REDESIGN FRAMEWORK FOR GRADES 9-14 IN HIGH NEEDS COMMUNITIES



Everyone Graduates Center Johns Hopkins University School of Education

CONCEPT PAPER

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TO SUCCEED IN THE 21ST CENTURY, ALL STUDENTS NEED TO EARN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA AND HAVE A SUPPORTED POST-SECONDARY PATHWAY THAT PREPARES THEM IN THEIR CAREER. UNFORTUNATELY, ACCESS TO THESE OPPORTUNITIES IS NOT EQUITABLY SPREAD THROUGHOUT OUR NATION. IN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITIES WITH THE HIGHEST NEEDS, THEY ARE LEAST FREQUENTLY PRESENT.

This concept paper proposes a framework that combines elements of high school redesign, work-force development, youth development and engagement, and career preparation and readiness in a more seamless system. Implementation of the framework is designed to improve high school graduation rates, especially among the highest needs students, and greatly increase the number of graduates who successfully continue their schooling or training and find employment, even in the most impacted locales.

We have learned a substantial amount about the impact of early warning systems, on-track to graduation and post-secondary success efforts, comprehensive whole school improvement, and workforce development approaches and how these systems can and have worked for vulnerable youth.

Leaders in secondary education, postsecondary institutions, workforce development, business, and community undertaking this redesign can build on previous knowledge, engage students and stakeholders, build on the assets in their communities and design implementation to meet their unique circumstances.

GRADES 9 - 14

REDESIGN FRAMEWORK

RATIONALE

Adults who have graduated from high school earn more income, are more likely to be employed, have higher health and life expectancy, and are less likely to be involved in the criminal justice system than those who have not graduated from high school. However, a high school diploma has become increasingly insufficient. Compared to the past when a high school diploma could ensure an adult's success at entering the workforce and earning a livable wage, the high school diploma is now seen, at best, as a necessary step to moving on to postsecondary education and training. At present, securing a stable, well-paying job requires training beyond high school, such as an occupational certificate, industry training, or a college degree. In fact, it is estimated that two thirds of entry level jobs and almost 80% of "good jobs" which provide family supporting wages require some type of postsecondary training (Carnevale and Rose, 2011, Carnevale 2019). As such, all students need to earn a high school diploma and have a supported post-secondary pathway that prepares them in their career. Unfortunately, access to these opportunities is not equitably spread throughout our nation. In our neighborhoods and communities with the highest needs, they are least frequently present.

Over the past fifteen years, the number of high schools that are graduating less than two thirds of their students has been reduced by half. Yet even with this progress too many (over 1,000) remain. Some of the remaining low graduation rate high schools are located in high poverty neighborhoods in large cities but just as many are found in high poverty smaller cities, towns, and rural areas (Twenty five percent are the only high school in their school district). Most of these remaining high schools are attended by low income and minority students. Many have large populations of students with disabilities and English as a Second Language students as well as over-representations of students in foster care and involved with the juvenile justice system. Post-secondary

outcomes are even more grim. College success rates for students from low graduation rate high schools are often under 10% and labor market outcomes are so poor that most of the students who seek full time employment after high school end up returning to but not succeeding in community college or for-profit degree or training programs.

Nearly all of these high schools have tried numerous and often piecemeal reforms that have not been able to reshape students' experiences. For these schools, and those where graduation rates have modestly improved, the most vulnerable students are still not succeeding. The current models of both secondary education and the post-secondary and initial employment pathways and supports must be rethought, restructured, and redesigned.

Our proposed redesign of secondary to post-secondary schooling and initial employment experiences for high needs students in high needs communities is built off of what we have learned about what students, especially our most vulnerable, need in order to be successful in graduating from high school, receiving additional post-secondary schooling or training and entering a career. First, we have learned a substantial amount about the predictive indicators of students' readiness and likelihood of high school graduation and increasingly about the indicators that are predictive of college success (Balfanz and Byrnes, 2019), as well as the types of school organizations, supports, and experience that are needed to keep students on track to high school graduation career and college ready. Over the past ten plus years, schools, districts, and partners have developed ways to organize adults, monitor and support students, and provide consistent instructional supports to keep more students on-track to graduation. These systems, often called Early Warning and Intervention Systems (EWS) or On-Track to Graduation, are an integral component for high school redesign when used as a whole school strategy to direct programming and

intervention. The goal is to both get the right supports, to the right students, at the right time at the scale and intensity required and to use early warning data to direct proactive schoolwide instructional and social-emotional prevention actions to reduce the number of students in need of additional supports. In addition, programs and research have begun to identify key exposures, experiences, and actions that propel students on a path towards a career and necessary training. By combining learnings from early warning systems and high school redesign with workforce development and career readiness training, we believe that we can create a more seamless transition for individuals from student to self-sustaining adult and active member of the community.

CORE BELIEFS AND ASSUMPTIONS:

A set of core beliefs and assumptions underlay this framework. The framework is not a program to be implemented at a high school or a partnership to create. It is intended to provide a framework that school districts and communities can use to guide their redesign efforts. It is worth noting that this work is born out of high school improvement efforts, thus, secondary schools and their partners are the primary audience. Given the flexibility needed to implement in a variety of settings, these core beliefs can help guide decision making around the intention of the model.

