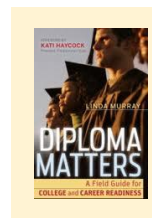


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Protocol for Student Focus Group Work:

Each student focus group should involve 10 to 15 students, broadly representing the high school students in the district in terms of the various high school pathways (i.e., general education, college prep, vocational/career-technical.)

The facilitator introduces him/herself, explains the purpose of the focus group and the facilitator's neutral role. The district's vision of college and work readiness for all students is given to help frame the conversation. Students are assured of their anonymity but told that the session is being recorded so that all comments are accurately captured.

Interviewer: Hello, my name is _____, and I work with the Education Trust – West in Oakland. We are working with the district to determine current levels of high school preparation and to identify the changes necessary to implement a college and career ready curriculum for all students. This group interview will provide us insight to your perceptions of your high school experience.

I would like to tape record this group interview to avoid missing anything you say during our conversation. The contents of this interview are for educational purposes only and you will remain anonymous. Are there any questions before we begin?

As a warm up, the facilitator starts with the following:

1. Going around the table state your name and tell me one thing about your high school that you particularly like.
2. Okay, now in reverse order tell me one thing about your high school that you particularly dislike.

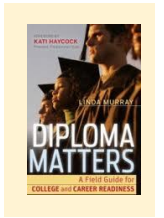
The facilitator proceeds to explore student attitudes and expectations, indicating that anyone can jump in and offer opinions on the following:

1. How hard is high school? What makes the school hard or easy?
2. Think about the best teacher you had at this high school, what made this teacher the best? What types of things did they do in class that had a positive impact on you? How did they challenge you?
3. Conversely, think about a teacher you have struggled with – why?
4. Do you get help from your teachers when you don't understand something? What did they do to help you?
5. How do teachers communicate their expectations to you? How much is expected of you in your classes? If teachers expected more of you would you be able to do it?
6. Which classes do you find most challenging? Why?



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7. What are your goals after high school? Are you being prepared to meet your goals by the courses you are taking now? How?
8. What roles do the counselors play in preparing you for life after high school? What types of support do they provide? How often do you see your counselor?
9. Have you had access to the classes that you need to take to be prepared for life after high school? If not, what has stopped you from taking those classes?
10. What CTE courses have you taken? How do you know about these courses? How do you get programmed into CTE courses?
11. Do you believe you are prepared for college and career?
12. If you could change one thing about your high school, what would it be?

The facilitator asks if anyone has other comments about high schools that they would like to offer. After final comments, the facilitator thanks the students for their participation.

