

# Governor's Summit on High School Graduation:

## 16 to 18 - Reducing the Dropout Rate in New Hampshire Alternative Learning

### **What are we doing well in this topic area?**

- Wide array of programs in state; excellent models in state; districts creative in addressing problem
- Identifying problem, talking about solutions, giving issue statewide focus
- Understanding at-risk populations and needs
- Flexibility for student population
- Models maximizing limited resources and regionalization of efforts

## Alternative Learning

### **What do we need to do better?**

- Identify youth earlier at risk identifying issues at elementary and middle school and younger involvement in hands on, work based learning
- More flexible pathways to graduate
- Have all students be a person, not a number; mentors to work with them in high school.
- Need to provide more affordable alternative options and better job regionalizing
- Create compliance alternatives for alternative education

## Alternative Learning

### **What are our recommendations?**

- Secure additional funding to support current efforts: a huge infusion of money and resources that are sustainable.
- Decide how state will define what is a dropout (example: GED)
- Support Job Corps in NH
- Identifying successful existing programs that have sustained success with early intervention
- Emphasize and invest in early intervention and identification of dropouts.

## Career & Technical Education

### What are we doing well in this topic area?

- Connections with business and industry – advisory committees, work-based learning, cooperatives, internships
- Personalizing education – positive relationships with students over time
- Emerging programs such as biotech, Cisco, Project Lead the Way
- CTE programs are competency based on an agreed set of standards based on national and state standards
- Small class sizes (15 – 20 students)

## Career & Technical Education

### What do we need to do better?

- Opening the doors – e.g. awareness of CTE sooner in middle schools with students and parents, resolving scheduling issues, more career guidance at middle and high school level, packaging the experience so students could take CTE and academic courses (esp. for kids coming from sending schools)
- More seamless integration of academic and career tech programs – students can make choices between both academics and careers
- Embedding academics in CTE programs
- Common calendar – students coming from sending schools may end up missing two weeks from a program
- Change perceptions with regard to who should be accessing CTE
- Funding needs to be better – not just Perkins, more local, more state

## Career & Technical Education

### What are our recommendations?

- Required career exploration course administered to 9th graders, possibly taught through IT course
- More and earlier opportunities to participate in CTE courses/programs, for example open enrollment, not limited to juniors seniors, allowing students more time in the center
- Alternative programs are necessary to meet the needs of all students
- Need a mandate from a higher power to enforce things, establish policies – e.g. Advisory Committee for all content areas
- CTE only be considered as an assistance in helping the dropout program but not be considered the dropout program per se
- Extended learning opportunities and alternative ways to meet requirements, earn credits be examined – e.g. competency based demonstration of skills
- Some data needs to be collected statewide – what is offered and how are students accessing, how many students are accessing articulation agreements

## Internships and Apprenticeships

### What are we doing well in this topic area?

- New Hampshire has creative examples of excellent programs in individual businesses.
- There are examples of NH schools with programs that prevent or remediate dropouts (e.g. Jobs for NH graduates, academies like Academy of Finance)
- New Hampshire's internships are reaching the **highly motivated** students.
- NH technical schools effectively build skills that prevent dropout.
- NH has codified learning standards for Real World Learning experiences connected to Career Clusters

## Internships and Apprenticeships

### What do we need to do better?

- Address Student Risk Factors
- Create better alignment between academics and the workforce.
- We need a statewide infrastructure for ensuring the availability of services (including accountability, and adequacy of consistent funding).
- Start career education at an earlier age (middle school, even elementary school).
- Have staffing resources to support internship and apprenticeship programs.

## Internships and Apprenticeships

### What are our recommendations?

- Eliminate local policy barriers to internships and apprenticeships (academic credit, pay, transportation).
- Expand and replicate effective programs (local and national) by creating a template of best practices such as an "internship in a box" kit for schools and business alike to use.
- Create mechanism for schools to learn about business and industry and vice versa, such as opportunities for guidance counselors to shadow technicians.
- Involve students in the dialogue (e.g. have a summit with students and dropouts only).
- Establish state department position that coordinates internships and apprenticeships policies and programs statewide.

# Community Social Services Supports

## What are we doing well in this topic area?

- We know who the kids are; We know where the gaps are – anecdotal, but we know where to look
- There is a desire to come together that is a strength; people get it that you can't do it alone; a desire for change
- Special education model is doing well because it has the mandates that keep it intact and its comprehensive around the social emotional realms and individualized education and involving parents; look at this model for all students
- Pilot models of innovated community based work such Dame School Concord and Claremont School District which has adopted the Yale 21st century school
- We're a small state and we do talk across disciplines; not too territorial

# Community Social Services Supports

## What do we need to do better?

- A genuine engagement with youth as partners in reform in a meaningful way
- Supporting values in education as a way to address risky behaviors; having an authentic community
- Establishing relevancy for youth
- Lack of availability of quality after school programs
- CTE at an earlier age
- Adequate funding to assure full opportunities regardless of geography

