TRANSITION SKILLS

LESSON 12-29 ▲ MOVING ON: REFELCTING ON THE TRANSTION FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE

**LEARNING GOALS/OUTCOMES**

* Increase awareness of transitional challenges from high school to college.
* Describe college resources for transitional and academic success.
* Identify student/family communication opportunities.
* Analyze academic, social, and co-curricular differences between high school and college.

**MATERIALS NEEDED**

* **Tape, Markers, construction paper**
* **Learning Tree: tree outliners, smart leaves, branches, big trees**
* **Teacher model of a Learning Tree**

**CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

1. **Ask students to visualize how a tree grows from the smallest twig with just a few leaves to a huge tree with many branches and lots of leaves.** Take the analogy further and share with students that their current academic and social interests, talents, and leadership skills are those twigs that have the potential to grow into a significant set of skills and knowledge in college (the tree).
2. **Share the model of your personal Learning Tree.** What academic interests, social interests, talents or leadership skills did you have in high school? Are they represented in the larger branches of the college tree and even in life? For example, you may have really enjoyed math in high school and even worked as a cashier at a store. Did this become your major and “blossom” into your career as a teacher?
3. **Distribute the activity materials and encourage students to see this as an exploration of what they will expand on and use to transition to college.** Leave the creativity to the students! Some may want to work alone and others may want to work beside a partner for reflection support. Remind students that they need to label leaves and branches.
4. **Give students ample time to reflect on where they are today and where they will nourish their learning trees by expanding their thinking into their college years.** Example: A student may like to babysit (small leaf). Using a branch and a larger leaf, the student may move into volunteer work or service opportunities in college. This may then become a full-blown career and another leaf with “Human Services” or “Education” or “AmeriCorps.”
5. **Give students time to see the changes and timelines other students have created** in their “Learning Trees.”
6. **Give them time to reflect on and discuss what things they saw continuing, what new things were added, and what things did not continue into college.** The most important part of this lesson is that students have an opportunity to identify and even list the steps necessary to reach their end goal.

**STUDENT PRODUCTS**

* **Completed, personalized “Learning Tree”**

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND OTHER INFORMATION**

* **FACILITATOR NOTES**

Students have many questions and some apprehension about how college will be different from high school. By beginning the discussion early, students can focus on what they need to learn about college. A great deal of this kind of information is hidden from the first-generation student simply by virtue of exposure to colleges. Visiting colleges and having the opportunity to talk with college students is a critical component in the overall transition process.

Note that this lesson may need extra time depending on the level of detail used in creating student Learning Trees.

It is very helpful if a teacher creates a model of a Learning Tree from their own experiences as a model to use during the lesson.

* **ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY**

Closely linked to the knowledge, skill, and interest development that is represented in the Learning Tree is the concept that resources exist to help students with the transition to college whether they will be attending a technical program, a two-year program, or a four-year program. Brainstorm as a class the resources the students are aware of and be prepared to add resources that you want them to recognize. If a computer lab is available, assign a different college to a small group of students and have them check out the resources for:

* Academic Advising
* Tutoring
* Technology support
* Counseling
* Health care
* Tutoring
* Clubs and social interests
* Athletic interests
* Financial aid
* Finding a Job