



America's Promise Alliance Community & State Action Planning to Improve Graduation and College-Readiness Rates

The America's Promise Alliance is committed to mobilizing the vast resources of states and local communities to address their dropout challenges and help more young people graduate from high school, ready for college, work and life. While we aim to serve as a catalyst for this action, we recognize that it is the states and communities themselves who will drive, and *sustain*, the actions that are necessary to make high school graduation and college readiness a reality for all of their youth. The Alliance applauds the leadership of your Dropout Prevention Leadership Team in making these crucial issues a priority for your state or community and encourages the Team to use your Dropout Summit, as well as the Action Plan the Team develops here, to shape your state's or community's long-term commitment to addressing the dropout challenge.

All Alliance-funded summit states and communities are required to complete and submit an Action Plan, using the enclosed customizable worksheet, within 60 days of your summit in order to fulfill your Dropout Summit grant agreement. (Note: It may be helpful to answer some of the questions before your Summit to inform your agenda planning.) The Alliance recognizes that states and communities are in various stages along the continuum of addressing their dropout challenges, so this action planning worksheet is meant to be flexible enough to apply to your local context. It is based upon and refers to sections of *Grad Nation: A Guidebook to Help Communities Tackle the Dropout Crisis*, a rich resource we commissioned to help you delve deeper into the questions and access many of the leading organizations and tools available around the country that can help you do this work. Please provide as much detail in your answers as you can, reflecting how far along your state or community is in the planning process. While we strongly suggest responding to both the open-ended questions that ask for narrative summaries of your high-level goals and objectives, as well as the charts and check-off boxes that ask for your more specific tactical priorities, we understand that some of you may not be at the point where you have developed this much detail. Please do the best that you can.

Note that America's Promise Alliance may share your Team's Action Plan with leading national organizations and funding agents interested in providing resources – financial, human, and intellectual – to help your state or community pursue the priorities that are identified.

Helpful Resource to Do This Work

The Alliance recommends the following resource to help inform your Action Plan:

Grad Nation: A Guidebook to Help Communities Tackle the Dropout Crisis, by Robert Balfanz and Joanna Hornig Fox of the Everyone Graduates Center, and John Bridgeland and Mary McNaught of Civic Enterprises.

See www.americaspromise.org/GradNation

The *Grad Nation* Action Tool (pp. 91-93) provides a rapid assessment of your progress against the recommendations in *Grad Nation*. Completing it should give you a jump-start on developing a high-quality, evidence-based action plan.



ACTION PLANNING WORKSHEET

Enter State/City's Name Action Plan to Help More of its Young People Graduate High School, Ready for College, Work & Life

Name of Summit State or Community: Richmond, Virginia

Date and Location of Summit: October 22, 2009 St. Paul's Baptist Church 700 E. Belt Boulevard, Richmond VA 23224

Geographical Area Covered by Action Plan: Richmond, Virginia- Richmond Public Schools
(i.e. which county(ies), school district(s), etc.)

Date Submitted:

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(please provide full contact info)

[Note: The Alliance is especially interested in the data, priorities, and plans emanating from your dropout prevention summit, so you are encouraged to highlight those as appropriate in your answers below. If your state or community has a pre-existing comprehensive action plan to improve your graduation and college readiness rates, please attach it as an appendix to this document.]

I. Building Knowledge: Understanding Your State's or Community's Dropout & College-Readiness Challenges

(See Part 2 of Grad Nation, pp. 22-41, for help with this area of planning.)

1. What is your state's or community's current graduation rate? (please cite the source and methodology)

The 2009 on time graduation rate in Richmond city was 68.7%. The Virginia Department of Education changed the collection and calculation of high school graduation data in 2008. The on time graduation rate expresses the percentage of students in a cohort who earned a Board of Education approved diploma within four years of entering high school for the first time. Percentages are based on longitudinal student-level data and account for student mobility and retention and promotion patterns.

