**Preparation for Academic Counselling – two way conversations**

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| **Professional Development for whānau teachers to conduct academic counselling:** |
| Use the Starpath Academic Counselling DVD as a basis for a structure and for discussion about how Academic Counselling can be used in your school.   * Professional Development around: **What is my role in Academic Counselling?** Shared understanding of **What is academic counselling**? **Purpose**? **Why do we do this**? Establish the need for effective counselling for the student to achieve their potential- need buy in by teachers. * Teacher Only Days - volunteer some students for practice. * Understanding that teachers have levels of academic counselling - not expecting that ’one size fits all’ - mentoring a possibility by more experienced teachers to newbies. * Observations of others in another school if initiating for the first time. * Allocate time for and invite experts to do the training. * Get some expert voices from overseas - Google ***Self Directed Learning Schools***in Canada. * Role plays using scripted or structured interviews. * Discuss how to keep the momentum going? * Ensure teacher understanding of NCEA - conduct quizzes to check their knowledge. * Professional development on open and closed questions and not telling students the answers, but the whānau teacher learning to ask questions e.g., ‘What do you need to do to improve?’- **Not** ‘You need to come on time’. * Feedback from students once the process is underway - what worked well. * The need to understand **all the data** – NCEA, asTTle, Numeracy testing, PAT, Reading Tests etc. PD on reading and interpreting data- e asTTle and NCEA and questions to ask. Knowledge of non- traditional data used by diverse groups- e.g., ESOL and Special Needs. * Relationship building and communication skills. * Importance of meaningful academic conversations with all ethnic groups - any protocols to observe. * PD on how to share personal data- red flagged students- home difficulties, medical issues etc. * Knowing the ‘Who to go to’ for things I don’t know. * Formalising the systems for recording and sharing data from academic counselling sessions. |

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| **Communication between whānau teachers and subject teachers - ideas?** |
| * Use the SMS system to record informal data about a student’s. learning that is accessible to all staff teaching that student. * Use a template to gather academic information using the SMS and print these notes out for whānau teachers to use for counselling. * Time for recording and sharing is an issue - maybe do this in a staff meeting time as informal sharing can be valuable. * Whānau teacher to enter their academic counselling notes in an accessible part of the SMS- subject teachers can access this easily and add notes if necessary. * Email and internal communication systems. * Time given for communication between whānau and subject teachers - 2 PD slots - 45 minutes each and one staff meeting before PST Conferences.   Privacy issues - personal/home issues which may affect a student - sensitivity around these. |
| **Preparation for Academic Counselling by the Whānau / Tutor teacher** |
| * Refresh knowledge of student from previous sessions - Timetable time to actually read/study each student profile; check the targets for the student for NCEA. * Understand the purpose of the data - what does it mean, where can it lead? * Check that student is on track with credits. * Ensure the student understands NCEA including course endorsements, UE requirements etc. * Have a new focus for each session and record what is discussed to follow up for the next session. * Check career path/subjects. * Know the student – the relationship is built on trust and respect.   Upskill oneself on NCEA if necessary. |
| **How often should you have academic conversations with students?** | |
| Starpath recommends at least 3 times a year for formal academic counselling sessions with informal follow up as and when required in between.  There should be a PST at least once a year.  There needs to be a mechanism to check when counselling has been completed - records of meetings should be kept in the SMS.   * Ensure ALL students have academic counselling in Term 1. * Formal session early in term one, but this will only be successful with regular ongoing conversations from subject and homeroom teachers. * Some students need counselling more often – marginal and students who are at risk e.g., ‘at risk of not reaching potential’ students mentored by non-teaching staff - middle managers - weekly meetings and targets. * Each time a credit update is given to the students, subject teachers should have an academic conversation. * Subject teachers – twice a term when unit is beginning and ending. * Feedback for specific questions or queries should be done within a week - maybe on a blog or wiki. * Parent Student Teacher Conferences – once or twice a year. * It should be ongoing - building the teacher and student relationship. * It is not just the tutor teacher, but the subject teachers, deans and all teachers that have anything to do with the student. * If a goal is set for a student it must be followed up in the time agreed. | |
| **What questions or topics would you not ask in an academic conversation?** | |
| * Stay within the boundaries of professional ethics. * Anything negative - putdowns, blaming - student, parent or teacher. * Avoid making excuses for teachers. * Be careful of the wording of touchy subjects - it is important to phrase them in a non-threatening way. * Teachers’ personalities or ability to teach. | |
| **Student reflection sheets for academic profiles- what needs to be in them?** | |
| * Targets. * Where I am now, where I want to be and how I will get there- where I want to be at different stages. * Something about careers. * Linking pathways to goals. * SMART Goals - not just “I am going to try my best……” * Goals for e.g., attendance, academic, citizenship. * Things I’m good at and things I struggle with. * Time management plan to fit in all the things I want to achieve in each day (including leisure). * Reflection on my strengths and weaknesses. * Attendance. * Areas of improvement. * Current work. * Support required - who? What? Where? * Their own traffic lights. | |