History and Purpose of Middle College Program

• Began in 1974 at LaGuardia Community College of the City University of New York.

• Designed to create a learning environment, on a college campus, that provides disengaged high school students a fresh start.
History and Purpose (cont.)

• Disengaged students are creative nonconformists who have trouble fitting into a traditional high school setting.

• Because of their dress or lack of interest in school activities, their peers often reject them.
History and Purpose (cont.)

• While most are bright, many drop out of school.
• The model pulls disengaged high school students back into the education process.
History and Purpose (cont.)

• Program provides the host college with a new pool of potential students.

• Grade level varies;
  – 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders
  – 11th and 12th graders
  – 9th, 10th, and 11th graders
History and Purpose (cont.)

- Small enrollment of no more than 125 – 150 students per site is one key to the program’s success.
- Approximately 200 programs exist across the nation.
Middle College Governance and Operational Logistics

- The program is governed by the local district’s Board of Education.
- The district and the host college collaboratively manage the program.
- The host college provides space for the program.
  - Principal’s office
  - Teacher’s workroom
  - One dedicated classroom per 25 students
  - Access to “floating” classrooms, laboratories, library, etc.
Governance and Operational Logistics (cont.)

• The district provides:
  – Telephones
  – Computers
  – Copying machines
  – Office furniture, etc.
  – Student high school textbooks and material
  – Tuition and textbooks for college courses taken by Middle College students.
Governance and Operational Logistics (cont.)

• The district selects, employs, and trains all teaching and administrative staff.
• Middle College students abide by all college rules and regulations.
• However, the school district makes decisions pertaining to student discipline.
Governance and Operational Logistics (cont.)

• The Middle College Principal reports to the Chief Academic Officer.
• Relationship with college faculty is very important.
• The Middle College Principal should attend all college faculty meetings.
Governance and Operational Logistics (cont.)

- Most successful Middle College programs have a college faculty member who serves as a liaison between college faculty and Middle College program.
- Suggest including college administration and faculty and student leaders when visiting existing Middle College high school sites around the country.
Middle College Staff Selection

• The principal should be the first staff member selected.
  – Position much like a symphony conductor.
  – Must possess a clear sense of purpose.
  – Be able to confront irresponsible behavior.
  – Must remain firm in pressing for a positive direction.
  – Must be able to work with the college staff.
Staff Selection (cont.)

• Selecting highly talented staff members is essential to program’s success.
• Must select staff who are empathetic listeners, have high expectations for students and adults, and are facilitators of student learning.
Staff Selection (cont.)

• Use a uniform interview technique that ask the same questions to all teachers.
• Provide a Middle College program of 125 students with a principal, one secretary, a counselor, and seven high school teachers.
Middle College High School
Student Selection

• The college-based program is for students who have become disengaged from the learning process in their high school.

• These students’ grades and interest in schools remained strong until the early adolescence, and then begin declining rapidly.
Student Selection (cont.)

• While very bright, some do not attend school regularly, will not participate in classes they find uninteresting, and do not participate in any extracurricular activity.
• The program is not for everyone.
• Middle College students must be interested in turning their academic careers around.
Student Selection (cont.)

• The Graduate Equivalent Degree Program might better serve high school seniors who need a significant number of credits to graduate.

• Middle College Students must be willing to accept responsibility for their social as well as their academic behavior on the college campus.
Student Selection (cont.)

- Students that will not abide by college rules will be sent back to their home schools.
- Students must apply for and meet admission requirements of the program.
- Teachers, counselors, or high school principals may nominate students.
Student Selection (cont.)

• Acceptance is not automatic.
• The student’s past academic and social performance, personal references, and interview data are all considered.
• We look for dropping grades, falling attendance, and nonparticipation in school activities.
Student Selection (cont.)

• An interview is held with each student and his or her parent or guardian.
• Questions are asked to determine what factors created the largest amount of stress in the student’s academic and personal life.
• Students accepted into the program and their parents must sign contracts agreeing to expected levels of effort and compliance with rules and regulations.
The Power of The College Campus

• A local college campus is more than the physical location of a Middle College program.

• The Power of the Campus is the “magical bridge” that reconnects disengaged high school students to learning.

• The college campus creates a sense of community to help Middle College students feel like they belong.
Power of the Campus (cont.)

• Middle College students feel like college students while they complete their high school education.

• Core high school courses are taught by carefully selected “second chance” high school teachers.

• Middle College students have access to all college facilities.
Power of the Campus (cont.)

• Eligible Middle College students can take dual enrollment college courses for both high school and college credit.
• The district pays for the tuition.
• Older college students exert a great deal of moral pressure on Middle College students to fit in and become responsible members of the college family.
Power of the Campus (cont.)

- College students are usually more accepting than traditional high school students of students who dress or look differently.
- Middle College students cannot go into college dormitories.
Power of the Campus (cont.)

• The Power of the Campus helps Middle College students see the relationship between schooling and their future.
• Attending a local college motivates students to complete their high school degree and enter college.
• Many Middle College students will continue their education at the host college.
Q&A

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