’s academic program is to prepare students for attaining academic success on standardized assessments by offering support and review courses. In SY 12-14, all tenth grade students in preparing for the District of Columbia standardized assessment received extensive support through an eight week review program in mathematics, biology, and English and in an eight week Saturday Academy. After reviewing the student achievement data on the DC CAS, we realized that the low attendance and participation at our Saturday Academy sessions, especially for tenth graders, resulted in students not being able to perform well on the DC CAS. Thus, we found a drastic decrease in attendance for our 10th grade Saturday Academy. Compared to 2011-12 school year, we found that our 2012-13 Saturday Academy student attendance decreased by 40%. Further, we found that parent participation for this cohort drastically decreased and parents were not enforcing their children to attend Saturday Academy for the eight weeks on a regular basis. Further, we found that our 9th grade students arrived at National Prep ill prepared to take the coursework. In fact, many of our students

arrive at National Prep on a 5th grade reading level which means that we have had to take drastic measures to get them up to speed and to get them ready for the DC CAS.

Thus, for SY 13-14, we have decided to eliminate the Saturday Academy sessions and instead implement an extended school day for one additional hour per day on Monday through Thursday. National Prep will offer DC CAS Prep during a fifth block period. This strategy allows students to participate within the school day and so, we will not face the same challenges with getting full participation in the Saturday Academy sessions. The fifth block is a 60 minute class that runs Monday-Thursday every week, and will be held throughout the entire school year. We expect that changing the DC CAS Prep time to a block offered during the school day will increase attendance by over 50% and thus, we expect to have improved DC CAS scores for SY 13-14 for our tenth grade students.

Using Assessments to Track Student Achievement and Growth and the Role of the Director of Curriculum and Instruction

As a school-wide goal, we have worked to methodically collect a variety of reliable indicators of student comprehension of classroom content. Based on our grading system, we have determined that 70% of a student's grade is based on assessments, and 30% is based on assignments. This approach intentionally places a variety of reliable assessment to determine our students' success in the classroom. In addition to the assessments and student assignments given to students every quarter, NCP students took the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) and the District of Columbia Benchmark Assessment System (DCBAS) assessment throughout the year. These assessments were used in addition to the quarterly and biweekly internal assessments, to gauge and implement a plan to improve student performance in areas where they are still struggling. We have found that the DCBAS assessment that we used last year was ineffective however, for preparing students for the DC CAS. However our practice of preparation in classroom technique was accurate. For example, we used exit quizzes and Brief Constructed Response Questions which are given daily. At the beginning of each class, students are presented with a BCR Question. These questions require students to give a brief written response to a topic pertaining to the material the students are currently learning. These questions allow the teachers to ascertain how well the student can write in response to a question that requires more in-depth thought. In addition, this information is then used to help improve student performance on written response questions. At the end of the class, students are also given a short Exit Quiz. These quizzes are generally three to five questions that relate to the material covered in class that day. They help provide feedback of students understanding of the material. This data is then used to adjust a teacher's presentation of the content to better fit the needs of our students and help determine which topics may need to be revisited. Biweekly assessments are given throughout the year. These assessments provide the data for the teacher to determine how well the students have mastered the content covered in a two week period. Assessments are teacher developed and when appropriate, developed by the publisher of the applicable textbook used in class, or a combination of the two. After tests are graded, the scores are reported back to the students immediately and entered into PowerSchool, our student information system, so that parents may track student progress. We also administered comprehensive quarterly assessments.

We found, through the administration of the Northwest Evaluation Assessment (NWEA), that at the beginning of their ninth grade year, 85% of our students were below grade level and ranged between 5th-7th grade levels and 65% of that cohort were below the 5th grade reading level. While our DC CAS scores dropped during the 2012-13 school year, we maintained a MGP in reading at 66%. Our MGP in math was 44%, however, our weighted two year average, was 55.4%. From this data, we determined that our students were much weaker in their literacy and numeracy skills than we thought and that while NCP maintained our growth rate between 2012 to 2013, our students needed much more support

and better benchmark data to gain proficient or advanced scores. Based on this data, we determined that while we showed continuous growth with our students from their 8th grade CAS scores, we were not using an effective benchmark to prepare them for the assessment by using the DC BAS.

In SY 12-13, we administered three Common Core interim assessments within the school year. Each assessment was administered during each of the three quarters. We know that assessments are useful in preparing students for standardized assessments and for receiving data about students' present level of performance in mathematics, biology, and English. After each assessment, teachers and the Administrative team analyze test data and design interventions to support areas of concern/weakness. These interim assessments provide valuable data about what students know and where they require support. The data garnered from these assessments help to guide instruction and promote academic growth and give evidence of the effectiveness of interventions.

