

Possible opportunity youth strategies identified to date – March 14, 2014

Improving the quantity, quality, and coordination of reengagement pathways

Quantity

- Identify effective programs to replicate or expand (using research-based practices, with an emphasis on postsecondary success)
- Expand capacity of diverse, flexible, and effective pathways
- Explore work-based strategies (e.g. bringing school to the workplace)
- Expand navigation supports that link reengaged students with social services, education, and employment
- Explore expanding options for credit for prior learning

Quality

- Research unique challenges and effective strategies for engaging specific populations of underserved youth (e.g., ELL, special education, homeless, court-involved, foster-care) in order to develop unique pathways and improve existing ones
- Explore quality standards for re-engagement, particularly in the fields of case management, instruction, and work training
- Strengthen career/employment component of new and existing pathways, focusing on high demand jobs and including internships, on the job, and real world experience
- Involve youth in pathway design and development
- Build a network and community of practice among pathways providers

Coordination

- Develop and maintain a reengagement program directory
- Create a coordinated regional intake and referral function
 - Explore the option of community colleges/community technical college as reengagement centers
- Engage with school districts to identify youth appropriate for reengagement pathways prior to youth dropping out
- Engage with community colleges/community technical colleges to identify youth who have dropped out and develop early warning indicators

Influencing policy and funding

- Create an Open Doors advocacy agenda (including improvements to the law as well as enhanced funding)
- Support youth-led advocacy agenda on education and employment

- Explore companion funding for over 21 (e.g. BEFT)
- Explore federal performance pilot opportunity that would allow for administrative flexibility
- Explore social impact bonds/ outcomes-based financing strategies
- Advocate for extending K-12 funding beyond age 21
- Tax credits for employers who employ Opportunity Youth
- Develop a regional Open Doors/reengagement transportation strategy
- Advocate for expansion of and effective implementation of extend foster care
- Advocate and watch for equity funds
- Leverage housing-related policies and priorities

Improving capacity to gather and use data

- Analyze supply and demand of reengagement seats
- Develop additional Road Map indicators to monitor progress and build awareness
- Push for uniform coding and regular reporting of dropouts by school districts
- Push for uniform coding of postsecondary dropouts
- Create common/aligned data systems among re-engagement providers
- Employ data coaching to support continuous improvement
- Disaggregate data by culture/ethnicity; improve coding for ELL spectrum and other populations
- Research root causes of dropout/reengagement rates and monitor longitudinal trends/changes
- Improve shared data distribution and integration
- Increase knowledge of business process rules to make improvements
- Involve young people in data collection, dissemination, and outreach
- Develop data on course taking at CTCs
- Collect and share funding data
- Share and support understanding of data with students, parents, and caregivers
- Use data for storytelling, including qualitative data
- Develop data visualizations with maps and colors

Increasing stakeholder engagement

- Develop action-galvanizing report on Opportunity Youth in our region and current gaps in supply, demand and funding
- Reach out to and engage municipal champions at all levels across the region (city, county, state)
- Deepen youth involvement: work with young people to highlight the significance of their involvement and to spread the word (particularly at places where youth go, such as communities centers schools, clubs, YWCA, libraries)
- Facilitate Opportunity Youth Work group representation on Road Map Sponsor Group
- Develop multilingual, culturally competent public awareness campaign tailored to specific audiences and incorporating social media
- Focus on engaging:
 - Funders/Donors/Philanthropy

- School districts and school board
- Trustees
- Parents
- Employers /organizations
- CBOs/CBO boards
- Colleges (2 and 4 year)
- Alumni of schools, colleges, and reengagement programs
- Chamber of Commerce
- Large corporations (Boeing, Microsoft, Starbucks etc.)
- Small businesses
- Unions/trades
- Public agencies like DSHS
- Sports teams
- Churches/faith based communities
- Criminal justice employees (police, lawyers, prosecutors , juvenile court)