

Infusing Parent Engagement into Summit Planning and Design

Summit Design:

Parents and caregivers play a critical role in the student's academic achievement. They can also play a critical role in the role in your city and/or state's Drop Out Prevention Summit and post summit action. The best way to ensure the greatest impact from your parent engagement summit planning is to ensure your summit design builds on your community's unique assets and addresses its challenges.

Summit Design Considerations:

As your community prepares for your Summit, you will need to decide the best way to include parent engagement into your overall summit agenda. While there are several ways to accomplish this, we recommend that you address parent engagement in both plenary and breakout sessions. There are various ways that you can accomplish this including, but not limited to, the following two:

- ✓ *Create a Parent Engagement Track:* Kicked off by a plenary session, your agenda could provide multiple sessions covering a wide range of parent engagement related topics.
- ✓ *Embed Parent Engagement throughout the Agenda:* Parents play an important role in most aspects related to student achievement (Student Supports, Transforming Schools, etc.). Consider including a parent representative throughout all panels in your agenda.

Keep in mind:

It is both important that a parent's voice is embedded throughout the agenda, as well as allowing parents to speak among their peers in a safe and supportive environment. Putting a parent on a panel with a school administrator, teacher, and other professionals may result in great dialogue, or may result in no one feeling safe to provide fully transparent answers/remarks. Moderator facilitation skills will be very important to create a safe environment, especially when there are integrated panels.

Agenda Topics:

As noted above, parent engagement topics should be covered in both plenary and breakout sessions. Some sample topics include:

Plenary Sessions: should focus broadly on issues such as:

- ✓ *How Parent Engagement is Impacts Student Success*
- ✓ *Barriers to Parent Engagement*
- ✓ *Best Practices in Fostering Parent Engagement*
- ✓ *Diversity and Parent Engagement: What Works*

And you could:

- ✓ *Assemble an Integrated Panel:* with a representative from each of the following groups: Parent, Student and Teacher
- ✓ *Assemble a Parents Panel:* to discuss their views on barriers to on time graduation

Breakout Sessions: should strive to look more deeply at specific topics and inspire audience discussion and contribution. Breakout session ideas include:

- ✓ *The 3A's* -- Presentation of the "3A's" (Attendance Every Day, Achievement Every Year and Attainment Over Time). Why are these critical to student's progress and what role parents can play in each.
- ✓ *Understanding Parent Engagement in Your Community* – as part of pre-summit data collection, sites are encouraged to gather data on the perspectives of parents and caregivers (and teachers and community organizations working with them) regarding their challenges as they strive to support their students in their academics. This session could be used to report out on this data and ask for audience discussion.
- ✓ *A Parents' Voice* -- Assemble a parent panel with parents who represent diverse points of view. Panel moderator questions could focus on parents' views and challenges in supporting their student's Attendance, Achievement and Attainment.
- ✓ *Parent Serving Organizations* -- Assemble a panel of representatives from organizations that serve parents. Panel moderator could pose questions regarding what organizations are currently doing or could do to support parents efforts around their student's Attendance, Achievement and Attainment.

Guidance on Moderator Identification and Preparation: Just as important as identifying the right agenda topics, panel participants and speakers, is identifying and preparing panel moderators – this will make a huge difference in ensuring the success of your sessions. Here are some helpful tips to follow:

Moderators should get to know panelists:

Moderators should have brief biographical information about each panelist sent to them well in advance to the summit. Whenever possible, the moderator should reach out to individual panelist via telephone prior to the day of the summit.

Moderator should arrange for panelist to get to know one another prior to the panel:

Oftentimes it is very challenging to get all panelists and the moderator together on the telephone before the summit. Whether or not they are able to connect in advance of the summit, it is important to ask the moderator and panelist to come early to meet for at least 30 minutes prior to the panel discussion.

Moderators should know about the subject:

Moderators should have knowledge about effective parent engagement. Moderators can read more about this topic by browsing toolkit materials as well as materials listed in the resource section of this toolkit.

