ADVISORY GROUPS

Supporting young leaders through relational learning (Grades 6-8)

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IBSC
Southport, Queensland
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OVERVIEW

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Toronto, Ontario
CANADA

- All-boys day school founded in 1987
- Exclusively focused on the Junior Kindergarten – Grade 8 formative years
- 315 students, 65 faculty and staff
- Student-to-teacher ratio of approximately 7:1
- Over 30 Athletic Teams and more than 50 Clubs
- Character education and leadership opportunities for all grade levels
GAP ANALYSIS
Identifying Our Needs

- Increased Retention
- Support Emerging Leaders
- Sense of Community

DELIVERY ELEMENTS

1. Guided character education framework
2. Meaningful facilitated conversations
3. Benefit of shared experiences
Incubation & development of Advisory Group program during spring/summer 2014 – Launched September 2014

Collaborated on ideas for an expanded program & supports @ IBSC-Nashville

Introduced an expanded Advisory Groups program; implemented Student Handbook & Progressive Discipline

Sharing results with IBSC colleagues 4 years later
Student Handbook
• Clarification of school policies
• Each student signs their homeroom contract

Progressive Discipline
• Clarifies expectations to keep students on the path for success
• Part of the student handbook

Inspiration from IBSC
Nashville, 2015
A way for boys to connect and learn from each other through meaningful conversations and shared experiences.

**ADVISORY GROUPS**

- Leadership
- Peer Mentorship
- Relational Learning
Advisory Group Coordinators

Andrew Kilmer
- Health & Physical Education teacher
- Experiential Learning Coordinator
- Advisory Groups Co-Coordinator
- Grade 7 Leadership Process Co-Coordinator

Elizabeth Gray
- Grade 8 Homeroom & English teacher
- Director of Graduate Placement & Alumni Relations
- Advisory Groups Co-Coordinator
- Grade 8 Mentorship Program Coordinator

Support and Guidance from Teacher Advisors

Tyler Meakin
Laura Medcalf
Kim Lynch
Jon Moore
James Hay
Joel Brough
Scott Davis
Guide for Teacher-Advisors

TEACHER FACILITATED...

DEFINE & DISCUSSION TOPIC

AVAILABLE RESOURCES & SUPPORT

ACTION OR FACILITATION SETTING

DEFINITIONS & QUOTES

THEME OR DISCUSSION TOPIC

Sterling Character

We value and develop confidence and resilience, kindness and respect, with the courage to advocate for oneself and for others.

What are your strengths?

Wisdom

Creativity
Curiosity
Judgment
Perspective
Love of Learning

Courage

Bravery
Perseverance
Honesty
Zest

Temperance

Forgiveness
Humility
Prudence
Self-Regulation

Justice

Love
Kindness
Social Intelligence
Teamwork
Fairness
Leadership

Transcendence

Appreciation of Beauty
Gratitude
Hope
Humour
Spirituality

Guide for Teacher-Advisors
1) Two boys were inspired by a YouTube video that their Head Boy showed them.

"This video inspired me and my fellow classmates."

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8g_Q7KYYG1g

1) The boys brought forward the idea of showing the video to other intermediate students during Advisory Groups.

2) The boys created a template for the Advisory Group meeting by connecting the video’s message to our character education program.

3) The boys brainstormed questions that could be discussed after watching the video.

4) The video was moving and allowed boys to reflect on who motivates them in their own lives.
“I believe that has given the boys an opportunity to pass on important information to their peers in the younger grades...”

“I feel like advisory groups have given me an opportunity to connect with a core group of boys on a different level than as a classroom teacher...”
“This is an excellent platform for them to open up about themselves. There are not too many opportunities where boys can share real experiences like they do during advisory groups...”

“Relational learning allows me to connect with the boys on a different level and allows the Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys to build relationships with peers who they may not have had contact with otherwise...”
“I learned a lot more about other group members than about myself. This allowed me to connect to other students like I never had before...”

“Advisory groups were something that I took for granted. Throughout the meetings we had, I was skeptical about what they would actually do for me. Looking back now, the advice from older students and the lessons we learned helped me a lot throughout middle school and now in high school...”
I remember being afraid and not wanting to go...but after meeting with the older kids I knew they were just there to help me and I was there to help them. Even though they were a couple years older, we both had equal power in that room..."
BREAKOUT SESSION
Breakout Session

Three Questions to Consider and Explore

~10 Minutes

1. How might we create a similar opportunity for boys in our own school community?

2. How might we develop a mentorship, leadership, and character education-focused curriculum?

3. What kind of outcomes can we expect to see in our students/alumni due to their experience in the program?
RECENT OBSERVATIONS & ANALYSIS

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<th>ENCOURAGES A MORE ENGAGED COMMUNITY</th>
<th>Moved beyond traditional barriers of grades and geography</th>
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<tr>
<td>FOSTERS HEALTHIER COMMUNICATION</td>
<td>Open natured atmosphere promotes trust and fosters support</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROMOTES STRONGER CONNECTIONS</td>
<td>Families are more aware of what occurs across all grades</td>
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FUTURE FOCUS & PRIORITIES

From Advisory Groups Feedback Sessions

- Continue to expand the scope of the program
- Explicitly encourage students to come forward with their own ideas
- Incorporate new initiatives
- Move beyond themes to more specific topics
- Empowering student-led programming
- Introduce year-long projects for each group
WHAT’S THE TAKEAWAY?

1. Needs Analysis
   What needs improvement?

2. Executive Support
   Get early buy-in from senior leadership

3. Make It Real
   Build the activities into the timetable
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