Source: (check all that apply)

- State department of education
- School district/school board
- Independent research organization – please specify:
- Other – please explain:

Methodology: (check all that apply)

- Average Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR, US Dept. of Education)
- Cohort rate using individual student identifiers (National Governors Association)
- Cumulative Promotion Index (Editorial Projects in Education)
- Other state method, using individual student identifiers – please explain:
- Other state method, without using individual student identifiers – please explain:
- Other district method, using individual student identifiers – please explain:
- Other district method, without using individual student identifiers – please explain:
- Other – please explain:

To most effectively address your dropout challenge, it is imperative to have a more detailed analysis of your data. What is your state’s or community’s graduation rate disaggregated by race/ethnicity and gender? By grade level?

School Year:2009	TOTAL	Male	Female
ALL	1583	748	835
White, non-Hispanic	108		
African American or Black	1442		
Latino or Hispanic	23		
Asian and Pacific Islander	10		
American Indian or Alaska Native			

School Year:2009	TOTAL	# of Dropouts	# Off-Track for Graduation
ALL (9 th -12 th)		336	
9 th grade			
10 th grade			
11 th grade			
12 th grade			
Black (9-12)		305	
Hispanic (9-12)		19	
White (9-12)		0	

(Note: see pp. 64-67 and Tool #20 in Grad Nation for discussion of off-track indicators)

- Cohort completion rate for class of 2009 was 71.4%.
- During the 2008-2009 school year 5259 students were reported truant.
*Truancy is measured by the number of students who have been identified as missing more than 6 days of school.

If you don’t have these data, please describe your plans to obtain them.

2. Will these data be used as a baseline to show your progress over time?
Yes

3. What does both national and local data indicate about the trends in your state's or community's graduation and college-going rates over the last few years (e.g. over the last 2, 5 and 10 years)? Have the schools' rates been improving or getting worse? How do your local statistics compare with your state's and/or the nation's rates?

Richmond city lags behind the state and nation in on time graduation rate. Virginia's 2008 on time graduation rate was 68.7%. Due to different data collection standards established in 2008 on time graduation rates reported in 2008 is not comparable to data from previous years. The national graduation rate is between 68 and 75 percent, which exceeds Richmond city's rate of 68.7% (Grad Nation). American Community Survey (ACS)- the percent of adults 25+ with a Bachelor's Degree or higher was 32% for Richmond city, 32.9% for the state (2005-2007 ACS)

4. Please describe what efforts were taken in preparation for the summit, or will be taken in the future, to better understand the issues from key perspectives, such as parents and young people themselves. In particular, what information was learned, gathered or shared via the summit?

Prior to the summit we conducted five youth focus groups at various locations throughout the city of Richmond. That information was recorded and will be provided at the summit as a one pager titled "Additional Youth Feedback." Major findings from these focus groups revealed that personal relationships with family, mentors, youth organization employees, coaches and teachers are key in keeping youth engaged in school and preparing for graduation.

At the summit we had three youth panels. Youth were chosen to serve on the panel from focus group discussions held at various after school programs and schools in the city. Youth were also identified by RPS administrative staff and Communities in Schools staff. The youth panel will consisted of guided discussions on how they view school and community supports available to them, what keeps them from engaging in school or programs, and how they view their future.

The youth panel committee members have also discussed continued engagement of the youth panel participants after the summit to further gain their input on the action plan and next steps through quarterly meetings.

A concerted and committed effort by Richmond Public Schools and summit participants to reach out to parents in a variety of structured discussions after the summit will likely result in a combined approach to decrease and prevent a double digit drop-out rate. Research has shown that when parents are actively involved in their child's education that these children are more likely to succeed. The PTA is nationally recognized as the largest child advocacy organization. This organized structure of parents, teachers, and others offer a venue ripe with opportunity to gather feedback and input. We hope the summit will allow us to reach the Richmond and surrounding county PTAs more effectively and enable us to collaborate on further initiatives in our community.

5. Have you collected data (e.g. via surveys, focus groups, interviews) with any of the following groups to better understand the issues around the dropout crisis in your community? (check all that apply)
 - Business partners, economic development agencies, etc.
 - Public education representatives, state level
 - Public education representatives, district level
 - Public education representatives, school level
 - Postsecondary public and private education representatives
 - Nonprofit service providers
 - Public/governmental health, welfare, justice agency representatives
 - Local civic organization representatives
 - Parents and other community adults
 - Current students

Youth who have already dropped out

Please describe: We collected only information from youth prior to the summit. As we continue this work we will be sure to survey different representatives in our community to gain further insight into the dropout crisis.

