

Paterson's Pilot Year 2007 – 2008 Grade 6 Report

The Navigation 101 Pilot Year was a great success! Paterson Education Fund is pleased to report that the program surpassed our expectations. The following testimony, from a teacher/advisor at School #2, fully captures the Navigation 101 success story.

Celebrating the Difference Navigation 101 Has Made

School 2 Teacher, Kate Kuebler

I have been teaching 7th grade for the last four years in Paterson, and never have I started a school year with students who possessed such a positive enthusiasm for school!

Every September I hand-out a student survey to my new students. This survey effectively introduces me to my new class by identifying their interests, goals, positive/ negative attributes, and favorite activities. I usually receive very limited answers that often include far-fetched ideas and unrealistic goals.

This year was the complete opposite! When reviewing the surveys this September, I came across answers that exceeded all expectations! Majority of these surveys included goals that incorporated plans for college! In addition, almost every student had clear-realistic goals, career choices, and mature-well thought out answers!



There were no directions given prior to the distribution of this survey. In fact, this survey was assigned as homework. The new 7th graders took it upon themselves to provide me with answers and ideas they took pride in! Students elaborated on most questions and really organized their thoughts. I know that this survey would have mimicked prior years if Navigation 101 wasn't involved! The only common link between these students and the survey was the Navigation 101 program. It was clear that this program really assisted students in understanding the requirements needed to reach their goals, as well as the importance of a college education!

As a Navigation 101 advisor, I was so proud of these responses! Students absorbed the program's objectives and allowed the main ideas to remain with them! I look forward to expanding this beneficial program to all the middle school students in School #2. In addition, I anticipate a wonderful school year with goal-orientated students that continue to build on a positive foundation that Navigation 101 helped establish!

Celebrating the Difference Navigation 101 Has Made

For Students

Outcomes: Two thousand, four hundred 6th grade students are better able to articulate their educational and career goals and are fully immersed in planning, self assessment and critical thinking activities, that have increased their determination to achieve at higher levels.

Paterson Students took some time to warm up to Navigation 101 but now they love it! Here's just a small sampling of their comments. These comments evidence changes in belief and behavior.

- I felt good because of the accomplishments I made and I learned that when you get older you have to worry about how you're going to get into college and making budgets. I enjoyed it and I think it's a good idea for next year and I feel I did good.
- I felt nervous because I never did this before. I learn in the summer don't always be in front of the TV. Start to read books and learn more things about all subjects even the ones I know already.
- It felt really good. I think I actually did a good job. I think these student led conferences are great because it actually helps students know what they want to be when they grow up. For example, to go to a great high school, go to a great college and also get a great job.
- Well it felt pretty interesting and good for me because I get to do things with others. It was worthwhile because all the things I did to teachers and others weren't right. Somehow Navigation just makes it easier for kids to learn something about themselves.
- I feel great I am really happy with what I said. My performance rubric to assess says that I did a good job. It was really worthwhile. I really enjoyed it. I do want to do it next year. It could really help me get my goals in life. I talked about my goals for the future.



- **91% of students said that the student led conference was worthwhile.**
- **80% want to do another conference next year.**

For Paterson School Staff

Outcomes: Four hundred, eighty school administrators and teachers received professional development to help them become effective facilitators of student learning. Teachers gained new understanding of their role as advisor as distinct from counselor. Counselors are redefining their responsibility for connecting students and families with community resources so that the needs of the whole child are met.

Administrators will be able to identify student interest areas for the creation of small learning communities that offer more rigorous courses meet student need.

The advisor feedback is strong evidence that school leadership played an important role in defining the culture of the program. All the advisors in one school asked for more time with students. In a different school, all the advisors asked for better organization. In a third school, all the advisors wanted additional

compensation. This helped us identify issues that are building specific. We are using this information for targeted technical assistance. All but one advisor said that the program was worthwhile.

Here are some comments from advisors and other teachers:

- Thank you for letting me be a part of this program.
- I wish I could have had more time to spend with my group.
- The portfolio presentation day was a huge success and advisors, teachers, students and parents enjoyed the children.
- The student led conference was a wonderful experience for students and teachers. I was able to meet with parents and make connections between family and student. Also I was so proud of their great conferences!

Some teachers who were not advisors graciously sat in on student led conferences when parents couldn't make it. Here's what they thought.

- I think this is a wonderful program because it makes students think about the future and what they need to accomplish it.
- This was an absolutely terrific experience. I can't wait for my turn to work with a group.

➤ **Of all advisor comments received 98% felt positive about the program content.**

For Paterson Parents

Outcomes: Parents received tools and information to help them better support, monitor and advocate for high educational outcomes for their children. Parent attendance increased in 90% of participating schools. Parent/ teacher/student dialogue increased/improved with student led conferences.

Parents' response to the program was phenomenal! The numbers and comments speak for themselves Here are some of the parents' comments.

- I was really shocked that he can do an interview by himself also it just showed me how important his goals are and how smart he really is. I really thank Navigation 101 for helping my child keep up the good work.
- I would like to truly thank Ms. C for her guidance and words of wisdom for both myself and my daughter. Not only has she helped me to find ways to work with my daughter but her guidance has shown me how to apply within my life as well.
- I like it a lot that my daughter is following her dream and I will help her in what I can, take her to art classes and other activities that she needs to be able to realize her dreams. Thanks for the conference to help and understand our children.



- I feel that this experience was extremely important. My daughter tends to be shy by nature; however she was confident, secure, and interested in the Navigation 101 program. She has been discussing at home the whole experience of college applications.
 - **99% of parents said their child's student-led conference was worthwhile.**
 - **98% reported that the conference helped them learn what the child had accomplished in the school year.**
 - **98% learned about the students' plans for academic improvement and graduation.**
 - **98% learned their child's hopes for life after high school.**
 - **93% of parents observed personal and social development.**

What Made the Difference

During the pilot year implementation, PEF and Paterson Public Schools began preparations for full scale implementation for all 6th 7th and 8th grade students beginning in September 08. A group of 8 teachers, administrators and guidance counselors were sent to Tacoma Washington for full immersion as the Franklin Pierce School District students conducted their student-led conferences. This group became solid leaders in the Paterson implementation process. The Paterson training team trained 160 new advisors who then turnkey trained approximately 300 of their peers.

A team of four Paterson teachers and guidance counselors were hired to adapt the Franklin Pierce 7th and 8th grade curriculum so that they conform to the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards. The team also edited the 6th grade curriculum to incorporate lessons learned from the pilot year. The Paterson Curriculum has been posted to the districts and PEF's websites and is accessible to the general public.

Encouraged by the smooth implementation of Navigation 101 in the middle school, the district leadership invited the high school personalization team to meet jointly with the Navigation 101 steering committee. Several elementary schools have accessed the Franklin Pierce K-5 curriculum and is using it for special education students and lower grades.

The Paterson community has learned about Navigation 101 through cable-casted public service announcement and a PEF informational brochure. PEF also hosted a student-led Navigation 101 community workshop as a part of the Graduating Every Paterson Child conference. We have recruited several community members who are interested in serving as Community Navigators, working to connect advisors with community resources.

We eagerly anticipate next year's full rollout and beyond.

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