



# DUBLIN HIGH SCHOOL

2017 GOLD RIBBON SCHOOL

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## Model College and Career Readiness Program

Dublin High School's College and Career Readiness Program is a model designed to support students academically and emotionally during high school and to prepare them for success after they graduate. The program revolves around a seven period day. Freshmen attend seven classes ( including a one semester class entitled **Freshman Seminar**) and participate in our lunchtime **Freshman Mentor Program (FMP)**. **Freshman Seminar and FMP are Tier 1 supports to provide all students a strong start to high school.** Freshmen requiring additional Tier 2 support; academic, behavioral or social- emotional, are identified at the end of middle school and are scheduled into appropriate supports, based on individual needs.

Beginning sophomore year, DHS students take six classes during their seven periods, with an additional "**GAEL**" period embedded into their daily schedule. **The GAEL period is a non-instructional "academic flex" period.** Students use this period to complete homework, access tutoring, make up tests, speak to counselors, attend to school business or take a stress break. Paid tutors are available to assist them.

Students demonstrating academic responsibility have autonomy during GAEL period. This allows them to develop and practice the time management and study skills they will need in the future. Students not meeting academic expectations, defined as more than one grade below C, are scheduled into mandatory tutoring during GAEL. **They remain in this Tier 2 support, FOCUS GAEL,** until they achieve success. With monitoring systems in place, we catch students as they begin to struggle, keep them in FOCUS GAEL until they demonstrate success, then release them to the general GAEL period. FOCUS GAEL students include students with special needs and from our English learner population.

The GAEL period is also a time when we run counselor groups or meet individually with students to address social-emotional needs, reducing impact on student academic performance. Students with behavioral incidents meet with drug and alcohol counselors or attend on-campus Youth Court, restorative justice practices we offer as alternatives to suspensions. Our crisis team meets weekly to address and track students with behavior, academic, social-emotional needs, including chronic absenteeism.

**The GAEL period provides daily support on a general level for all students and targeted support for our unique student populations.** We work with all students to help them feel supported and safe as they learn at high levels.

Program goals drive our professional development. Targeted support for students in FOCUS GAEL is meant to go beyond homework help. Course teams work in collaboration to identify essential standards which are shared with our tutors. Work to improve systems for monitoring, and communication is a priority. This ongoing work is supported during staff meetings, collaboration days and PD days. Parents are part of the support team and communication is critical.

Implementation of **Dublin High School's Career and College Readiness Program** was a two year process. Phase one, during the 2014-2015 school year, was marked by an extended lunch, the initiation of the lunchtime Freshmen Mentoring Program (FMP) and tutor support both during lunch and after school. With an extended lunch, average attendance in the library at lunch went from 50 students to excess of 200. Despite concerns that a longer lunch would lead to student misconduct, our number of tardies to 5<sup>th</sup> period decreased. Students and staff reported that the longer lunch allowed them to feel less rushed and to get work done. Grade data showed a decrease in our Ds/Fs.

Phase two was the implementation of a seven period day for the 2015-2016 school year. This enabled Freshmen to take 7 classes (including the critical Freshman Seminar semester class) and allowed Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors have a GAEL period during their day to provide designated time for academic support or a much needed gift of time to complete homework, study or take a stress break.

**Freshman enter DHS to structured support. The Freshman Mentor Program (FMP), designed to address SEL Standards, helps acclimate freshmen to our inclusive and spirited high school culture.** Meeting for the first 20 minutes of lunch, three days a week, freshmen are monitored by teacher advisors and grouped by counselors, who offer monthly guidance. Key to FMP success is our 150+ juniors and seniors mentors. The leadership skills they develop through their training and participation has a lasting impact. Thus FMP benefits not only 800+ freshmen every year but also the 150+ juniors and seniors as well. This is 30% of our student body. The increased sense of connection FMP has given our students has resulted in increased freshman participation in clubs and organizations and record setting performances in class competitions.

The second component of our freshman program is our semester long **Freshman Seminar** course. This course builds on the "Get Focused...Stay Focused" curriculum designed to help students identify their interests and life goals, explore careers aligned to those interests and goals, develop an educational pathway to prepare for career goals and create 10 year plans to achieve their individual goals. Units include budget, resume writing, and interview skills, all critical components future success.

Two days during the week in Freshman Seminar, students are taught skills designed to train them to successfully use their future daily Gael Period. Students learn to access tutors in the HUB and teachers guide them in self-monitoring of grades. This training and practice creates a smooth sophomore year transition to a daily GAEL period. Students are prepared and aware of the supports and expectations.

