



Western Association for College Admission Counseling
www.wacac.org

District Directions Fact Sheet

Program Purpose:

To intentionally link WACAC programs and services to an underserved public school district. An agreement is signed with the district Superintendent and the WACAC leadership works closely with the district counseling office throughout the 15-month program. The program is a joint effort of the College Board and WACAC. WACAC fully funds all program costs.

Counselors are exposed to data analysis, Action Plan development, college admission officers, College Board programs and services, and teamwork.

WACAC hires a researcher from UCLA to create school-specific data on graduation rates, PSAT, SAT, AP data, college prep coursework completion (A-G courses), and college enrollment.

Program Components:

The district commits all of its counselors to attend the following mandatory meetings and professional development events:

- An orientation and needs assessment
- A two-day retreat in a local hotel with public and private college and university admission officers
- A one-day drive-in professional development workshop sponsored by WACAC
- The WACAC Annual Conference (two counselors from each school)
- The NACAC Annual Conference (one counselor from each school)

Program has served six public school districts since program inception:

Sequoia Union, Rialto, San Jose Unified, Vista Unified, Campbell Union HSD

District	Number of Students	Counselors Served in DD
Sequoia Union HSD	8,481	32
Rialto Unified SD	8,314	36
San Jose Unified	8,873	22
Vista Unified	9,174	26
Campbell Union HSD	7,805	28
Salinas Union HSD	7,302	34

Action Plan Examples

- Increase college prep course completion
- Increase Latino enrollment and test taking
- Increase involvement of teachers and administrators in college counseling program
- Rebuild 9th grade year with college information and academic supports.
- Increase FAFSA/Dream Act Completion

Program Outcomes

After one year, Sequoia Union HSD saw an increase in PSATs – 10th grade – 28%; among Latinos, 59%. For their 11th graders, 26% increase, and 52% among Latinos.

After one year, San Jose Unified has hired an additional counselor per school.

Sequoia HS saw significant increases in students submitting college applications to public and private colleges and universities: Cal State East Bay +18%; Notre Dame deNamur +95%; Santa Clara University: 133%; University of San Francisco +134%.

San Jose's Lincoln HS increased FAFSA completion for their seniors – The goal was to increase completion by 10%. Completion rate went from 33% to 62% in one year. Counselor cited the "Nine Principles of a College Going Culture" research as key to the program.

Counselors are renewing WACAC membership and attending professional development events.

Program won NACAC's Best New Program of the Year Award in 2013.

Counselor Comments:

- We talk about the same issues and work as a team
- Our district is now focused on college
- We use data to inform our decisions
- We work as a team and have a coherent conversation about common issues.

Recommendations

With foundation and or industry sponsors, more school districts could be served.

This program could be presented as a summer institute.

Fact Sheet prepared by Dr. Esther Hugo