

Colorado's Unified Improvement Plan for School

GOAL Academy UIP 2023-24 | District: District 49 | Org ID: 1110 | School ID: 3475 | Framework: AEC:
Improvement Plan | **Draft UIP**

Executive Summary

School Context

GOAL Academy is an online school serving grades 9-12. The school operates 40 student drop-in sites, allowing students to work on-site, get academic help, participate in student activities such as prom and student counsel. The school offers CTE opportunities as well as Concurrent Enrollment and ASCENT.

If we...

Major Improvement Strategy: An overall approach to improvement that will reduce or resolve the identified root causes.

STUDENT ACADEMIC GROWTH AND SUCCESS (PILLAR ONE OF STRATEGIC PLAN)

Success in this area would be an increased number of students that grow a minimum of one year in a one-year time frame, an increase in the levels for Show Up, Connect and Succeed rate, a course completion rate higher than 50% and an increase in the internal graduation rate.



HIRE, TRAIN, EVALUATE, AND RETAIN QUALITY STAFF (PILLAR FOUR OF STRATEGIC PLAN)

As GOAL's student population continues to grow, it is critical to fill open positions with highly qualified staff, who are committed to the mission/vision of the school. Last year some of our sites were significantly understaffed which led to high staff-to-student ratios and these sites had notable differences in student engagement, course completion and graduation than the sites that were more fully staffed. This also causes burn-out among existing staff, as the workload for them is higher than desired. The positive staff culture of GOAL Academy is what continues to set GOAL apart from other schools. A positive and unified staff with a strong feeling of wellness and job satisfaction is the key to meeting GOAL's mission and vision. Genuine concern for staff wellness leads naturally to student wellness and provides for the caring, supportive and personalized environment that remains GOAL's vision. This environment naturally leads to increased student success.



INCREASE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING & SELF-AWARENESS FOR STUDENTS (PILLAR THREE)

The majority of GOAL students have experienced trauma before enrolling at GOAL. The school leadership and staff understand the importance of social emotional learning and self-awareness in the process of continuing successfully on a path toward a diploma and in our mission of helping to develop productive members of society. Wrap-around support for students will continue to be at the forefront of GOAL's processes. By helping students meet basic needs and overcome obstacles, a trust relationship is developed. Once a student has a relationship with one or more trusted and caring adults, their change for success vastly increases.



INCREASE CTE PATHWAYS (PILLAR TWO OF STRATEGIC PLAN)

Based on our ESSA identification of Low Graduation Rate, we will focus on ways to increase our CTE pathway choices. We will increase opportunities for our students provided by local community colleges, internships, and work-based learning options. This strategy was chosen for this challenge because we struggle keeping students engaged in classes, many choose to work or need to work due to family dynamics. By offering classes that provide students with employable skills and a firm connection to their after school goals, the hope is more students will continue to pursue education. When students are exposed to and instructed on career pathways, it provides opportunities for them to realize and explore their passions. Data has proven that attendance, engagement and success show monumental gains once a student becomes involved in passion-related opportunities. As educators we have the responsibility to influence students by helping them explore their interests and passions and secondly by providing the direction, information, and pathway to success. Students may choose to join the workforce, join the military, attend a trade school, or enroll in college. GOAL will assist in the planning, pathway, and preparation to be productive members of society, regardless of the student's choice.



Then we will address...

Root Cause: Statements describing the deepest underlying causes within control of the school that if dissolved would result in elimination of the performance challenge.

STAFF TURNOVER, UNFILLED POSITION, AND STEEP LEARNING CURVE FOR NEW HIRES.

Hiring, training, evaluating and retaining highly qualified staff. Filling open positions has become more challenging in the recent years, perhaps made more challenging by the pandemic. Many positions were unfilled during the last school year, leading to increased workloads for employees with more student needs to meet. In sites with open positions and higher staff/student ratio's student achievement was lower than sites that were fully staffed.



UNDERDEVELOPED ENVIRONMENT FOR SOCIAL EMOTIONAL & TRAUMA EFFECTED STUDENTS

We have identified that a large majority of GOAL students have experienced trauma before arriving to GOAL. Creating an engaging and safe environment for the social emotional and trauma effected students is key to student success. The school's population of students have experienced higher level of trauma and de-stabilization and this has increased with the Covid pandemic. The number of support tickets for social emotional help has increased considerably over the past two years.

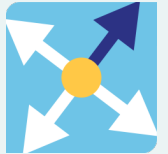


Then we will change current trends for students.

Priority Performance Challenge: Specific problem statements about student performance that provide the strategic focus for improvement efforts.

EXPECTED ACADEMIC GROWTH BELOW TARGET.

Students are not growing academically at a rate fast enough to get them to grade level by graduation. This is evidenced by the previous years' Median Growth Percentile obtained through the internal Star 360 data.



HIGH DROPOUT RATE

GOAL Academy's most recently reported dropout rate of 21% is higher than the AEC norm of 12.7%. GOAL Academy retains approximately 90% of the students through out the school year through consistent staff contact and coaching. However, approximately 10-12% of the students dis-engage over the summer and do not re-enroll for school in the fall. Due to the at-risk nature and transiency of our population, many of the students can't be located after the summer break.



LOW COMPLETION (GRADUATION) RATE

GOAL Academy's completion (graduation) rate was 39.4%, which is in the "Does Not Meet" category for AEC schools, and remains a priority for GOAL Academy.



