



THE MENTA GROUP.®



Mission Statement

- The Menta Group is a multi-faceted organization dedicated to providing innovative solutions to critical problems in education and human services.

Vision

- We envision a society in which all youth can be successful. As an organization, we are especially committed to making success a reality for high-risk youth. Our mandate is to be the recognized national leader in serving high-risk youth in educational and social service settings, by providing empirically based innovative solutions to critical problems in education and human services.
- We strive to positively impact high-risk youth and the professionals who work with them by focusing on program development, professional training, and child advocacy.

Special Education Services

- The Menta Group's Special Education Services is committed to providing high quality, data-driven educational programming in an environment that invites students to learn, and results in positive academic, social, and emotional outcomes. Educational and clinical staff members promote life-long learning and provide students the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to function successfully in school and the community. The people of Special Education Services are committed to eliminating those barriers that impede the educational success of the students in their care. They evidence courage, compassion, leadership and an outstanding work ethic. Each of these traits is practiced daily and grounded in the belief that giving up on any child is unacceptable.

Illinois schools

- Aurora Education Center – 148 students
 - 112 male, 36 female
 - 54 ED, 6 LD, 48 CD, 30 Aut, 7 OHI, 1 TBI, 2 none
- Country Club Hills – 134 students
 - 116 male, 18 female
 - 71 ED, 35 LD, 14 CD, 5 OHI, 1 Sp/L, 1 TBI
- Fox Tech – 108 students
 - 90 male, 18 female
 - 72 ED, 24, LD, 11 OHI

Illinois schools

- Hillside Academy – 105 students
 - 88 male, 17 female
 - 67 ED, 19 LD, 3 CD, 1 Aut, 5 OHI, 8 none
- Hillside East - 43 students
 - 31 male, 13 female
 - 43 ED
- Lake Shore Academy – 45 students
 - 38 male, 7 female
 - 28 ED, 6 LD, 4 CD, 4 OHI, 3 none

Illinois schools

- Park Forest – 119 students
 - 99 male, 20 female
 - 75 ED, 21 LD, 4 CD, 8 OHI, 1 Sp/L, 3 none
- Thompson Instructional Center – 63 students
 - 61 male, 11 female
 - 33 ED, 5 LD, 1 OHI, 1 TBI, 4 none

Arizona Schools

- SWEC- Casa Grande – 18 students
 - 15 male, 3 female
 - 7 ED, 3 LD, 4 CD, 4 AUT,
- Southwest Educational Center – 41 students
 - 40 male, 1 female
 - 19 ED, 13 CD, 7 Aut, 1 OHI, 1 Sp/L
- Total Number of Students served by The Menta Group - **837**

Presenters:

- D Thurman, M.Ed.- Dir of Community Development
Fox Tech
- Cheryl Fredrickson- Curriculum Facilitator/EMM
Thompson Instructional Center
- Beth Anderson, LPC,NCC- Transition Specialist
Aurora Education Center
- Breann Whitford,MSW- Transition Specialist
Country Club Hills Tech and Trade Center



The 3C's...College, Career and Citizenship

**Preparing Our Students to be College,
Career and Citizenship Ready!!!!**

The Steps We Take

To Improve Student Outcomes

- 1) Planning/Preparing for the Year
- 2) ALL School Staff Orientation and Training
- 3) Preparation and Holistic Assessment of Students
- 4) Placement of Student
- 5) Student 3C's Support and Preparation
- 6) Ongoing Assessment of Students and Programs

How We Do It...

- Step 1- Planning/Preparing for the School Year
 - A team of Transition Specialists, curriculum facilitators and social workers, from all menta schools, plan and prepare for the year by creating a thematic/event calendar that is used by all schools. This allows for all three core areas: academics, social-emotional and transition to be congruent.
 - The Transition Specialists (“Managers”), per their school, create transition related event calendars. Setting up college, trade/technical school visits, military visits, in-school speakers/presentations, college/transition fairs, ect.

How We Do It...