# Community Social Services Supports

## What are our recommendations?

- Resource directories – one big directory from the State pulling all these local directories together; one state agency responsible
- Any planning groups that convene from this summit involve youth who have dropped out of school
- On site provider direct services available in every middle and HS and especially drop in health centers; social workers; Drop in health centers for all students all ages..
- More after school programs
- Community based schools intergenerational

## Law Enforcement/Safe Learning Environments/Juvenile Justice

### What are we doing well in this topic area?

- SROs (School Resource Officers)
- Awareness of issue and accompanying problems through data and documentation
- Belknap County efforts with juvenile courts, North County Charter Academy, Some communities doing well by focusing on strengths and a holistic approach
- New flexibility in state's school standards
- Youth Vision Partnerships and APEX II – Drop out prevention initiative

## Law Enforcement/Safe Learning Environments/Juvenile Justice

### What do we need to do better?

- Listen to the youth and problem solve rather than band aid the issues
- Having the community involved with the school after the proper identification of the drop out problem and not put it back on the school (improving collaboration between school and community)
- Judicial cooperation/training
- Changing the child and family mindset about attendance early (before high school)
- Dealing with minority issues

## Law Enforcement/Safe Learning Environments/Juvenile Justice

### What are our recommendations?

- Have a similar summit regionally and state-wide to share what is happening
- Get complete data to answer questions more effectively
- Additional law enforcement training in two areas: dealing with the 16-17 year old truant and dealing with the violent behaviors of the 16-17 year olds who do not want to be there.
- Make the curriculum more hands on and practical
- For interagency collaboration each agency identify what we can contribute to the solution

# High School Re-Design and School Approval Standards

## **What are we doing well in this topic area?**

- Expansion of Curriculum and allows for more electives
- NH students -- Performance is strong
- New standards provides opportunities for earning credits
- Drop out is a systemic problem – legacy from earlier grades
- Good targeted programs (isolated, not integrated)
- Individual efforts of teachers

# High School Re-Design and School Approval Standards

## **What do we need to do better?**

- Focus at Elementary level, better use expertise of Elementary teachers in identification and intervention with students who are at risk of dropping out
- Develop student specific strategies for potential dropouts
- Need better data about the mobility of our students
- Understanding of individual student needs
- Determine and analyze the root cause of our dropouts.

# High School Re-Design and School Approval Standards

## **What are our recommendations?**

- Appropriate use of data – all kinds – to determine where our concerns lie, and where we can do better
- Personalized learning strategies for each student
- Identify students who are potentially at risk early and provide intervention
- Provide Professional Development to create Professional Learning Communities
- Reallocation of resources

## K through 8: Pre-High School Years

### **What are we doing well in this topic area?**

- Good individual pre-K-12 programs exist that support students at risk
- Public education leaders are actively coming together to acknowledge the complexity of the problem and strategize practical solutions by taking a holistic approach to dropout prevention.
- Higher education is doing a good job preparing teachers
- K-12 schools are doing a good job at addressing diverse needs of students
- State is doing a better job at tracking students through a state-assigned student ID

## K through 8: Pre-High School Years

### **What are do we need to do better?**

- Acknowledge diversity of students and expand their educational options by connecting the curriculum to student interests (eliminate one-size-fits-all thinking and approaches)
- End isolation by setting up systems for sharing and replicating best practices, and allocating necessary resources to support this work
- Know the whole child from the beginning – follow the child needs to begin early!
- More effective engagement with families
- A more effective job of convincing the public of the benefits and importance of public education

## K through 8: Pre-High School Years

### **What are our recommendations?**

- Don't lose sight of the importance of non-academic in-school resources (such as music and art) – essential to the whole child
- Make the schools a community resource – open the doors!
- Acknowledge the complexity of the problem and the need for shared language among all stakeholders by redefining the environment as an ecosystem
- Establish a P-16 state council to establish and build partnerships, and gather good whole-child data on which to base decisions.
- Mandated full-day kindergarten with defined standards

## Roles and Responsibilities of Students and Parents

### **What are we doing well in this topic area?**

- Internships and school to work partnerships
- After school programs
- Alternative classes and alternative programs
- Multiple forms of communication to parents
- Sharing best practices

## Roles and Responsibilities of Students and Parents

### **What do we need to do better?**

- Right kind of communication methods
- Stronger tools to identify at-risk youth
- Establish a “want to stay” environment rather than a “have to stay”
- Strengthen and establish more youth programs
- Hiring minority representatives

## Roles and Responsibilities of Students and Parents

### **What are our recommendations?**

- Track and communicate attendance to parents
- Training for teachers on parental involvement (pre-service and in-service)
- Early childhood interventions
- Better tracking of dropout rate real time
- Define and establish a minimum set of communication practices for teachers and schools