6. Have you identified the schools that most contribute to your dropout rate?
Yes

II. Rallying Your State or Community: Getting Buy-In to Address the Crisis

(See Part 1 of Grad Nation, pp. 8-21, for help with this area of planning.)

1. What key data and message points have you developed around the issue to secure commitment from your community's and state's leaders and to mobilize the general public? For example, what is the impact of the dropout challenge on your economy, state or city budget, social services, employers, post-secondary institutions, etc.

(List key data and message points below inserting additional rows as needed.)

Key Data Points	Key Message Points
See below	

For the state, more than 29,000 students did not graduate from Virginia high schools in 2008; the lost lifetime earnings in Virginia for that class of dropout's totals \$7.6 billion. (Alliance for Excellent Education: state fact sheet) Virginia would save more than \$396.9 million in health care costs over the lifetimes of each class of dropouts had they earned their diplomas. Furthermore, Virginia's economy would see a combination of crime related savings and additional revenue of about \$179 million each year if the male high school graduation rate increased by just 5%. (Alliance for Excellent Education 2006).

If you don't yet have these data and message points, what are your plans to obtain them? \

Richmond and our region are poised to make significant improvements in addressing the achievement gap in our community. Our summit in October mobilized key stakeholders and leaders around issues facing our young people. A one pager was developed by the planning committee that was handed out to summit attendees, listing ways they can actively get involved in helping address the drop out issue in our city. Summit participants included service providers, business leaders, educators, local and state officials, parents and youth advocates. Our community is working on several initiatives which will not only produce key message points and champions, but also the graduation rate itself.

2. Who is serving or can serve as your state's or community's champion and chief spokesperson around the high school dropout issue? If multiple spokespeople are needed, which leaders – elected officials, business leaders, other local influentials – will be recruited? What champions spoke at the summit, and how will they remain engaged over the next 6-12 months?

We view the dropout issue and importance of education as everyone's issue in our community; from parents to educators, from program providers to librarians, from neighbors to faith leaders; from the mayor to business owners.

In Richmond, we are lucky to have several dedicated organizations who have led the way in addressing education needs for all children in our community. United Way has led the early childhood movement in our

area, focusing on quality early childhood programs and home visiting services to our youngest children and their parents. Our local Chamber of Commerce has joined in our efforts around early childhood, emphasizing the return on investment of early interventions and investments in a child's first few years of life. A solid foundation leads to a solid start in school and life. United Way also realizes the importance of sustained investments throughout a child's life. We lead a coalition of after school programs focused on quality enhancements and coordination among service providers and schools. But United Way knows it can't do this work alone. We need business leaders, elected officials, service providers, parents and educators to work together to establish common goals and accountability.

Key leaders have already stepped forward as champions of our region's children and youth. Virginia Commonwealth University is committed to lead a coordinated and comprehensive regional partnership that spans all sectors of the greater Richmond community and seeks to ensure that every child in the region succeeds from preschool, through college, to entry into a meaningful 21st Century career. With the formation of *Bridging Richmond*, community leaders who are invested heavily in educational improvement will work collaboratively to align the community's resources in support of coordinated efforts that result in student success. *Bridging Richmond* will unite common providers around the shared vision of developing a successful graduate through an improved educational system that creates a workforce ready to compete in the 21st century. In collaboration with Living Cities, the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities, and the Strive Partnership in Cincinnati, Ohio, *Bridging Richmond* will adopt the "Strive Promise of Student Success":

- Every child will be prepared for school from birth through early childhood education.
- Every child will be supported inside and outside the school walls.
- Every child will succeed academically.
- Every student will enroll in some form of postsecondary education.
- Every student will graduate and enter a career.

Virginia Commonwealth University will serve as an anchor institution and will partner with locally committed education, corporate, civic, and philanthropic affiliates who will invest in the vision of success for the children and young adults in our region. The Executive Council established under the grant consists of school superintendents from various localities (Henrico, Richmond, Chesterfield, and Hanover), local business leaders, foundation and nonprofit leaders, and the Executive Director of the Office of Early Childhood Development established by the Governor.

