

What Happens Next? Mott Haven Village Preparatory High School's Class of 2006 In Their First Year After High School

Question:

How can we better prepare our students for college and support them during college?

Rationale

Mott Haven Village Preparatory High School (MHVP) is a small public high school located on the South Bronx High School Campus. The three main goals of MHVP are to prepare students for success in college, to form close personal relationships with the students, and to help students become active participants in their communities. Of the sixty-one graduates in the Class of 2006, fifty-eight (ninety-five percent) were admitted to college. While this represents a tremendous success, what truly matters is how many of our former students finish college. With this in mind, I set out to discover what we could do to better prepare future students for the transition from high school to college and what kind of support our students need to successfully complete college.

Context:

- 65% Latino, 33% African-American, 2% Asian
- Vast majority of the students are from the Bronx
- 92% Qualify for Free or Reduced Price Lunch
- 82% test at Level 1 or Level 2 on the 8th grade English Language Arts Test
- 35% of survey respondents learned a language other than English first
- 26% of survey respondents were the first in their family to graduate from high school
- GPA's ranged from 93-63
 - 76.2 was the class average
- Combined Critical Reading and Math SAT scores ranged from 1000-400
 - 695 was the class average
- Averages on the 5 Regents Exams required for graduation ranged from 81.8-34.2
 - 60.5 was the class average

Literature Review:

- 86% of Asian graduates enroll in college
- 76% of white graduates enroll in college
- 71% of African American graduates enroll in college
- 71% of Latino graduates enroll in college
- 85% of graduates from the highest income quartile enroll in college
- 58% of graduates from the lowest income quartile enroll in college

- 1 in 6 Latino and African-American low-income college students leave during their first year and 1 in 3 leave by the end of their second year
- 77% of high income students graduate within 6 years
- 54% of low income students graduate within 6 years
- 67% of white students graduate within 6 years
- 47% of Latino students graduate within 6 years
- 46% of African-American students graduate within 6 years

Data:

MHVP Class of 2006 – September 2007							
Total – 61 Graduates							
Did Not Enroll	Proprietary College	2 Year CUNY	2 Year Non-CUNY	4 Year CUNY	4 Year SUNY	4 Year Private	Tech/Voc. School
15 (24%)	10 (16%)	8 (13%)	1 (1%)	14 (22%)	1 (1%)	10 (16%)	2 (3%)

MHVP Class of 2006 – January 2007			
Total – 61 Graduates			
Total Students Enrolled In College	Students Who Started College in January	Students Who Have Not Enroll In College	Students Who Started College But Did Not Return For 2 nd Semester
43 (70%)	6 (9%)	9 (14%)	9 (14%)

Key Themes:

Students Who Enrolled In College	Students Who Did Not Enroll	Data From Second Semester
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 55% felt prepared to write essays in college • 42% took remedial classes • 40% were the first in their family to go to college • 34% mentioned that they had trouble with the workload • 20% had trouble with the freedom and/or responsibility of college 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students planned to enroll • Only 3 students enrolled in college and stopped before the end of the 1st semester • 8 students said they were not in college because of financial aid • 3 students were not ready for college or needed a break • 3 out of 7 foreign born students did not start college 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students regretted not spending more time choosing their college • Number of students not in school increased from 15 to 18 students • 9 students started school in September but did not return • Financial aid was a bigger issue • The work was more difficult • 6 out of 15 students who were not in school started school

Conclusions:

- Mott Haven has succeeded in making students believe that they can go to college
- Mott Haven has a successful program for helping students get admitted to college and enrolled in college
- Mott Haven needs to better prepare students to succeed in college

Policy Recommendations:

The policy recommendations are based on the following three principals:

1. The government should make a free or low cost college education available to all students
2. Colleges and universities should take more responsibility for graduating students they accept and enroll
3. High schools should be responsible for preparing students to succeed in college
 - Tuition at SUNY and CUNY Schools should be cut
 - Federal Pell grants and New York State TAP grants should be increased
 - Aid should be made available to all students regardless of their immigration status
 - Funding for Education Opportunity Programs (EOP) that focus on low-income students of color should be increased because they have succeeded by providing academic, social, and financial support
 - Expand orientation programs to include all students regardless of residence status
 - Content areas should align expectations with college level work and develop skills throughout high school
 - Students need to be taught advocacy skills and prepared for the independence they will encounter in college
 - More time needs to be spent on the financial aid and the cost of college
 - Money should be made available so that students and families can visit schools they have been admitted to
 - Mott Haven should develop a list of pipeline schools where our students have been successful
 - A position should be created at Mott Haven to provide on going support to alumni