

ENTRANCE INTERVIEWS: ASSISTANCE AND PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILIES AT THE IFS – CAMPUS TOBIAS BARRETO

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ABSTRACT

This experience report aimed to present the planning process, the strategies used, and the impact produced by the contact made through the initial interviews with the families and guardians of the students in the first class of the integrated High School in Administration. These interviews were conducted by the school psychologist and the social worker of IFS – Campus Tobias Barreto. Aspects such as listening and welcoming were essential for establishing the family-school bond and the partnership for a democratic, participatory school focused on the power of collectivity.

Keywords: school psychology; interview; families

Entrevistas de ingreso: acogimiento y asociación con familias en el IFS – Campus Tobias Barreto

RESUMEN

En el presente relato de experiencia se tuvo como objetivo presentar el proceso de planificación, las estrategias utilizadas y el impacto producido por el contacto realizado por intermedio de las entrevistas de ingreso con las familias y personas responsables por las/os estudiantes de la primera turma de la enseñanza secundaria integrado en administración. Esas entrevistas se realizaron por el psicólogo escolar y por la asistente social del IFS – Campus Tobias Barreto. Aspectos como escucha y acogimiento fueron esenciales para el establecimiento del vínculo familias-escuela y la asociación por una escuela democrática, participativa y enfocada en la potencia de la colectividad.

Palabras Clave: psicología escolar; entrevista; familias

Entrevistas de ingreso: acolhimento e parceria com famílias no IFS – Campus Tobias Barreto

RESUMO

O presente relato de experiência teve como objetivo apresentar o processo de planejamento, as estratégias utilizadas e o impacto produzido pelo contato realizado por meio das entrevistas de ingresso com as famílias e pessoas responsáveis pelas/os estudantes da primeira turma do Ensino Médio integrado em Administração. Essas entrevistas foram feitas pelo psicólogo escolar e pela assistente social do IFS – Campus Tobias Barreto. Aspectos como escuta e acolhimento foram essenciais para o estabelecimento do vínculo famílias-escola e a parceria por uma escola democrática, participativa e focada na potência da coletividade.

Palavras-chave: psicologia escolar; entrevista; famílias

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INTRODUCTION

The federal institutes of education are part of a network of education in which the objective is the integration of studies with the professional world, and the world of science and technology. In order to do so, courses are offered for initial and continued formation, high school level technical courses, as well as graduation and postgraduation courses in the technology area.

In Brazil, the Rede Federal de Educação Profissional e Tecnológica (Federal Network of Professional and Technological education) is made up of 661 units, connected to 38 Federal Institutes, 02 Federal Centers of Technological Education (Cefets), Federal Technological University of Paraná (UTFPR), 22 technical schools and Colégio Pedro II¹.

With the emerging expansion of the federal institutes in 2013 and the process of educational ruralization, the Sergipe Federal Institute created some campi in specific regions of the state, like in 2014, with the creation of *Campus* Tobias Barreto. The city is located in the countryside of the state, with a population of 50.905 inhabitants.²

Better known as the Embroidery Capital, the municipality of Tobias Barreto has commerce as its most important source of income. Based on local reality and its needs, the campus offers technical courses in commerce, computer science, and system development in subsequent and concomitant mode.

In the year 2022, however, the management of the campus realized an internal mobilization with the objective to offer the technical course of high school level in Administration in the integrated form – one of the flagships of the institution. After that, a Commission – with teachers from the technical course in commerce, a pedagogue, a librarian, a technician in educational affairs and members of the pro-rectory of Education – elaborated the Pedagogical Project of the Course, which was approved by the Superior Council by means of resolution CS/IFS Nº 167 de 01/12/2022.³

At this moment, a new reality “knocked on the door” of the institution. It would be necessary for the multidisciplinary team of the campus (psychologist, social assistant, pedagogue, technician in educational affairs, translator, libras interpreter, and psycho-pedagogue) to adopt new proposals and interventions. Thus, internal meetings were realized with the intention to observe the empty spaces, the needs, and the possibilities of practice for each professional in the process of course implantation.

¹ Available at: <http://portal.mec.gov.br/rede-federal-inicial/instituicoes>. Access on: Feb 16, 2024.

² Available at: <https://cidades.ibge.gov.br/brasil/se/tobias-barreto/panorama>. Access on: Mar 17, 2024.

³ Available at: https://www.ifs.edu.br/images/arquivos/Audint/audint/Documentos/BAC_2022/BAC_12.pdf. Access on: Mar 17, 2024.

