

P-20 Council Meeting Notes

Buena Vista Conference Center

Thursday, July 29, 2010

- Dr. Teri Quinn Gray welcomed Council members. She provided an overview of the strategic planning process to this date. She explained that the Council began the conversation in October and that the work of the P-20 Council is focused on transitions. The question we have been addressing in the strategic planning process is, “How do we, as a Council, facilitate those transitions?” In March, work sessions were conducted to take a look at the areas addressed in the Governor’s Education Blueprint and Delaware’s Race to the Top application:
 1. Standards & Assessments
 2. Turning Around Low Achieving Schools
 3. Great Teachers and Leaders
 4. Data Systems

Council members need to continue this process keeping in mind the question, “How do we facilitate and execute on those areas aligned with the Governor’s Education Blueprint?” The Council came back together in April and came to the consensus that transitions are key in the P-20 pipeline and this is where P-20 can make a unique contribution to the work. It was also decided that the Council should focus on research. Members posed the question, “How can the Council membership work together to accelerate what we know is best in terms of initiatives such as increasing graduation rates, improving college success, ensuring students a good start in Pre-K, and preparing for success in what you do in college, after college and post graduate. At the conclusion of the April meeting, it was agreed that we needed to bring back the subcommittees to discuss where they are and how they align with and help the Council leverage our current initiatives. From that reporting, the Council will build a strategic plan and pool resources and talent around the table. The plan could be “off the chart” great with this type of collaboration around the table. The Council must communicate effectively, have clear accountability and be about execution and results.

- Dr. Quinn Gray then noted that there were new members at the table. Introductions were made around the table. Dr. Nancy Brickhouse was introduced as the new University of Delaware representative, and Dr. Alton Thompson was welcomed as the replacement for Dr. Harry Williams as the Delaware State University representative.
- Dr. Lowery provided the group with an overview of the status of Delaware’s Race to the Top (RTTT) work. She stated that they are running as fast as they can and added that it is a good run. This grant provides many possibilities for the state of Delaware. This funding will enable us to do more quickly. Dr. Lowery told the Council members that they are important ambassadors and that it is important that they understand the work underway. She explained that 90 days after award on March 9 LEAs (districts and charter schools) had to write individual scopes of work. On April 9th state leaders met with representatives from US DOE. The state followed up with a statewide workshop and three additional county level workshops. In the application, there are 12 areas in our

scope of work. It is required that all work LEAs include in their plans must comport with that scope of work. LEAs will choose from 12 statewide scope of work the four or five, which will be their focus recognizing that they have to touch on all 12.

The districts have worked hard to develop plans. In April, the Department of Education met with districts and charter schools regarding the scopes of work. These meetings included representation from local boards of education, local union affiliates, teachers, school leaders and superintendents. They pulled it together and all teams participated in every part of the development of district scopes of work. We are committed to being transparent. The districts did what we asked and we gave feedback. We talked them through the good and bad, with both written and oral feedback. We ran their data for them so that they had their data to help them know where to spend their time. Districts were given a June 18 deadline. However, we were getting the same kinds of success plans we were getting year after year. We were advised to fully fund the best plans, fund the mediocre plans only where they were good, and not to fund the ones that did not meet expectations, but we did not believe that would work in DE. Those preparing the plans did not really know how to do what we were asking them to do. If we took that stance, we believe that people would walk away from the table just when we need them at the table. The business community got behind us and offered support so that the school personnel could visit places to see some of these strategies in action such as the Harlem Children's Zone, Hillsboro, FL with teacher leader work, etc. We decided that the best approach for Delaware would be to implement a year of change management, so we submitted a request to US DOE. If we want this to be sustainable, people need to know and understand what RTTT is. Districts needed time to educate their school board and their community. We found that only about 30% had a 50,000 ft view. This change management year allows for a year of education at the local level. There are tough options associated with RTTT and people have to understand the sense of urgency and why those options are viable options. Districts really have 6 months to the Dec/Jan period. They are being asked to provide a revised plan no later than January. In additions, we are taking the business community up on their offer for support and USDOE said they want to practice what they preach by providing technical assistance as we work through this. If the revised plan is not more creative and address outcomes in a meaningful way they won't get funded in years 2, 3 and 4. We have given them the help, and they have to step up to the plate. If we do not take this approach, we are using a formulaic funding process and that will not get us where we need to be. It would not have been fair to do this right off the start, but this is fair.

