

Ingham Impact Episode 18 - High School Diploma Completion Initiative Video Transcript

HSDCI stands for High School Diploma Completion Initiative; it's a program for those who

don't necessarily work with the natural high school vibe.

It throws you into a college experience.

You definitely have to grow up, and it's

not the easy route.

You learn how to work on a college campus with college instructors.

You start your first semester out in restricted classes, which means you're only

with HSDCI instructors, and you're only with HSDCI students, and in these classes, they

work with you to help you grow, not only as a person but in your education.

And you're getting high school credit and college credit, which is awesome because,

if you're like me where, when I started HSDCI, my senior year had already ended,

you don't fall behind quite as much.

The High School Diploma Completion Initiative,
otherwise known as HSDCI, is a program

at Lansing Community College that's a
collaboration between the college as well

as Ingham and Eaton County traditional
high school partners.

We've been at the college for just over 10
years; I've served as director for five years.

Currently, we have an enrollment of 40
students, so we're a pretty small learning

community, which provides an opportunity
for students who had dropped out, disconnected,

or are struggling in traditional systems.

It gives them the opportunity to come to
LCC, earn their diploma, and also valuable

college credit and experiences.

I have a friend who came because she just
wasn't fitting into what high school needed;

she needed more of a support system in the school that she wasn't getting;

she was getting lost. I have friends here who are in the program because

they got bullied. All of our stories are very different, we all come from very

different backgrounds, but as corny as it sounds, we really are this huge family.

Our semester was super small too so we kind of became one person, that was the joke;

we all morphed into one human. Everyone has their own different story and something

new that they bring to the program.

This year, we actually have a whole cadre of support; they're called Academic Success

Coaches, and we have a few of those folks that are specifically assigned to support

our students. So, in the way of mentoring, it really is just about beginning to build

a relationship so that the students don't feel lost in this big system, which is a

brand new institution, and all the things that come along with navigating college

can be complex and confusing.

I went from barely showing up and failing all of my classes senior year, to I graduated,

I think, with a 3.7 or 3.6 GPA, and I graduated with 21 college credits, and eight

of those went towards my general associates.

We are more than blessed to have fantastic community partners with our Ingham and

our Eaton County partners. This opportunity is a direct result of collaboration between

our K-12 and higher education partners.

Kassondra wrapped up and earned her diploma our last complete semester, which for us

was spring. It's been amazing to watch her blossom and to make it through those

challenges and setbacks, and just not give up.

Even at the graduation celebration, just to see the joy of her mom and her family and

friends that were there to celebrate with her, was something that I'll never forget, and I

really do reflect on all of those celebrations that we have with the students.

And I think of, kind of the blood, sweat and tears throughout the semesters that

have gone through getting them there, and there's certainly no better way to recharge

your battery than to be a part of that.

You're worth it, and it is worth it, and it's overwhelming and scary at first. For me,

I had a lot of pressure walking in, but you'll have the support here, and it's

important to reach out: go to your counselors as your high school, ask them what the options

are, as them if there's an early college program you can do, or if there's something

like HSDCI. It's there, and they want to help,
they want you to be successful; no one

doesn't want a student to get a high school
diploma.

And as long as you believe in yourself,
a little bit, they'll get you there to

believing in yourself all the way, and
it's worth it.

Even if you don't need it and you see
someone else struggling, it's a good thing

to pass on because, like I said, there's not
a lot of knowledge about these kinds of

programs out there.

I hear a lot of the time "Oh, is it dual
enrollment?" No, it's not dual enrollment.

I'm on LCC's campus 24/7, but the knowledge
isn't out there, so spread the knowledge,

be an advocate if you're not in the program.

Learn about it so that you can help other

people get to the program that might need it.

END OF VIDEO