

# Advisory Program Report

Ariana Garcia  
2018

**CITY** CENTER FOR  
COLLABORATIVE  
LEARNING



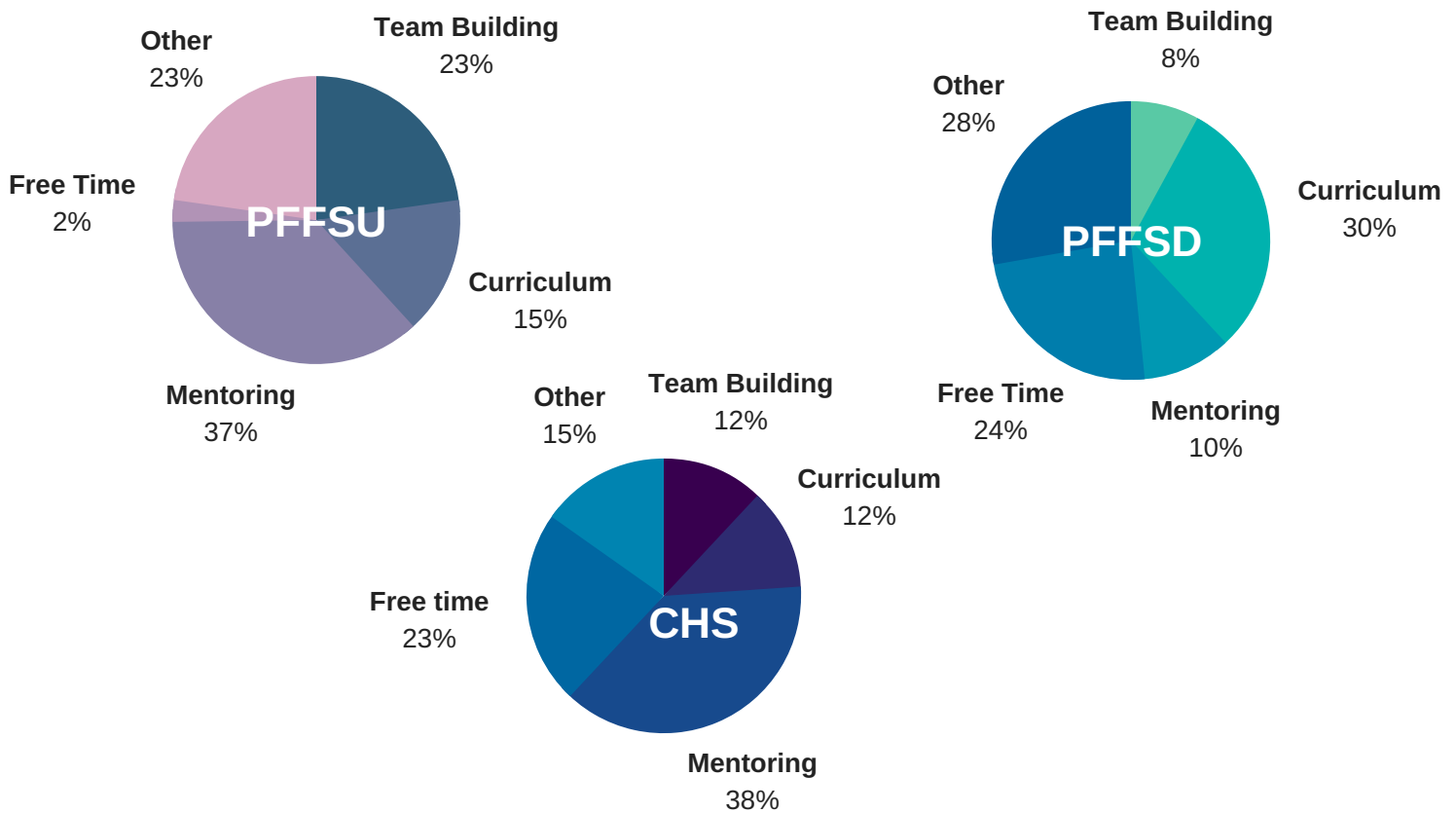
**PAULO FREIRE**  
FREEDOM SCHOOL

**CITY HIGH SCHOOL**  
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# Introduction

Over the course of two weeks during the Spring 2018 semester, Ariana Garcia, AmeriCorps VISTA Coordinator for Wellness and Diversity Initiatives evaluated the advisory programs at all three schools (City High School, and both Paulo Freire Freedom Schools). This evaluation consisted of six hours of in-person observation of advisories between February 27th and March 8, 2018, as well as surveys taken by advisors and students. The summarized results of those observations and surveys are included below.