Several elected officials and key stakeholders attended the summit that participated are clearly champions in our community around the high school dropout issue. As we continue our work we will engage those individuals and ask them to continue their advocacy.

3. Does your state or community have a vision statement for your young people, related to their successful completion of high school and preparation for college and/or work?

Vision Statement:

The mission of Richmond Public Schools (RPS) is to educate all students to become highly successful, contributing citizens in a global society. Two of RPS goals that support truancy reduction and dropout prevention are to:

- Improve student achievement as indicated by national, state and local standards leading to each student's graduation and ability to pursue future educational opportunities and meaningful careers.
- Strengthen and increase collaboration with parents, government, business and other stakeholders to promote the success of each student

One of our goals at this summit is to galvanize our community to reach a common goal related to the success of our young people. This one day event will be an initial call to action that will be followed by building a network of advocates to come together around supporting our young people through already established networks.

- Has your workgroup or will it set a quantifiable long-term goal (e.g. a 3-, 5- or 10-year goal) for your dropout and college-readiness challenges? *(Example from Detroit: “Vision- All children and youth in southeastern Michigan graduate from high school prepared for life, work and postsecondary education. Goal- The 30 high schools in the region with dropout rates of 40% or higher will be transformed into small schools or learning communities graduating 80% of youth with an average ACT score of 18 within four years after entering 9th grade.”)*

We are anticipating setting a quantifiable long-term goal once we reconvene.

Goals:

(List key goals below, inserting additional rows as needed.)

Goals related to high school graduation rates	Goals related to college-readiness and success rates

If no quantifiable goals have been set, please describe if/when you anticipate them being set and by whom.

The dropout summit planning committee is scheduled to convene in January to discuss the next steps in the dropout issue/work at hand. This committee will be charged with setting quantifiable goals that may be taken from the Department of Justice Services as well as Richmond Public Schools. Both have their own goals and our work will focus on creating city wide quantifiable goals.

III. Identifying Solutions: Considering and Prioritizing Potential Solutions to Comprehensively Address Your Local Dropout Challenge

- As a result of your summit and follow-up planning process, what are your state’s or community’s top 3-5 next steps for improving your graduation and college readiness rates?

Richmond Public Schools announced their dropout prevention initiative on October 20, 2009. They have developed multiple strategies for improving the city’s graduation rate. For example, key elements of the RPS dropout prevention initiative include:

- Single point of entry at the Adult Career Development Center for all students who have been recovered to ensure seamless reentry.
- Dedicated DPI recovery specialists responsible for facilitation the return of students to the district.
- Dedicated DPI intake counselors who will work with recovered students to develop individualized learning plans, identify appropriate student placement and help coordinate wraparound services for students and families as needed.
- Individual learning plan, and online educational plan for students that helps pair students’ career goals with academic and career and technical courses needed to accomplish their future interests. The ILP system is currently used in four middle schools and six high schools throughout the district.
- Extensive mandatory professional development for staff on how to proactively assist at-risk students, as well as on best data entry practices to ensure more accurate data collection.
- Door-to-door visits to recover dropouts, organized in collaboration with community-based organizations, elected officials, colleges and universities.

- Partnerships with higher educational institutions to look at and expand alternative education programs for high school students.
- Collaborations with higher education institutions, faith and community-based partners to provide mentors for students recovered.
- District-wide mentoring program that encourages each RPS employee, as well as RPS high school seniors, to serve as mentors to recovered students.
- A new, ongoing “Get In-Stay In” media campaign in partnership with television and radio media outlets to encourage student attendance.

In addition, with the formation of *Bridging Richmond*, community leaders who are invested heavily in educational improvement will work collaboratively to align the community’s resources in support of coordinated efforts that result in student success. *Bridging Richmond* will unite common providers around the shared vision of developing a successful graduate through an improved educational system that creates a workforce ready to compete in the 21st century. They are currently working to develop specific strategies.

The Alliance advocates four focus areas that we believe to be key in addressing the dropout issue at the state and local levels:

- 1) **transforming schools** including through increasing curricular rigor and relevance
- 2) **supporting young people** holistically with wraparound services
- 3) **developing effective policies**, and
- 4) **employing data systems** as a dropout prevention tool.

