CAMPAGNA ACADEMY

PARTNER PROFILE: SCHERERVILLE, IN

Location

Campagna Academy, a charter high school with boarding and supportive services on site, is located in Schererville, Indiana, a sprawling community of Lake County in Northwestern Indiana. Adjacent cities are Hammond, Gary, and East Chicago. A large amount of people who commute to Chicago for work live in this area. Campagna is located just north of Route 30, a very heavily traveled commercial highway that contains many mini-malls, stores and office buildings. Being in close proximity to this bustling community allows easy access to the school and its facilities. A quiet subdivision of houses is located directly to the west and a wooded area to the north and east. These natural areas are incorporated into the school through the use of outdoor classrooms and trails.

History

Campagna Academy was founded as Hoosier Boys’ Town in 1947 by Father Michael Campagna, who wanted to provide a loving and secure environment for boys without parents and for boys whose parents were unable, for a number of reasons, to be primary caretakers of their sons. Five local businessmen and professionals: Robert Black, Fred Billies, William C. Huber, Sr., Dr. James S. Niblick, and Dr. Samuel J. Petronella became the first charter members of Hoosier Boys Town. Father Campagna’s idea was incorporated by the State of Indiana as a not-for-profit corporation “for the rehabilitation of emotionally disturbed boys.” Six boys arrived in 1947 and a home was established for these young men who had emotional difficulties.

Shortly after the first boys arrived, Father Campagna purchased an abandoned 9-hole golf course on 47 acres of land with a house, small cottage, dilapidated barn and one-room cabin. In 1956 a building in Gary was purchased for $1,000 and moved to the Schererville site. The interior was remodeled to add a few rooms and house the facility’s population. An administration building with offices and a library was built in 1958. The Convent and the Chapel for the Sisters, who helped at the facility, was built shortly after in 1961. The A-framed wood structure, along side the Administration Building, housed the eight nuns. The chapel and administration building, which both still exist, present a very picturesque and relaxing view of a pond and forest for residents and visitors.
Through the hard work and financial support of various individuals and organizations, the facility grew to have four cottages, the administration building, the recreational building and the chapel. From its inception through 1972 there have been 653 boys placed under the facility's direction and care.

In 2002 the facility offered its services also to girls and changed its name to Campagna Academy in honor and memory of Father Campagna. The school applied for and was granted charter school status in 2002.

Purpose

The Campagna Academy Charter School serves youth at risk of not completing high school. Without a high school education, they are at risk of not securing employment and being able to lead life as participating and contributing members of our society. There are various sub populations that fall into this overall “at risk” category, including expelled and suspended youth, drug and alcohol dependent youth, teen mothers who are responsible for their child/children or who are pregnant, and youth who have fallen so far behind academically that they see no hope of graduating. The purpose of the school is to provide an opportunity for each student to earn high school credits and fulfill the requirements for graduation. This is done through an educational environment supplemented with support services, including on site residential living facilities for youth.

Mission and Vision Statements

Mission Statement

“To Restore Hope... Build Dreams”

Vision Statement

We believe all student can learn and become self assured, productive citizens in an ever-changing world through the practice of discipline, hard work, and productivity in a supportive and challenging environment.”

Philosophy Statements

- Lasting behavioral change happens only in the context of meaningful relationships.
- Respect is the underlying value in life-respect for self, for others, and for our world.
- Respect can be taught and modeled by all staff at all times.
- Every moment is a learning opportunity for both staff and residents.
- Every interaction has the potential to be therapeutic.
- Families consist of varying constellations of children and adults and hold great potential for providing, nurturing, and grounding that each individual needs.
- Emotions are an important part of our humanity and need honest recognition and appropriate expression.
- Individuals can learn to be proactive in choosing and mature in accepting the natural consequences of our choices.

Site

On the 47 acre campus, there are several different buildings, each serving a desired need. The main building, called Campagna Center, houses the charter school and is the result of an adaptive re-use project. Before repurposing the building as a charter school, Campagna Center served as a day treatment facility. A second building, located to the east of Campagna Center, is the Hope Center which serves as a residential day treatment facility for students diagnosed with severe behavioral and psychological disorders. Therapy groups, counseling administrators, and emotional experts are available for youth residents. There are also residential cabins available for adolescents who need 24 hour care and supportive services. Residents are between the grades of 6-12. One problem that exists is that the charter school only offers instruction for high school, grades 9-12. Many of the middle school residents must therefore attend neighboring public schools where they often struggle to balance their emotional and intellectual needs. The residential cabins and day facility cabins, that are located on the campus, have significant water damage as a result of recent flooding in 2008. These cabins too will eventually need to be replaced with a well designed residential facility like the Hope Center.

