Focusing on 40 and Serving Up Some ServSafe!

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Abstract

FOCUS: A two-pronged approach to increasing our Measurable Skills Gains. Create products in two areas that would ideally increase our MSG numbers.

- **Product 1:** A set of High Impact Standards that were data-driven from our students' TABE results. These standards were identified by analyzing data to identify the most missed questions on 100 TABE tests given in Math and Reading. Both levels M and D were examined. We then looked for the most missed standards from the TABE that are also tested on the GED. From this data, we formed a list of high impact indicators that could be taught to result in MSGs and GEDs simultaneously.
- **Product 2:** Expanding our ServSafe IET and adding a real world component to benefit students as they returned to their communities. We worked with multiple restaurants across the Consortium and asked them to agree to grant an interview, if there is a vacancy, to our students who have earned the certificate.

Introduction

FOCUS: The Heartland Consortium took this opportunity to work on MSG rates through a focus on *efficient* student retesting at the 40-hour mark of instruction and the expansion of an existing integrated education plan.

- The first opportunity we focused on improving was our total 40 hour retesting program. The main focus was to increase our MSG performance through the introduction of high impact teaching modalities. Three steps:
  - Data from the initial TABE scores to identify learning gaps of our students.
  - Create prescriptives to streamline instruction to close those gaps.
  - Post test students.

  The results are below:
  - **For FY 2023, we post tested 154 students, a 20% increase in the number of students being tested over FY 2022.**
  - **Of the 154 students, 87 students achieved a gain, a 56.4% post test rate through April 30, 2023. The number of students who posted with a gain in FY 22 was 75. We set our goal to increase this number by 10%.**
  - **32 students were tested using the high impact standards. 27 of those tested made a level gain, a 84.4% pass rate.**
- Second, we worked on bringing real world opportunities to our current ServSafe IET to increase our total MSG numbers.
  - As a recruitment tool, formed partnerships with local restaurants that will guarantee interviews for vacancies **if** the student possesses the ServSafe certification. We also found some positive results:
  - **The total number of participants in FY 22 was 66.**
  - **The total number of participants in FY23, through 4/30/23 was 87. This is an increase of 32%.**
- Another surprising positive result was that the **student pass rate** significantly increased. The real world connection provided an incentive for students to take the certification more seriously.

Chart 1. 40 Hour Retest & High Impact Standards Data

APPROACH

APPROACH: Use a process that not only included a usable product, but also renewed focus on the entire re-testing process. The use of **student data** was an important factor for us. A research brief created by the California Department of Education emphasizes the importance of using student data to enhance teacher instruction. The brief also identifies that a teacher who understands the students' needs can set goals and adapt instruction based on the research or feedback (Mishkind, 2016).

OUTCOMES:
- Our use of data from the 100 TABE scores allowed us to rely on standards to improve student achievement in a targeted process.
- Once the standards were created and initiated, students could then be easily grouped for instruction if an instructor had more than one student becoming eligible for a retest.
- The Elevated Achievement Group states that students who collaboratively engage and interact with the content together will produce elevated achievement levels (Kennedy, n.d.).
- Instructors don't always find multiple students who need retesting at the same time, but in an event of two or more students simultaneously arriving near the forty hour mark, cooperative learning is highly encouraged.
- In order to create the high impact standards, we used student data from 100 TABE tests taken earlier in the fiscal year.
  - We disaggregated the data from 25 TABE tests in Reading and Math levels M and D.
  - The most frequently missed standards were identified for each level.
  - The most commonly missed standards that closely aligned with skills found on both the TABE and the GED exams were compiled.
  - Those concepts were then aligned with standards found in the TABE Mastery books published by New Readers Press and IXL digital learning standards.

CHALLENGES:
- The problem for our Consortium was that students and instructors often don't want to change course in their GED instruction to prepare for a retest on the TABE.
  - The goal is to produce high impact standards that would allow for the continuation of GED instruction while simultaneously creating more positive retesting results using these parallel standards.
- The second problem that we wanted to solve was giving more students a real world connection to our ServSafe integrated education training.
  - In order to increase our MSGs, the students needed a more concrete understanding of how the IET could benefit them in their communities. Harvard University, (source: their Ablconnect publication), states that students are more engaged and interested in a subject if it is clear how the information is relevant to the world around them ("Make Real World Connections," n.d.). Our Consortium created a list of restaurants in our communities that would grant an interview for vacancies if an applicant had acquired the ServSafe certification. This real world connection is a tangible component of the IET that provides that community connectivity.

Baseline & Goal

For the past three years, our baseline percentage for students who test and achieved a gain has been 59% on average. Our primary goal was to get a 10% increase over the baseline of students tested and achieved a gain from FY 2022. Since the introduction of our high impact standards in February, we achieved a post test percentage of 84.4% for students who achieved a gain.
- We were able to increase our number of students re-tested by 16% at the April 30, 2023 mark.
- Had we not introduced our high impact teaching standards, we may have fallen short of our three year average baseline of 59%. The FY 23 data showing students that tested and achieved a gain was 56.4% at the April 30, 2023 mark.
- Since the implementation of the high impact standards in February, our percentage of students achieving a level gain has elevated to a 84.4% pass rate.

We implemented the real world component of our ServSafe IET during sprint 2 of this process. This greatly helped in our recruiting efforts. This addition allowed us to compete with other programs that are offered in detention centers and allowed us to offer the program at one of our main sites.