In this sense, a major preoccupation of the multidisciplinary team was: how to keep students in the integrated high school and approach their guardians in order to combat school evasion that is present in the campus and that had already been discussed with the administration? The idea presented by the school psychologist was to realize entrance interviews with each family or guardian of the students, in order to get to know the family and educational reality while establishing partnerships and bonding with families and school.

Thus, the present study aims at presenting the planning and development of the entrance interview (Santos & Guilherme, 2021) with families and guardians of students in the first class of integrated high school in administration of the IFS – Campus Tobias Barreto. In addition, it is intended to describe the impact and the reverberations of such actions.

ASSISTANCE STRATEGIES, PARTNERSHIPS, AND THE CREATION OF CONNECTIONS WITH FAMILIES AND STUDENTS

At the IFS – Campus Tobias Barreto, the school psychologist is located in the Student Assistance Coordination. According to internal regulations on the function of this professional, its praxis consists of realizing works with groups of students, realizing actions for the promotion of health and the prevention of diseases, contributing with training for the formation of teachers, and acting in commissions/nuclei involving the specific needs and/or learning difficulties, etc.⁴

Nevertheless, from a macro perspective, professionals integrate a multidisciplinary team that is made up of a social assistant, a pedagogue, a technician in educational affairs, a psycho-pedagogue and a translator/interpreter of libras. Although they practice in different departments/coordinations, assistance and deliberations are realized in combination by means of weekly meetings, so that internal demands that are related to psychosocial intervention, psycho-pedagogical assistance and the development of students happened in accordance with different perspectives/conceptions regarding the same phenomenon.

The realized work aims at a taking a distance from the pathologizing and individualizing conception of the processes that involve teaching-learning. The team intends to understand the school context, the community, the social actors that are involved for the formation and development of students and conceive “school as a space that reflects the influences of the socio-historical and cultural context, and contains the necessary elements for the sake of the constitution of an emancipated individual who is active and able to think critically while constructing his own history” (Silva & Aquino, 2023, p. 5).

⁴ Activities outlined by the Pro-rectory of Personnel Management in collaboration with the professionals of the institution.

Thus, great demand for discussions and possibilities for practice in 2023.1 was caused by the insertion of high school and administration in the campus. What would be the strategies that the team employed to work with this new type of student? Was the campus ready to receive them? What would be necessary?

As part of the present reality, the first step was to analyze matters of practical and/or bureaucratic order and that were referred to the pedagogical administration, by means of a technical decision of the multidisciplinary team while listing points that deserved attention, such as school transportation (the campus is located in an area that is quite distant), sports facilities, cafeteria, uniforms, hiring of teachers in the propaedeutic area, pedagogical material, etc.

The second strategy was the creation of a style of intervention that had not been used in the campus before: the interviews with the families – described here as entrance interviews (Santos & Guilherme, 2021). The work with families is considered in literature as important practice and resource of school psychology for the creation of a space that is conducive to dialogue and connection, approximation between families and institution, support for the eradication of school evasion, knowledge of the family dynamics that might impact the education of all students and school life in general (Albuquerque & Aquino, 2021; Burgos, Inácio, Oliveira, & Baptista, 2021; Cavalcante & Aquino, 2019).

Thus, aiming at a collaboration with families and guardians, after the public offering of vacancies for 40 students in the institution, the school psychologist sent a congratulations message via WhatsApp to the Student Assistance Coordination, informing the result and inviting students to go to the IFS with the documentation that was described in the first notice (time, place, date etc.) for enrollment. The work of approximation, of orientation and of creation of a feeling of affiliation to the new institution were the most important reasons for the choice of this third strategy.

The next stage was the elaboration of a shared timetable with the names and appointments for each family and the type of meeting: onsite or remote (using *WhatsApp* or *Meet* as platforms). The proposal took into consideration the impossibility for some people to go as far as the campus or accomplish some tasks due to geographical distances.

Thus, the professionals realized the individual contact with parents, guardians, the students themselves, with the objective to set a time and mode that was compatible with the needs and realities of these families. Thus, 30 guardians went up to the campus and 10 other chose the remote version of the conversation.

The meetings or interviews were primarily focused on assistance; understood as “action of approximation, a “being with” and a “being close”, that is, an attitude of inclusion (Brasil, 2010, p.6)! in order to do so, the

following specific objectives were delimited: getting better acquainted with the new students, presenting the work realized by the IFS, obtaining information on the lives of each student, introducing newcomers to the IFS premises, and strengthening the connection between families and the IFS. In order to do so, a semi-directed script of questions was listed by the psychologist and by the social assistance in order to identify aspects of great relevance for future interventions according to Santos and Guilherme (2021) on the aforementioned methodology.

