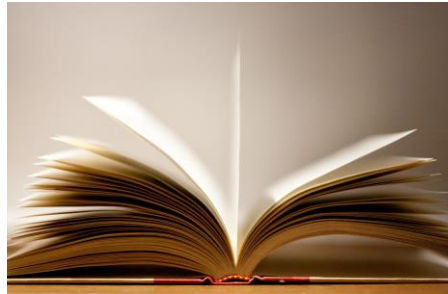


Restructuring Academic Support at Darien High School

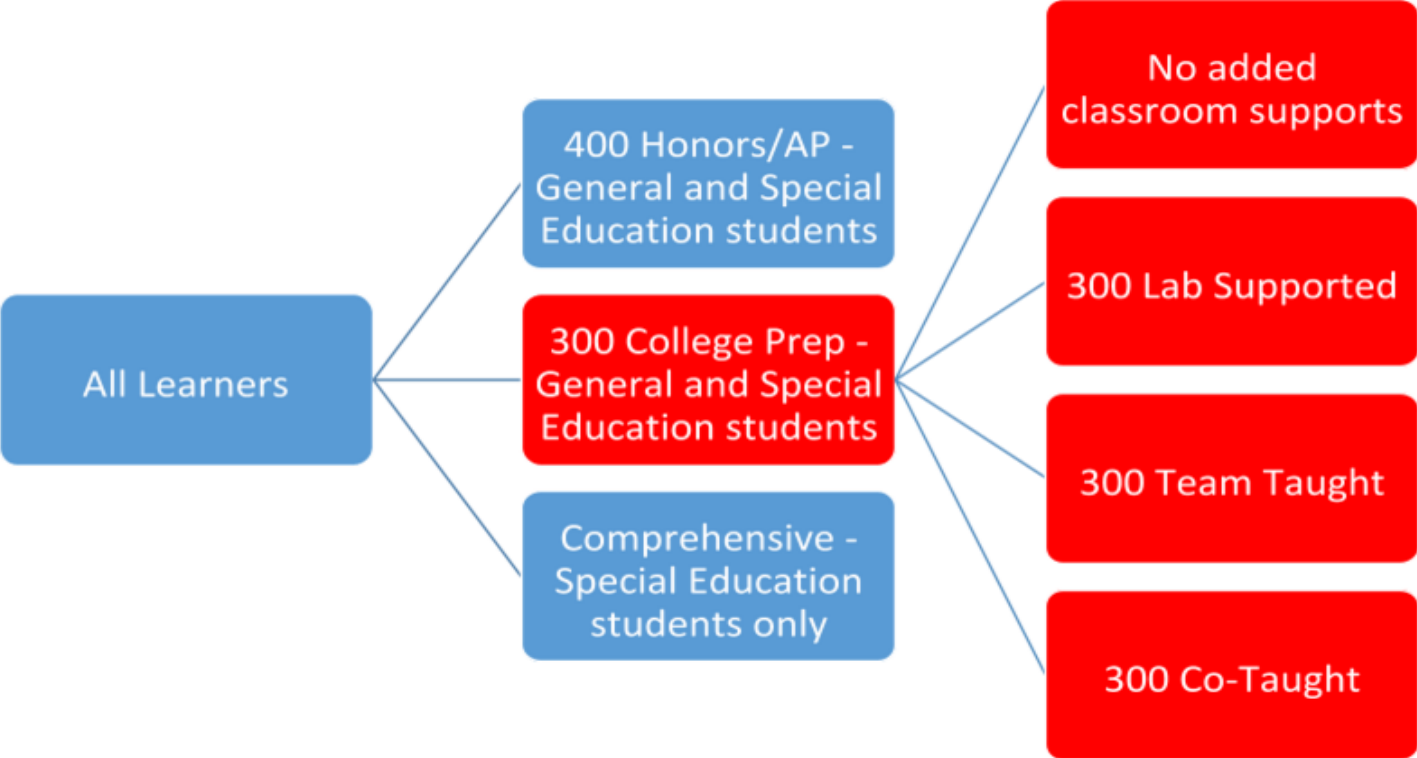


An Update to the Board of Education, April 2017

Board of Education Goal

Assess the “Restructure of Support Pilot” for Darien High School and make recommendations for growth.