These four areas of work are discussed in Part 3 of *Grad Nation* (pp. 42-75) and examples of the strategies/priorities under each of these areas are provided in the respective charts below. We are interested in better understanding your state’s or community’s plans in each of those areas. In the following four questions, we ask that you identify, as much as possible given your stage of planning, your priorities consistent with those four areas of work. Given that much of education is under local control, we recognize state summits and community summits will result in different priorities and strategies under these areas of work, and encourage you to answer accordingly.

2. Please identify the most significant strategies and/or reforms consistent with *Grad Nation* emanating from the summit that your state or community will pursue in order to **transform the schools** that the majority of your local/state dropouts attend.

(Example: “The New York City Department of Education’s Children First agenda has overhauled the school system by closing large failing high schools and opening up clusters of small high schools in their place. This shift to small schools offers more options, a more personalized learning experience, high expectations for all students, and theme-based studies.”)

Richmond Public Schools has developed an increased graduation rate charter in conjunction with its Balanced Scorecard process that focuses on improving student achievement by developing and fully implementing a continuous, systemic, interconnected curriculum and instructional model to increase the graduation rate, reduce the truancy rate and improve the attendance rate.

In addition, a pilot project is scheduled to launch at Martin Luther King Middle School in 2009 that will coordinate after school activities and services on site, taking a holistic approach to engaging children and their parents. It is hoped that this collaborative pilot, if successful, will be duplicated at additional schools. The afterschool programs serve as the hub for garnering other external community resources to provide opportunities for student participants at each school. Being able to extend the afterschool programs until 7pm and include a meal would allow access to additional resources and opportunities for students.

Our major goals for transforming our under-performing schools are: (please limit your answer to no more than 200 words)

*(OPTIONAL: After describing your strategic priorities for **transforming schools** above, we encourage you to benchmark your priorities against evidence-based practice by reviewing the chart below of strategies and/or reforms consistent with Grad Nation. For each, please indicate what priority level it is for your state/community, and whether pursuing it would be a relatively new effort or would be building on a well-established effort underway.)*

Transforming schools by:	PRIORITY LEVEL			NEW EFFORT OR BUILDS ON EXISTING	
	High	Medium	Low	New	Existing
Curriculum					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing a college and career-ready curriculum with rigorous requirements and expectations for quality of student work. 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanding college-level learning opportunities 					
Multi-tiered dropout prevention, intervention and recovery systems are put into place.					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing early warning systems 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizing on-track indicators 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employing positive support and recognition systems 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing transitional support systems (middle grades into high school, high school into college and careers) 					
Human capital is developed					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting administrators and teachers with coaching and professional development 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revising staffing ratios and teacher allocations to benefit the most struggling students 					
High schools with high dropout rates (and their feeder middle schools) are revitalized and reconfigured					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dividing existing large schools into small schools 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating new schools 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing schools into small units or academies 					

• Organizing teachers into teams						
Other (describe)						

For your highest priority strategies or reforms, what would you need to do in the next 6-12 months to advance it? Is anything already underway to support it? What support or information would help you make better progress?

3. Please identify the most significant strategies, programs, policies, and/or reforms consistent with *Grad Nation* emanating from the summit that your state or community will pursue in order to **support young people**. How will more young people, particularly those most in need, receive wraparound supports in and out of school, such as tutoring, afterschool programs, mentors, social services, health care and others?
(Examples from New York State: “1. Ensure that each student is connected to one caring adult in school, by structuring mentoring programs that can be implemented with limited resources. 2. Provide quality afterschool programs that can increase student voice and provide social, emotional, physical and intellectual support to youth.”)

Richmond has several successful efforts in place that work to support our young people. Smart Beginnings Greater Richmond Area, led by United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg and the Greater Richmond Chamber, is a coalition of public and private organizations, businesses, and citizens working together to ensure that the region’s children enter school healthy, well-cared for, and ready to succeed in school and in life, with the ultimate outcome of graduating on time and leading productive lives. Another coalition, the Partnership for Out of School Time, staffed by United Way, is a coalition of over 35 youth service providers, funders and youth advocates. The Coalition recently underwent a planning effort to identify goals and strategies to meet its vision that every school age youth in Greater Richmond has the opportunity to participate in quality out of school time programs that support educational success, foster personal development, create community connectedness and lead youth toward positive, productive adulthood. The four goals are:

- Goal 1: Create a coordinated system of quality out-of-school time programs that meet the needs of children while maximizing resources.
- Goal 2: All out-of-school time providers will strive for and adhere to best practices that promote high quality programs.
- Goal 3: Ensure all youth and families have knowledge of and access to out of school time resources.
- Goal 4: Advance the necessary policy, programmatic, and financial supports to achieve this agenda.

