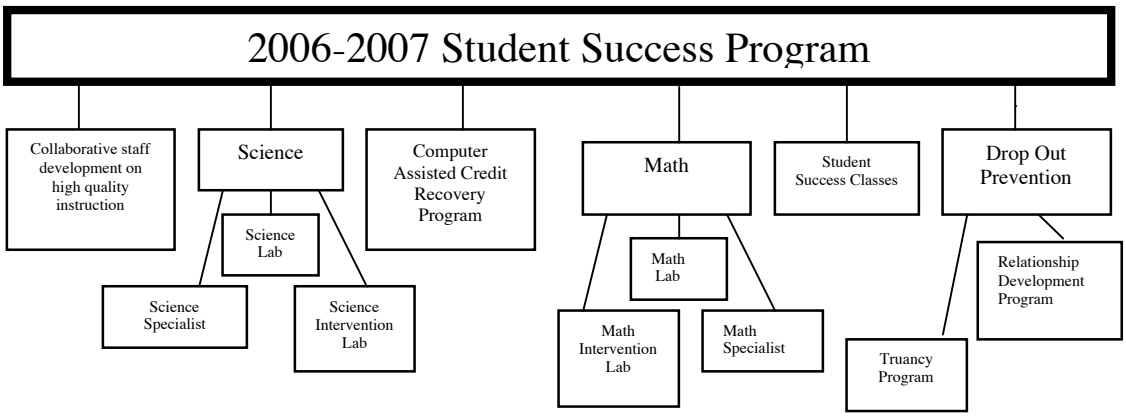
High School allotment funds helped FHS students to succeed

Friendswood High School has been successful in implementing innovative high school completion and success programs or strategies last year. Data from Friendswood High School confirms that the High School Allotment money allowed students to succeed through the Student Success Program.



The Friendswood High School's Student Success Program is a systematic approach consisting of various components designed to ensure every students successful completion of high school.

A total of 227 students, or slightly more than 12 percent, received direct intervention from the Student Success Program.

Results of data analysis indicated a need to address freshmen in all four core areas and all other at-risk students in the areas of math and science, according to Director of Student Success Initiatives Nancy Lockhart.

Students were selected for this program based on TAKS scores, grades, attendance and discipline records.

The following components emerged from individual student's needs and analysis of the data: Student Success Program (SSP) class for freshmen; an online computer assisted program; math, reading and science instructional specialists; specialized math and science labs; and an Academic Literacy Class.

The SSP class consisted of four teachers and targeted 43 high-risk incoming freshmen. Students were assigned to this class as an elective. In this class assistance was given in the four core areas as well as study skills, organization, communication and conflict resolution.

Counselors worked with students using various techniques designed to encourage student participation in high school activities.

Based on failure rates, 119 students were identified as needing credit recovery and were placed on a self-paced computer assisted curriculum. Two teachers were assigned to assist the students.

The math, reading and science specialists provided support to students and teachers in their respective areas.

Many students benefited from collaborative teaching in classrooms while 129 students received intensive instruction from the specialists. The specialists also

tracked student history, monitored and assessed student progress in support programs and collaborated with faculty on high quality instruction.

Specialized Math and Science Labs were created to assist at-risk students that failed or were in danger of failing the TAKS test and also provided support for their current math/science course. There were 90 students who participated in Math Lab, while 45 students participated in Science Lab.

Twenty struggling readers were identified through TAKS performance or historical data and assigned to an Academic Literacy Class as an elective. The reading specialist also provided intensive individual instruction to 35 in 10th and 11th grade who failed English/Language Arts.

Specialists in the four core areas regularly monitored student progress through daily grades, tests and quiz grades, and benchmark assessments. They met with the Professional Learning Community (PLC) in each core area twice each month to discuss the data. If corrections were needed, such as the addition of tutorials, curriculum modifications or changes to a student's schedule those decisions were made by the team and based on the data.

The district also embarked on an initiative aimed at building positive relationships with teachers and peers. Staff development was provided to all teachers at the high school to facilitate, support and build a positive approach to discipline. A truancy officer was hired to facilitate better communication with students not attending school regularly.

"The Student Success Program met the needs of the whole child," Lockhart said.

Of the 43 freshmen enrolled in the SSP classes, 56 percent passed all core areas. The freshmen retention rate decreased by 4 percent. Of the students enrolled in the online computer assisted classes 75 percent recovered at least one additional credit.

FHS sees increases in TAKS scores

The following gains were seen on TAKS scores for 2006-2007:

In Reading/ELA scores rose 2 percent from 97 to 99 percent. Hispanic students passing rate increased from 96 to 99 percent. African-American students remained above 99 percent. Economically Disadvantaged students passing rate increased from 88 to 99 percent.

Math scores rose 4 percent from 89 to 93 percent. Hispanic students passing rate increased from 78 to 88 percent. African-American students passing rate increased from 67 to 93 percent. Economically Disadvantaged students passing rate increased from 77 to 81 percent.

Science scores rose 2 percent overall from 91 to 93 percent. Hispanic students passing rate increased from 78 to 89 percent. Economically Disadvantaged students passing rate increased from 75 to 81 percent.

Of the 12 specific scores considered for TAKS in the subject areas targeted, gains were evidenced in all but one with significant gains seen among African-American and Hispanic students in math.

The lowest subgroup passing rate on any portion of TAKS was 81 percent, which is a 15 percent increase from 2006. Based on TAKS, the gap in performance among student groups defined by ethnicity and gender significantly decreased and nearly met the exemplary rating criteria.