

Success in Schools

Anglophone School District South



The "Success in Schools" initiative at Harbour View High School (HVHS), led by the Education Success Advisor, aimed to address declining high school completion rates among students from the Lower West Side of Saint John, New Brunswick. The program targeted students from grades 9 to 12 who faced challenges related to poverty, lack of academic support, and social barriers and evolved to include all students experiencing barriers to high school completion, not only those from the lower west side, although recruitment efforts continued to be focused with middle school students at schools serving that particular neighbourhood.

Key Objectives

The primary objectives of the program included:

1. **Strengthening Social-Emotional Skills:** Building self-worth, confidence, and a sense of belonging.
2. **Improving Academic Performance:** Providing tutoring, mentorship, and personalized learning support.
3. **Career Pathways Development:** Guiding students toward post-secondary education or direct-to-work opportunities.
4. **Addressing Basic Needs:** Tackling food insecurity and providing essential resources.
5. **Fostering Community Connections:** Collaborating with local organizations and integrating community support.

Major Achievements

1. **Increased Graduation Rates:** The graduation rate among participating students rose to 76% in 2023, with 85% of graduates pursuing post-secondary education or employment.
2. **Enhanced Academic Support:** Students received tailored tutoring, especially in math and literacy, through partnerships with local institutions such as the University of New Brunswick.
3. **Essential Skills Achievement Pathway (ESAP):** The program supported students with unique learning needs, resulting in successful graduation for those who might otherwise have fallen through the cracks.
4. **Community Integration:** Initiatives like the "Trades in Action" program and "EducatUs" model fostered practical skills and personal growth.
5. **Holistic Student Support:** Daily mentorship and personalized assistance addressed social-emotional and academic needs, creating a sense of safety and belonging.

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Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Funding and Sustainability:** Funding from the Greater Saint John Foundation concluded in June 2023, jeopardizing program continuity.
- **Administrative Burden:** Coordinating community resources and maintaining individualized support were demanding for a single advisor.
- **Systemic Barriers:** Programs like the Laptop Subsidy Program failed to reach the most vulnerable students due to bureaucratic obstacles.

Recommendations and Next Steps

To sustain progress, it is crucial to:

1. Secure long-term funding to maintain the advisor position.
2. Streamline administrative tasks and community coordination.
3. Expand successful initiatives like ESAP and Trades in Action to other schools.
4. Advocate for systemic changes to reduce barriers to essential resources.

The Success in Schools program demonstrated that consistent, personalized support and community involvement can significantly improve educational outcomes for at-risk youth. To continue building on these successes, sustained investment and structural adjustments are essential.

