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How to Better Prepare Students for College

**Introduction**

In the current scenario, it has been observed that there is a high need to prepare students at the school level for college. The reason for that lies in the fact that most of the students after taking admission in college are still not capable of aligning with the requirements. The matter of fact is that success in college is not about grades only. It has been observed a great number of key changes that are required in school for preparing students to be successful at college-level. At times when high school seniors tend to walk across the stage and are collecting their diplomas, at that particular time, high hopes rest on their shoulders. The aim of such students is to either become a doctor, teacher, scientist or go to any field.

The matter of fact is that the majority of students after passing their high-school diploma will not live out their college dreams. When the majority of the students head to college, it is to be taken into consideration that the issue of whether such students are ready for college or not has arisen. Studies and researches show that only around 60 percent of students graduate within six years. In the current scenario, most of the schools are observed not preparing the student for success in college. However, there are certain changes that can be made in schools for better preparing students for success.

**The Need to Prepare Students**

In the past few years, it has been observed that a large number of students are graduating high schools, and still not have a clear, real path to success in college. Studies and researches tell that nearly half of college-level students are seen graduating high school, and not even taking college readiness course of study. In the majority of the cases, high school graduates are not ready to take on college-level courses. Apart from some basic classes, there is not any set curriculum that a high school student can follow. A student is left free to choose whatever class he/she wants even if they are not under a college-readiness level. In a nutshell, it can simply be said that highs schools are failed to prepare students for college. Due to this, students are not able to provide quality work at the college level, and it results in a dark future for them. It is true that the problem cannot be resolved on its own, but the matter of fact is that there are some ways in which high schools can try to prepare the students for college.

**Focus on Emotional and Social Learning**

Not only in America but all over the world mental health is becoming a crucial issue on college campuses. From the past few years, it has been observed an increase in the number of students in crises. As per different reports, depression, anxiety, sleep, and stress difficulties among college students tend to affect their academic performance more than any other factor. Students at the college level are mostly found in such cases, and they are not able to fulfill the requirement of college (Deming et al., 2016). All of it happens due to not having proper training from schools. The majority of the students who fall in such category are mostly the ones who speak English as a second language. For schools, a piece of advice is to offer workshops that may cover all competencies of emotional and social learning along with workshops about depressing and anxiety in college.

**Strengthen Executive Function Skills**

The matter of fact is that in schools, professors tend to provide scaffolding for students. There are a number of duties that a teacher is bound to perform such as organizing projects, creating deadlines, and setting aside time in class to work on the project itself. The outcomes of this result in the student not developing the executive functioning skills they are required to be successful in college. At that particular time, students are mostly seen struggling to finish their college degrees.

An important thing about executive functions is that they tend to allow us to complete tasks by problem-solving and making decisions. If schools aim to better prepare students for college, there is a high need to teach them as a part of the coursework deliberately. A perfect example in such a scenario would be instead of planning for students. Professors should teach students the ways in which they can plan out larger projects for themselves. The matter of fact is that students at the high school level require opportunities for practicing self-talk or for working through the decision-making process and difficult situations. It is quite obvious that students participating in sports, arts, extra-curricular activities can build executive functioning skills.

**Offering College Classes**

Another way in which schools can better prepare students for college is by offering college classes. The matter of fact is that dual-enrollment programs tend to allow students in getting a sense of academic rigor college to expects. Along with this, a student is helped in becoming knowledgable regarding the overall college system (O'Sullivan et al., 2017). The outcomes of this result in becoming an advantage for students to entering college as they are already armed with reasonable credits. Although there are some high schools that take dual enrollment classes, this culture is not that much in common. There is a high need for all high school students to have exposure to a college class before they leave. The reason for that is quite simple as it will help them for the real thing.

**Embracing Rigor in Classrooms**

A classroom is a place that tends to play a vital role in the skill enhancement of a student. It is none other than the environment of a classroom that affects the mind of a student to a great extent. Rigor in the classroom is considered as a useful way for the teachers to better prepare the student for college (Skinner, 2016). When a teacher tends to increase rigor in the classroom, most of the times, they are subjected to backlash from parents, students, and administration that tries appeasing parents and students. Therefore, in the effort to prepare students for college, there is a high need to increase rigor school-wide (Deming et al., 2016).

Here, the question would be what are the ways to build rigor. Well, in any particular situation, if there is a need to build rigor in classroom, there needs to be a shift to unification within schools. In order to build rigor, the best place for taking a start is to develop a common language for articulating academic expectations across the school. One thing that must be taken into consideration that the common language developed should be used when teachers and administrators speak with students and parents. Apart from this, across content areas and grade levels, there requires to be a set of common practices. The matter of fact is that each science teacher in a grade level who tends to use a set of common assessment for gauging student progress is a strategy for increasing rigor. It is to be taken into consideration that each such change needs to supported with professional development. Therefore, teachers have knowledge and tools they require for building rigor in classrooms.

**Preparation Course**

It is true that for the majority of the students, college is the beginning of freedom for loving life and making decisions on their own. However, it must be taken into consideration that the freedom of that type requires skillsets which are basically outside the scope of K-12 curriculum. In such a scenario, a course like genuine college preparation will be of great worth. In that particular course, it is required to make it a genuine college readiness course for teaching the students' life skills that may help them in their college. If a student is looking forward to success, he/she is required to understand the ways in which he/she can locate and take advantage of opportunities in their field. In that particular case, students should understand how to network (Greenhow et al., 2017).

**Conclusion**

It is concluded that success in college is not about grades only. Studies and researches tell that nearly half of college-level students are seen graduating high school, and not even taking college readiness course of study. A large number of students are graduating high schools, and still not have a clear, real path to success in college. As per different reports, depression, anxiety, sleep, and stress difficulties among college students tend to affect their academic performance to a great extent. The matter of fact is that students at the high school level require opportunities for practicing self-talk or for working through the decision-making process and difficult situations. The dual-enrollment programs tend to allow students to get a sense of academic rigor college expects. Along with this, a student is helped in becoming knowledgable regarding the overall college system. Although there are some high schools that take dual enrollment classes, this culture does not seem that much in common. In the current scenario, there is a high need for all high school students to have exposure to a college class before they leave high school.

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