- Step 2- Training/Preparing ALL School Staff
 - We feel it is very important for ALL of our school staff: teachers, assistants, social workers, transportation, office staff, to understand and be on board with preparing our students in the 3C's (College, Career, Citizenship).
 - We strive to make this the culture of our buildings, our mission and purpose. We want the students to sense and know this and not from just certain staff but from the entire program. Not "IF" the student is going to do something but "WHAT" are they going to do!!!!
 - We do this by making sure all staff go through the training on the 3C's at the beginning of the year orientation. Explaining what they are and how EVERYTHING we do falls into these categories. But also making sure that throughout the year transition related training is a focus.
 - Teachers/Assistants: "How is this going to look in your classroom?"
 - Social Workers: "Tying all behavior to transitioning- You can be a straight A student but if you can't get along with your peers how can you truly be successful???"

How We Do It...

- Step 3- Preparation and Holistic Assessment of Student
 - Orientation Process
 - Academic
 - IEP Review- Related Services, Accommodations, Academic Levels, Behavioral Information
 - Academic Testing- gather brief current info- Basic Reading Inventory
 - Credit Information/Graduation Analysis
 - Social- Emotional
 - Transition Related
 - Transition Survey (see attached)
 - Checklists (see attached)
 - Career Cruising (www.careercruising.com)

How We Do It...

- Step 4- Placement of Student
 - Advisory (see attached outline)
 - Academic Classes
 - Vocational Classes
 - Read 180
 - Wilson's Reading
 - Social-Emotional Dynamic
 - Credit Recovery
 - Service-Learning
 - Community Service

How We Do It...

- Step 5- Student 3C's Support and Preparation- Making the TPG Active!
 - Engage-Hook-Include Students Immediately in 3 C's Activity
 - Everyone working as a team- Student/Parent, Case Manager/Advisor, Teachers/Assistants, Social Worker and Transition Specialist- constant communication to meet the students needs and plans.
 - Advisory Activities- Self-advocacy, Interest Identification, Goal Setting, Mock Apps/Interviews, Role-Playing
 - PBIS – school stores/bonus bucks- 3 positive for every negative
 - Level System including a monetary incentive
 - Trips / visits – college, trade, voc, military, agencies, community resources
 - Individualized support-fill out app, take to placement tests, support for FAFSA and filling it out for parents and students, meeting with college counselors, in-depth tour of schools
 - Drivers License, State ID, Social Security Information and Trips
 - Volunteering – Service Learning
 - School-wide events
 - Menta wide events – Culture Fair, Science Fair, Spelling Bee etc.
 - In-school work programs (staff buy-in: who's going to supervise)
 - Community Work Programs
 - Robert Morris relationship

How We Do It...

- Step 6- Continual-Ongoing Assessment

Assess-Tweak-Adapt-Modify-Repeat

- Ongoing Academic Assessment (CBM, IRI, SRI)
- MSIS Data for:
 - TABS (Truancy, Academics, Behavior, Safety)/Action Teams
 - PST (Problem Solving Teams)
- The Questions you must always be asking yourselves?
 - Staff Buy-In? Student Buy-In?
 - What defines success?
 - What Works? What Doesn't?
 - What can we add? Should we remove anything?
 - Are we doing too much in some areas and/or too little in others?

In Summary...

- We feel the best way to improve student outcomes is to have a purposeful plan of action...
 - You must plan as early as possible!
 - You must have EVERYONE on board! A Team! Preparing, training and supporting them!
 - You must gather information about your students and then immediately engage and connect students to meaningful experiences!
 - You must think of the whole student (strengths and weaknesses) when placing the student!
 - You must create a culture in your buildings of not “IF” the student is going to do something but “WHAT” are they going to do when they graduate and then provide them the opportunities to practice and implement!
 - You must continually assess, evaluate and adapt!!!

What Are You Doing to Prepare Your Students to Be 3C Ready and to Improve Transition Outcomes?????

ACTIVITY

Now that you have heard what WE do...

We want you to brainstorm about what YOU do and WHAT you might want to do to improve your transition outcomes?

See “Activity Sheet” in Handout Folder

- If you are in a school district- think about it from either your position or from a school-wide perspective...what do you wish was being done?
- If you are a community agency- what things do you already do and what could you do? Who could you partner with that you might not already?
- If you are a parent- what do you and/or your child’s school do well? What do you wish you and/or your child’s school were doing to help better prepare your child?