Dr. Lowery discussed the capacity at DOE to accomplish this work. She shared information about the newly formed Project Management Office. Jim Palmer was hired to head the Project Management Accountability Unit, a young man from Miami Dade with a specialty in Human Capital was hired to lead the Teacher and Leader Unit and conversations are under way to hire a high school principal from within the state of Delaware to run the turn-around office. The Department is currently in the process of interviewing people who will be working in those offices. We are building capacity within the Department and have received help from Broad Foundation. They have supplied an Intern for whom we pay ½ the salary and they pay ½. I need good people in here doing this work. We have also hired Lisa Bishop as assistant to the Secretary. She is from Maryland and has a great deal of experience

in a variety of areas. We will also have two data analysts from the Center for Education reform at Harvard University to work with us with faculty advisor from Harvard. Again, they will pay ½ of the costs and we will pay ½. The USDOE believes this to be a great idea. They approved the plan last week and are in the process of releasing the Race to the Top funds. The plans that were submitted were not totally strong and we wanted to push for a little bit more. All the districts are still at the table. It is the Delaware way to give people time to collaborate and think about things. We feel very good about the process.

Dr. Lowery went on to state that we have to do a better job of communicating the complexity that is RTTT. To that end, Delaware has hired an outside consultant with experience in education public relations to help us craft and shape our message so that WE are telling our story and so that rumor and innuendo are not getting in the way of the facts.

The Governor has made great progress on the issue of due process protections for new teachers. Delaware has a good evaluation system that needs to have a little teeth added to it. If a teacher does not achieve student growth in two of the first three years of teaching, the teacher cannot be granted tenure. In addition, a teacher cannot be label “effective” if they do not demonstrate student growth. “Student Growth” is in the process of being defined with the help of DSEA and other key stakeholders.

Subcommittee Progress Reports

- Early Childhood Subcommittee progress report was provided by Dr. Dan Rich, University of Delaware professor of public policy and Chair of the Delaware Early Childhood Council (ECC) He sent greetings from Mr. Paul Harrell who was unable to attend. This Council serves as the P-20 subcommittee on early childhood education. The Early Childhood Council has been reconfigured with a revised mandate since the last legislative session in ways that respond to federal guidelines and to the need for a stronger policy focus in the years ahead. The members of the new Early Childhood Council have been recommended to the Governor for appointment in August, with the first meeting of the new Council scheduled for September 16th. The Interagency Resource Management Council (IRMC) through which the Council reports to the Governor and General Assembly also has been modified in legislative code to update its responsibilities for the development of a comprehensive system of early childhood care and education and to include the chair of the Early Childhood Council as an ex officio member.. There is a new provision in the revised legislation that the ECC will have a subcommittee on higher education. Dr. Rich proposed that the P-20 Council would recommend the members of the subcommittee on higher education, thereby having that subcommittee serve as a link between the ECC and the P-20 Council. He asked that each institution represented at the table identify the person from their institution who they wish to be their representative on the ECC committee. He indicated that the working plan for the Early Childhood Council is incorporated in a grant proposal being submitted by the Department of Education on behalf of the state to the U.S. Head Start office. This money would support the ECC’s next set of initiatives.

Dr. Rich called two major points to the attention of the Council. First, the gains from RTTT that will be substantial will not be sustainable if we don't change the front end of early childhood which is defined as 0-8 years. And secondly, as the P-20 Council focuses on transitions, he believes the most challenging transition is Pre-K to K-12. He illustrated his point with the following remarks.

Just to name a few, at the Pre-K to K-12 transition we are combining:

- a Pre-K system that is entirely voluntary with a K-12 compulsory system
- a Pre-K system that is mostly private with a K-12 system that is mostly public
- a Pre-K system that is predominantly babysitting with a K-12 system focused on education

He concluded by stating the two systems are not consistent for all of the reasons just mentioned and more. Further, the key policy and program elements impacting early care and education in Delaware (and virtually all other states) are not aligned with one another and were never intended to be. In Delaware, there are over 50 different programs/policies on early childhood cutting across three major departments that were not developed with any overall systems thinking to align objectives and outcomes. He illustrated the point by sharing that the responsibility for establishing quality standards lies with DOE, but responsibility for licensing of facilities and programs lies with KIDS Department, and most of the public money resides in DHSS. And each of these agencies operate with totally different guidelines. They were never designed to be integrated, so there is no alignment between policies of various departments. The Policy Matters Task Force led by co-chairs Lt. Governor Matt Denn and Connie Bond Stuart (PNC) identified strengthening governance and alignment as their number one priority.

