

INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY REENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

REVISED DRAFT (post-ERN discussion) – 6.28.17 (changes in bold)

What is the long-term goal for this Equity Essential?

Ultimately, the mainstream education system should work for all young people. Until that time, our region needs a robust, coordinated and diverse system of reengagement pathways for young people who are not connected to school to return to education, earn a college or career credential and get living-wage work.

Background

Despite efforts to flag and respond to early warning signs, many students in our region continue to fall through the cracks, on-time graduation rates ranging from 75-81% across Road Map Project districts in 2015-16. Students of color are more likely than their White peers to drop out or be pushed out of school, making both dropout prevention and reengagement important priorities from a racial equity standpoint. In late 2014, the Road Map Project's Opportunity Youth Work Group developed a plan to build a robust and coordinated regional system to reconnect opportunity youth to education pathways, leveraging the state's Open Doors/1418 dropout recovery program, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Adult Basic Education, and other funding sources. With leadership from King County Employment & Education Resources, work is underway by many partners to build a system that successfully connects young people to programs and ensures quality services.

What needs to change?

Re-engagement options have expanded significantly over the past several years, but having more "slots" is not enough. To ensure high-quality **reengagement programs**, we need to do the following:

- Expand and improve outreach efforts, including peer outreach and **market programs more effectively**
- Improve program supply and coordination (improve alignment between Open Doors programs and **rigorous** postsecondary/workforce training, apprenticeships, **employment opportunities**, etc.)
- Strengthen program quality and support innovation (offer quality professional development for providers; **diversify provider workforce**; **emphasize high expectations for students**; expand key services including college/career transition **and retention** support, **life coaching**, employment, behavioral health and youth voice; **culturally relevant curriculum**, **soft skill and social capital development**)
- Improve data collection, reporting and use at the program, systems and policy levels. **Data needs to be disaggregated by demographic sub-groups**
- **Ensure accountability (e.g. ensure that beneficiaries are those the program is intended to benefit)**
- **Strengthen partnerships and governance rules between districts, community colleges and CBOs**
- **Ensure districts are intentional about best-fit programs for off-track students and others who may not be well served by the "mainstream" system**
- **Ensure equitable funding, with additional support for English Learners, students with learning disabilities, etc.**
- **Ensure alternative options are available at the middle school level**

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How can we track progress?

Reengagement system indicators:

Improved district reengagement and referral practices
Program participation in monthly reengagement system meetings
Open Doors programs implementing promising/effective practices (based on Back on Track framework)
Access to postsecondary navigators within programs
Access to career/employment support within programs
Access to behavioral health support within programs
Case manager to participant ratio
Partnerships with CBOs
Staff qualifications
Student-centered approaches
Cultural connections
Reasons why students are not in school
Data on program fit to improve referrals
Persistence rates by program
Quality of instruction in programs

Youth indicators:

% of youth who drop out reengage in high school completion within 2 years of leaving
% of youth who reengage earn a secondary credential (diploma or GED) within 2 years
% of reengaged youth who complete a secondary credential enroll in postsecondary
% of reengaged youth who enroll in postsecondary complete a credential <i>and</i> at least 45 credits
Number of students who study and work full time
Drop-out rates

Interim youth indicators:

% of students who are “billable” quarterly under Open Doors (academic progress plus minimum attendance)
“Stick rate” (retention) in Open Doors programs
High school credit attainment in Open Doors programs
Postsecondary credit attainment in Open Doors programs

Initiatives & partners involved in this work:

- Road Map Project Opportunity Youth Advisory Group
- King County Reengagement Provider Network
- School districts and Community & Technical Colleges – Open Doors and High School 21+
- Open Doors/HB 1418 programs, alternative high schools
- King County Employment and Education Resources/Reconnect to Opportunity/Career LaunchPad
- United Way of King County, Reconnecting Youth
- Seattle Education Access/United Way/CCER – Opportunities Work SIF grant

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- Best Starts for Kids – School to Prison Pipeline, Transition to Adulthood
- King County Youth Advisory Council/SOAR
- 100K Opportunities Initiative/Educurious
- Generation Work/Skill Up Washington
- Workforce Development Council/Performance Partnership Pilot (P3)
- Reclaiming Futures, PathNet, Uniting for Youth
- **CCER (data support)**
- Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), State Board on Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC)
- Private funders, e.g., Raikes Foundation, Ballmer Family Giving, Boeing Corporation, Seattle Foundation, Starbucks, Schultz Family Foundation, Microsoft, Aspen Forum on Community Solutions

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