

Evaluation of the Northeast Tennessee College and Career Consortium i3 Grant

Client: Niswonger Foundation

Overview

In 2010, the Niswonger Foundation was awarded a 5-year investing in Innovation (i3) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Through the i3 grant, the Niswonger Foundation established a college and career consortium of 15 schools districts and 30 secondary schools to serve 27,000 students. The goals were to (1) ensure all students graduate high school college and career ready, especially students from under-represented populations such as rural; and (2) improve the likelihood students would successfully enroll in and complete college. Activities funded included (1) providing online classes, (2) increasing AP classes and AP enrollment, (3) increasing access to dual enrollment classes, (4) providing career counselors, and (5) supporting training and professional development for math and science instruction.

For this work, Insight helped the Niswonger Foundation evaluate the range of activities funded under the i3 grant. The evaluation methodology included a quasi-experimental design using a matched comparison group to estimate the consortium's impact on student advanced placement (AP) course participation, AP exam pass rates, ACT test scores, and college enrollment. The evaluation also included a formative component to track progress on all programs and activities at the school and consortium levels and provide near real-time feedback on what was working in the schools. Data sources included survey data from both consortium and comparison group schools; administrative datasets from Tennessee's education commission; school staffing logs; federal student aid application data; and interviews and discussions with counselors, teachers, and administrators.



As part of this work, Insight—

- Collected, analyzed, and reported on Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support data
- Monitored counseling activities and mapped and reported on those activities
- Planned the evaluation of the text message campaign
- Evaluated and reported on the Algebra I blended learning project
- Designed and administered the schoolwide surveys of climate and leadership
- Conducted follow-up monitoring of teachers who participated in the summer professional development academies
- Collaborated in monitoring sustainability activities
- Developed quarterly reports for the advisory board

Products

Data collection instruments; datafiles; final impact and implementation analysis findings report; presentations