Professional development has built capacity. Teachers, administrators and tutors have been trained in the positive behavior program, **Capturing Kids Hearts**, designed to provide safety and emotional connection to students. Staff have also been trained in **AVID strategies, Mental Health First Aid, PLC and Response to Intervention**. All these trainings have been aimed at building students

Orientation for parents and students begins in 8th grade year, with our Future Freshmen Family night. We introduce the program, then continue with email communications over the summer. At Back to School night, parents experience how their student utilizes the program daily. We maintain robust websites for FMP and for our HUB support during GAEL, while Freshman Seminar uses Google Classroom as a form of student and parent communication.

Our metrics for success for our College and Career Readiness Program include Grades, Survey Data, Suspension rates and Attendance. In addition to the hard data, we survey GAEL students once a year for their perception and suggestions. FMP surveys freshmen quarterly, using data for program improvements. We survey teachers regarding climate, school culture and effectiveness of improved students learning. This year, parents will be surveyed. Survey results drive decisions for continuous improvement of our program.

Our **College and Career Program** was designed to meet the varied needs of our diverse population. Using our **district LCAP goal, "We will maximize student learning and achievement by providing a rigorous and relevant 21st century education that prepares EVERY student for college and career and success in the global economy"**, Dublin High staff developed WASC and SPSA goals aligned to LCAP: 1. Provide freshmen with a seamless transition, both socially and emotionally to high school, 2. Reduce the number of Ds/Fs while maintaining rigor, 3. All students will graduate college and career ready and 4. Promote a school climate that encourages safety and wellness.

Dublin High School Survey data of **DHSs College and Career Readiness Program** has been positive. March 2018 survey results show **67% of the 1000+ student respondents rated the GAEL period 10 on a scale of 1-10**, with 94% giving a rating of 7 or above. This was up from 30% and 70 % two years earlier. High achieving students score the GAEL period high, positive about tutoring and time during the day to work. Students cite supports available during GAEL period contributed to their decision to challenge themselves with more rigorous classes.

Students in **FOCUS GAEL** also score the program high, recognizing that the mandatory supports have benefited them. The data reflects that the program has been a benefit for both our targeted and non-targeted student groups. As one student wrote in the survey, *“It’s perfect! It’s almost an hour of time which you take care of what needs to be taken care of. No more library study sessions, because I have GAEL. No more sprinting to student activities to be the first in line, because I have GAEL. And best of all, a lot less homework when I get home, BECAUSE I HAVE GAEL. Also, after putting myself in mandatory tutoring, I’ve seen an improvement in my grades! GAEL has been a pleasure and I think it will serve well for many years in the future.”*

Grade data is also encouraging, **showing a decrease in Ds/Fs, not only in total number but in number of students with multiple Ds and Fs.** This is true both looking at year to year and cohort data. At the same time, there has been an increase in As/Bs. The percentage of students receiving As/Bs has increased from 79.2% in 2015 to 80.65% in first semester of this 18/19 school year. Perhaps more significantly, overall GPA went from 3.19 in 2014 to 3.38 in 2018. Meanwhile the percentage of Ds/Fs has decreased from 8.86% in 15/16, and 8.57% in 17/18 and to 7.69% this year. Students are learning to utilize the supportive structures in place to improve learning outcomes.

In the past three years we have seen improvements in both suspension and attendance data. **Our overall suspensions have decreased from 5.3 % in 2015-2016 to 3.5% in 2017-2018.** Suspensions are still primarily focused with our Freshmen and has decreased only slightly. What is more significant is that cohort data shows a decrease among classes. The freshmen class of 2015-2016 had 1.3% suspensions. The number decreased to 1.04 as sophomores and to 0.82% as juniors. This trend has remained constant.

**Overall school wide attendance has increased.** 2015-2016 averaged a 96.27% attendance among the classes. The percentage increased in both 2016-2017 (96.36%) and in 2017-2018 (96.57%). **We are currently at a 96.81% average for the first semester of this school year** and are hoping for an illness free winter.

**Dublin High’s College and Career Readiness Program provides students with a system of support throughout their high school experience.** They enter high school feeling connected through the **Freshmen Mentor Program**, deepen their understanding of themselves and the tools they need to be successful in **Freshman Seminar** then continue to build on these skills with the **GAEL period**. We are grateful to have the systems and structure to guide them to success.