Future Ready Center: A Community Hub for Postsecondary Pathways

Poudre School District

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The goal of the Future Ready Center was to increase equitable access to college, career, and life-ready opportunities for all students by creating a centralized, community-based hub for students and families. Poudre School District serves a diverse population, including multilingual learners and families who may face barriers navigating postsecondary systems. Historically, information about career pathways, concurrent enrollment, and workforce opportunities has been spread across multiple departments and locations, making it difficult for families to access and fully understand available options. The Future Ready Center was designed to remove these barriers.

The planning and implementation of the Future Ready Center involved multiple district departments and community partners. Key contributors included Career and Innovation, Language, Culture & Equity, counseling teams, and district leadership. District staff developed partnerships with local businesses, higher education institutions, and community organizations to support programming and real-world opportunities for students. This cross-departmental collaboration required ongoing communication, shared decision-making, and alignment of goals to ensure the center met the needs of students and families.

The Future Ready Center hosted workshops, career fairs, information nights, and hiring fairs for graduating seniors that connected students directly with local employers. Students and families received support with FAFSA completion, scholarship opportunities, career pathway exploration, concurrent enrollment, and industry certifications. The center also supported peer tutoring opportunities in which high school students mentored and tutored middle school students, helping build positive student connections across grade levels.

The Future Ready Center was evaluated through participation data, event attendance, and feedback from students, families, and staff. Early indicators showed increased engagement from families, particularly those who have historically had less access to postsecondary planning resources. Staff also reported stronger connections with students and families and increased awareness of available opportunities. One challenge was coordinating across multiple departments with different priorities, timelines, and funding sources. Additionally, there were important discussions around long-term sustainability and how to align funding to maintain the center's operations. Ensuring consistent communication across departments was essential to addressing these challenges and maintaining momentum.

For those looking to replicate this practice, invest time in building strong cross-department partnerships early, particularly between teams focused on career readiness and those supporting family engagement and equity. Clear planning around funding and long-term sustainability is essential. Centering accessibility, including multilingual support and a welcoming environment, ensures the space meets the needs of all families.