Located in the center of the campus is a small pond which acts as a community node, bringing...
together students, residents, and staff. This interaction with nature gives a more personal and secluded feeling to the school, which is helpful for the student's academic achievement. One of the newest buildings located on the campus is the gymnasium. The gymnasium houses a weight room, a full-size basketball court with bleachers moveable curtains, and a concession stand. Many community events in addition to sporting activities are held at the gymnasium yearly.

Finally, the original chapel that Father Campagna designed and constructed still stands on the campus. Today, this building is used for admissions, academic offices, file storage, meeting spaces, and conference rooms.

**Enrollment**

The enrollment policy for the Campagna Academy Charter School is a lottery system. Students who apply for the school will be picked to be part of approximately a 150 total student enrollment population. This provides fairness so that there is no discrimination in selection of families or students. Most of the students are non-traditional students who have experienced the realm of public schools and were not satisfied and could not behave or perform well in the public school, with its curriculum, traditions, or values. Campagna Academy is an alternative school for these alternative students. Many students have had behavioral and/or academic problems in previous schools. Campagna works with the county police departments to ensure that the students receive an education that meets the Core 40 requirements and also mitigates the hazards of drugs, alcohol, and violence.

**Funding**

Most of the funding for the school comes from the non-profit social work and welfare organization properly called Campagna Academy Inc. The organization provides a continuum of therapeutic, educational, and residential services to at-risk youth. This organization works with the Board of Directors and decides the budget and the allocation of financial resources. Campagna Academy Charter School also receives donations, governmental grants and foundations, partnership investments, and monetary gifts. Also Campagna is eligible to receive Title I funding and a typical per child tax base rate.

**Curriculum**

Campagna Academy Charter School offers instruction in Core 40 curriculum classes taught by qualified, Indiana state-licensed teachers. Elective courses are offered to students to expand their knowledge base. Advanced and remedial programs are available through computer assisted instruction and independent study programs. The school requires both the completion of an independent project and either school involvement or community service as a part of their graduation requirement.

English/Language Arts 8 credits. Including a balance of literature, composition and speech.

Mathematics 6 credits
2 credits: Algebra I
2 credits: Geometry
2 credits: Algebra II
Or complete Integrated Math series I, II, and III for 6 credits.

All students are required to take a math or physics course during their junior or senior year.

Science 6 credits
2 credits: Biology I
2 credits: Chemistry or Physics I or Integrated Chemistry-Physics
2 credits: any Core 40 science course

Social Studies 6 credits
2 credits: U.S. History
1 credit: U.S. Government
1 credit: Economics
2 credits: World History/Civilization or Geography/History of the World

Directed Electives 5 credits
World Languages
Fine Arts
Career/Technical

Physical Education 2 credits
Health and Wellness 1 credit

Electives 6 credits
(Career Academic Sequence Recommended)

**Demographics**

Ethnicity
African American: 63% (93 students)
White: 16% (24 students)
Hispanic: 14% (20 students)
Other: 7% (10 students)

Students eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch:
Free: 56% (83 students)
Reduced: 10% (15 students)
Paid: 33% (49 students)

Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch State Average:
Free/Reduced: 66%
Paid: 38%

2008 data collected by the Indiana Department of Education

Figure 2.10.7: Students participate in several community enrichment and community service projects throughout the Schererville area.

Figure 2.10.8: Campagna Academy Inc. is the business aspect of the charter school. It is also in charge of many financial and funding aspects of the school.
Program Intentions

Residential
- Clients will learn to trust adults and develop relationships of reciprocity.
- Clients will learn to identify personal feelings and express them in behaviorally appropriate ways.
- Clients will learn academic, vocational, social, recreational, and relationship-building skills, which will enable them to function in society in positive and healthy ways.
- Families will be able to live together with mutual respect and have the ability to resolve conflicts as they arise and support each other in healthy and joyful living.

Individual Help
- Emotional areas that are affecting normal functioning in society

Alternative Day Treatment
- Working towards general GED requirements

Charter School
- Individualized Education Programs
- CORE: 40 requirements

Campagna also offers a parent-liaison for parents of students to get involved in their child’s education. The charter school employees appoint a liaison who contacts parents on a regular basis regarding each student’s academic progress, behavior, missing homework, absences, or to notify them about upcoming events such as ISTEP testing.

Daily Schedule
Campagna Academy follows a four (4) period block scheduling system. The school day starts at 9:00AM and ends at 3:20PM. Many students participate in after-school activities and in-school activities, which the school supports because the students are not on the streets, which limits their involvement with crime and drugs/alcohol. More time is spent in each class and this benefits both the students and the teachers. The teachers have more time for personalization of learning within the classroom, and the students are more focused in class and less distracted by frequent passing periods. There are 189 days in the academic school year, which is 9 more than the average school days in the United States. Campagna students benefit from the additional days spent learning and achieving.

