

Freshman Parent Post-Secondary And Workforce Readiness Plan Training and Orientation

The Classical Academy
Colorado Springs, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education

At The Classical Academy (TCA), post-secondary planning with students and families is prioritized as early as freshman year through the College and Career Connections Center. TCA has partnered with Naviance, a comprehensive K-12 college and career readiness platform, to support their Freshman Parent PWR (Post-Secondary and Workforce Readiness) Plan Training and Orientation. In TCA, it's called a PWR Plan and is represented by their own action figure, PWR Plan Man.

The goal of the PWR Plan is to create partnerships with families that support student learning and success. The PWR Plan empowers families to engage with their students' college or career planning. TCA hosts an introductory meeting for parents that highlights the tools available through Naviance and provides guidance on navigating College in Colorado, a state resource that helps students and families navigate planning, applying, and paying for college. At this meeting, dinner is provided. TCA shares with parents their students' learning style survey and interest inventory results, and school counselors discuss ways to support learning at home by sharing study skills and time management tips.

One tool Naviance provides to TCA is the Family Connections website. Students and families use this website to access online resources, communicate with school staff such as school counselors and teachers, and work on college and career readiness activities. Through Family Connections, students and families can create course plans, research colleges, request teacher recommendations, take personality assessments, and set personal and academic goals.

Following each career or college conversation in the classroom, TCA encourages family communication by sending "post chat" articles to students and families on the topics discussed in the classroom, tools used with the student, and a comparable tool for parents to complete. TCA also sends out "around the table" announcements that connect topics discussed in the classroom with real-world events and conversations.

After evaluating their partnership with Naviance, TCA learned that families would benefit from a reduced audience size that would allow for more engagement with the Family Connections website during the meetings. TCA recommends hosting meetings in an open computer lab, as not all families have access to smart phones or computer.

By having students and families begin thinking about career and college planning as soon as they begin high school, the PWR Plan at TCA encourages students to develop a deep knowledge of their strengths and interests. Such knowledge is further supported when families are included in the planning process.