This effort is worthwhile and can impact individuals and communities.

- High schools and their communities can substantially impact the trajectory of students' future by strategic organization, activities and partnerships.
- Putting effort and resources into organizing, coordinating, and partnering has significant return on investment.

The framework must be built to counteract and address current challenges and inequities.

- Partnerships are focused on the time period when students would be in 8th/9th - 14th grades or roughly ages 14 - 21.
- Creating equitable outcomes and opportunities for historically underserved students is a priority.
- The goal is to prepare all students for career. The differences are in when, how much, and in what doses, individuals participate in on-the job training,

- formal education, exposure (internships, job shadowing, community service), career training (classroom, on-the-job, apprenticeship, etc.) and work.
- In high poverty neighborhoods and communities, the most common experience for 14- to 21-yearolds will be a combination of work and schooling.
 The goal is to structure and support these experiences, so they lead to adult success.
- Preparing students for jobs that have opportunities for advancement and livable wages is a priority.

Local customization is essential for success of the framework

- Student, community, and stakeholder voice should play a key role in the local customization of the framework.
- Not all schools will follow the same implementation path. Schools with higher percentages of students with off-track indicators or concentrations of different indicators will require different kinds of investment and partnership.
- The experiences and outcomes for individuals should be consistent across implementing schools and communities, while the process, partners, and specific approaches to get there may be different.

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED FROM RESEARCH

We have learned a substantial amount about what works in high school redesign, postsecondary readiness, and workforce development but these components are often understood in isolation and not always as a comprehensive model. In this section, we will detail key research that is informing the design of the framework.

First, in tracking and researching changes in graduation rates, we have been able to see where progress has occurred, where there are still gaps, and starting to better understand where we need to focus our efforts for improvement. On the positive side, data indicates that graduation rates are improving. For example, in 2011 there were five states that reported graduation rates below 70 percent, but there were no states below 71 percent in 2016 (Civic Enterprises, 2018). Although the goal of 90 percent graduation in every state may be far in the future, especially with only two states having reached this goal in 2016, the findings are encouraging. The other change is where the challenge is concentrated and again, we

have seen promising signs and indications of where the challenge remains. While the majority of schools with low graduation rates were in big urban centers, the remaining low graduation rate high schools are as likely to be in suburbs, towns, or rural areas, which will require different interventions, supports, and approaches (Balfanz et. al 2018). Barriers associated with rural poverty include underfunded schools, unemployed or underemployed parents, and inadequate transportation (Thorne et al, 2007; Ali & Saunders, 2009). Rural communities have also seen a decline in jobs related to physical labor (Ali & McWhirter, 2006), which leads to a need for other career opportunities and training. However, research indicates that high school students in rural communities can lack confidence in their ability to pursue higher education or career training and lack assurance that postsecondary education will lead to future success (Ali & McWhirter, 2006, 2009). Rural students are exposed to negative messages regarding postsecondary pursuits (Wallace & Diekroger, 2000) and studies indicate that rural students have lower aspirations for postsecondary education than urban students (Gandara, Gutiáez, & O'Hara, 2001; Stayhorn, 2009).

Second, while achieving a high school diploma is incredibly important and this attainment matters for individuals, schools, and communities, the high school diploma is now seen, at best, as a necessary step to moving on to postsecondary education and training. At present, securing a stable, well-paying job requires training beyond high school, such as an occupational certificate, industry training, or a college degree. Carnevale et al estimate that two thirds of all entry level jobs and 80% of all "good jobs" that provide a wage that can support a family require some type of training post high school (Carnevale et al 2018). A growing component of these "good jobs" are middle skills jobs, or jobs that require going beyond high school but don't require a bachelor's degree. They currently are estimated to make up one third of all jobs in the US and have an annual salary of more than \$45,000 (JEC, 2018). While there are still jobs that can lead to a successful career with only a high school diploma, this segment of jobs is shrinking, and growth is focused on positions that require training and education beyond high school.

Third, states, districts, and schools have taken note of the increased need to make sure students graduate high school prepared for post-secondary success. Research indicates that at least half of all US high schools state they use an early warning system using indicators such as attendance, course grades, and disciplinary incidents (U.S. Department of Education, 2016) to progress monitor students' progression towards high school graduation. These systems are based on research identifying attendance, behavior, and course performance as predictive as early as 6th grade of students' graduation rates (Balfanz, Herzog, MacIver 2006). Recent research has shown that predictors of high school graduation, including attendance, behavior, and course performance (ABCs), are also predictive of college enrollment and persistence when different thresholds are used (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2019). In particular, findings from an examination of high school students in Boston indicate that decent attendance (94% or above) and a solid GPA (2.7 or above) are very predictive of earning a 4-year college degree (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2019). Further, these findings also suggest that taking challenging courses, whether the sequence of courses that qualifies students for admission to the state university system or participating in college level courses while in high school (e.g., AP, dual enrollment), are also key metrics for being on track to post-secondary success.

