Building Community Around Financial Aid and Scholarships

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www.pdsmemphis.org

What is your role?
- Teacher
- Administrator
- Admissions
- Development Team
- Head of School

Overview
- Providing access to students of varying cultures and incomes and create an inclusive environment.
- Potential long-term impact of these programs
- Best practices around funding and execution of these programs

Context
Memphis:
- Has a poverty rate of 21.4%, with a Child Poverty rate of 32.7%.
- Specifically one of the zip codes in Memphis is regularly listed in the top 5 poorest zip codes in the United States.
- Only ONE out of every 13 Public School students in Memphis is fully prepared to enter and complete college.

Two Models

Young Scholars Program
Young Scholars Program

Specifics:
- Begin Young Scholars in Junior (4 yo) or Senior (5 yo) kindergarten
- Commitment of 7-8 years from PDS for each young scholar
- Family income needs to be roughly below or around 2 - 3 times the poverty line for the area. (~$80,000)

New Hope Christian Academy

- PK (3 yo) through 6th grade (12 yo) Co-ed, elementary school in a low-income area in Memphis.
- 80% of the families are considered low-income based on the Shelby County (Memphis) poverty rate.
- Almost all of the school consists of "young scholar" families, and their tuition is heavily subsidized through scholarships.
- After 6th grade, the school will provide a scholarship for your child to continue learning at another private school in Memphis.

Key Components

- Commitment: both from the school and from the family
- Anonymity: only a handful of our staff know who the Young Scholars are.
- Respect: PDS embraces respecting individuals for who they are.
- Funding: without which, the program would greatly suffer.

Commitment

- PDS asks each entering Young Scholar family to informally commit to attending through 6th grade.
- Each Young Scholar family must pay something towards tuition or extracurriculars, but really their part of the contract is engagement in the school.
- Each year, all new students are paired with a buddy family. For do the same with the Young Scholars, and I have asked some families to continue to be a bridge for all new families.

Funding

- PDS raises funding for these boys each year through eight-year commitments or the use of the Young Scholars endowment.
- A donor contributes 45% of the cost of tuition
- The school contributes 45% of the cost of tuition
- The Young Scholar family pays 10% of the cost of tuition
- Additionally, fees for Young Scholars (sports, aftercare, school trips) are heavily discounted, and the families only pay 10-20% of the costs.

https://socialcapital.org/
Impact

- Cross-Class friendships are a better predictor of upward mobility than the quality of a school.
- These relationships help families or students navigate some parts of life that may be unfamiliar to them.
- The dosage effect, kids who move into these economically diverse neighborhoods at age 2 years old tend to do better than those who move in at 11. Nobody is talking about SAT’s or job openings at age 2.

Impact

- Friendships - your friends strongly influence how you perceive reality.
  - How you see yourself
  - Shape the world you see
  - Alter our desires
- Entering into a friendship can be a life-altering experience and entering into a friendship with someone different from yourself can be life-transforming.

Outcomes

- Currently 21 Young Scholars across eight grade levels (JK – 6th grade)
- Over 16 years, PDS had 58 Young Scholars (including current young scholars).
- Around a 75% completion rate (graduating sixth grade)

Questions?

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