BUILDING STUDENT CONFIDENCE, STUDENT INVESTMENT, AND A FAMILY ATMOSPHERE

TIPS AND STRATEGIES FOR MOTIVATING AND RETAINING STUDENTS

ACADEMY WEST ADULT EDUCATION
ABOUT ACADEMY WEST ADULT ED

• PART OF THE WESTWOOD HEIGHTS SCHOOL DISTRICT
  • CURRENTLY HOUSED IN THE BUILDING WITH OUR ALTERNATIVE ED PROGRAM

• PROGRAM BEGAN WITH 2015-16 SCHOOL YEAR

• OFFER ABE, HSC, AND HSE SERVICES

• USE PLATO COURSEWARE AS MAIN SOURCE OF CURRICULUM

• CLASSROOM OPEN MONDAY – THURSDAY, 8:30AM – 3:00PM

• AVERAGE ABOUT 175 ADULT LEARNERS IN THE DOOR EACH YEAR
PROFESSIONAL GOALS FOR OUR PROGRAM 2019-2020

• EVERY PROGRAM SHOULD SET PROFESSIONAL GOALS FOR THE PROGRAM

• HELP STUDENTS ENROLL IN POST SECONDARY EDUCATION
• ADD MORE TRAINING SESSIONS EACH MONTH WITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & MICHIGAN WORKS
• FOCUS ON STUDENT GROWTH MEASURES (80% POST TEST RATE, 70% POST TEST WITH EFL GAIN)
• ADD FIELD TRIPS TO ART MUSEUMS, CAPITAL BUILDING, HOLOCAUST MUSEUM, MICHIGAN HISTORY MUSEUM, AND AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY
BUILD A SUPER TEAM WITHIN YOUR STAFF

• DEVELOP LEADERSHIP QUALITIES
• EXHIBIT INTEGRITY
• ACCOUNTABILITY
• EMPATHY
• HUMILITY
• TRUST
• VISION
• INFLUENCE
• ABILITY TO RELATE TO STUDENTS AND THEIR EXPERIENCES
• ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTION TO DRIVE IDEAS TO COMPLETION

WE ARE ALL RESPONSIBLE FOR LEADING OUR STUDENTS TO SUCCESS!
CHANGING THEIR MINDSET

MOST ADULTS ENTER CLASS WITH A FIXED MINDSET.

OUR #1 GOAL IS TO HELP THEM DEVELOP A GROWTH MINDSET.

What Kind of Mindset Do You Have?

Growth Mindset

I can learn anything I want to.
When I'm frustrated, I persevere.
I want to challenge myself.
When I fail, I learn.
Tell me I try hard.
If you succeed, I'm inspired.
My effort and attitude determine everything.

Fixed Mindset

I'm either good at it, or I'm not.
When I'm frustrated, I give up.
I don't like to be challenged.
When I fail, I'm no good.
Tell me I'm smart.
If you succeed, I feel threatened.
My abilities determine everything.
CHANGING THEIR MINDSET

• IT’S IMPORTANT TO PLANT THE SEEDS OF SUCCESS EARLY

• START DEVELOPING THAT GROWTH MINDSET THE MINUTE OF FIRST CONTACT
  • WE CONGRATULATE NEW STUDENTS AT ORIENTATION FOR TAKING THE FIRST STEP OF WALKING IN THE DOOR
    • MANY OF THEM HAVEN'T COME BACK BEFORE BECAUSE OF FEAR OF FAILURE

• SET UP YOUR PROGRAM IN A WAY THAT STUDENTS CAN SEE THE STEPS THAT LEAD TO SUCCESS

• CONSISTENCY – ALL STAFF NEED TO BE ON THE SAME PAGE AND PROVIDE CONSISTENT INFORMATION
SET EXPECTATIONS EARLY

• EVERY STUDENT MUST ATTEND AN ORIENTATION SESSION
  • FILL OUT ALL PAPERWORK
    • THE HOW TO COMPLETE AND REASON FOR EACH PAPER IS EXPLAINED
      • ALP, STUDENT CONTRACT, EMPLOYMENT SURVEY, GOALS SURVEY, RELEASE OF INFORMATION FORM

• OUTLINE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS & EXPECTATIONS
  • EVERY STUDENT SIGNS A STUDENT CONTRACT