## Time spent in advisory



## Observation Notes

On average, 10 minutes was spent in each advisory. The advisor-student and student-student interactions varied greatly across advisories, but overall advisors seemed to act as mentors and friends to students, often joking around with students while offering them guidance and positive reinforcement. When students would act out, advisors would gently guide them to understanding their actions and how they could improve.

Especially in the middle schools, advisors would often begin with a personal check in with students, asking them about their highs and lows of their day or week, and actively listening and engaging with students' experiences. Students felt safe sharing personal stories and confiding in their advisors during one-on-one mentoring time.

The "Other" category in the chart above was made up of a few things, namely transition time into advisory from another class or announcements from the advisor, or watching videos as an advisory. The curriculum that most often was observed was of a social-emotional nature. Advisors talked about power dynamics, technology use and relationships, student activism and social justice, and school safety and mental health.

# Survey Feedback

15 teacher responses

166 student responses

CHS - 7, PFFSD - 4, PFFSU - 4

CHS - 88, PFFSD - 50, PFFSU - 28

## What is the purpose of advisory?

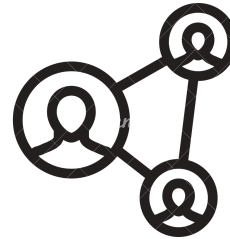
Build community



Guide and mentor students through challenges



Provide social-emotional support

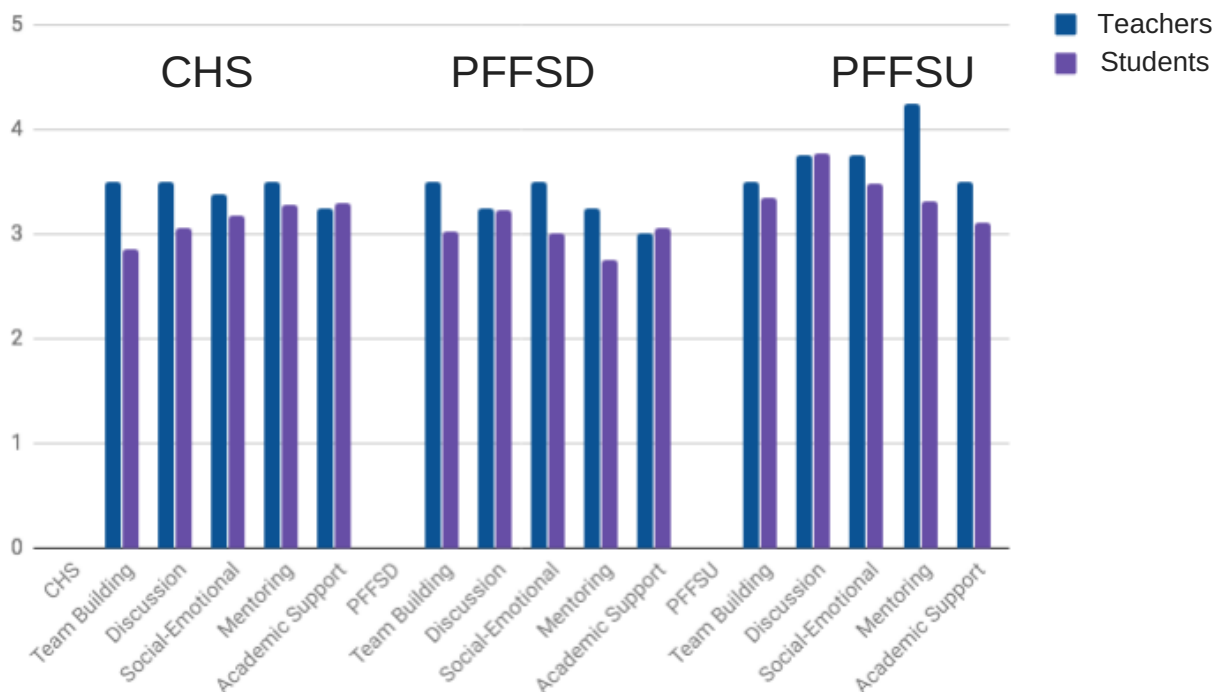


Provide academic support

Provide information to students outside of regular curriculum

Create positive social interactions with students and teachers

## One a scale of 1 to 5 how effective is your advisory at...



# Survey Feedback

## Continued

**Words that describe the culture  
of advisory (from teacher and  
student surveys)**

**City High School**

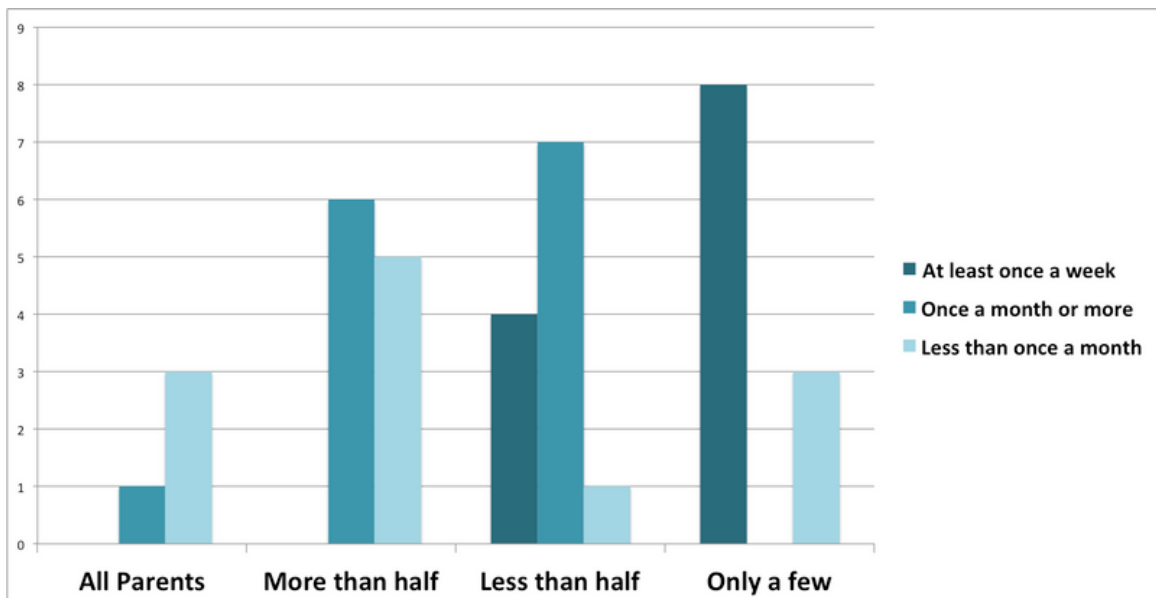
Quiet, Fun, Calm

**PFFS Downtown**

Fun, Boring, Interesting

**PFFS University**

Fun, Chill, Funny



## Advisor contact with parents

Advisor contact with parents was pretty inconsistent across the board with no real trend. Since there were only 16 total teacher responses and they were all so varied, it was difficult to separate this data by school.

# Teacher Feedback Continued

## Requests by Advisors

### City High School

- Team building activities
- Inter-advisory activities
- Smaller advisories (~3 students/grade)
- Time to enact own advisory plans
- More structure/guidelines
- Resources for parent communication

### PFFS-Downtown

- Facilitated interactions with the community
- Training to recognize developmental challenges in adolescents
