

Communities Supporting Youth

A Cradle to Career Collaborative

Charter, July 13, 2012

Mission

The mission of the Communities Supporting Youth Collaborative is to create systemic and sustainable change that increases school and community engagement among children, youth and families in Multnomah County.

Description

Communities Supporting Youth is a cross-sector collaborative of people committed to supporting youth and families through working at various levels across diverse organizations. We aim to align and increase school and community supports, for children, youth and their families, that contribute to academic and life success with a focus on eliminating disparities.

Problem Statement

Too many Multnomah County students and their families lack the supports necessary to ensure academic and life success. Relevant data include:

- There is a clear and consistent relationship between early attendance and later achievement.¹ In Multnomah County, 6,254 (20%) of students in Kindergarten through third grade are **chronically absent** from school, placing them at a significant risk of future academic failure; 33% of Pacific Islander, 31% of Native American, 30% of African American, 23% of Multi-Racial, 22% of Hispanic, 18% of White and 9% of Asian students are chronically absent.²
- Rates of student suspension and expulsion have nearly doubled since the 1970s, yet school safety has remained unchanged.³ As out of school suspension and expulsion increases, academic achievement declines.⁴ Students of color are disproportionately more likely to be **suspended or expelled** from school than their White counterparts, often for subjective reasons, even though evidence shows that students of color do not misbehave more often than White students. In Multnomah County schools, the rate of exclusion for students of color was twice the rate of that for White students, with the rate being 3.3 times as high for African American students (40 exclusions per 100 African American students compared to 12 exclusions per 100 White students).⁵
- Although completing high school is associated with higher earnings, better health, greater civic participation and stronger communities, many local students do not graduate on time or at all.⁶ The combined on-time **graduation rate** for the six major school districts is 60% compared to Oregon's rate of 67%. Locally, 68% of Asian/Pacific Islander, 65% of White, 51% of African American, 47% of Hispanic, and 40% of Native American students graduate high school on time.⁷
- Young people who transition to higher education or the workforce by age 25 experience higher wages, more stable employment, less reliance on public assistance and less involvement with the criminal justice system.⁸ XX% of low-income youth ages 16-24 [include # when available in the fourth quarter of 2012] in Multnomah County are **disconnected from both school and work**.⁹

Project Scope

The initial focus of the collaborative is to increase engagement (cognitive, behavioral and emotional) among children and youth as measured by enrollment, attendance, completion from early childhood through post-secondary education and declining disproportionate discipline. We will prioritize neighborhoods and schools that have high numbers of students of color, and high levels of absenteeism and disproportionate discipline.

¹ *Chronic Absence in Oregon*, a 2012 Oregon Study issued by Attendance Works, The Chalkboard Project, The Children's Institute and EcoNW

² SUN Service System Early Childhood Community Schools Linkage Project, 2010-2011 Data. Chronic absence is defined as missing 10% of school or more

³ *Suspended Education: Urban Middle Schools in Crisis* (2010), Daniel L. Losen & Russell Skiba, Southern Poverty Law Center

⁴ Bowditch 1993 c.f. APA Zero Tolerance Task Force 2008; Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack & Rock 1986 c.f. APA Zero Tolerance Task Force 2008

⁵ *Exclusionary Discipline in Multnomah County Schools*, A Report of the Multnomah County Commission on Children, Families & Community (2012)

⁶ *The High Cost of High School Dropouts: What the Nation Pays for Inadequate High Schools*, a 2009 Issue Brief from the Alliance for Excellent Education

⁷ ODE 2011 cohort graduation rate

⁸ *New Growth in Stumptown: Young Portlanders Face Twenty-First Century Challenges*, a 2007 study issued by Connected by 25/Portland Schools Foundation

⁹ Information is currently being gathered for the Cradle to Career Indicators