Ms. Joseph will continue to oversee the DC CAS Review literacy course and that will be rolled into our DC CAS 5th period block. This course is designed to review the learning Standards in English that are assessed on the DC CAS. Students in the 10th grade attend this course after school two days per week and work to enhance reading comprehension skills through activities in Close Reading and annotating. There is also a DC CAS Review of Numeracy which is designed to review the learning standards in Mathematics that are assessed on the standardized exam. Students in the 10th grade attend this course after school two days per week and work to enhance skills in algebra and geometry.

We will continue to administer our academic intervention programs such as Banneker Scholars under the administration of Latoya Joseph, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, which is a reading class devoted to supporting the needs of struggling readers. Students in this class are currently enrolled in 9th and 10th grade and are reading between beginning reader (BR) and 4th grade reading levels. Students were identified using NWEA data and were enrolled in this class on September 15 of this school year. Banneker students receive support in phonics, phonemic awareness, word blending and decoding, reading fluency, and reading comprehension strategies. During SY 12-13, after one month of school, English teachers met with the Director of Curriculum and Instruction to discuss student weaknesses and lack of exposure to grade level vocabulary. To remedy this deficiency, the team worked to design across grade level vocabulary development interventions. This intervention involves each English and Freshman and Sophomore Seminar teacher explicitly teaching how to use context clues, word parts and origins to determine the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary. Each English and Seminar teacher opens the day's lesson with a BCR question that is focused on finding the meaning of unfamiliar words using context and students supporting their thinking with evidence from the text or from prior knowledge. We will continue to use this intervention during SY 13-14 under the administration of Ms. Joseph, our Director of Curriculum and Instruction. We also employed a similar academic intervention for basic math skills reinforcement. Last school year, after one month of school, teachers in the Mathematics Department met with the Director of Curriculum and Instruction to discuss areas of need among students. After reviewing data and classroom teacher observations, the team determined that students needed the most support with reinforcement of basic math skills. The team worked to design across grade level mathematics intervention which includes each math teacher teaching and reviewing two agreed upon basic math skills in a given month during the Do Now/BCR portion of instruction. Students will also be assessed on these skills during monthly assessments.

Developing a Robust Data Driven Instructional Model through a Partnership with Achievement Network

Our DC CAS proficiency scores dropped by a composite score of 21.4% on the math and reading sections. After reviewing this data and reviewing student growth on an individualized student basis, we determined that we need to have more accurate predictors of student performance in reading and math. Moreover, much of the analysis needs to be done in a more systematic manner and through an electronic database.

Initiative: We have decided that we need to fully implement our data driven instruction model in order to ensure that our interim assessments actually serve as an accurate predictor on student performance in reading and math. As mentioned earlier, during our meetings with National Prep teachers, it was determined that Discovery's DC BAS was not an appropriate predictor of student performance in reading and math. Consequently, for the 2013-14 school year, we have partnered with Achievement Network (ANET) to assist in developing a data-driven approach to improve student performance. ANET provides interim assessments that assess student mastery of grade level standards in Math and English. The ANET also provides a Data Coach to provide analysis of interim student assessments and provide support identifying areas of academic deficiencies and providing support by designing appropriate interventions. We will suspend using the DC BAS for 9th graders, and instead, we will offer ANET in order to determine proficiency in reading and math as a way to ensure that we realized dramatic gains on the DC CAS and other standardized assessments.

Professional Development activities and sharing of best practices among schools within the Network is an added benefit of being a partner with ANET. Our partnership with ANET becomes a conduit to ensure alignment with the Common Core Standards and it also begins our preparation for the PAARC assessments. Finally, Mrs. Latoya Joseph, our Director of Curriculum and Instruction will work closely with the Data Coach to review test results, to identify learning trends, and to identify areas of learning that require support.

Initiative: It is our goal to ensuring that at least 97% of our students graduate on-time every school year. According to the U.S. Department of Education, only 59 percent of students who started as freshman in 2006-07 school year graduated four years later according to data which outlines state four year high school graduation rates in the 2010-11 school year. See <http://www2.ed.gov/documents/press-releases/state-2010-11-graduation-rate-data.pdf>. Moreover, the data shows that nationwide, only 60% of Black students are graduating within four years. In Washington, DC, only 56 percent of students graduated within four years. Accordingly, we have reconfigured our Student Affairs Office to work closely with Academic Services to continue to ensure that all of our students graduate on-time.