Academics/Test Scores
Based on the 2006-2007 academic school year, Campagna Academy had shown modest improvements compared to the first year of operation as a charter school.

Attendance Rates: 94.1%

ISTEP+ Passing Percentages:
- Grade 9:
  - Math: 15%
  - English/Language Arts: 32%
  - Both: 12%
- Grade 10:
  - Math: 15%
  - English/Language Arts: 33%
  - Both: 15%

Compared to the Indiana ISTEP averages, Campagna’s test scores were much lower. Campagna, however is a non-traditional school with students who would likely drop out of a traditional public school. Compared to the Gary Community schools, Campagna achieved higher ISTEP scores in English/Language Arts. One of the curriculum and academic goals is to raise the comprehension and testing scores in mathematics.

Community Enrichment
Community service is a required part of Campagna’s curriculum and students work with the community in a variety of ways. Students regularly visit and are involved with specific clients at a local nursing home, a local elementary school, and Arc Bridges, a workshop for mentally challenged adults. Campagna also works directly with the Lake County Juvenile Delinquency Center. By partnering with local agencies, the learning environment becomes more personal for the students. Campagna has partnerships with Calumet College in Whiting, IN. Every year one graduate receives a full ride scholarship to nearby Calumet College. This gives incentives for students looking for improvement and development through education. Many of the students come from difficult backgrounds. A local hospital located about two miles east provides treatment for some students.

School Facility
The main building, called Campagna Center, houses the charter school. Within the school, there is a main office that is seen as soon as you enter the building. A security official is in charge of buzzing in guests and checking students as they enter the facility. An octagonally shaped cafeteria is right off the main lobby space and offers a place for students to share meals and

Figure 2.10.9: Windows at a 45° angle to the classroom walls are a remnant of the smaller day treatment rooms after its conversion to a charter school.
Figure 2.10.10: The cafeteria, lobby, and administration area acts as the “joint” of the floor plan, connecting classrooms, library, and offices with day care and community rooms.

Figure 2.10.11: Long, dark, narrow hallways pose a risk for confrontations between students and are difficult to monitor.

Figure 2.10.12: The sinks in the classroom are leftovers from the Day Treatment Center.

socialize. The main hallway of the school leading to the right is also clearly seen when entering the school. Since the building was previously a day treatment facility, each classroom contains a working sink which can be used for demonstrations and experiments. It poses a problem for some teachers as it inhibits space use or has caused water damage to equipment or materials. Each classroom, requiring a security code to enter, varies in size. Most classrooms are relatively small which is surprisingly a positive attribute because many students get distracted easily in large classroom. With smaller classrooms, the teacher to student ratio is 18:1. Research supports that gains in achievement generally occur when class size is reduced to less than 20 students. Achievement gains are stronger for students that are traditionally disadvantaged in education.

Classrooms and offices contain large windows that produces natural daylight, however the 45 degree angled bay window wall limits spatial layout. The hallway’s narrow width are also a concern for the faculty of the charter school. Crowding around lockers increases the risk for fights and confrontations between students. Secondary hallways also have less informal surveillance and are a concern as well.

Safety and Security

Safety and security procedures are needed to ensure that the school remains a place free from harm. The students are checked upon entering the school by a school official. The classrooms offer a sense of security. Near each classroom entrance, there is a code that teachers and administrators must use in order to open the doors. This controlled access allows only qualified employees to enter a classroom when it is closed. Security and safety regulations provide structure for the curriculum. Many students feel comfortable attending school knowing that these procedures are being followed fully and completely.
Student Response

The responses by students about Campagna are quite positive.

- “Thanks for not giving up on me.” - Warren
- “Thank you for being there for me and giving me all these opportunities to do better.” - Thomas
- “Thank you for helping me with all of my problems and giving me advice on what to do.” - Andrew
- “Without Campagna I don’t think I’d be where I am at today.” - Sam

Future Plans

Future plans for Campagna Charter School include building a new academic facility (Grades 9-12), with hopes of adding a middle school (Grades 6-8) to the program since there are middle school residents living on the campus grounds. These middle school students attend off campus schooling and Campagna would eventually like to offer all residents an educational opportunity on campus. This new facility will have larger classrooms, wider hallways, and will continue to provide an alternative education for the youth of Northwest Indiana. School developers want to create a more energy-effective campus. Every classroom will have windows which will help benefit students who have SAD (Seasonal Anxiety Disorder). More day lighting will also increase student performance in the classroom. Other plans include relocating/refurbishing the residential cabins.

Sources

www.campagnaacademy.org
Ball State University Office of Charter Schools
Photos by Matt Van Soest and Mark Harnew
Conversation with Principal of Campagna Academy, Ms. Barbara Huber