The Early Childhood Council will have the responsibility for evaluating and proposing initiatives aligned with the State's strategic plan (Early Success 2006) through the IRMC. This group is now comprised of the Secretaries of the three key Cabinet agencies as well as the Budget Director, Comptroller General, and ECC Chair, serving ex officio. Until March of this year, however, the IRMC had not met for 2 ½ years and did not function for 8 years. The ECC morphed from being what it was conceived to be as a State planning and policy council into a loose statewide assembly that held a series of large meetings (40-50) where information would be shared. It served a very useful function in creating a statewide early childhood network. We should preserve and grow that network. Secretary Lowery called for the meetings of the IRMC to resume last March. The second one was held last Monday. The IRMC is functioning and back in business. The DE Code referring to the Early Childhood Council has been changed to reflect modifications required to align with federal guidelines under Head Start. A copy of the revised code was distributed.

Dr. Rich went on to share that the state will be submitting a proposal for a federal Head Start grant today. The proposal defines a work plan that will start shaping what the council will be doing in the beginning of its new incarnation in September. The grant will provide Delaware with more than \$500,000. The key elements of the work plan are:

- Conduct needs assessment statewide in early care in education

- Development of an updated strategic plan that would go from the Council to IRMC
- Development and maintenance of a website with full access to the information regarding what the state and others are providing in terms of services
- Develop proposals for improved program and policy alignment
- Contribute to a unified data system...0-20
 - Integration across agencies and Departments
 - Pooled with other funds including RTTT

Dr. Rich will work with the newly formed committee in September/October and will be able to present a first draft of their plan with proposed outcomes and measures at the October 28th meeting of the P-20 Council.

- The Delaware's Promise Dropout Prevention Subcommittee progress report was presented by Dr. Judi Coffield, Policy Analyst to the State Board and Chair of the subcommittee.

The goal of this subcommittee is to improve high school completion rates. The 10-year goal is that 90% of Delaware's youth, as calculated using the NGA graduation rate methodology, will be graduating from high school ready for post secondary education and/or training.

Dr. Coffield reviewed the Subcommittee's Action Plan that was developed in March of 2008 and then reviewed the current status of each item. She also reviewed the group's accomplishments and recommendations for next steps. Dr. Coffield distributed a copy of the RELM-A report entitled Creating an Early Warning System: Predictors of Dropout in Delaware. (A copy of the report is available on the P-20 website.) In addition, she shared for internal purposes only, a copy of a draft proposal to set Delaware Graduation Targets and Benchmarks based upon our long term goals. This study would answer the research question: *How many students would be needed to get Delaware from its current graduation rate to its goal and what does that mean for individual districts and schools?*

Please see the attached progress report.

- The Delaware College Access Network (DECAN) Subcommittee progress report was presented by Dr. Judi Coffield, Policy Analyst to the State Board and member of the subcommittee. The subcommittee chair, Dr. Joseph Pika was unable to attend. Dr. Pika is stepping down as chair, and a new chair is being sought.

Dr. Coffield reviewed the charge of the subcommittee which is to strengthen the preparation of public school students in Delaware to ensure their college readiness and ability to succeed in work readiness programs, as well as degree completion from two- and four-year college degree programs. Simply stated, the charge of DECAN is to expand the population of Delawareans attending and completing college.

DECAN Goals

1. Develop and Strengthen Public Support for Increasing Academic Rigor

2. Support Student Access to a State-wide Network of College Preparatory Activities
3. Develop a Community-wide Academic Support Infrastructure
4. Use data to measure student access and success in higher education
5. Develop a financial plan to support DECAN

Dr. Coffield distributed the DECAN Higher Education Subcommittee's report "*Increasing the number of Delawareans who Pursue and Complete Postsecondary Education*" that recommends strategies for higher education in their efforts to increase persistence and completion rates.

Please see the attached progress report.

Strategic Planning Discussion

Fran Fletcher, University of Delaware, then facilitated a discussion based upon the information presented by the subcommittees and the focus areas identified in previous meetings. The conversation focused around the question, "What is it that the P-20 Council can do to enhance, accelerate, and support the various stakeholder groups' efforts?" It was clear that the Council members agreed that research, advocacy and accountability around transitions were key components for the P-20 framework. They then reflected upon the existing subcommittees to determine if they are the correct subcommittees. Are they still needed and if so, are they doing what we need them to do? The group was asked to consider the question: "What does everyone in this room need P-20 to do to help them reach their goals?"

