

Barriers and School Resources

The Basics:

Grade: 8-12 9-12	Objective: Students will define 'barriers to learning' and identify key staff who can provide support as students take personal responsibility for overcoming obstacles to school success.	Start here: Young adults must learn to identify barriers to learning and counter-productive patterns of thinking/behaving so they can take personal responsibility for finding solutions to problems they face.
Theme: Team Building		
Duration: 35 minutes		

REQUIRED ACTIVITIES:

- (5 min) Have the class do a five-minute self-assessment and scavenger hunt: Have each student write down five behaviors, mindsets or obstacles that negatively affected school last year, then collect and write down one example from five different peers. Students should end up with a total of ten negative mindsets and behaviors (five individual examples and five examples from peers). These should be collected by Advisors, with student names – to be used for the October 7 advisory lesson!
- (5 min) Returning to seats, have students pair-up with a neighbor and develop a working definition for 'barriers to learning' based upon what they heard during their scavenger hunt. Let them know they will be reporting out to the class.
- (10 min) Have a representative from each group write their definition on the board, have the class circle or underline common themes and language, then work on a consensus definition of Barriers to Learning.
- (5 min) Consider sharing a personal anecdote about overcoming a barrier you faced in high school, college or your professional life, emphasizing action over making excuses or surrendering. Or, facilitate a conversation about the dangers of being passive in the face of barriers (both real and imagined) and the importance of actively working to identify, understand and respond to barriers.
- (5 min) Show the slides that identify key faculty and staff and their respective roles. Emphasize that at DHS "Every door is the right door," meaning that students may step into any office or classroom and ask for help. If that person cannot help on a particular issue, they will help the student find the right person.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Advisors should consider student's barriers as they speak to students during grade check-ins or anytime they note falling grades.
- Have students make a flow chart or poster to hang in your Advisory room: WHO ARE OUR HELPERS? with staff names, roles/responsibilities, photos and contact information.
- Challenge students to a contest: Have them introduce themselves (in the hallway, classroom or office) to their Counselor, Academic Advisory and Administrator, collect a signature and report back to their Advisor. Then, hold a drawing for a prize, privilege or recognition in your next Advisory.

LITERACY STRATEGIES: What? So What?; Think, Pair Share; Reciprocal Teaching; Circle key terms and highlight ideas; Connect to personal experiences