LISTEN UP

Using Student Voice To Improve Well-being And Increase Engagement In Learning

Presenters: Eric Chandler, Carrie Green, Emerson Damiano, and Vanessa Chavez, Kent Denver School (CO); Jennifer Villeneuve and Jon Kleiman, Challenge Success, Stanford University
Individually, think about a change initiative your school embarked on. Write down 4+ steps your school took to tackle this initiative.

Share list with a partner, reflecting on how present student voice was in the steps you described.

- Convened faculty task force to look at homework policy
- Collected best-practices from friends at local schools
- Hosted parent coffee to educate parents
- Piloted with group of students
To what extent does student voice drive your school’s policies and practices?
WHY DOES THIS MATTER?
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Including **student voice** in school change efforts helps ensure that our initiatives **benefit students**
FALL CONFERENCE

» Identify focus
» Attend workshops
FALL CONFERENCE

- Identify focus
- Attend workshops
FALL CONFERENCE

SPRING CONFERENCE

» Reflect on year
» Network with teams
» Plan for next year
CHALLENGE SUCCESS SCHOOL PROGRAM

FALL CONFERENCE

DO THE WORK

SPRING CONFERENCE

» Listen in to better understand theme
» Pilot various solutions to address theme
CHALLENGE SUCCESS SCHOOL PROGRAM

FALL CONFERENCE  DO THE WORK  SPRING CONFERENCE

Listen In
CHALLENGE SUCCESS SCHOOL PROGRAM

FALL CONFERENCE

DO THE WORK

SPRING CONFERENCE

Listen In

Explore solutions
CHALLENGE SUCCESS SCHOOL PROGRAM

FALL CONFERENCE

DO THE WORK

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Explore solutions
CHALLENGE SUCCESS SCHOOL PROGRAM

FALL CONFERENCE

Listen In
Listen In

Explore solutions

DO THE WORK

Explores solutions

SPRING CONFERENCE

Listen In

Listen In

Listen In
HOW TO LISTEN

/ Dialogue Night

/ Student Fishbowl

/ Shadow Day

/ Student Survey

...
KENT DENVER + CHALLENGE SUCCESS TIMELINE

Administer Student **SURVEY**

Attend Fall **CONFERENCE**

Engage in **LISTENING IN**

Implement New **POLICIES**
KENT DENVER + CHALLENGE SUCCESS TIMELINE

Administer Student SURVEY

Join SCHOOL PROGRAM

Engage in LISTENING IN

Implement New POLICIES
KENT DENVER + CHALLENGE SUCCESS TIMELINE

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TIMELINE

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Implement New POLICIES
KENT DENVER + CHALLENGE SUCCESS TIMELINE

- Administer Student Survey
- Join School Program
- Engage in Listening In
- Implement New Policies
WELLNESS SURVEYS

/ Impetus for surveying on wellness

/ Initial Resistance — Cost and Expertise
WELLNESS SURVEYS

1. **Survey**: High School Survey of Student Engagement (HSSSE)
   **Learning**: Students very engaged in learning
   **Action**: Commit to surveying
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2. **Survey**: The Independent School Health Check
   **Learning**: Student substance use is low
   **Action**: Share data with community
WELLNESS SURVEYS

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3. **Survey**: Challenge Success Student Survey
   **Learning**: 9th grade is most stressed
   **Action**: Freshman wellness/study hall program
What we learned

- Surveys give students voice
- Expertise is worth the price.
- Critical to communicate findings with community
Administer Student Survey
Join School Program
Engage in Listening In
Implement New Policies
Joined **Challenge Success School Program**

Team of administrators, parents, teachers and **students**

Importance of **student voice**
CONFERENCES

SCHOOL PROGRAM

CHALLENGE SUCCESS
Team charted stressors and root causes

Everyone had equal voice

No judgement
3 FOCUS POINTS

SCHOOL PROGRAM

COMMUNITY MESSAGING

HOMEWORK/GRADING POLICIES

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
Administer Student SURVEY
Join SCHOOL PROGRAM
Engage in LISTENING IN
Implement New POLICIES
Organized **focus groups** to listen in

Led by **students**

Ran **time wheel** activity
Shadow Day is an opportunity for teachers and administrators to shadow students to learn about the **daily experience of attending school**.
Paired teachers with diverse group of students

Followed students for entire day

Provided opportunity for reflection
Paired teachers with a diverse group of students

Followed students for the entire day

Provided opportunity for reflection
My colleagues are doing awesome things in their classes!
"This provides so much insight into friend groups"
SHADOW DAY

LISTENING IN

“Couldn’t put my feet up on chair in front, back was sore, couldn’t recline, chair too rigid, no flexibility. Much easier to be a teacher, you can sit, stand, walk around as you need to or want to. Students are basically stuck in chairs for 50 min.”
A fishbowl offers a unique opportunity to “listen in” as a small group of thoughtful students share their experiences and feelings on a particular topic.
I wish my **teachers** knew...

I wish my **parents** knew...

I wish my **peers** knew...
// I wish my **teachers** knew…

- “We need time for our brains to transition from one class to another”
- “We have five more classes and a lot more work than they realize”
- “The workload is better than it used to be!”
- “We are so thankful for everything that you do and sacrifice for us!”
WHY LISTENING IN MATTERS

- Allow teachers to **understand student experience**
- Led to **changes** in individual classrooms and across the school
Administer Student
SURVEY

Join
SCHOOL PROGRAM

Engage in
LISTENING IN

Implement New
POLICIES
Example of how **listening in** led to work on HW policy
Original HW Policy

Students are expected to prepared daily for classes and generally spend **30 minutes** per class meeting on homework per night; students in Advanced Placement and hours courses may spend up to **45 minutes** each night on homework for these classes. Those who spend more or less time than these guidelines are encouraged to discuss study skills and expectations with their teacher.
Homework Load & Habits
Student perceptions of homework, including time spent and belief in its usefulness.

Challenge Success Student Survey, 2017
Student reporting 2+ hours of homework:

43.2%

NAIS Independent School Health Check Data, 2018
CHANGE PROCESS

// CS Homework Webinar

// Tolerance Exercises

// Meetings by Grade Level / Subject

// Institutional Support: Schedule Change
NEW POLICIES

CHANGE PROCESS
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**Revised HW Policy**

Students are expected to prepare daily for classes and generally spend no more than:

- **60 minutes** per night in **6th grade**,
- **75 minutes** per night in **7th grade** and
- **90 minutes** per night in **8th grade**.
**NEW POLICIES**

**2017**

Challenge Success Student Survey

- Average hours of homework on weekdays: 2.2
- Average hours of homework on a weekend: 2.1

**2019**

Challenge Success Student Survey

- Average hours of homework on weekdays: 1.6
- Average hours of homework on a weekend: 1.6

*Challenge Success Student Survey, 2017 & 2019*
New Policies

Homework Data

2019 Challenge Success Student Survey, 2019
Challenge Success Student Survey, 2019
STUDENT VOICE ACROSS ALL CS SCHOOLS

/ Evaluated impact of Challenge Success Program across 30 Schools

/ Student experience drove change, by answering the question:

What is it like to be a student at our school?
I think that it’s been very helpful to solicit input from students and get their perspective on how school operates and how it impacts them. It’s been very positive. It’s made all our conversations, even those outside CS, more in tune to what’s going on with our students.

Administrator
The most valuable part of being on this team for me is that it's a place and a group of people where I feel as though not only is my voice heard, but I also have a voice for those who tend to stay quiet and not speak up about the changes that they want to see in our community.

Student