Moderator should prepare questions, opening remarks and introductions ahead of time:

Moderators should use biographical information to introduce each panelist and should be prepared to make very brief opening remarks to frame the session. When preparing the questions, the moderator should prepare only open-ended questions and should have follow up questions as well. There should be more specific questions for each individual on the panel and only a few questions posed to all panelists.

Role of moderator during the panel discussion:

The moderator is primarily responsible for the flow of the discussion, keeping the conversation centered around the chosen topic, and tracking the time. As much as possible, the moderator should aim to have panelists to speak to one another and

engage with audience members. Finally, the moderator should make sure that each panelist has the opportunity to speak and make sure that the session ends on time — when appropriate, leaving enough space in the schedule to take questions from the audience well before the end of the session.

Ideas for Identification of Session Participants and/or Speakers: The following national organizations/programs are examples of resources that have a focus on parent engagement or involvement and/or family strengthening through their service delivery (note: this is not an exhaustive list). Sites are encouraged to identify a local chapter and/or affiliate serving their geographic area; these local affiliates may have speakers able to participate in summit planning and/or presentations:

Parents and Teachers Association (PTA): <http://www.pta.org>
Annie E. Casey Foundation: <http://www.aecf.org/>
ASPIRA Association: <http://www.aspira.org/>
Boys and Girls Clubs of America: <http://www.bgca.org/>
Catholic Charities USA: <http://catholiccharitiesusa.org>
Family One Network, Inc.: <http://www.familyone.org/>
National Head Start Association: <http://www.nhsa.org/>
Mocha Moms, Inc.: <http://www.mochamoms.org/>
National Black Child Development Institute: <http://www.nbcdi.org/>
National Center for Family Literacy: <http://www.familit.org/>
National Fatherhood Initiative: <http://www.fatherhood.org/>
National Foster Parents Association: <http://www.nfpainc.org/>
Parent Information Resource Center: <http://www.pirc-info.net/>
Parenting Teens Online: <http://www.parentingteensonline.com/>
Parents as Teachers National Center: <http://www.parentsasteachers.org>
United Way of America: <http://www.liveunited.org/>
YMCA: <http://www.ymca.net/>

Additionally, sites are encouraged to reach out to representatives from the following organizations and programs in their community, as these organizations may also have experience in parent or caregiver engagement:

Adult Education Programs
Home School Coordinators
Department of Social Services/Human Service
Department of Health
Parent Relations/Representatives/Liaison Programs
Child/Family Resource Center
Public Library

Ideas for Plenary Session Speakers: In the Drop Out Prevention collaboration space of the America's Promise Alliance's Community Action Forum website, there is a list of diverse speakers and organizations with detailed information about topics that they are well suited to address at summits. Please use the following link to access the Drop Out Summit Collaboration space: <http://www.login.icohere.com/americaspromise>.

Sample Summit Agenda: Virginia

The Virginia Statewide Summit created a strand called “Engaging the Student, Engaging the Family.” In this strand, the focus was on working with community agencies, business and hearing directly from parents on what they need to help their students succeed.

The agenda for the general sessions and this strand are found here:

PROGRAM

Virginia’s Statewide Dropout Prevention Summit
Learning, Working and Living: Keeping Promises to Our Youth
Richmond, Virginia

October 28, 2008

Registration 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
Shenandoah Ballroom Foyer

Opening General Session 8:15 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Welcome/Opening

- Dr. Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Virginia Department of Education

Greetings and Remarks

- Governor Timothy M. Kaine (Video)

Welcome

- Dr. Mark E. Emblidge, President, Virginia Board of Education

Keynote Speaker—Understanding the Dropout Crisis

- Bill Milliken – Founder – Communities in Schools

Youth Panel— What We Want to Tell You

Break 10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

Breakout Sessions — (Four concurrent sessions, one per strand for each time period)

First Session 10:15 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.

