Oregon STEPSS Pilot
North Bend High School Presentation
North Bend High School Profile

Location: North Bend, Oregon

Size: 763 Student

Number of Students with IEP’s: 109
Why did we apply for STEPSS?

Our district is committed to increasing graduation rates and supporting Post School Outcomes for our students with differences. We believed the STEPSS pilot would provide additional real time data that would drive our decision making and program planning. Also, as a rural community, we recognized that networking with other districts in the state could bring new ideas to support our students. We were hoping that we would be able to participate in facilitated conversations with other participating districts to provide a time to discuss challenges, share ideas, and identify strategies that would improve transition services to our students.
Before STEPSS-

Previous to being a part of the STEPSS program, we had several transition pieces in place. We had our long standing Youth Transition Program that has been a part of our school for over ten years. Just last year we had added an additional YTP specialist to begin serving more students doubling our intake of students who receive transition services. Having another specialist allowed us to serve more students in school based businesses, work experiences, Pre-ETS skills, and career readiness training. As well, last year we embarked on the Guided Group Discovery pilot through our YTP team. This pilot provides two full days of classes each month where students are exposed to a variety of topics surrounding transition topics. During this class time we invite multiple community members and agencies to come and work with the students teaching them a specific topic like learning how to present themselves at an interview, how to investigate a career, how to sign up for Worksource to look for jobs, or how to utilize disability services at the college.

Along with the additional YTP specialist we added a .4 certified position whose job is to support the students in our Adult Transition Program. This person works collaboratively with community partners and high school staff to support PSO for students graduating with a certificate of attendance or modified and extended diplomas.
Who is on our team?

• Special Education Director
• Special Education Teachers (3)
• Youth Transition Specialist (2)
• Attendance Specialist
• Guidance Counselors (2)
• Bulldog Hub Coordinator
• Betsy

This team was selected by opening up the opportunity to any person who was interested in participating on a team whose goal was to help increase student success.
Struggles?

Our struggles were minimal as far as the design of the team was concerned. We believed that with more team members there would be more ideas and greater collaboration, allowing our team to look at all the focus areas in ways that sometimes we take for granted. Our perceptions of what is most important are sometimes hidden because we are so rooted in our own direction. By having many people on the team it allowed us to view the steps from other individuals point of view and gave us a fresh look at how to determine/evaluate a step.

Having such a large team created two problems. One, getting every person on the team in the same room at the same time although difficult was not impossible. Two, having such a large group gave us a lot to talk about and often lead to us taking a considerable amount of time to make it through each phase.
Phase One- Review Data

• Data was older than we had hoped and made it more difficult to connect to the students in question.
• Confusion with what year of data we were working with.
• Our online school was included in our data making it difficult to discern if it was a NBHS or ORVA issue.
Phase 2- Assessing Outcomes

• The process took a considerable amount of time
• Because of our data point it was confusing and challenging to discuss proper outcomes and narrow down which ones were truly in need of our focus

Phase 3- Prioritizing Predictors

• The conversations were thought provoking and allowed for discussions that typically are not allowed for on a daily basis due to time constraints and responsibilities
• The organization of the outcomes allowed for us to hear each other and decide what predictors were thought the most valuable by majority vote
• This part of the process helped us break down our steps into a manageable feat
Way to go 😊

There were many places along the way where we celebrated all the good things we’ve accomplished. We celebrated our 100% compliance of transition IEPs. We celebrated our YTP transition data that shows long term our students are keeping jobs 180-365 days plus. The number of students actively seeking higher education is up as well as career jobs. Meaning we’ve already met our 25% goal for higher education and competitive employment.

We are evaluating our other goals and are celebrating that small gains are often more sustainable while working on increasing graduation rates as well as lessening drop out rates.
Putting Our Plan Into Action

Our action plan included increasing graduation rates, increasing the percentage of competitively employed youth, increasing youth graduation rates, and decreasing the percentage of students who drop out.

The great thing about having a big team is that there are a lot of hands to help when trying to implement new ideas. Some of the ideas we discussed were to implement special educators visiting classrooms to view struggling students and provide feedback to the team about possible interventions. To make that a possibility we freed up the SPED teachers by having YTP instructors running our Guided Pre-ETS class. Another intervention we put into place is that we would give all students on IEPs the ME! assessment to help better gauge their level of involvement and knowledge of self-awareness and then write meaningful self-advocacy goals for themselves. To achieve this goal, YTP implemented it during Guided Pre-Ets. Additionally, SPED teachers gave their students the AIR assessments to gage engagement and belonging in school. Our attendance specialist and our guidance counselor are working on ways to collect data to identify students who are at risk of dropping out. One of the largest ideas we are implementing are our Zones of Regulation. Our Special Education Director purchased the webinar and forty spots and provided substitutes for staff. Sped staff observed each others classes and observed Zones. We are hopeful that this direct instruction will help students with their interpersonal, conversational, negotiation, conflict, and group skills in context.
Lessons Learned

• We have noticed through our Post School Outcome Data that too many of our students were not engaged after high school.

• More focus on preparing our students for life after high school (Transition)