**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.
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| **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.
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| **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.
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