The group discussed being at a crossroad and that perhaps it was time to rethink the current structure. It was agreed that the P-20 Council no longer needs its own subcommittee on Early Childhood because the Early Childhood Council will serve as that committee. The group discussed whether it made sense to consider shifting our vantage point and no longer focus on DECAN and Dropouts in specific areas, but rather across areas/grade levels. The new focus would be on retention, completion and persistence across all levels. We could use the Council's collective influence for legislation, policy, etc. There was clarification that accountability did not mean policing, but rather how do I take this back to my stakeholder group in my role as SBE President? ...as Chair of Early Childhood? ...as University representative? It was also discussed that the Council could help agencies/stakeholders agree on overarching goals, but not mandate specific solutions. The group felt that there are some general principles we will agree to adhere to for common issues we face. The group felt that there is nothing wrong with being prescriptive on areas that cut across all agencies and felt that they are the best ones to come to those conclusions. This is especially important at transitions points not owned by an individual entity. We need collaboration and co ownership of the issues and solutions. Ultimately, the P-20 Council can be a powerful lobby around advocacy because of its eclectic and powerful group composition. Many felt that what gets measured gets done and that we should spend some time thinking about the longitudinal data system (LDS). This is where research, accountability, and advocacy meet. If we are going to do the kind of policy work we hope to take on, the LDS can really be the backbone of the work. Another suggestion was that the Provosts' Subcommittee

could take on much of the work currently under the charge of the DECAN Subcommittee with a focus on persistence and success across the entire P-20 spectrum.

Next Steps

- The two remaining subcommittees, Data and Transfer of Credit Matrix, will be invited to report out at the October P-20 Council meeting.
- We will summarize today's conversation.
- Conduct a virtual conversation to come to consensus.
 - Figure out where we are around our unique opportunity to influence the work.
 - What can we do to enhance and inform the education reform in this state?
 - Determine what is it we need to do to move forward from current state.
 - What can P20 do in re: to the RTTT initiatives? Can we play the role of a RTTT Advocacy Committee?

Attachments

- 1. DECAN Progress Report**
- 2. Delaware's Promise Progress Report**

**Delaware College Access Network (DECAN)
Subcommittee of the P-20 Council
July 2010**

Charge

The primary mission of DECAN is to strengthen the preparation of public school students in Delaware to ensure their college readiness and ability to succeed in work readiness programs, as well as degree completion from two- and four-year college degree programs. Stated most simply, the goal of DECAN is to expand the population of Delawareans attending and completing college.

DECAN Goals

1. Develop and Strengthen Public Support for Increasing Academic Rigor
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Action Plan (Developed 3/28/08):

- 1) Define the skills and knowledge students need to be successful after high school
 - a. Academic- middle school & high school (Build on work already completed by DEDOE to increase the rigor of the curriculum; graduation requirements; alignment with post-secondary; math, language arts, literacy, science, etc. Be as specific as possible);
 - b. Financial—financial literacy in general (e.g., credit cards); financing college; financial impacts of NOT going to college; others?
 - c. Social—define post-secondary readiness (study skills, peer pressures, time management?)
- 2) Outline the programs that are in place in Delaware that support students in acquiring these specific skills and knowledge (Much of this has already been started)
- 3) Identify priority areas of need. Who needs targeted help academically, financially, socially? REL Mid-Atlantic’s data compilation, to be presented at DECAN’s next meeting, will start to frame some of this. Examines trends in achievement, trends in demographic changes, trends in post secondary access etc in Delaware by student subgroups.
- 4) Develop communication channels. For each priority group, determine an effective means of communicating with those students, families, school staff, IHEs, etc. Answer the Questions: Who will be the messenger? How will the message be spread? What will the message be? Keep It Simple. Develop Networks—e.g., Rodel’s programs, schools, IHEs, community organizations (Boys and Girls Club, 4-H) etc.
- 5) Develop Measurable Goals (and baseline measures now)—examples

- a. Increase number of students in on- and off-campus pre-collegiate programs (need to specify by how much over what time period.)
 - b. Increase number of students attending 2 and 4-year DE colleges.
 - c. Increase number of students taking AP/dual enrollment courses
 - d. Increase number of students taking specific rigorous courses
 - e. Increase number of student using Student Success plan
 - f. Increase graduation rate (reduce dropout rates)
 - g. Increase other support program participation (see Barriers to College Access table)
 - h. Others....
- 6) Develop timelines
 - 7) Identify Staff to run/oversee program.
 - 8) Identify components that need funding
 - a. Staff
 - b. Administration
 - c. Data analysis
 - d. Communication (electronic, website maintenance, paper, meetings, trainings)
 - e. Other?

