

# Governor's Education Summit: April 28, 2009

## Breaking through Barriers: Building a Network for College Access & Success

### *Regional Breakout Session* DETROIT/WAYNE COUNTY

#### Notes: A-F

##### Part I.

1. Is college access an issue in my community and for whom?  
Yes, specifically low income students, displaced workers, low-income displaced workers, people lacking time (work and family responsibilities).  
Possible reasons and contributing factors:  
A feeling of being overwhelmed with information from all demographic areas.
2. What resonates with the way that you think about college access and participation in your community?  
The idea of creating a college access center in a mall. This tactic may prove to be quite successful in our community and area.

##### Part II.

2. What are the assets in our community that play an important role and can serve as rallying points?
  - A. The ability to promote examples of success
  - B. The new rigorous curriculum in Michigan.
  - C. ISD's procuring and distributing information
  - D. Potential in the strong sense of community.
4. What did you notice about your community as it was portrayed in the community profile document?  
The data provided was what was expected and the data has remained static and unchanged. The fact that they have not improved is perhaps the most shocking.

##### Part III

1. What are the current gaps in your community?
  - A. There seems to be fragmented efforts towards college access in our community and area.
  - B. The problem and issue of adequate transportation and structure.
  - C. Lack of consistent and parallel efforts towards college access.
    - EX. One person-experienced problems with School administrators blocking campus visits to certain students and tending to allow only the well-behaved kids the opportunity to visit college campuses. He stressed that It is important to not segregate children based on behavior.
  - D. A lack of accountability concerning college access.

2. What sorts of strategies might be appropriate given the strengths of your community?
  - A. Information booths at malls that would provide Fasfa, scholarship, college accessibility information among other types of college relevant info.
  - B. Seeking sponsors that could not only donate money, but time and resources. Ex. Transportation resources.
  - C. Intentional purposeful alignment. Part of this means dedicated funding. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of students, schools, parents. But it must be a coherent and clear plan to be effective.

#### Part IV

2. What do you believe are the next steps for your community?
  - A. The idea of linking and networking together to create change is very important, especially within the entire region. Also continuing to build a **variety** of networking and exposure techniques to the public to increase knowledge on college access. If it is to be successful, college access should be exposed to everyone, schools peers, businesses, etc.
  - B. Changing the public will. This involves changing culture from top to bottom and leveling the playing field. One step in reaching this goal is to get everyone to be involved; especially businesses.
  - C. A sacrifice of personal agendas.
  - D. A creation of accountability within the community.
  - E. Implementation of strategies and taking the necessary steps towards college access done by our community itself. There is a fairly unanimous feeling that Detroit must act by itself and can not wait for Michigan.
  - F. Campus Visits
  - G. Going straight to the kids.
3. Who will initiate the next conversations?
  - A. The DRC
  - B. People within the environment and community.

#### Notes: G-P

#### Problems:

- Need to raise expectations for college enrollment and access
  - Including with parents, as not all parents realize the importance of college yet
  - Need to start educating parents before the senior year of high schools
- Students have initial access, but they are not prepared when they get to college and thus need to take remedial courses

#### Moving Forward:

- Collaboration and communication across levels
- Tapping into community resources

- Communicate needs and possibilities to parents before their kid is a senior in high school
  - It's not that parents don't care, they just don't know what they need to do.
    - Look at number of parents with degrees to illustrate this point. If they didn't attain a higher education degree, they are probably limited in their ability to provide guidance to child(ren)
- Need to do a better job of asking parents what kids' needs are
- Need positive volunteers and role models to serve as liaisons
- Partner kids in high school with community colleges
  - Best practice out of California
    - Offer a for-credit class on the college-enrollment process
    - Provide parents with college credits and be a role model with kids, who then teach other parents
- School district wants to partner with Wayne Community College
- Taking kids on field trips to college campuses starting in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and doing it each year after that
- Dual enrollment should be encouraged because it sets college attainment expectations
  - Notion of students starting early
  - Early College in Dearborn
    - Henry Ford Comm. College and Health Systems
  - Achieving the Dreams class
    - For kids in dual enrollment
- Schoolcraft
  - Developed collaboration council due to too much fingerpointing
  - Discussing ways to change alignment
- Community colleges are gathering data from 4-year colleges when students transfer to help inform their respective policies/practices
- Need a statewide transfer agreement
  - Ability for students to move back and forth between systems and colleges is important