The Coalition is currently focusing on building quality within the out of school time arena by developing a common language, researching best practices in the youth development field and subscribing to a common evaluation tool to rate out of school time programs on environment and staff/youth interaction. In addition, a pilot project is scheduled to launch at Martin Luther King Middle School in 2009 that will coordinate after school activities and services on site, taking a holistic approach to engaging children and their parents. It is hoped that this collaborative pilot, if successful, will be duplicated at additional schools. The afterschool programs serve as the hub for garnering other external community resources to provide opportunities for student participants at each school. Being able to extend the afterschool programs until 7pm and include a meal would allow access to additional resources and opportunities for students.

In Richmond there is an effort to engage the community in the mentoring process during the school day and after school. Safe, supervised, structured afterschool programs are now available at the elementary middle and high school level. After school programs utilized the activity as the hook to

attract student participation, however the core of the program is to enhance the academic success of each student through tutoring and service learning opportunities.

Richmond Public Schools has partnered with Department of Justice Services (DJS) and Richmond Police Department (RPD) in order to best serve students at risk for developing truancy related problems. The DJS offers an array of free services that have been made available to RPS students and families including Case Management, Anger Management, Law Related Education, Functional Family Therapy and Truancy Mediation. Truancy Case Managers and RPS School Social Workers also work to connect families with school-based and community-based services as necessary.

Our major goals for supporting young people are: (please limit your answer to no more than 200 words)

(OPTIONAL: After describing your strategic priorities for supporting young people above, we encourage you to benchmark your priorities against evidence-based practice by reviewing the chart below of strategies and/or reforms consistent with Grad Nation. For each, please indicate what priority level it is for your state/community, and whether pursuing it would be a relatively new effort or would be building on a well-established effort underway.)

Supporting young people by:	PRIORITY LEVEL			NEW EFFORT OR BUILDS ON EXISTING	
	High	Medium	Low	New	Existing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing multi-tiered response systems to align tailored student supports with specific student needs. 			x	x	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the number of committed adults providing student supports as tutors, mentors, and graduation advocates. 		x			x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging more parents and caregivers in their children's school-lives. 		x		x	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launching a community-wide campaign to improve the attendance of all students. 	x				x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting school-based health centers. 		x			x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing more after-school opportunities. 			x		x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating school-community partnerships that bring additional supports and opportunities to students and their families. 	x				x
Other (describe)					

For your highest priority strategies and reforms, what would you need to do in the next 6-12 months to advance them? Is anything already underway locally to support it? What support or information would help you make better progress?

RPS's Dropout Prevention Initiative is spearheading the community wide campaign to improve student attendance as well as securing more partnerships in order to provide more mentors and tutors to students who need them. United Way, along with several key partners, are piloting an extended day program at one of the city's middle schools. The project desperately needs funds and training opportunities to continue the project at the level of quality needed to be successful.

4. Please identify the most significant policies or reforms consistent with *Grad Nation* emanating from the summit that your state or community will pursue in order to **develop effective policies** at the local or state level that encourage high school completion and college readiness. (Example from Alabama: The state legislature raised the maximum compulsory school age from 16 to 17 years old.)

RPS is committed to developing rigorous academic programs to help prepare children for college and the world of work. RPS is currently partnering with local community colleges and universities to continuously develop dual enrollment courses. Students are also exposed to career fairs, technical training and various other extra curricular activities that encourage academic success.

Richmond Public Schools will launch the Governor's Career and Technical Education Academy for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) this school year at the Richmond Technical Center, the district's career and technical education center. Additionally, the Richmond Public School system has conducted several public forums committed to the development of a multi-tiered plan that promotes the concept of developing the whole child and features personalized education plans.