Accomplishments

The action plan developed by DECAN accomplished the following:

- Strengthen college preparation – a major component of this work was accomplished when the State Board of Education raised graduation requirements following an evaluation of Delaware’s graduation standards conducted by Achieve Inc. Institutions of higher education have been asked to clarify their admission standards to reflect these changes. The University of Delaware’s *Commitment to Delawareans* has led this effort.
- Prerequisites for student success – Discussions among representatives of the state’s higher education institutions have identified both the academic mastery and social skills necessary for student success in college. Providing more explicit guidance to middle and high schools about what students need to succeed will help with retention and completion rates, though more can be done by the higher eds, as well. Higher Education Subcommittee drafted a report with recommendations.
- Build public understanding – Under the leadership of the Department of Education, the state has launched a campaign to build public understanding of both the possibility and desirability of students’ attending college. A grant from the National Governors Association created the “Yes You Can campaign,” an awareness campaign targeted at high school students. This effort now needs to be made a part of the comprehensive *Workforce 21st Century* campaign called for by Governor Markell. In addition, DECAN facilitated the planning and implementation of the June 24, 2010 “Navigating the Path to College” Conference held at DSU and funded through the College Access Challenge Grant awarded to the Department of Education.
- Single web portal – The DECAN group has made major progress toward designing a single state web portal to provide families with the information they need to pursue college. This effort needs to be meshed with that created through the state Treasurer’s office.

- Dual Credit opportunities – Consistent with the *Blueprint’s* call to expand student opportunities to earn college credits while in high school, other subcommittees of the P-20 have made progress in developing a common course matrix across the state’s HEIs and several HEIs have expanded efforts to provide high schools students with dual credit opportunities.
- Reach underrepresented populations – DECAN has designed a multi-tiered outreach strategy targeted on populations that have been underrepresented in post-secondary programs and that are likely to include high percentages of first-generation college students. Statewide, the middle and high school population is 87,000 and will receive information through the Yes You Can Campaign (Tier I efforts). We estimate that approximately 29,000 of these students require explicit, group-targeted efforts to encourage and facilitate the pursuit of a college education (Tier II). Another 14,000 require “high-touch” services that are best delivered through partnerships between schools and community groups to reach underrepresented populations (Tier III). As the initial step toward launching this comprehensive effort, we launched a pilot program built around Tier II and Tier III in targeted areas in each county.

Recommended Next Steps

1. Make college access and degree completion an explicit statewide goal supported by a broad coalition. **We propose that the Secretaries of Education and Labor, as well as the Director of the Delaware Development Office guide the future work of DECAN to make Delaware #1 in the region and the nation.** This would be a critical step in advancing the “Workforce 21st Century” effort that Governor Markell articulated during the campaign that would link the work already accomplished by DECAN to the efforts of related departments, particularly Labor and the Delaware Development Office.
2. **Authorize a pilot project targeted on three communities in the state where research shows a three-tiered strategy is needed in order to make a difference.** The three schools we propose to approach as partners are McCollough Middle School in Colonial S.D. (declined), Bayard Middle School in Christina S.D.; Central Middle School in Capital S.D.; Laurel Middle School in Laurel S.D. The analysis conducted based on census tracts identified these as three “hot-spots” of low college attendance and high family need of coordinated efforts.
3. **Create a statewide effort** based on lessons learned from the three pilots designed to move Delaware to the lead position on measures of college access and completion.

Membership

Consistent with these objectives, DECAN’s membership includes representatives from a wide range of stakeholders.

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Subcommittee of the P-20 Council
July 2010**

Charge

This committee was established by the co-chairs of the P-20 Council to sustain the work begun with Delaware's America's Promise Dropout Prevention Grant. The goal of the grant was to improve high school completion rates. This committee's charge is to implement the Action Plan developed through the America's Promise grant activities. The plan includes actions to increase awareness, encourage and facilitate collaboration and facilitate action across agencies, within districts and in communities to improve graduation rates.

DE's Promise Vision & Goals

All of the youth of the state of Delaware will graduate from high school ready for post secondary education/training, work, and life. The 10-year goal is that 90% of Delaware's youth, as calculated using the NGA graduation rate methodology, will be graduating from high school ready for post secondary education and/or training.

