

Inspiring Boys, Inspiring Teachers

Academic Advising and
Professional Development

Boys and Mentors

- Children must have positive role models and mentors to excel.
- Boys react well to consistency.
- Routines reinforce good practices and behaviors.
- Academic advising is a key component of a boys-school education.



Advising Programs

- Many are handled through psychological-counseling or college-counseling programs.
- Some are formalized; others are informal.
- Class advising is a frequent pattern.
- Often, advisors follow a class along until graduation.

Advising at Montgomery Bell Academy

- Years of haphazard assignments and infrequent/irregular meetings with unclear purposes.
- New high-school program instituted in fall, 2004, that continues to be refined and strengthened.
- The junior-school program is still handled through 1st-period classes because of middle-school best practices.

MBA Advisory Groups

- Mixed group of 9th – 12th graders
- Generally 6 – 10 in groups
- Meets from 7:50 – 8 a.m. each morning
- The advisor stays with students all four years of high school.
- Advisors are both faculty and staff members (First-year teachers are not assigned groups.)



Purposes of the Advisory

- Daily announcements
- Social awareness topics
- Academic advising (meetings with advisees at the end of each marking period)
- Course pre-registration – approval and denial of academic programs

By-Products of the System

- Service projects handled by the advisory
- Social gatherings of advisories outside of the school day
- “Big Brother/Little Brother” system and peer advising



Additional Advisor Functions

- The first point of contact to resolve student issues
- The student's advocate in discipline hearings and Honor Council issues
- First contact for academic, extracurricular, athletic, and college advising (This means that the advisor must be well versed in all of these areas.)
- End-of-year advisory comments (used by College Counseling on a regular basis)

Advisor Assignments

- Made by Director of Counseling
- Assisted by Heads of the Junior and High Schools
- Recommendations are sometimes made by coaches, previous teachers, or others who are close to the boys.
- Changes may be made by a boy's request at the end of the school year.

Challenges and Benefits

- Advisors must buy into the boys and the total school program completely.
- Involvement with the boys often transfers to families, too. Advisors have to deal with both the good and the bad; it's a terrific contact point for the school in all issues.



What People Are Saying...

- “I can't remember if I told you this, but I could have never survived all of my struggles at MBA without you, and I don't know if I'll ever be able to thank you enough for that.”
- “My transition to MBA was rocky. I do not know how I would have made the adjustment without my advisor. She was the constant in my hectic life that gave me the support I needed to succeed.”

- “I received an acknowledgement card for your memorial donation. Your constant care and attention to our family are so very comforting to us right now.”
- “You don't know me - I'm Will's grandmother; we have never met, but you are very much a PRESENCE in our lives. Will speaks of you with respect and admiration, and you have been a constant and positive influence during the course of his time at MBA. As mentor, advisor, instructor, and friend, you have strongly influenced his searching and agile mind in productive ways.”

- “I am so grateful that my son had the opportunity to be in your advisory. There were several times that I know he leaned on you for support and understanding, but I’m also aware and most thankful for all the times it happened and I never heard about it.”



Connecting the Professional Development Piece:

The Center for Teaching
Excellence

CTE Luncheons

- Generally 6 *per year*
- Held during all lunch periods
- Professional development points given for attendance – 1/16 Continuing Education Unit *per session*
- Topics include all issues of school life
- Engaging interdisciplinary discussions
- Sessions are handled by administration, academic departments, and staff.

Recent Topics

- Creativity in the Classroom
- Innovative ways of mathematics instruction
- How to teach respect
- Collegiality
- Summer professional development opportunities
- Working with College Counseling

- Using Whipple Hill (MBA's school-information system)
- Library resources and issues of academic freedom
- MBA's Honor Council

MBA's CTE Blog

[CTE Blog](#)