Our major goals for developing effective policies are: (please limit your answer to no more than 200 words)

(OPTIONAL: After describing your strategic priorities for **developing effective policies** above, we encourage you to benchmark your priorities against evidence-based practice by reviewing the chart below of strategies and/or reforms consistent with *Grad Nation*. For each, please indicate what priority level it is for your state/community, and whether pursuing it would be a relatively new effort or would be building on a well-established effort underway.)

Policies related to:	PRIORITY LEVEL			NEW EFFORT OR BUILDS ON EXISTING	
	High	Medium	Low	New	Existing
• Attendance/Truancy					
• Grade retention/ promotion					
• Streamlining K-12 and higher education standards					
• Grading course performance/homework completion					
• GEDs					
• Promoting alternative schools/multiple pathways					
• School accountability measures					
• Legal dropout age					
• Establishing a state body to coordinate efforts					

to increase the graduation rate						
Other (describe)						

For your highest priority policy reforms, what would you need to do in the next 6-12 months to advance them? Is anything already underway locally to support it? What support or information would help you make better progress?

5. Please identify the most significant strategies, programs, policies, and/or reforms consistent with *Grad Nation* that your state or community will pursue in order to **employ data systems** that identify those young people most at-risk for dropping out and drive appropriate supports and services. (Example from Iowa state: “Access multiple state agencies’ data, complete analysis and establish state level baseline and targets. State Team will provide relevant local data to Community Teams to assist in their planning and ongoing monitoring of progress.”)

RPS currently tracks attendance city wide and provides follow-up with families to ascertain risk factors associated with attendance. This process acts as an early warning system. Parents are notified by phone and by mail when frequent unexcused absences occur. Other city agencies provide support in identifying truant students as well as students with behavior issues. In most cases alternate educational opportunities are available within the Richmond Public Schools system for students to stay on track to graduate.

During the Partnership for Out of School Time’s draft of an actionable agenda, the planning team envisioned a shared data collection system between schools and after school providers that tracked the activities of youth and their academic outcomes. Such systems exist in Louisville, Kentucky and with technical assistance from the Forum for Youth Investment during our local planning efforts; Richmond may consider the pros and cons of a shared data collection system.

Our major goals for employing data systems are: (please limit your answer to no more than 200 words)

(OPTIONAL: After describing your strategic priorities for **employing data systems** above, we encourage you to benchmark your priorities against evidence-based practice by reviewing the chart below of strategies and/or reforms consistent with *Grad Nation*. For each, please indicate what priority level it is for your state/community, and whether pursuing it would be a relatively new effort or would be building on a well-established effort underway.)

Data System Reforms:	PRIORITY LEVEL			NEW EFFORT OR BUILDS ON EXISTING	
	High	Medium	Low	New	Existing
• Statewide student identifiers					
• Student-level enrollment data					
• Student-level test data					
• Information on un-tested students					

• Statewide teacher identifier with student match						
• Student-level course completion (transcript data)						
• Student-level SAT, ACT and AP exam data						
• Student-level dropout and graduation data						
• Ability to match student-level P-12 information with higher education data						
• State data audit system						
Other (describe)						

For your highest priority strategies and reforms, what would you need to do in the next 6-12 months to advance them? Is anything already underway locally to support it? What support or information would help you make better progress?

IV. Organizing for Long-Term Success: Getting the Right People on Board, Committing to Action, Ensuring Accountability, Securing Resources, and Tracking Progress over Time

(See Part 4 of Grad Nation, pp. 76-90, for help with this area of planning.)

Coordination and Leadership

1. Was there a workgroup or committee created in response to the summit to carry out the action plan? Did it exist prior to summit activities?

