

## Delaware's Promise Dropout Prevention Committee Meeting Highlights

Cabinet Room, Townsend Bldg.

February 4, 2011

1:30 – 3:30 pm

- Dr. Coffield welcomed the committee members and asked for introductions. She asked that each committee member provide updated contact information on the forms provided.
- Felix Fernandez shared a draft for input of the Regional Education Lab (REL) Mid-Atlantic Report *Delaware Graduation Targets, February 2011*. This study used the NGA definitions of cohort enrollment and graduation rate to determine the number of additional on-time graduates required each year in the state, by district and by school to meet Delaware graduation targets through 2014. Felix asked the group for their feedback and edits on the draft. The group was asked to email feedback to DR. Coffield at [jcoffield@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:jcoffield@doe.k12.de.us) or to Felix himself at [FFernandez@icif.com](mailto:FFernandez@icif.com). An electronic copy will be emailed to committee members; however, it was made clear that the document is in a DRAFT form and cannot at this time be shared outside of the Delaware's Promise Dropout Prevention Subcommittee members.

He also spoke of conducting a follow up to *Creating an Early Warning System: Predictors of Dropout in Delaware*- validation study and moving the current study into another phase in the next year and in 2 years. This phase will allow us to predict dropout longitudinally. We need to be able to provide two additional years of data in order to be able to complete the study, but there is an interim step that can be taken next year.

- Joanne Reihm, Education Associate from the Assessment and Accountability Workgroup in the Department of Education provided an overview of the Annual Dropout Report 2009-2010. The dropout rate for this report is calculated for grades 9-12 using the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) formula. This is an "event rate" method that provides a snapshot that reflects the total number of students who dropped out in a single year divided by the fall enrollment of the same school year. For the 2009-10 school year the dropout rate was 3.9 percent. This was a decrease from the previous year's rate of 5.1 percent.
- Dr. Adrian Peoples from the Department of Education provided a demonstration of the new dropout Cohort Management System. This system was designed to facilitate the tracking of a high school cohort through graduation (or dropout). He also shared a timeline for the process and discussed new quality control measures.
- Dr. Judi Coffield provided an update on the status of the rollout of the Dropout Early Warning System (DEWS). She called the committee members' attention to the Delivery Plan that was created for the Race to the Top Grant regarding Delaware's dropout prevention efforts. Dr. Coffield shared that four districts are currently

participating in a pilot of the new eSchool module (Student Success Plan, SSP) that will deliver the student at risk information to the educators. The districts are Lake Forest, Smyrna, Appoquinimink and Brandywine. This is not to be confused with the Student Success Plans mentioned in Regulation 505 High School Graduation Requirements which are currently using a tool called Career Cruising to enable students to create a five year education plan beginning in grade 8 that maps out four years of high school and one year beyond. Dr. Coffield explained that the committee who reviewed the delivery options felt that going with a module in eSchool had benefits that outweighed the conflict with the name of the module. The familiarity of the educators with the software coupled with the fact that they use the software on a daily basis increases the ease of implementation and the likelihood that the data will be seen and used on a regular basis. eSchool is not a separate piece of software that must be accessed for educators to be alerted that particular students are at risk. The pilot phase will be useful in determining what standard tables should be developed for the module, the prioritization of students based upon the risk indicators and product enhancements for the tool. Statewide rollout is scheduled for the May timeframe. At the current time, there are plans for three county level sessions for professional development. This professional development will also include an overview of the eSchool Graduation Requirements Module that facilitates monitoring on-track to graduate status. This tool is not currently utilized to the extent possible. It can be used to improve efficiency and effectiveness when monitoring student progress.

- Dale Matusевич, Education Associate in the Exceptional Children Workgroup of the Department of Education, and Barbara Riley, Director, Department of Vocation Rehabilitation (DVR), spoke of a US Department of Labor Target Grant recently received by DVR. The TARGET Youth Employment Project is designed to promote employment for in-school and out-of-school youth ages 14-24 and focuses on students with disabilities. The project features collaboration with the One-Stop Career Centers and Workforce Partners services. Disability Resource Coordinators will work with youth at One-Stops, schools and youth employment drop-in centers that will be created.
- Mr. Jim Purcell, Director Communities in Schools, spoke about the Mattie C. Stewart Dropout Prevention Interactive Tools including the CHOICE Bus Project and the InsideOut Toolkits. He also shared samples of a community pledge and a student pledge. Mr. Purcell shared an initiative he called Student Success and Graduate Delaware Campaign. The core objectives are to demonstrate to middle school students the benefits of an education and the relevance of education to earning potential, to stimulate student thinking about career options and to make citizens aware of the economic and social impact dropouts have on their communities. Mr. Purcell invited committee members to attend a meeting with staff from the Mattie C. Stewart Foundation on Thursday, February 17 in Wilmington, DE. Details regarding the meeting logistics are still to be worked out.
- Dr. Robert Andrzejewski, Executive Director of the newly reorganized Delaware Mentoring Council addressed the Committee. Dr. Andrzejewski shared a copy of

Executive Order Number Twenty-Four that was signed by Governor Markell on January 18, 2011. The Executive Order reestablished the Delaware Mentoring Council and charged the Council with supporting a statewide mentoring network that promotes both school and community based mentoring focused on building academic, career, social and life skills. Dr. Andrzejewski spoke of a second round of mentoring grants coming soon. Requests for proposals (RFPs) will be sought for \$10,000 grants to promote mentoring. Dr. Andrzejewski will send the RFP to be shared with committee members when it is available.

- The Committee discussed future meeting dates and topics. It was agreed that the next meeting would take place in mid-April. A Doodle request will be sent to determine the exact date.
- The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.