



Summer Bridge Programs 8th to 9th Grade

TARGETED INDICATORS

9TH GRADE-ON-TRACK
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



OREGON EXAMPLE

Redmond School District is located in Central Oregon and serves around 2,445 high school students. About half of the students are economically disadvantaged. Based on research about the importance of 9th grade for student success, Redmond and Ridgeview High Schools implemented Camp 9, a three-week summer program that helps students learn about their new school, get to know their high school teachers, get up-to-speed on academic and social expectations and build meaningful relationships that will be the foundation of a strong high school experience.

WHY WAS THE STRATEGY CHOSEN?

Redmond desired to do something different, to anticipate gaps in skills that students may have and work to fill those by providing students with powerful learning experiences that set them up for success. Camp 9 used a Response to Intervention matrix + other factors to identify students. The curriculum involved developing mindsets, ensuring positive relationships with teachers and peers and having field experiences out in the community.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STRATEGY

The transition from middle school to high school is a critical time for many students. It coincides with changes in adolescence that make this a particularly vulnerable time for students. Schools that intentionally focus on freshman success and in particular the transition into high school see improved learning outcomes. Summer Bridge programs are one of the strategies to help build freshman success by building strong relationships and student support structures before high school begins. They can help build a culture of high expectations and demonstrate that students will have plentiful opportunities in high school to achieve success.

The programs offered in a “Summer Bridge” format vary widely, but high-quality ones exhibit several common characteristics. First, they use student performance and teacher-generated data to identify students for the program who are struggling academically, emotionally and/or socially. Second, they focus on bolstering both foundational skills in academics and behavioral skills like organization, study habits, goal setting, self-regulation, improved sense-of-belonging, college and career planning and the supports that can help during transitions. Third, they embed social and emotional development into the learning experience and engage both students and families into the orientation program. Finally, they intentionally build relationships between students and the adults who will support them during the transition out of the program and beyond it.

Effective Summer Bridge programs often build partnerships among schools and community organizations. Portland has many summer opportunities showing positive results including the partnerships of Self Enhancement Inc. Summer program with Jefferson High School, Open School’s partnership with Roosevelt, Madison and Franklin, and the Native American Youth and Family Center’s partnership with Portland area schools to provide quality summer programs design to help students focus on their future and transition successfully to 9th grade.



EVIDENCE THE STRATEGY IS EFFECTIVE

Effective transition programs into 9th grade can ease the way to graduation for all students, but especially those entering high school with additional needs. The transition to high school is a place where students are at risk of getting stuck, failing or dropping out (Nield, 2009). Successful Summer Bridge programs have shown improved pass rates from 9th to 10th grade, increased enthusiasm and motivation for school, fewer discipline referrals and higher levels of student self-esteem (Dedmond, Brown, & LaFauci, 2006). Students who have strong time management, planning, problem-solving and study skills; healthy strategies for coping with adversity; accurate expectations of high school; a sense of scholastic competence; and healthy relationships with peers and teachers are more successful in high school (Grossman and Cooney, 2010). Summer Bridge programs that focus on these skills can help students transition successfully, though the most successful programs combine summer bridge programs with parent orientation and ongoing support throughout 9th grade.

FUNDING OF THE STRATEGY

Camp 9 initially was funded through an Oregon Department of Education grant for student mentoring. Then the Redmond School District made the commitment to repurpose local funds to create 9th grade academies that could continue the work.

THE STRATEGY IS WORKING IN OREGON

The Redmond High School 9th grade-on-track-to-graduate rate is almost 91% and the graduation rates have been dramatically increasing over the past 4 years. The summer bridge program Camp 9 is an engaging curriculum focused not only on academics but growth mind sets and relationship building.

Teacher buy-in to the value of building relationships with students over the summer months between 8th and 9th grades is important to the success of the program. Teachers have also shown a commitment to continue the relationships and support throughout 9th grade.

Finally, teachers in the middle school and high school have developed processes for sending their students from one to the other with a “warm hand-off” that demonstrates to students that teachers at both school levels care about their success.

Key elements:

- Student data is used to identify students who may need additional supports during the 8th to 9th grade transition and these students are proactively targeted for participation in the program
- Educators and support personnel intentionally build relationships with students
- Students experience activities that build a peer network of support
- Intense academic focus on learning foundational academic skills in applied settings
- Social and emotional development is embedded in all learning

LINKS TO RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND FURTHER RESEARCH

<http://oregongearup.org/resource/transition-high-school-toolkit>

<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/slcp/ninthgradecounts/ninthgradecountsummerbridgeguide.pdf>

<http://greatschoolspartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Ninth-Grade-Counts.pdf>

http://allhandsraised.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/2015-NGC-Guide_English.pdf

[http://education.ky.gov/educational/CCadv/ar/Documents/\(6\)MIDDLE%20to%20HIGH%20SCHOOL%20Transition%20Toolkit.pdf](http://education.ky.gov/educational/CCadv/ar/Documents/(6)MIDDLE%20to%20HIGH%20SCHOOL%20Transition%20Toolkit.pdf)

<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/78/91/7891.pdf>

<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/slcp/ninthgradecounts/ninthgradestudy2011.pdf>

https://www.pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu.coun/files/media_assets/sca_point_fj2.pdf

<http://k12engagement.unl.edu/strategy-briefs/Middle%20to%20High%20School%20Transition%2010-31-2013.pdf>

<http://hfrp.org/content/download/4004/108458/file/ResourceGuideforHSTransitions.pdf>

<http://www.avid.org/stem.ashx>

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONS

David Burke

Director of Secondary Education

541.923.5437 ext. 1134

david.burke@redmondschools.org

For more information, visit www.oregon.gov/ode.