Strand One: Engaging the Student, Engaging the Family: Going Beyond the School Door

This strand focuses on effective practices involving schools and community partners, such as service organizations, nonprofit organizations, and faith-based organizations. Presentations highlight programs that provide supports, such as mentoring and after-school programs, address alternative learning opportunities and academic supports, and create community partnerships in schools.

Creative Community Partnerships to Engage Students in Learning

- Chesterfield County Public Schools Partnership with Faith Organizations – Martha J. Frickert, Chesterfield County Public Schools – Communities in Schools Administrator, Chesterfield, Virginia
- Virginia Mentoring Partnership – Dr. Jennifer J. Smith-Slabaugh, Executive Director

BREAK 11:15 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Session Two: 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Strand One: Engaging the Student, Engaging the Family: Going Beyond the School Door

Business and School Partnerships: A Two-Way Street

- Dr. Harold Fitrer, Executive Director, Communities in Schools of Richmond, Richmond, Virginia
- Jay T. Engeln, Consultant, National Association of Secondary School Principals, Colorado Springs, Colorado

LUNCH 12:30 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.

Introduction of Speaker

- H. Douglas Cox, Assistant Superintendent, Division of Special Education and Student Services, Virginia Department of Education

Keynote Presentation: "From Dropout to Graduation Nation"

- John Bridgeland, President & CEO, Civic Enterprises

Session Three: 1:20 p.m. – 2:20 p.m.

Strand One: Engaging the Student, Engaging the Family: Going Beyond the School Door

Parent Panel: What Parents Need to Assist Their Children

- Dr. Novella J. Ruffin, Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist, Child Development & Parenting, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia State University, Petersburg, Virginia
- Milton Giles, Parent Involvement Program Coordinator, Department of Correctional Education, Richmond, Virginia
- Dan Phillips, Single Parent, Fredericksburg, Virginia
- Otis Dowdy, Assistant Principal, William Byrd High School, Roanoke, Virginia
- Forrest Mae Heath, Grandmother, Retired Medical Technician, Petersburg, Virginia

General Session Two 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Panel Presentation: Coming Together

- Moderator: Dr. Loujeania Bost, Director, National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina
- Dr. Mark E. Emblidge, President, Virginia Board of Education, Richmond, Virginia
- Senator Harry B. Blevins, Vice Chairman, Commission on Youth, Richmond, Virginia
- Jennifer Alvarez, Public Affairs Assistant Manager, State Farm Insurance, Charlottesville, Virginia
- Judge Elizabeth Kellas, Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, Winchester, Virginia
- Kerri M. Wilson, Harrisonburg City School Board Chairman, Harrisonburg, Virginia
- Samuel Hayes, Director, Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise, Richmond, Virginia

Group Action Planning

3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Groups comprised of representatives from each sector will develop recommendations stemming from summit activities to promote collaborative efforts to implement multifaceted and systemic approaches to dropout prevention. Group discussions will be captured through completion of action planning templates.

Next Steps

4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

- Dr. Patricia I. Wright

The themes from the action planning work groups will be shared through a proceedings document. Stakeholders will be invited to serve on steering committees that will review the summit recommendations and action plans, and support follow-up work and regional meetings across the state.

America's Promise Alliance Presentation

Turning the Tide: Charting a Course for Student Success

Sample Summit Agenda: Michigan

The Michigan Statewide Summit included time during the lunch plenary session to view video recordings of from a variety of stakeholders, including parents:

The agenda for this summit is found here:

A Community Call to Action! Michigan Dropout Prevention Leadership Summit October 20, 2008 • Lansing Center

We Are All in This Together: Sharing the Vision of High School Graduation for All Students

AGENDA

8 a.m. **Preconference Briefing Dropouts: One Is Too Many!***

- Preconference Briefing on Hearings Held Throughout Michigan
Hearing Partners include Michigan Education Association, Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators, Kent Intermediate School District, Michigan's Children, Michigan's Charter Schools, Michigan's Promise, and Michigan Future, Inc.
- Legislators and Media invited to attend Preconference Briefing.
Conveners Kyle Caldwell, Executive Director, Michigan Nonprofit Association
Jack Kresnak, President and CEO, Michigan's Children