- Shared folder with resources and activities

### PFFS-University

- Social-emotional wellbeing lesson plans
- Clear vision about advisory definition and goals
- Resources to help students cope with anxiety/depression
- Age-specific curriculum for overall wellbeing

## Other Feedback From Teachers

### City High School

- It is difficult to find the time to communicate with parents
- I love advisory and think it has great potential
- Advisory is hard
- Advisory is critical to the school community and culture

### PFFS-Downtown

- I'd love to have advisory every day. Or once a month have an extended advisory (1.5 hours, or so).
- The academic piece is stronger around Student Lead Conference time.

### PFFS-University

- My goal is to make advisory a relaxed environment that enables student connection, and to take a break from the stresses that may occur throughout the day.

# Student Feedback

## Continued

### City High School

- The advisory program relies very heavily on students' willingness to engage with one another and build a true community.
- I wish students would talk with each other more.
- I think advisory should be a place to hang out and get to know your peers.
- Advisory is my favorite class, and I wish we had it everyday.
- I wish we did more team building fun activities. I think the time could be used more efficiently for cool activities.
- I wish we got to have advisory discussions more.
- I think that if a student is uncomfortable within an advisory that that defeats the benefits of advisory and they should be allowed to move advisories. Within reason of course.

### PFFS-Downtown

- I like advisory but it isn't super duper extremely helpful. (It is helpful though!)
- The problem isn't my advisor, it's the other students (regarding disruptive behavior).
- It is getting boring.
- Advisory shouldn't just be another time we do even more work, it should at least be fun if we are doing an important activity.
- It can sometimes feel like a bit of a break time, which can be nice.

### PFFS-University

- I think advisory is one of the best places to talk and discuss things.
- It is fun but I don't always get help from my advisor.
- School would be so much different without advisory. I feel that all school should have advisory. It is such a good feeling to know that you are with a group of people you know are there for you.

# Conclusions and Looking Forward

Overall, advisories varied a lot both between and within all three schools. Some were very structured, while others were more laid-back. Some teachers and students wanted less structure, but on the whole most wanted more guidance. Overall, the feedback about advisory was positive with some suggestions for improvement.