- Created in response to the summit
- Existed previously
- Existed previously, but is significantly strengthened by the summit

Name of workgroup or committee: Dropout Prevention Summit Planning Committee (will need name change)

2. Which of the options below best describes the workgroup?

- School district task force
- Community-based collaborative While this is a community-based collaborative, RPS, Dept. of Justice Services, and several other local government and public officials are involved.
- Business-led collaborative
- Government-affiliated commission
- Other – please explain:

3. Has the group met since the summit?

- No
- Yes, once
- Yes, twice

Yes, three or more times

4. Over the coming year, approximately how often do you anticipate the group will meet?

Weekly

Monthly

Quarterly

Bi-annually

Other – please explain: Bi-monthly

5. Will there be a recognized coordinator for moving the work of the group forward?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide the name, organization and contact information for the coordinator:

Sandra Booth
Manager of Children, Youth & Families Initiatives
Phone: 804-771-5830 Email: booths@yourunitedway.org
United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg
2001 Maywill Street
Richmond, VA 23230

Average number of hours per week the coordinator has available to support the group: 8-10

6. Please indicate which sectors are represented in the composition of your workgroup:

K-12 Education

Higher Education

Business, economic development agencies, etc.

Nonprofit service providers

Government agencies

Child welfare/children & family services

Elected officials and/or their representatives

Parents and caregivers

Youth

Faith-based community

Media

Foundations

Civic organizations

Other – please explain:

Please attach a roster of your workgroup's members, including their organizational affiliations and titles.

Financial, human, and other resources

Does your work group have existing funds to start implementation?

Yes

No

Has the workgroup applied for or received new or expanded financial resources to support its work?

Yes, we applied for funding, but were not selected.

- Yes, we applied for funding but have not received a response yet.
- Yes, we applied and were selected, but have not yet received the funds.
- Yes, we have received new or expanded funding.
- No, we have not applied for new or expanded funding.

Please briefly describe the funds applied for and/or received: Richmond has several initiatives being introduced. With *Bridging Richmond* and our newest 0-21 continuum initiative, Ready by 21's Southeast Challenge, we want to be sure we are not taking on more that we can effectively work on at a time. In addition, it is important that we do not duplicate work being done anywhere within our community so we can maximize resources. I anticipate the exploration of expanded funding in late spring or early summer.

Has an assessment of current financial, human, programmatic and other resources been completed?

- Yes
- No

If an assessment has been completed, have gaps in resources been identified?

- Yes
- No

Are you setting a resource development goal?

- Yes
- No

If yes, has a plan for reaching the goal been developed?

- Yes
- No

Does the plan include funders and other potential partners to approach?

- Yes
- No

Evaluating and reporting impact

Has the workgroup developed an evaluation to assess/monitor the effectiveness of its work?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide a concise summary or the evaluation plan:

Will your workgroup initiate or collaborate on additional planning/awareness activities? (check all that apply)

- Regional/local summits
- Business summits/roundtables/briefings
- Youth summits
- Parent summits
- Other – please explain: We are unsure at this time pending our work with other initiatives.

Please briefly describe the planning/awareness activities:

V. Staying Connected to the America’s Promise Alliance: Identifying Long-term Interests, Priorities, and Points of Alignment

1. As part of our Alliance’s *Grad Nation: Campaign for the Promise of America* and our goal of helping the nation cut the dropout rate in half by 2018, America’s Promise has committed to resourcing and advocating for certain strategic priorities. Together, we are always looking for states and communities that share similar interests and that may provide effective models for policy and practice, investment opportunities and other points of alignment, including possible technical assistance from our Alliance partners. Please describe your level of interest/priority for the following:

ALLIANCE STRATEGIES & INTERESTS	PRIORITY LEVEL			HAVE EFFECTIVE OR MODEL PRACTICE TO SHARE
	High	Medium	Low	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging parents and caregivers to increase graduation and college readiness rates 		x		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting young people in foster care so they graduate from high school prepared for college, work and life 		x		Coalition present in our community called the Millenium Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing young people’s financial literacy 		x		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing on the middle school years, especially providing service-learning and career exploration opportunities in and out of school 	x			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving young people’s access to quality health care, including promotion of SCHIP and Medicaid public health insurance programs 			x	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating community hubs (e.g. schools, afterschool programs, community centers) where coordinated wraparound supports are available to young people and their families 	x			MLK pilot project

2. How can the America’s Promise Alliance best support your state or community with the implementation of this dropout prevention plan? The Alliance is interested in hearing how we can best assist you in your dropout prevention efforts, including resources we can provide, relationships we can facilitate, and any other needs your community may have. *Please be as expansive and forthright as you can. We will use your feedback to ensure that the most useful resources are provided to our Dropout Summit states and communities through our website, training and technical assistance, and other means.*