Objective

To give Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and city policy decision makers clear recommendations on how to improve graduation rates and better prepare students for the next stages of their life.

Recommendations

1. **Provide students with an ease of transition to college by equipping them with social support networks beginning in freshman year of high school**

   CPS should create more partnerships between the CPS schools and universities around the city and focus specifically on CPS schools with an increased amount of first-generation students. CPS schools should also allow alumni to come back to their former schools and become mentors. Alumni would provide their experiences, and support to students heading to similar colleges in order to ease the transition and create connections in the college of choice.

2. **Hire Teachers of Color to represent the diverse student population, so students can better connect with their Cultural Identity and Cultural Roots**

   In order for CPS’ diverse student body to be represented, they must create partnerships with statewide universities and colleges aiming to create more opportunities for students of color seeking to pursue a career in education, who would then work for CPS. CPS should actively seek to hire more teachers of color to adequately represent and meet the needs of its diverse student body.

3. **Provide CPS students with the life skills needed to graduate college successfully, in four years and be job ready**

   CPS should provide classes to every high school student in their senior year that teaches real life lessons. These classes would teach lessons on how to file taxes, how to build credit, how to find insurance providers, how to prepare for an interview-job and college, and how to write a resume and cover letter.

4. **Provide a more comprehensive education for high school students on how to understand the financial aid process of college readiness that includes after school programs that are revolved around financial aid**

   In the CPS system we need to find more ways to not only provide financial aid classes to the students in their school schedule but also provide after school workshops and programs for the student and parents. We need more resources for first generation, low income and undocumented students to be aware of all their financial aid resources.

5. **Provide students with counselors and teachers that are more effective and supportive in providing mental and emotional support to students’ needs inside and outside the classroom**

   Students can be helped by having the counselors and teachers go through mandatory training on how to support students’ personal needs inside and outside the classroom. We can also have peer student mediators, since students tend to respond better to other students their age. This will help counselors focus more on students that need help with the college process or students with serious mental issues.

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