Current Structure of Academic Levels (Year 2 Pilot)



The Goal of Restructuring Academic Support

Provide a more systematic support for struggling students at DHS

Provide support programmatically while maintaining academic rigor and the integrity of curriculum



Academic Support Structure and Class Composition



300 Level Class with Accompanying Lab: Student Composition

This lab is designed for :

- students who require pre and post teaching of content to maintain pacing of the course
- students who require small group instruction in a lab setting

300 Level Class with Accompanying Lab: Structure

Lab meets 3-4 times in an 8 day cycle

Class and the lab are taught by the same general education content area teacher

Lab is linked directly to class curriculum

Lab focus is on pre and post teaching

300 Level Team Taught Class: Structure

- Class is taught by two general education content area teachers
- Reduced student to teacher ratio
- Common planning time
- Rigor maintained
- No accompanying lab with this class

300 Level Team Taught Class: Student Composition

This class is designed for students who may:

- Need less support than the pre/post lab setting
- Have special education accommodations or are in general education, but require additional support as defined by the SRBI team
- Require a reduced student to teacher ratio in the classroom setting, increasing teacher contact

Lab Model

What have we learned from Student Feedback? Questionnaire

- Improved confidence
- Improved understanding of content
- Better prepared for class
- More opportunity to ask questions and clarify misunderstanding in smaller group setting
- Would recommend this model to others who need additional support
- Teachers have gotten to know them better and are better able to support

Lab Model

What have we learned from Parents? Focus Group

Improved transition to ninth grade

Improved confidence

Students have stronger connections with teachers

Improved skills and performance

Scheduling can put limits on choices

Targeted support

Lab Model

What have we learned from Teachers?

- Increased confidence in students
- Improved class discussions
- Time to focus on skill building
- Students are better able to handle the pace of the class because of the pre and post teaching
- Improved skills and performance
- Enthusiasm for attending and participating

Areas for Continued Growth Lab Model

Scheduling challenges

Impact on availability of electives

Staffing to meet the demand

Team Taught Model

What have we learned from Students? Questionnaire

- Teachers are readily available for support.
- Class discussions are richer because there are two teachers
- Both teachers provide support and encouragement
- Team teaching should be continued
- It works best when teachers have similar philosophies and approaches
- Can be challenging when teachers have different approaches
- Although most students saw their teachers as a team, some expressed that they find it challenging when the lead role changes often in a unit or lesson

Team Taught

What have we learned from Teachers?

- More opportunity for differentiation of instruction
- Increased opportunity to work with students in small groups
- Increased contact time with students in class and out of class
- Mutual professional growth as a result of collaboration
- Requires similar philosophies/approaches
- Collaborative partnerships are essential

Team Taught

What have we learned from Parents?

Focus Group

- General Education support removed stigma
- Students enjoy the interaction of two content experts
- For students in need of content support, better model than co-teaching
- Two teachers to go to for assistance
- More direct instruction within the classroom setting
- Two teaching styles can offer different perspectives

Areas for Continued Growth Team Taught

Consistency and organization within a team

Pairing of teachers is critical

More professional development on instructional models

Trends in support at DHS

Less restrictive environment

Learning Center alternating days to accommodate lab support

Team taught sections increasing with reductions in co-taught sections

Next Steps

- Maintain team partnerships that have worked well
- Create new teams where necessary with support from “expert” teams
- Examine schedules that may support models better
- Create PLCs for each model
- Create alternatives that allow for increased sections of lab model
- Explore the implementation of the 1:1 initiative and its impact on the models
- Further staff development on various team teaching models