As part of the reception, the psychologist and the social assistant were very careful in the choice of spaces for assisting families, in aspects such as air conditioning, location of the room, comfortable environment, adequate light etc. Thus, the conversation in both modes, started with a rapport, or a break-the-ice moment, introductions and acknowledgements. Then, the psychologist and the social assistant presented the objective of the meeting, requesting families to share their expectations regarding the work that the IFS would realize in the learning process of each student.

Some of the aspects that were mentioned were the relationship of the student with family, school and friends, remarkable characteristics of the students and their grades. In addition, the identification of assistances realized by professionals from other areas (medicine, clinical psychology, psycho-pedagogy, neurology, hearing and speech therapy, etc.) was a theme in the meeting with the objective to strengthen bonds and get a better understanding of the needs for assistance, interventions, continued formation for teachers. At this moment, four students with special needs were identified and contact with professional help was later realized, with the permission of the interviewees, for the orientation of the teachers and provision of assistance for students in the institution.

The aspects related to work, habitation, received benefits, and family situation were relevant information for the comprehension and social analysis of these families, as well as the necessity to plan actions that are related to the strengthening of connections and the intervention by the public administration if it was necessary. Most importantly, it led to an initial view of the socioeconomic situation of families, as well as to an identification of students who needed financial support as a strategy for permanence in the course.

Then, the two professionals informed participants on matters that were related to the inner workings of the course, uniforms, possibility for benefits, formation of the multidisciplinary team, and the way assistance to students was realized. The greatest concern was always connected to the offering of a welcoming environment, as sensible, unprejudiced attention. That is the reason why parents felt free to question things and make their point regarding the IFS, its efforts and expectations.

Parents and guardians reported that the students were very studious and were eager to start the course. They emphasized the importance of the work realized and demonstrated how much the invitation and the conversation were essential for the realized work, the type of assistance that would be offered to their children and felt relieved when they got to know the preoccupation of the institution with the wellbeing of each student.

At the end of the interview, the guardians who visited the campus were invited to get to know the spaces in the institution: classroom, computer science, library, departments and so on. The telephone number was shared so that further questions could be answered and communication could be kept. Finally, handshakes and hugs sealed the new partnership.

After that, on the first day of class, at least one guardian of each one of the 39 students attended the meeting. It was the moment for a second encounter with the whole team (other professionals in the multidisciplinary team and the integrated high school teachers). Considering the positive feedback, manifested by the presence of the parents and guardians, we observed the importance of assistance as a strategy for approximation at school with the families and with the contribution by the school psychologist in this process.

Albuquerque and Aquino (2021) emphasize the mediating role played by the school psychologist with the families since the first day of class, with the objective to understand the demands of learning, the expectations of guardians, the roles played by the family and school, as well as the creation/strengthening the connection between the two institutions. In this aspect, previous information led to the planning of efficient actions after the first assistance that will produce new meanings and relations.

In this sense, we highlight the reflections by Macedo (2018) in which the author demonstrates the importance of the creation of spaces where people can ask questions and get help, and the consequent strengthening of the role played by families in the construction of the students' learning process.

CONCLUSION

The present work had the objective to present the process of planning and development of the entrance interview in the integrated high school course in administration – an experience that was realized as part of the attributions of the school psychologist and the social assistant in the Tobias Barreto Campus.

It was possible to notice how important the work realized with the families and guardians is important for the opening of a collective effort. In agreement with

this Oliveira, Ramos and Souza (2020) emphasize the importance of a partnerships with psychologists in the relations at the school community.

The used strategies (messages, remote and onsite bookings, availability for conversations, presentation of the campus etc.) led to the creation of “bridges” with the intention to promote conversations in order to respond to the need of the target public. The conversation was fundamental in the creation of an emotional connection so that participants could feel comfortable in the space.

Finally, it is important to highlight that the assistance and the partnerships led not only to the creation of a professional connection with guardians, in addition to engagement for a democratic school, that was participative and focused on the power of collectiveness.

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Submitted on: May 24, 2024

Approved on: July 28, 2025

This paper was translated from Portuguese by Régis Lima.

Section editor: Silvia Maria Cintra da Silva

Data availability: the author declares that the set of data in the study is not available for the general public because it contains information that might lead to the identification of participants.