While the graduation rate for DC was the lowest in the country, National Collegiate Prep had great success in this category as all of our 53 seniors in SY 12-13, graduated on time. This achievement was due in large part to the Student Affairs Department. Our Student Affairs Department has undertaken several measures through our academic program and support services, to ensure that all of our students graduate, on-time, each year. The Student Affairs Office is responsible for working to research and implement programs, daily, weekly, and monthly that are meaningful and thought-provoking for all students on every grade level. All Grade Level Activity Advisors report directly to the Student Affairs Coordinator. The Director of Academic Affairs works diligently with the Director of Curriculum to ensure students were in the proper classes needed to graduate and monitors academic performance throughout the year to ensure that students would successfully complete the classes needed. Upon our scheduled progress report periods, the Academic Affairs Department evaluates the progress of students

to determine if they are on a successful track to pass each class. If we find a student struggling in a class, the Student Affairs Office works with Ms. Joseph to set up interventions to include additional tutoring after school with the instructor to support their skills help them to successfully complete all required components to pass the class.

More importantly, National Prep supports its students by providing highly qualified staff members to aid in academic planning and tracking. Krishna Rampersaud, the Director of Academic Services, is the full-time staff member dedicated to assisting students will planning their required coursework for graduation based on their career path (i.e., International Baccalaureate Diploma, General Diploma). Students work with their parents/guardians along with the Director of Academic Services to complete their Individual Academic Plan each year to ensure successful graduation. Carlisa Hurtt, the School Registrar, also works closely with the Director of Academic Services to schedule students and help with student pacing of courses.

As a result of these efforts in the Student Affairs Office and College Advising Office, during the 2012-13 school year, we graduated all of our 53 students and we are pleased to report that each member of our senior class graduated and was accepted to a college and/or university. Our students were also the recipients of over 2 million dollars in scholarships. Thus, we would like to use our Schoolwide Plan funds to pay for continue our successful efforts under the Student Affairs Office and continue to allocate some of the funds to Ms. Asendio's salary.

We would like to use our achievement as a school that has a 100% graduation rate as a spring board to increase our scholarship awards and seek acceptance to more tier one and tier two colleges and universities. We understand that in order to achieve our objective we need to improve performance on PSAT, SAT, and ACT examinations. We found that our partnership with Princeton Review did not help us to realize the results our students need. Accordingly, for SY 13-14, we have partnered with A List to train our teachers to become certified SAT/PSAT instructors. Students in Grades 10, 11, and 12 are now being prepared for the demands of these assessments. In addition, all students are responsible for learning the SAT words of the day. We understand that improved performance on these national assessments will provide more opportunities for scholarships and acceptances in Tier 1 and 2 schools. Improved performance on the PSAT, SAT, and ACT examinations also result in overall improved student achievement and mastery of key concepts in math and reading.

Initiative: We would like to increase parental engagement by increasing our home visits for students, reaching out to parents through telephone calls in order to add a personal touch to our communication, and requiring parents to sign a compact in the Family-Student Handbook in order to ask parents to make certain commitments.

During our 2013-2014 school year, a great emphasis has been planned for encouraging increased parent/guardian participation. We have increased the amount of specialized grade level meetings. This way we address the specific concerns a parent has regarding their child and their specific grade. Instead of just sending generalized all school phone messages, we are contacting parents individually to encourage their attendance to meetings that are important to them. Our school Social Worker and Outreach Coordinator will increase the amount of home visits they make to homes in which we have not seen the parent come to the school often. We also are providing parent focused social events to foster relationships between parents. Our Outreach Coordinator, Mr. Terrell Davis, has developed more topics as well as social activities that we feel are relevant to our parents to increase our PTO participation of parents.

In an effort to remedy our concerns related to attendance and lateness, our student and family handbook was amended to emphasize the importance of reporting to school on time and each day. It was also amended to reflect changes in the discipline code to avoid the inappropriate behavior experienced in the previous year. Parents are now required to sign for a copy of the handbook. We believe that these initiatives will result in an overall increase in student achievement because parental engagement is critical to the academic success of students. We know that our increased home visits coupled with data-driven parent meetings will increase parents' ability to support their children in fulfilling their academic goals. As we refine our parental engagement activities, we expect to see academic gains achieved on the DC CAS, PSAT, SAT, and the ACT examinations.