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Helping Youth Pursue Education (HYPE): Exploring the Keys to Transformation in Postsecondary Access and Retention for Youth from Underserved Neighbourhoods Appendix

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Appendix 1: The HYPE Participant Profile and the Value of the HYPE Intervention

Targeted interventions delivered by service staff have also been demonstrated to be effective in engaging students at risk. In a large study using data from 115 US colleges, Keup and Barefoot (2005) provided evidence that a combination of supportive measures is likely most effective. Another large study (Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, Kinzie, & Gonyea, 2008), investigated the effects of student engagement on performance and persistence with a range of orientation, learning skills, mentoring and other activities, and showed that student engagement in educationally purposeful activities was positively related to academic outcomes as represented by grades of first-year students and by persistence between the first and second year of college. An increase of one standard deviation in “engagement” during the first year of college increased a student’s GPA by about .04 points. Jamalske (2009) and Potts and Schultz (2008), reported similar improvements in retention and student GPAs with a combination of service and academic interventions.

Malatest and his associates (2009) tested an at-risk diagnostic process and case management intervention at three Ontario colleges. They reported an average Semester 2 GPA of 2.00 for students who had participated in success activities, compared to an average of 1.88 for the control group.

Peer mentoring and other peer assistance to students at risk of failure has not been as well studied. For example, Lloyd and Eckhardt (2010) investigated the impact of an intensive general chemistry course on student grades and program graduation rates. Students in the intensive course completed the course with higher grades than those in the regular six-week and 12-week sections. Of the intervention group, 38% of students ultimately obtained their degree compared with 19% in the regular six-week course.

Robinson and Niemer (2010) examined the effectiveness of peer-mentor tutoring on program pass rate, GPA, exam scores and attrition. Students in the intervention group attended weekly peer mentoring sessions for the first four semesters and had, on average, higher exam scores and lower attrition rates than those in the comparison, but no significant difference was found in overall GPA. Those findings are consistent with the assessment reported by Sanchez, Power and Paronto (2006) on the effects of peer-mentoring on retention and attrition and satisfaction with their institution: students in the experimental group reported greater satisfaction with their institution; data on retention and attrition were not conclusive.

To summarize, there is evidence in the literature that offering students from first generation and low-achieving backgrounds individualized support can enhance retention. Successes have been reported with many engagement interventions, including mentoring support from peers and from graduate students, staff and faculty, as well as service support and coaching in enhancing the retention and success of students. The challenge is to deliver the right service to the right student, and then create conditions for success in the regular college setting.

Appendix 2: Key Informant Interview Guide for HYPE Program

Short telephone interviews of up to 30 minutes were conducted to cover design and delivery of HYPE curriculum, participant expectations, the overall program intervention and experiences of five faculty, four staff and three peer mentors in delivering and supporting program participants.

The interviews were administered between August 15 and October 3rd, 2015 to 12 individuals involved in HYPE program delivery, selected in consultation with Outreach Program Manager and co-investigator Anthony Bertin, and interviewed by co-investigator Janet Maher. Transcripts were then subjected to a content analysis of themes which is the basis of the report.

1. **Intro:** Role, current position, history with HYPE program and College (amended as appropriate to role in program planning/delivery). How long have you been involved in the program? What has been your general experience, compared with other recent work you have done?
2. **History:** Can you describe your history and interest in youth from underserved communities? What are your expectations of youth from underserved communities? What does this mean for you in the design and delivery of programming like HYPE?
3. **Program Content:** Can you describe briefly the components of the HYPE program you have been involved in?
 - *Program Objectives and Program Model?*
 - *Program Activities? Probe for estimate of time dedicated to specific activities, uptake/interest of program participants*
 - *Anticipated Program Outcomes? Probe for immediate and longer-term outcomes*
 - *Follow-up and referrals? How well does the program accommodate perceived participant needs*
 - *Communicating program information to others? To potential program participants? To potential funders and decision makers?*
4. **Participant Profile:** Can you describe briefly the typical participant you have encountered? Who do you think benefits most from the program as currently designed and delivered? Where are the biggest challenges
 - For program participants?
 - For program delivery staff?
5. **Program Outcomes and Challenges:** How well do you think HYPE engages program participants in planning for their future? What are the benefits of providing an experience like HYPE to underserved youth? What additional curriculum or supports do you think would enhance the process?
6. **Additional Comments:** Is there anything you'd like to add to what we've talked about today?

Thanks from the research team.



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