

'CONVERSATION TOWARD A BRIGHTER FUTURE': Civic Memorial High School's FreshMentors

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The following article is presented as part of the Mannie Jackson Center for the Humanities' "Conversations Toward A Brighter Future" discussion series.

The articles are prepared by the participants of the discussion in their own words.



BETHALTO - The goal of Civic Memorial High School's FreshMentors project is to improve "connectedness," and instill a belief that students and faculty are a valuable

member of the school community. Support for each other and the importance of positive achievement will be a priority.

The FreshMentors will consist of freshmen students being paired with a Peer Leader or a “buddy”. The goal is to demonstrate that we care about each other. The Freshmen students, new to the high school community, are connected in a positive manner. Leaders are positive role models who mentor the freshmen to discover what it takes to be successful during the transition to high school and help facilitate freshman success.



FreshMentors creates a structure that connects every incoming freshman with a caring upperclassman for their first day through the end of their freshman year. Mentoring begins at Freshmen Orientation and continues throughout the year with quarterly social activity and quarterly mentor initiated contact. Mentors will also encourage freshmen to attend one school event per semester together.

We believe connected freshmen who feel welcomed and wanted also feel safe and therefore behave differently—they are more respectful, less antagonistic, more involved, and care more about themselves and the school community in general. T

he more connected students are to their new school, the better they will do in all the measures that are important in tracking their success: grades, test scores, attendance, and discipline. All these measures are positively affected when students are connected. Student leaders will promote co-curricular activities, athletics, and special events in the hopes that kids will connect.



Key Highlights from the First Year of Implementation:

- FreshMentors led freshmen orientation, receiving outstanding feedback from participants and School Administrators.
- FreshMentors along with the guidance counselors, spoke to every freshmen during their English classes about building a positive high school transcript.
- Donuts and Discussion was held at the beginning of the school day at the beginning of 1st Freshmen and FreshMentors discussed how the freshmen's first quarter went and where to get academic help.

Evaluation of Program:

- Compare responses from 2016 end of year freshmen survey to responses from 2017 end of year freshmen survey to measure students personal feeling of connectedness and level of involvement at school.
- Compare attendance records of 2015-2016 freshmen class with attendance records of 2016-2017 freshmen class.
- Compare number of office referrals for 2015-2016 freshmen class with the number of office referrals for 2016-2017 freshmen class. Compare number of class failures of 2015-2016 freshmen class with number of class failures of 2016-2017 freshmen class. Compare number of 2015-2016 freshmen honor roll students to 2016-2017 freshmen honor roll students.