#### **Adults:**

- Is there a role for K-12 institutions helping adults access college too??
  - It seems K-12 institutions provide the most direct link to parents that state is also wanting to reach out to enroll in college.
- Need to market programs more effectively
  - Market where they are, which applies to reaching kids in K-12 system as well
- Many adults and parents may not have had good experiences with education themselves

#### **Concluding Next Steps:**

- Grassroots efforts to engage teachers and parents
- Need efforts to get our students committed to state of Michigan

- Foster children encounter increased risks and barriers, and number of foster children is going up
  - There is a scholarship in MI for foster kids
- Do we feel enough of a sense of urgency?
- **Group indicated they want to see a working group continue this work**
  - Need a mechanism for continuing this
  - Possibly a task force to help work with state officials because they don't have the educational background
- Need to re-think all our programs and examine whether each respective program is contributing to end goals, as no new money is coming.

## Notes: G-Z

### What are some problems

- Money
- Trying to get students to stay in college
- Financial//access Wayne and U of M Dearborn near, but attrition rate low
- Parental expectations "I have a HS diploma but did not go to college, and why should my children?"
- Many students do not believe that college is an option, and that graduating from high school is top of the line.
- Redefining what is meant by post-secondary opportunity. We have too many educators who do not believe that all students can make it to post-secondary.
- You need the backbone from the DOE. As a superintendent, I cannot reconstitute a HS. The MEA will not allow school to have decision-making ability for innovative teaching.
- The curriculum does not support college-ready students.
- The actual support is ready to re-emerge with designed support
- Detroit Urban League///// don't see college as important for some students, hanging out with friends will determine what your college motives are, (if they want to go or not).
- Parental involvement //Diverse students/families need to feel welcome and feel college is an option.
- In Dearborn, with changing demographic, preparing certain students for the assigned curriculum
- Even if you have some students who pass on paper, are they ready for college success. Do students comprehend what they are reading?
- Low expectations, and the need for good expectations..... would lead to goal of going to college.

### Assets in your community

- Wayne CC down from the high schools, and we have strong mayors and community that support education

- Met with mayor and city council school district decided to meet with everyone in the city (reps), communicated with people not to worry about tuition..... created dual-enroll for all students (juniors and seniors) River Rouge
- Dept. of Human Services – evaluating youth moving through education
- DPS = engaged community in discussions a real asset in Detroit. Partnerships with Skillman , United Way.... Array to redesign learning community in Detroit.
- Dearborn Pub – Only K-14 district in the state partnership with Henry Ford CC.... contracts with CC (students and teachers)... a lot of dual enrollment..... a lot of credit hours are generated.
- Wayne State U – Pathways programs (works with Detroit PS and Detroit Federation) bringing orgs together to bring teachers.
- UofM Dearborn – Thinking about tomorrow – 10,11,12 graders to think about going to college. Big event in June is preparing students for college (students and parents)
- EMU – a tremendous amount of alumni reside in Detroit. Branch out to the schools and support the students who need the exposure
- Inkster – dual enrollment, graduating first class in June with associates, upward bound, a lot of students not interested in Upward Bound, we have a mentoring program (bringing alumni and community members in with students)
- Detroit Urban League – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of every month, meant for students anywhere, project ready, it's geared for preparing students
- Wayne CC – dual enrollment, requirement for online experience..... Wayne Direct.... We're teaching the top group of all the schools, and we are missing the middle group of individual who wonder around and just by chance make it into the college. We need to convince them early on to continue their education. If they lose time, it is harder, but want to get students to move on through school as soon as possible.
- First-generation students and SES – greatest obstacle is finances. College-Goals Sunday, which helps complete the FAFSA form..... which highly-increases
- MSU Agriculture – Commitment by provost and Dean of Ag. To create position of rep speaking, who creates networks to have conversations at the local level. It creates a pathway for the student to come to MSU..... community college partnership..... looking into urban farming in Detroit .
- College-Bound kids ---- starts when students are 3 years old, and parents must be involved from day one..... you are going to college from day one. (Dr. Chapman created it)
- Dearborn partnership for parents K-2 to start helping support parents

## **Gap**

- The soft-skills gap, self-management skills, we find difficult to train in a non-captive audience. There is no class to teach soft-skills. These skills turn out to be things that cause students to leave early.
- We need to get kids to college... and trying to prepare students for global. Trying to build leadership from an early age.... Promote with learning languages. Dealing with people with different cultures.

- Formal register versus casual register
- Access to technology
- Credit recovery

**Next Steps**

Low-skills jobs being out-sourced, and high-skills jobs will be outsourced.... More responsibility to teach differently for students who are technology-skilled. Bring people with business skills.