PRESENTATION AGENDA

- Overview of Developmental Guidance Program
- Development of the Student Success Plan
- Demonstration of the electronic system
- Grade-by-grade review of program
- Discussion of Student Learning Clusters
- Next Steps
- Conclusion and Questions
The mission of Simsbury High School is to help each student realize his/her potential by learning the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that promote both personal fulfillment and civic responsibility.
SIMSBURY HIGH SCHOOL
GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

- One of the premier guidance departments in the region.
- Established an effective, developmental guidance curriculum.
- Examined the “guaranteed experiences” in guidance at each grade level.
- The challenge was/is to make the experiences feel more like a sustained approach (Student Success Plan).
GUARANTEED GUIDANCE EXperiences

- Examined developmental program in two ways
  - By grade level
  - Academic, personal, and social components
- Emphasis on goal setting, academic planning, and school involvement
- Post-secondary planning is the culmination of the plan
  - Begins in junior year
  - Increased involvement of parents
  - Group and individual components
  - Sets up students for success in senior year
DEVELOPING THE
STUDENT SUCCESS PLAN

- Had been talking about concept of an “IEP for every kid.”
- Settled on the idea of deliberate, continuous goal setting.
- Grant opportunity from CT State Department of Education
- Supported curriculum writing for guidance counselors
- Covered stipend for webmaster – it was a critical goal for us that this be an electronic plan.
- Supported the development of Student Learning Cluster book.
ELECTRONIC STUDENT SUCCESS PLAN

- Already subscribed to Naviance/Family Connections
- Needed a way to show the arc of the developmental program.
- Place to store artifacts as a permanent record of the student’s guidance experiences.
- With those goals in mind, we turned the work over to guidance.............
IDEAS BEHIND OUR WORK

- Create coherence/connections in available programs
- Transparency
- Portfolio of student work – potential for interdisciplinary collection
- Guidance Capstone
CHALLENGES

- Availability of existing models
- Integrating technologies
- Language of the students/accessibility
- Developmental implications
SHS STUDENT SUCCESS PLAN

- Grade level focus on key developmental benchmarks
- Transition/Career Exploration/Post High School Planning
- Elements of Student Success Plan
ELECTIVE PROGRAMMING
AS PART OF SSP

- Imperative that students approached the elective choices with a sense of purpose.
- Goal was to create in-depth programming; eliminate the “smorgasboard” approach.
- Designed clusters with an awareness about national research on career pathways.
- Identified nine Student Learning Clusters that captured current program and required us to stretch.
RESHAPING THE ELECTIVE PROGRAM

- Engaged instructional leaders in challenging conversations about programming.
- Screened courses for rigorous curriculum, student engagement, 21st Century skills, course enrollment patterns, place in a defined sequence, and articulation with further education.
- Courses that were added were balanced with the elimination of outdated or “stand alone” courses.
- Heavy lifting! This work included value judgments about long-standing programs.
Course mapping of elective choices in conjunction with core courses.
Linked to extracurricular offerings, opportunities for career exploration, on-line and college courses, and community connections.
Parent feedback about the product has been tremendously positive – they see opportunities they didn’t know about.
A change in schedule (8 periods) will start to give students more opportunity to take advantage.
Students have limited choice in their courses (most are core); this work allows them to think ahead where they do have control.

Has been especially effective for those students who know what they want.

Emphasize that cluster pathways are suggestions, not lock-step sequences.

Counselors do use the guide during some SSP activities, but link could still be more explicit.
**NEXT STEPS**

- Integrate into SHS Connect Programming
  - 9th Grade: transition, relationships, connections
  - 10th Grade: Career Exploration
  - 11th-12th Grades: Basis for Post High School Planning
- PowerSchool – course mapping/career clusters
- “One Stop Shopping” – refine blends of existing technologies
- Strengthen link between Learning Clusters and Student Success Plan
- Student & Family Ownership – ensuring completion of SSP activities
- Measures of Effectiveness