

A M E R I C A

RAMP Stories: Closing the Gap

How 2023 RAMP schools addressed equity issues

issues including students failing multiple classes, seniors in danger of not graduating, and more. Supporting students academically in many cases required significant outreach to parents and families to ensure they had opportunities for engagement and felt comfortable supporting students in completing homework. Several RAMP schools also pointed to social media distractions, anxiety and lack of motivation affecting student success.

Consider the following examples for how RAMP schools closed gaps in academic achievement:

Data from a RAMP elementary school indicated Black second-grade students consistently scored below the benchmark measure on the math Measures of Academic Progress test and when compared to White students. School counselors learned that the students felt anxiety about math, and teachers didn't have enough time for remedial lessons. The students also didn't feel connected to math concepts. School counselors held classroom lessons with a small group of students to focus on growth mindset, coping and resiliency. They also held a parent presentation on how to deal with anxiety. Teachers participated in professional development on cultural humility vs. cultural competence. Another benefit of the annual student outcome goal plan was that the school counselor was seen as more integral to the overall school mission.

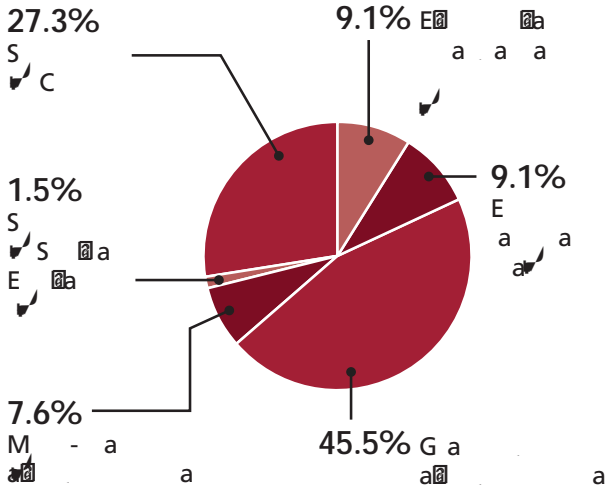
At another RAMP school, school counselors identified a group of 5th grade students who had scored below range on their ACT Aspire reading assessment. School counselors were concerned that shifting learning environments due to school construction had negatively impacted student learning. Further, students were finding it difficult to concentrate on their work upon returning to school after COVID-19 and were unfamiliar with how to find and track their grades. Students with learning disabilities or Tier 3 mental health needs were particularly vulnerable. School counselors helped students learn positive study skills to improve test scores and grades, demonstrated how tracking grades can help with their final grades, and discussed how setting goals helps achieve positive outcomes. School counselors also helped students learn about the best way to ask for help and provided information about additional services, such as tutoring services, with parents.

The school counseling team at a California middle school focused on 6th grade students who were English learners earning a D or F in language arts. Advocating for students required working with the state association to address legislation that placed special education students who are English learners in English language development classes. Among

supports school counselors advocated for were training on [Ellevation](#) to access and analyze English learner data, [Pear Deck](#) (which translates lessons into any language), and for posters with the English learner reclassification process to be distributed and posted across campuses districtwide. Students also wrote SMART goals about the grade they wanted to earn in the class.

At a RAMP middle school, school counselors focused on 7th and 8th grade students identified as failing two or more classes after the first marking period. According to the school's RAMP application, "Students appear to be struggling to readjust to being around their peers and are exhibiting heightened emotional reactions and outbursts related to peer interaction. Students are struggling with endurance for a full, in-person school day and are not organized in their schoolwork and assignments. Teacher expectations and assignments are more challenging in-person than they were during virtual school." School counselors helped students develop a system to keep track of their assignments, described how their attendance impacts academic achievement, and provided instruction on effective organizational, study and time-management skills. School counselors delivered both classroom lessons and small group lessons to address academic improvement, achievement and regular attendance. Additionally, one-on-one counseling meetings between student and grade-level counselors were held to discuss grades, attendance, setting goals and formulating plans for improvement. School counselors consulted with parents to ensure strategies being implemented on campus were consistent at home. The school saw a 67% decrease in the number of students failing two or more classes.

Students of Focus — Achievement



periods or 3 days of unexcused absences) during first trimester reports. The data showed that seven students classified as low socioeconomic status had a higher percentage of absences compared