Strengthening Schools- Delaware will see increased centralized oversight and collaboration among dropout prevention entities in support of public schools. Delaware will increase its ability to identify and target areas and populations with low graduation rates and provide support and resources to schools.

Supporting Students- Delaware will become proficient in identifying individuals at risk for dropping out, starting in early childhood programs. Supports will be provided, including but not limited to the services of community based dropout prevention entities, dual enrollment/credit opportunities and real life experiences to provide job and life training and enhance student motivation and understanding of higher education and workforce expectations.

Building Effective Policies- Delaware will expand the role of the Department of Education in dropout prevention oversight and coordination. A Dropout Prevention Advisory Board will be formed to ensure the path forward of dropout prevention initiatives and support to schools in Delaware.

Employing Data Systems- Delaware will become proficient in identifying individuals at risk for dropping out, starting in early childhood programs. Supports will be provided, including but not limited to the services of community based dropout prevention entities, dual enrollment/credit opportunities and real life experiences to provide job and life training and enhance student motivation and understanding of higher education and workforce expectations.

Action Plan:

- 1. Inventory & evaluation of current efforts-**

- 1.1. Who in Delaware is working on dropout prevention and what are they doing?
 - 1.2. Evaluation of outcomes/effectiveness and/or use of best practices methodology
 - 1.2.1. Regional Education Lab
 - 1.2.2. United Way
 - 1.2.3. Self-Assessment Tools (review those currently available and adapt or adopt one)
 - 1.3. Develop & disseminate technical assistance and professional development resources grounded in research-based best practices to address gaps in current practice and to promote capacity building for teachers, building administrators, community based organizations and others.
- 2. Develop a dropout risk assessment tool for district and school use by tapping into the Data Warehouse with specific queries.**
- 2.1. Develop the queries and user interface for the tool.
 - 2.2. Develop and disseminate technical assistance and professional development on the use of the tool.
 - 2.3. Once we are able to identify vulnerable students based upon proven indicators, take preventative action. (See a, iii above: Develop & disseminate technical assistance and professional development resources to address gaps in best practice and capacity building) for teachers, building administrators, community based organizations and others.
- 3. Communication/Collaboration Across agencies (DOL, Kids Dept., etc) and with community partners and non-profits**
- 3.1. Discuss with other Cabinet Secretaries to ensure their awareness of the dropout issue and the economic impact. Establish a partnership in the effort to address the crisis.
 - 3.2. Agree upon and send common key messages (call to action, economic impact, stats...)
 - 3.3. Look for efficiencies by reduction in the duplication of efforts
 - 3.4. Share relevant data
 - 3.5. Share best practices for replication

Accomplishments

The action plan developed by DE's Promise accomplished the following:

- DE's Promise conducted an online survey of a variety of providers, non-profits and other community based organizations to develop an inventory of current dropout prevention efforts. The survey results have limitations and should be cautiously interpreted; however, they could provide some basis for decision making around next steps. Results of the survey indicated:
 - More providers address students at the high school level than the middle school level.
 - Approximately half of those who responded stated that they were **NOT** using a scientifically research-based or outcome-based program.

- Of those who responded to the survey, most indicated their programs focus on prevention and intervention.
- Of those who responded to the survey and indicated their program focused on prevention- homework assistance, tutoring and social skills were most frequently cited interventions/strategies.
- Of those who responded to the survey and indicated their program focused on intervention- mentoring, behavior management and life-skills training were most frequently cited interventions/strategies.
- Of those who responded to the survey and indicated their program focused on credit recovery- teacher directed interventions were most frequently cited interventions/strategies. Several respondents indicated that their programs were utilizing computer based credit recovery options (ex: Plato, Novel) and Twilight Programs.
- Nearly 80% of the respondents indicated that their programs did not charge students a fee to participate/were NOT fee based.
- Through a partnership with the Regional Education Lab Mid-Atlantic (RELM-A) an historical analysis of key indicators of dropout for Delaware students in grades 9-12 was conducted using data housed in the longitudinal data system. Relationships between student dropout and several student indicators were empirically evaluated. Cut points for key risk indicators of high school dropout for the State of Delaware were provided. Using the predictors and cut points identified in the study, a dropout early warning system (DEWS) for students at-risk for dropping out was developed.
- The DECAN Subcommittee developed a grant proposal for the NGA Graduation for All Grant. Although the state was not awarded the grant, our proposal was recognized for its quality. The grantors stated that Delaware is well on its way to addressing the dropout problem, and has a very good data system, so it is likely to accomplish all activities regardless of the grant. However, in recognition of the strength of our proposal, we were one of a handful of states invited to participate in two opportunities to help Delaware continue to harness the energy in our state around increasing high school graduation and college readiness rates. We sent a team of policy leaders to participate in two learning opportunities from America's Promise Alliance (APA) and the American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF). These sessions provided resources and tools to support our efforts to end the dropout crisis.
 - Delaware sent a team to in a fact-finding trip to Boston, Massachusetts on March 24-26, 2010. This trip was organized by AYPF in partnership with APA and NGA. This trip offered an opportunity to engage in substantive policy discussions with key leaders about critical issues related to dropout prevention and recovery and to participate in strategically designed and intensive visits to research-proven programs that reengage at-risk youth. Sessions on this trip included a conversation with Secretary of Education Paul Reville, a panel discussion with members of the Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission and visits to nationally recognized dropout recovery programs.
 - The second opportunity was an invite-only technical assistance training sponsored by America's Promise Alliance in partnership with the Everyone Graduates Center at John Hopkins University and NGA. This training provided an