9 a.m. **Welcoming Address**

- Governor Jennifer Granholm (invited)
- Charles Hiteshew, COO, America's Promise

9:15 a.m. **First-Hand Accounts**

- Michigan Youth Share Perspectives on the Challenges of Staying in School through Graduation
- Facilitator: Karen Pittman, Executive Director, Forum for Youth Investment

9:45 a.m. **Michigan's Dropout Crisis: Why Communities (We) Should Care**

- Jim Sandy, Director, Michigan Business Leaders for Education Excellence, Michigan Chamber of Commerce
- Chris Cressy, Vice President, State Farm Insurance Companies

10:15 a.m. **What We Know about Michigan's Dropout Crisis**

- Introduction: Yazeed Moore, Associate Program Officer, Pathways Out of Poverty, C.S. Mott Foundation
- Andrew M. Sum, Professor of Economics and Director, Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University, Boston

- This session will focus on Dr. Sum's recent research illustrating the social, educational and economic costs of failing to graduate young people in Michigan and eight Michigan communities.

10:45 a.m. **Community Round Table Discussions**

- Facilitators will team up with Community Groups to draw upon the morning presentations and start building a strong support network for helping students successfully graduate from high school and continue on to post-secondary opportunities.
 - Facilitators include representatives from the Michigan Association of Community and Adult Education, Michigan Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Michigan Staff Development Council, Department of Labor and Economic Growth Shared Youth Vision Partnership, and the Oakland County Intermediate School District

11:15 a.m. **Connecting State and Community Efforts to Support Our Children**

- Facilitator: Kyle Caldwell, Michigan Nonprofit Association
 - Michigan Children's Cabinet Members:
 - Ismael Ahmed, Director, Department of Human Services
 - Andy Levin, Deputy Director, Department of Labor and Economic Development
 - Ed Mize, Operations Manager, Department of Corrections
 - Michael Flanagan, State Superintendent, Department of Education
 - Janet Olszewski, Director, Department of Community Health (invited)

Noon Break

12:30 p.m. **Lunch: Detroit Summit—A Success Story**

- Representatives from the One D Dropout Prevention Summit and Retreat will update the group on the progress in Detroit and make an important announcement that will assist Detroit schools in turning around their graduation challenges.
- As backdrop: Students, parents, school staff, community leaders and others share their thoughts, concerns, suggestions, hopes and fears via a video stream from the statewide community hearings on Michigan's dropout crisis.⁷

1 p.m. **The Art of the Possible**

- Karen Pittman, Executive Director, Forum for Youth Investment
 - As one of the nation's leaders in advancing strategies to prepare young people to be ready for college, work and life, Karen Pittman has made a career out of starting organizations and initiatives that promote youth development. The Forum for Youth Investment's "Ready by 21" initiative calls upon states and communities to change the odds for children and youth by changing the way they do business. Working in partnership with business, government, education and nonprofit sectors, the Forum for Youth Investment provides frameworks, coaching and tools to help leaders think differently, act differently and act together.

1:30 p.m. **Moving Forward—Sharing the Vision**

- Framework for Round Table Discussions: Becky Rocho, Calhoun ISD
- Community Groups will rejoin facilitators to discuss how they can build a strong alliance in their communities to support children and youth throughout their lives.
 - A. Engaging the Community
 - B. Assessing State and Local Data
 - C. Asset Mapping
 - D. Tools and Resources for Community Building

3 p.m. **Committing to Change**

- Community Group Reports
- Facilitation: Karen Pittman, Executive Director, Forum for Youth Investment
- Speaker: Dan Mulhern, Author of *Everyday Leadership: Getting Results in Business, Politics and Life*, and Michigan's First Gentleman

3:30 p.m. **Pulling It All Together: Next Steps**

- Jack Kresnak, Michigan's Children/Michigan's Promise
- Andy Levin, Shared Youth Vision Partnership

4 p.m. **Adjournment**