• ENTRANCE/EXIT SURVEYS
  • HELP GIVE STUDENTS THE SENSE THAT THEY MATTER

• BE REAL!!!! - DON’T SUGARCOAT IT!!!
  • THIS IS OUR CHANCE TO FIRST CONNECT WITH STUDENTS
  • GIVE THEM YOUR STORY SO THEY SEE YOU AS A REAL PERSON
HONESTY & TRANSPARENCY

• CLEARLY OUTLINE REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPLETION AND GIVE THEM TO STUDENTS AT THE BEGINNING
  • OUR STUDENTS ARE GIVEN A TRANSCRIPT EVALUATION OUTLINING CREDITS NEEDED AT ORIENTATION
  • SEE HANDOUTS

• GET STUDENTS TRANSCRIPTS BEFORE THEY ATTEND ORIENTATION IF POSSIBLE
  • WE GET INFO ON PRIOR SCHOOLS ATTENDED FROM STUDENTS WHEN THEY CALL TO SET UP ORIENTATION AND SEND FOR TRANSCRIPTS THEN

• DON'T SUGARCOAT IT!
  • STUDENTS ALWAYS WANT TO KNOW “HOW LONG WILL THIS TAKE”
  • OUR ANSWER IS “I CAN'T ANSWER THAT QUESTION. IT DEPENDS ON YOU”
  • IF A STUDENT'S PRETEST SCORES AND PRIOR CREDITS INDICATE IT MIGHT TAKE AWHILE TO REACH COMPLETION, BE HONEST AND TELL THEM THAT
HONESTY & TRANSPARENCY

• EVERY STUDENT GETS A COPY OF CLASS COMPLETIONS FOR THEIR OWN RECORDS AS WELL AS A COPY BEING PUT IN HIS/HER FILE

• STUDENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING TRACK OF THEIR OWN PROGRESS

Isaac and all his class completions
VISUALIZE THE GOAL

• FOR MOST STUDENTS THE ULTIMATE GOAL IS FINISHING THEIR DIPLOMA OR GED
  • THEY’VE NEVER REALLY THOUGHT ABOUT “WHAT’S NEXT”

• MAKE STUDENT GOALS VISIBLE FOR THEM TO SEE
  • IT’S ONE THING TO TALK ABOUT IT, BUT SEEING A DAILY REMINDER OF THE GOAL IS HUGE
  • MAKE VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF ALL GOALS, BIG AND SMALL
  • GRADUATION BOARD, TESTING BOARD, NO MORE MATH BOARD, WHAT’S NEXT BOARD

• OUR GOAL IS NOT ONLY TO HELP THEM GRADUATE BUT ALSO TO PUSH THEM FURTHER
  • MANY HAVE NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT THEY WILL DO AFTER GRADUATION
  • PART OF OUR JOB IS TO OPEN THEIR EYES TO THE POSSIBILITIES BEYOND GRADUATION
    • TRADE SCHOOL
    • COMMUNITY COLLEGE
    • CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS
    • APPRENTICESHIPS
VISUALIZE THE GOAL

CLASSES REMAINING BOARD

• STUDENT GETS A STAR ON THE BOARD ONCE THEY REACH 8 CLASSES LEFT
• THE STUDENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MOVING THEIR STAR
• STUDENTS ARE MOTIVATED BY SEEING THEIR GOAL BECOMING A REALITY
• CREATES HEALTHY COMPETITION BETWEEN SOME STUDENTS
VISUALIZE THE GOAL

NO MORE MATH BOARD

- Math is often a student’s most dreaded subject
- A student’s name goes on the board after they have completed their last required math class
- It becomes a goal for students to get their name on the board
- We celebrate as a class every time a name is added
VISUALIZE THE GOAL

PAST GRADUATES BOARD

• GRADUATES FROM PREVIOUS YEARS ARE PROMINENTLY DISPLAYED

• CURRENT STUDENTS SEE THAT OTHERS HAVE BEEN IN THE SAME BOAT AND ACCOMPLISHED THEIR GOALS

• STUDENTS ARE MOTIVATED TO GET THEIR NAME ON THE NEWEST GRADUATE BOARD
VISUALIZE THE GOAL

CURRENT GRADUATE BOARD

• All graduates have picture taken in front of graduate board
• Graduates are celebrated the minute they finish by staff and other students
• Leave class that day to “pomp and circumstance” playing
• Graduates posted on program Facebook page
• Graduates remain on sign-in sheet with “graduate” in the signature spot
  • This motivates others as the number of graduates grows throughout the year
VISUALIZE THE GOAL