Results

After the February implementation of the high impact standards, we have seen very positive results. Our goal is to continue to track this data and hopefully see a percentage increase, by June 30, 2023, in the number of students who retest and achieve a gain.
- We pulled prescriptives, identified gaps, and adjusted our teaching approach from 2/1/23 through 4/30/23.
- Our baseline was 56.4% of students tested achieved a gain for FY 2022.
- Our goal was 66.4% for FY 2023.
- We did not achieve the 66.4% increase by 4/30/23, but with the increase percentage (84.4%) of our High Impact Standards, we hope to hit the mark by June 30, 2023.

The ServSafe baseline was 10% and we achieved a 32% increase through April 30, 2023. (See Chart 2 for ServSafe Data).

Chart 2. ServSafe Data.
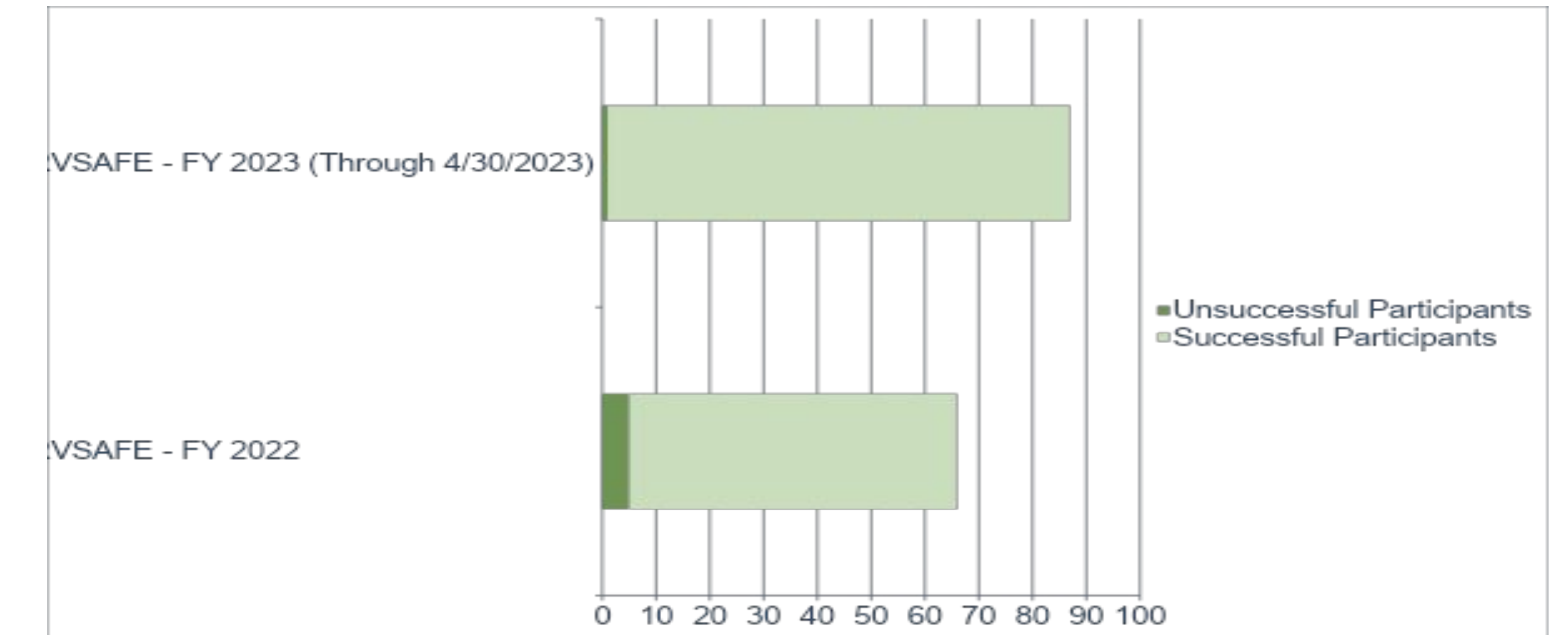
Discussion

Since we took a two-pronged approach to our PLC work this year, we were able to set two goals. Our goal for the High Impact Standards was not met at the April 30, 2023 mark, however we are hopeful to make the goal by June 30, 2023. We were able to see the fruits of our labor materialize in the results of the High Impact Standards, in the short time they were implemented. The goal possibly could have been met with a faster implementation of the standards. The 10% goal seems achievable and our Consortium looks forward to the continuing use of the standards as part of our strategy to increase our numbers for FY 24.

Our Consortium got off to a late start due to leadership transition one month into the academic year. The data desegregation turned into a very tedious and lengthy process in of itself, but we felt like the work would be beneficial and produce results. Looking back, if we could change any part of the process it would be to implement the standards much sooner. This does lead us to hopeful year in FY 24 since the standards will be implemented at the beginning of the academic year.

The second goal was tied to increasing our ServSafe IET participation by 10%. We not only met but exceeded this goal. The interest seemed to be much higher at the detention centers once the students realized that a real world connection was initiated. This allowed us the opportunity to increase our ServSafe numbers by 32%. We expanded this to other counties in our Consortium, but we still have had trouble finding time slots in some of our detention centers. We hope to continue to grow our list of restaurants partners and increase our percentage of participants for FY24.

Conclusions

We feel very positive about the products that were produced during this process. The high impact indicators will be a useful tool to help students earn MSGs while moving closer to the goal of attaining their GED.

The goal of a 10% increase is reasonable if given the whole fiscal year to attain. However, we did not implement the indicators until February and our cut-off for data was April 30. When numbers for FY 23 are finalized, we feel confident that we will meet the 10% increase goal that was initially set.

As we move forward into FY 24, we plan to continue using the high impact indicators that were developed through this process. We are excited to see the results of a full year of implementation.

Regarding the expansion of our ServSafe initiative, we plan to continue offering this certification to our students in the detention centers and at our main sites. The list of restaurants we have partnered with will be updated as our community grows.

References & Acknowledgements

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