opportunity to move from action planning to implementation. Top national experts and leading practitioners provided technical assistance and guidance to invited teams. This training took place in Arlington, Virginia on April 22-23, 2010. Topics addressed included implementing dropout early-warning systems; developing state dropout communication initiatives; and creating effective business partnerships.

- Communications and Outreach Efforts
 - Yes You Can! Website
 - RELM-A Bridge Event on Dropout Prevention held on February 24, 2010 at Delaware State University. A Dropout Prevention Summit was held on February 24, 2010, at DSU in collaboration with the RELM-A. The RELM-A sponsored the morning Bridge Event featuring Linda Clark, one of the authors of the What Works Clearinghouse IES Practice Guide on Dropout Prevention. The afternoon session focused on the release of the REL study and the rollout of the DEWS tool (see bullet below).
 - Roll out of the *Creating an Early Warning System: Predictors of Dropout in Delaware* Report and Dropout Early Warning System held on February 24, 2010 at Delaware State University. This study received more the most attention of any report done at the REL and has been very well received. The RELM-A are replicating the study for the District of Columbia and has submitted the report for publication.
 - Student Success Plans

Measure of Success

Evaluation Metric-

- 2006-2007 NGA graduation rate for all students 77.87% (baseline)
- 2008-09 NGA graduation rate for all students 80%

Recommended Next Steps

1. Promote graduation for ALL.
 - a. Conduct or commission a statewide policy review related to school, district and state policies that relate to staying in school (i.e., promotion, grading, attendance, and discipline), dropping out and graduating.
 - b. Conduct or commission work to identify by district and school the number of students that will need to be added to the graduation count to reach statewide benchmarks (i.e., 84% by 2010, 85.5% by 2011, and + 1.5% annually through 2014) and the ultimate target of 90% graduation rate using the NGA graduation rate calculation by 2014.
 - c. Champion higher graduation rates through a strong, broad Communications Campaign and targeted outreach to local school boards.

- i. Promote Home Access Center through Eschool for Parents.
 - ii. Promote efforts such as Alert Now Attendance Program that automates calls to parents when students are absent.
 - iii. Reach out to Sue Francis, Delaware School Boards Association, to offer information regarding resources to members of local school boards.
 - d. Raise the maximum compulsory and allowable school attendance ages coupled with the provision of additional supports and alternative paths to achieving a high school diploma;
 - e. Assign responsibility for dropout prevention and recovery.
- 2. Strengthen middle grades students' transitions into high school and reduce ninth-grade failure rates.
 - a. Revisit the Wagner Law.
 - b. Promote and/or incentivize bridge programs at key transition points
 - i. Share best practices such as Seaford's transition program for students with IEPs.
 - ii. Early School Model- camp like program that provide engaging and fun activities that pre-teach or refresh content and allow students to become familiar with the new surroundings (location of library, gym, cafeteria, etc.) and key staff (principals, secretaries, custodians, cafeteria staff, nurse, etc.) for students entering a new level or a gateway course such as Algebra I.
 - iii. Use Student Success Plans to emphasize the importance of the role of the 3-credit career pathways graduation requirement.
- 3. Engage students in rigorous and relevant instruction. Dropouts point to disinterest in school as a key reason for missing classes and ultimately leaving school. Almost half of the dropouts surveyed in a national poll indicated that the main reason they left school was that classes were not interesting.
 - a. Expand Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit opportunities.
 - b. Link academics with quality career technical (CT) studies to improve students' achievement and readiness for college and careers, and raise graduation rates.
 - i. Evaluate current career pathways to determine the effectiveness of approved pathways and relevance of existing pathways to the current job market.
 - ii. Ensure that the implementation of the 3-credit career pathway graduation requirement is embedded into the SSP process beginning in grade 8.
 - iii. Consider the development of blended academic and career technical courses that meet the existing graduation requirements.
 - iv. Encourage greater collaboration between state agencies (DOE, DEDO, DOL) and programs within the Department of Education.
 - 1. Develop and promote student internship programs and job shadowing opportunities.
- 4. Provide rigorous, relevant options to earning a high school diploma. Recognize that one path to graduation does not fit all students.
 - c. Reengage youth who have dropped out of school. Bring dropouts back into the education system through a statewide recovery effort.
 - d. Provide alternative pathways to a high school diploma.