WHAT’S NEXT BOARD

• STUDENTS ARE MOTIVATED BY A VISUAL REPRESENTATION THE GOAL OF GRADUATION AND WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE TO ACCOMPLISH THAT GOAL

• MAKE SURE STUDENTS SEE THAT THERE ARE ABUNDANT OPPORTUNITIES AFTER GRADUATION

• DISPLAY FLYERS, BROCHURES, ETC. FOR APPRENTICESHIPS, CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS, COLLEGES, AND MORE
**VISUALIZE THE GOAL**

**TESTING BOARD**

- **STUDENTS CAN SEE WHEN IT IS THEIR TIME TO POST TEST**
- **HOURS LEFT UNTIL TESTING ARE UPDATED REGULARLY**
- **STUDENTS OFTEN END UP REMINDING US THAT IT IS TIME FOR THEM TO POST TEST**

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BRING BACK THE HAPPY TIMES

• THEIR ELEMENTARY YEARS WERE THE HAPPIEST TIME FOR MOST ADULTS WHEN THEY WERE IN SCHOOL
• DON’T BE AFRAID TO CHANNEL YOUR INNER ELEMENTARY TEACHER
• MAKE THE CLASSROOM COLORFUL AND INVITING
• TAKE TIME TO CELEBRATE AND HAVE FUN
  • EVERYBODY LIKES A GOOD PARTY
  • FALL PARTY – POT LUCK AND TAKE TIME TO ENJOY EACH OTHERS COMPANY
  • WINTER (HOLIDAY) PARTY - PLAY GAMES, GIFT EXCHANGE (WE PURCHASE GIFTS), AND POT LUCK
  • GRADUATION CELEBRATION - REHEARSAL, BANQUET, AND GRADUATION CEREMONY
  • END OF THE YEAR PARTY - FOOD, PICTURES, CAKE, AND MORE
  • DECORATE FOR THE SEASONS AND THE HOLIDAYS
BRING BACK THE HAPPY TIMES

PARTY TIME

• WE TAKE TIME TO PARTY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR
  • HOLIDAY PARTY, GRADUATION CELEBRATION, END OF THE YEAR PARTY
  • HAVING FUN TOGETHER HELPS BUILD RELATIONSHIPS AND CREATE A FAMILY ATMOSPHERE
BECOME A STALKER (IN A GOOD WAY)

• STAFF MAKE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE PHONE CALLS
  • NOT MEANT TO BE PUNITIVE
  • CALL TO LET STUDENTS KNOW WE MISS THEM
  • FIND OUT WHY STUDENT IS ABSENT AND SEE IF THERE IS ANYTHING WE CAN DO TO HELP

• SEND OUT FACEBOOK MESSAGES TO STUDENTS
  • CONTACT STUDENTS WE HAVE TROUBLE REACHING BY PHONE

• SEND OUT COMICAL NOTES TO STUDENTS WHEN ABSENT
  • “MISSING” POSTERS
  • ADELE POSTERS
  • TREASURE MAP

• SEND OUT POSTCARDS
  • ATTENDANCE
  • ENCOURAGEMENT (STUDENTS LOVE TO GET THESE)
  • ORIENTATION
  • TESTING
BECOME A STALKER (IN A GOOD WAY)

POSTCARDS
INSPIRE, INSPIRE, INSPIRE

SET UP YOUR CLASSROOM SO THAT INSPIRATION ABOUNDS

• INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES

• INSPIRATIONAL POSTERS
INSPIRE, INSPIRE, INSPIRE

• USE POSTCARDS FOR INSPIRATION
  • SEND HANDWRITTEN POSTCARDS WITH INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGES

• STUDENTS ARE INSPIRED WHEN THEY FEEL YOU CARE
  • SEND GRADUATION CARDS, SYMPATHY CARDS, GET WELL CARDS, THANK YOU CARDS
  • HAVE OTHER STUDENTS SIGN THEM AS WELL AS THE STAFF
INSPIRE, INSPIRE, INSPIRE

INSPIRATION BOARD

• EVERYONE NEEDS TO BE INSPIRED

• BOARD IS COVERED IN INSPIRATIONAL STICKY NOTES

• STUDENTS CAN TAKE A NOTE AND/OR LEAVE A NEW NOTE FOR OTHERS
BUILD PARTNERSHIPS STUDENTS ARE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN

MICHIGAN WORKS!
- Reps from our local Michigan Works! are typically at our orientation sessions to meet with students.
- We take field trips to Michigan Works! to expose students to the resources available.

