

Activity: Introduction to PSAM for leadership and school improvement team (aka PSAM team)

Before you begin:

This introductory meeting will lay the groundwork for the leadership or improvement team (aka the PSAM team) to work together. To provide background knowledge, distribute a hard-copy of the PSAM survey and ask the members to review it in advance.

Goal/purpose of the meeting:

- To find out what team members know about college and career readiness at the beginning of the PSAM work together.
- To provide an introduction and overview of PSAM.
- To explain the process and develop the school's implementation timeline for PSAM.

Suggested Time Frame: 60-90 minutes

1. Introduction and discussion of PSAM survey
 - a. What is it?
 - b. Why are we doing it?
 - c. What is the research behind it?
 - d. What's my role in it?
2. Develop a timeline or calendar for implementation [PSAM Implementation Timelines](#)
 - a. Staff completion of the PSAM survey
 - b. Meetings to review and analyze PSAM survey results
 - c. Meeting to develop plan of action

Materials Needed: Chart paper, markers. PowerPoint deck: *An Introduction and Overview of the Postsecondary Success Asset Map (PSAM)*

Steps

1. Chalk Talk: What does it mean to be college and career ready?

1. Post a large piece of chart paper or two in the room with the following question written on it: *What does it mean to be college and career ready?*
2. Distribute several markers around the room and explain that this is a silent Chalk Talk that will be conducted on the chart paper.
3. Ask everyone to stand up and write down their thoughts and responses to the question, as well as their thoughts and responses to what others write.



- They should only go back to their seats when they have nothing left to add to the conversation that is taking place on the chart paper. It's okay if several people are writing at the same time. It's okay to stand back for a few moments to see what others have written.
4. When everyone has returned to their seats, take a few moments to “read the conversation.”
 5. **Ask:**
 - a. What do you notice about our ideas, thoughts, and definitions of college and career readiness?
 - b. Where do we agree?
 - c. Where do we disagree?
 - d. What questions does this raise for you?
 6. **Explain** to the group that we might all have different ideas of what it means to be college and career ready based on our personal experiences. It is likely everyone sitting around the table went to college and is pursuing a career of their choosing. The level of preparedness, knowledge, skill, expectation, financial means, cultural awareness, motivation, and support to arrive where they are today were critical in helping them navigate the pathways after high school. Many high school students don't have this background knowledge, skill, and awareness. To give students the best choices and to prepare them for make good choices about pathways after graduation, the school needs to develop a common understanding of what it means to be college and career ready in the 21st century.
 7. Explain that the school has decided to focus on **improving the college and career readiness of the students**. One step in this process is to conduct postsecondary success asset mapping in order to better understand what we as a school are doing well and where there are opportunities for improvement.

II. Introduction and Overview of PSAM

1. Show Power Point slides: [Introduction to PSAM](#)

III. Timeline and Logistics

The team must develop a timeline and work out the logistics for implementing PSAM. The following questions will help the team do that. As you go through these questions, be sure to document Who, What, and When.

1. How will PSAM be introduced and rolled out to the staff?
 - a. Who will introduce it?
 - b. How will it be introduced?
 - c. In order to do the PSAM survey online, who will be the technical point person?
 - d. If there are paper copies, who will be responsible for them?
 - e. What is the window of opportunity and deadline for completing the PSAM survey?



2. Plan in what order to review each of the five asset data sets.
 - a. In what order does the team think they should review each of the asset areas?
 - b. Is there a reason to do one of the asset areas first, second, third? For example, are there initiatives or professional development scheduled that might have an impact on what order to choose?
 - c. When does the PSAM team want to analyze the data from Asset 5? (Remind the team that they are the only ones who will be completing the questions for asset #5).
3. Identify others (internal and external) with specific knowledge or expertise to bring in for each asset
 - a. The perspective and input of partners and staff can help the team understand and discuss the issues raised by the data, and might know specifically what data are being collected to track these programs.

IV. Wrap-Up and Suggested Next Steps

1. Establish a regular meeting time for the PSAM team, e.g. the first Tuesday of the month after school.
2. Include an introduction of the PSAM team by the principal to the rest of the school in a full staff meeting.
3. Send out a letter to all staff, and partners inviting them to participate in the PSAM survey (below and at: [PSAM Invitation Letter to Staff and Partners](#)).
4. After the school completes PSAM online, download and compile aggregated PSAM data results in preparation for analyzing and discussing results.

Tips for Success:

DO require that Assets 1-4 be filled out in one sitting. It will take about 20 to 30 minutes.

DO plan to have the PSAM team spend an additional 20-30 minutes responding to the questions in Asset 5.

DON'T try to analyze and review data from all five Asset Areas in a single meeting. You will need to spend at least one hour on each Asset Area.

DO: Invite specialized staff or partners who might be valuable contributors to discuss and analyze particular asset areas.



Sample Invitation Letter to Staff and Partners to Participate in the PSAM Survey

Greetings Staff and Partners:

The Postsecondary Success Asset Map (PSAM) is a research-based tool to help our school understand how well we are supporting students — starting in the 9th grade — in developing the knowledge and skills essential to becoming college and career ready. The information gathered through PSAM will help our school improve program coordination and quality and fill in where new strategies are needed.

The [*name your school leadership team or PSAM team*] is pleased to invite every member of our school community, including partners, to take approximately **20-30 minutes** to complete PSAM. Your participation in this effort will enable us to:

- Build our shared understanding about what it means to be college and career ready;
- Develop a comprehensive picture of the school's assets to prepare all students for postsecondary success;
- Use data to make decisions about the use and effectiveness of resources;
- Eliminate fragmentation and redundancies in supports and services;
- Create clear pathways beginning in 9th grade;
- Strengthen partnerships between secondary, postsecondary, business, and community partners; and
- Develop a realistic action plan for improving college and career readiness for our student body.

You take the PSAM survey online by going to [*put in your school's customized web address here; this will be obtained from FHI 360*]

Your responses will be anonymous, but they are important!

The only information we ask about you is what role you play in the school (e.g., teacher, administrator, school partner, other).

If you have any questions about PSAM, please feel free to speak with [*list here an appropriate contact person(s) at your school*].

Thank you for giving this your time and attention! The [*name your school leadership team or PSAM team*] will send out updates on next steps.