- e. Provide a statewide system of credit recovery opportunities (i.e. Online, web based).
 - f. Develop an outreach and communications strategy for recovering out-of-school youth.
5. Broker services and share what resources are currently available between districts, other state agencies and non-profits/community based organizations.
 - a. Coordinate mentoring opportunities focused on dropout prevention with the Delaware Mentoring Council.
 - b. Establish a Dropout Prevention Advisory Board that will serve as a hub to available services.
 6. Develop an incentive structure for schools and districts to focus on dropout recovery.
 - a. Place outreach coordinators in schools with high dropout rates.
 - b. Remove seat time requirements for students for over-age, under-credit students.
 - c. Establish school reentry programs for juvenile offenders.
 - d. Facilitate partnerships between districts, social service agencies and non-profits to offer effective in- and out-of-school interventions.

Committee Membership

Consistent with these objectives, DE's Promise membership includes representatives from a wide range of stakeholders.

Chair:

Dr. Judi Coffield, Policy Analyst
DE State Board of Education

Members & Organizations:

Current Committee Members

- Dan Cruce, Esq., Deputy Secretary of Education;
- Dr. Susan Haberstroh, Legislative Liaison and Regulation Review, Delaware Department of Education;
- Maureen Whalen, Director Adult Basic Education, Delaware Department of Education;
- Dr. Karen Hutchison, Career Technical Education, Department of Education;
- Dennis Rozumalski, Student Services and Special Populations, and Dale Matusevich, Transition Services, Department of Education;
- Joanne Reihm, Assessment and Accountability, Department of Education;
- Bob Czeizinger, Dr. Tommy Tao, Lisa Marcum, and Dr. Bruce Dacey, Technology Management and Design, Department of Education.
- G. Patrick Heffernan, Member of the State Board of Education;
- Dr. John McCoy, Superintendent Laurel School District;
- Dr. Michael Thomas, Superintendent and Lynn Widdowson, Capitol School District;
- Elvina Knight, Principal Caesar Rodney High School;
- Lennie Richardson, Assistant Principal Polytech High School;
- Jeff Menzer, Principal William Penn High School;

- Burton Watson, Director of School District Services, Red Clay Consolidated School District;
- Joyce Kaufmann, Brandywine School District;
- Carlyse Giddins, Director, Division Delaware Youth Rehabilitation Services (formerly Div. of Family Services);
- Barbara Riley, Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation;
- Christina Andrews, Parent Information Center of Delaware;
- Nancy Wagner, Delaware State University;
- Dr. Suzanna Lee, Jobs for Delaware Graduates Inc.;
- Edie Corbin, Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League;
- Dave Hilyard, Delaware Afterschool Alliance;
- Carol Blaeuer, Business, Industry, Education Alliance;
- Lynn Paul, Delaware Mentoring Council;
- Jim Purcell, Communities in Schools;
- Cindy Mitchell and Wanda Lopez, Governors Advisory Council for Hispanic Affairs;
- India Colon, Latin American Community Center;
- Dr. Felix Fernandez, Frank Livoy and Joe Fitzpatrick, Regional Education Lab Mid-Atlantic (RELM-A).

Past Committee Members

- Kate Clapper, State Farm;
- Betty Wyatt, Principal Lake Forest High School (retired);
- Secretary Woodruff, Department of Education (retired);
- Jean Allen, President, State Board of Education;
- Kimberly Hoffman, Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Education;
- Sally Coonin, Governor Minner's Education Policy Advisor;
- Jennifer Bausmith, Regional Education Lab Mid-Atlantic;
- Ogechy Nwanekwu, Visiting Teacher, Kirk Middle School.

