



The Pathway To Success



We're For Strategic Planning

Goal One:

Increase Enrollment and Student Success

Initiative: 1 **Initiative Name:** Develop Programs for Parents and Families

Introduction

Many of our first year students are first generation college students. The families of these students want to provide support, but since they are in an unfamiliar environment, they need programs and information to guide them.

Students in the age group of our "typical" freshman often share close relationships with their parents, and those relationships continue when the students begin their college studies. Veteran as well as first generation parents play an important role in keeping their student in school. It is our goal to get them engaged through programs and activities at Indiana State in an effort to guide their student and feel like a member of the ISU Community.

Purpose

Currently ISU engages its parent partners through programs such as parent orientation, a tent during Move-In Weekend and ISU Family Day, among other activities. This initiative is meant to increase the University's interaction through programs and activities with parents and siblings.

Methods

*Meet with parents and family members during the New Student Orientation program. In addition provide resource materials for younger siblings/children that are attending Orientation with their brother or sister/parent.

*Set up a tent on Dede Plaza during Move-In weekend to answer questions, give directions and help parents, family members and students through a stressful time.

*Continue to grow and develop Family Day which includes academic units, student organizations and targeted programming for younger siblings and a community engagement activity for the whole family.

*Provide assistance, as needed, to the ISU Purchasing Department as they re-negotiate the Break Transportation Contract.



Discussion

Our most successful program has been Family Day which has grown exponentially since 2008. We continue to add younger sibling activities courtesy of our academic and other partners. For the third year, families were invited to participate in a community service activity. In 2008 there were 108 families registered compared to 450 registered families in 2013. We are continuing to grow the program and add campus partners.

For the past two years, we teamed up with Turner to provide break transportation for Thanksgiving, Winter and Spring Break. This year we combined the two initial routes (Northwest Indiana/Chicago and Indianapolis Airport/465 loop) into one route. In addition, we added a trip at the beginning of winter break which increased the ridership for that trip. We promote the service, student and families make reservations and payment directly to Turner. We had a total of 175 registered riders for the 3 breaks. We are also teaming with other areas of campus - International Affairs, Student Government, Residential Life, Greek Life and the Charles E. Brown African American Cultural Center to get the word out to students. While we don't have hard data to show that it contributes to retention, it is an attractive feature in terms of recruitment and helps families overcome hurdles in getting their student home.

The two other programs that we provide have been well received. By having a presence at the morning welcome fair during day one of New Student Orientation has given us an opportunity to greet the parent and families as they begin the program. The other program that we coordinate is an information tent during fall move-in. This is a site that provides information, directions and a place where parents and families can stop by and ask questions.

Summary

This initiative has been very successful in engaging parents and families with Indiana State, especially first-generation college families. We have developed relationships through the personal contact at new student orientation, move-in weekend and Family Day. We've increased attendance at Family Day, and the Move-In Information Tent and Break Transportation Program continues to grow. While we serve only a small percentage of ISU parents (primarily first-year parents), the impact we have is high.

Parents have let us know through personal contacts and emails that they appreciate our efforts and the university's commitment to parents and families. Our work is firmly committed to building a parent partner atmosphere at Indiana State.

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