

Parent Academy for Student Success (PASS)

Westminster High School

Westminster, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education

Often the best ideas in education are second-hand. Westminster High School replicated a family partnership program from California called the Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE). Westminster High followed the program with fidelity, but gave it their own name—Parent Academy for Student Success (PASS). PASS' vision is to achieve economic and social equality for all students through education. The mission is to provide families with the knowledge and skills to partner with schools and communities to ensure their children achieve their full potential.

Parents gain critical college and career preparation information, as well as knowledge on how their child's school and district function, and how to better prepare their students for college. This social change program teaches parents how to confidently and respectfully advocate for themselves and their students within the school system and their community.

The nine-week program debuted in Westminster during the 2016-2017 school year, and involved 100 parents, 87 of whom graduated from the Parent Academy for Student Success. In future years, Westminster School District hopes to expand the program to reach other elementary, middle, and high schools within the district to partner more successfully with parents to improve student outcomes.

Whitney Allen, a staff member in the Future Center for Westminster Public Schools, planned, implemented and evaluated this program with support from PIQE staff during this first year. Additionally, she had support from on-site school administrators. Whitney also hired and trained local PASS Recruiters and Facilitators to implement the program to parents. The PIQE philosophy strongly encourages parent graduates of the program to share their knowledge with other parents by becoming PIQE/PASS Recruiters and Facilitators themselves.

National data from the PIQE indicates that students whose parents complete the program experience a 40% higher high school graduation rate when compared to the national average. Of these high school graduates, 20% more enroll in college than the national average. Students take more college preparatory classes, earn significantly higher grades than their peers whose parents do not participate, complete more high school courses, and are absent approximately 40% less during the school year.

PASS facilitators recommend that once you commit to the program, follow it to the letter and you will have success! The national organization has worked out all the "bugs" over their 30-year history and are very generous with their coaching support every step of the way. Also, dedicate a detail-oriented person to run this program. There are many moving parts to manage, but the results for parents (and their students) are palpable!