MOTT COMMUNITY COLLEGE
- Reps from Mott come to our classroom throughout the year to work with students.
- We take field trips to Mott to expose students to the campus, programs available, admission process, financial aid, and more.

FLINT & GENESEE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
- Chamber of Commerce comes to our class to present career preparation workshops (Career Edge).
- Students begin to network with members of the local business scene.

DELTA COLLEGE
- We take field trips to Delta to expose students to the campus, programs available, admission process, and more.
- Reps from Delta conduct career research workshops.
ALL STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO JOIN THE ACADEMY WEST ADULT ED FACEBOOK GROUP PAGE

THINGS POSTED

- Job Postings
- Community Events
- Graduates
- Inspirational Memes & Quotes
- Class Information
- School Closings
- Workshops
- Field Trips

- Students often post personal updates and successes
- Family and friends of staff and family also accepted to the group
MORE THAN ACADEMICS

• FOOD PANTRY
  • WE HAVE A SMALL FOOD PANTRY STUDENTS CAN TAKE FROM

• CLOTHING CLOSET
  • WE CALL IT OUR “FREE GARAGE SALE”
  • STAFF, FAMILY, AND FRIENDS DONATE ITEMS
  • STUDENTS OFTEN BRING IN ITEMS FOR OTHER STUDENTS

• DAILY SNACKS & COFFEE
  • WE PROVIDE COFFEE AND SOME SNACKS DAILY
  • USUALLY RECEIVED AS DONATIONS
DOES IT ALL WORK

• PROGRAM DATA
  • HAD 59 GRADUATES DURING THE 2018-19 PROGRAM YEAR
  • 148 GRADUATES SINCE 2015-16
  • 79.86% POST TEST RATE LAST YEAR
  • 69.44% MEASURABLE SKILLS GAIN RATE LAST YEAR

• SUCCESS STORIES
  • WE HAVE STUDENTS WHO HAVE MOVED ON TO MANY DIFFERENT POST SECONDARY PROGRAMS AND TRAININGS
    • PHLEBOTOMY
    • CNA
    • TRUCK DRIVER
    • EMT
    • MILITARY
    • CONSTRUCTION TRADES
    • CULINARY SCHOOL
    • LICENSED MASSAGE THERAPIST
    • MEDICAL ASSISTANT
    • PHARMACY TECH
  • POLICE ACADEMY
  • ART INSTITUTE
  • RAILROAD WORKER
  • MOTT COMMUNITY COLLEGE
  • PHARMACY TECH
This is to our teachers. I just want to say I am very thankful for meeting you… You taught me to not give up, to keep going. I appreciate every teaching you gave me, you have really helped me a lot and I never ever will let you down. I’m going to continue to keep pressing forward.

Keisha B.

For me it was hard in different programs not being able to be in a class room and having a learning disability. You guys made it easy for students like me to be able to do what you need to do in and out of class and still get done.

Sandy R.

I've tried other adult educational programs through the years! None of them can hold a candle to this one! This program actually "CARES" about their students! From the first time you walk in the door; they make you feel as though you’ve walked through the door of family! …For now at the age of 47 I can actually start "Living" and not just surviving!

Loretta N.

I came to Academy West to get my high school diploma at 45. I stayed because of the staff. They help and encourage me as well as my daughter and son who also attended. There positive influence kept me going and they wouldn't allow me to give up. I thank them every chance I get. I will forever be grateful to these wonderful educators.

Tiffany M.
IN MEMORIAM

DOUG MCNEIL

FEBRUARY 10, 1972 – JULY 18, 2019

STUDENT, COWORKER, FRIEND, AND BROTHER

DOUG WAS A GRADUATE OF ACADEMY WEST ADULT EDUCATION CLASS OF 2017. AFTER GRADUATING, HE WORKED AS A SECURITY GUARD AT ACADEMY WEST AND MCMONAGLE ELEMENTARY. HE ALSO WORKED CUSTODIAL AND WAS THE GED TEST PROCTOR.

DOUG MAY HAVE STARTED AS A STUDENT, BUT HE QUICKLY BECAME FAMILY. HIS CONTRIBUTIONS AND DEDICATION TO THE STUDENTS OF WESTWOOD HEIGHTS WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN.
QUESTIONS?

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE
ACADEMY WEST ADULT EDUCATION
ENROLL NOW
Classes Start September 9th
REAL TEACHERS | REAL CLASSROOMS | REAL SUCCESS