Lastly, exploring, experiencing, preparing for, and choosing post-secondary pathways is integral to post-secondary success (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000). Thus, it is not enough to be on-track for post-secondary success through good attendance and grades in challenging courses. In fact, even students who make it to graduation and are accepted into postsecondary institutions don't attend at high rates (Roderick, M., Nagaoka, J. et al 2008). In order to achieve post-secondary success, students and their families need to make wise and informed choices about which post-secondary pathway to pursue, to find one that is aligned with their preparation, interests, goals, and resources (Cunningham, Erisman, & Looney, 2007). Accordingly, post-secondary success places a premium on receiving good post-secondary exposures, experiences, guidance, and navigation supports. These supports can be more predictive of college enrollment than overall GPA (Gandara, 2002). This is particularly true in high-poverty high schools, where many students will be first-generation college attendees, and in locales, including rural ones, where the majority of students have historically entered the workforce after high school. In these schools, moreover, the post-secondary navigation needs of students typically overwhelm existing counseling and guidance supports. For this to work, strong structures and routines will need to be built in schools, with specific and targeted support for college and career preparation for students prior to and through twelfth grade (Gandara, 2002).

FRAMEWORK FOR SUCCESS

KEY COMPONENTS

At each step of an individuals' pathway from ages 14 to 21, systems, supports, and consistent relationships will better ensure individuals stay on-track for what's next. Key components of this system may be delivered by an individuals' high school, a post-secondary training institution, an intermediary organization, local government, or an employer. Decisions will be made locally about where these experiences are, what funding can support them,

and who will lead them. Some experiences may be provided by implementing, localizing, and weaving together existing proven programs. In some cases, new programs and approaches may be needed. Throughout this paper, a redesign team, which we define as the high school's school improvement team, and a community planning team, which we define as the group overseeing the entire effort will be used. Further description of these teams will be described throughout.

SCHOOL AND DISTRICT BASED STRUCTURES

School Leadership Grade Level Teams Data Systems: Indicators and milestones

REDESIGN COMPONENTS

System to identify and respond to predictive indicators for:

Partnerships
Youth feedback and engagement
Stakeholder ownership
Community and Industry analysis

- High school graduation
- ~ Career readiness
- Postsecondary education success

STUDENT EXPOSURE AND SUPPORTS

Instructional supports and interventions
School connectedness
Student teacher relationships
In School and Out of School curated projects
Career Counseling
Student Exploration and Awareness
Case Management and Transition Support
Scaffolded Work Experience
Job Specific Training
Postsecondary courses and training

SYSTEM TO IDENTIFY AND RESPOND TO PREDICTIVE INDICATORS

The framework proposes a series of indicators (included in Table I) to be tracked, monitored, and responded to by the partners engaged in implementation of the framework. The metrics combine predictors of graduation, career readiness, postsecondary success, and likeliness of engagement into a 9-14 series of indicators. These metrics will guide implementation planning and individual and group responses.

METRICS OF PROGRESS

9th grade on-track Promotion rate

Number and percentage of students who have: Met entrance requirements of state university system Participated in college courses (AP, IB, CTE, etc.) A GPA of 3.0 or higher

A Postsecondary plan

Completed application and acceptance into postsecondary training

Industry certifications

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO DEMONSTRATE:

21st Century Skills/cross industry competencies

NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS PARTICIPATING/ COMPLETING:

Scaffolded work experiences
Job or industry-related training
Community service connected to school experiences
Internship and job shadow
Paid work experience
Industry certifications

SCHOOL AND DISTRICT BASED STRUCTURES

There are a variety of books, research and policy papers, and guides that detail key components of effective high schools. This is not intended to recreate or to rewrite what we have learned about school improvement and high school redesign more generally. Our intention is to highlight the key components that are unique to this model and provide the necessary structures to ensure effective implementation. These structures are intended to build

spaces for collaboration, ready access to information, and clear direction.

- School Leadership: Effective turnaround or rapid improvement leadership provides a sense of urgency, concrete short- and long-term goals and clear ways to gauge and measure progress (Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement, West Ed, 2017). Effective leaders help teams focus on a few strategies that can be effectively implemented at any one time. Effective school leadership teams in turn, benefit from access to timely information related to their needs, coaching supports, and the ability to share and receive insights with schools facing similar challenges.
- School Based Grade Level and Content Teams: School teams are ideally designed by grade level so that a common group of teachers supports a common group of students, has time to meet to work together, and collectively responds when students are not learning or are disengaging. In addition, teachers in each grade can focus on providing common college and career readiness and preparation experiences to all students in the grade and responding when not all students are meeting indicators. When teachers share common students and have the time and processes for meeting, they can bring a more comprehensive view of students that builds on the knowledge of staff members and acknowledges that consistency across classrooms and experiences is important. The focus of meetings can vary and should include conversations about individual students, patterns across groups, and instructional planning. How this is achieved will vary depending on the size of the school and may include a variety of schedules and assignments. Things like 9th grade academies, career academies, and small learning communities allow this to occur in structured ways.
- Data systems to support indicator and milestone monitoring and analysis: Staff who are working within the framework need timely information about students to make school-level, partnership wide or individual student decisions. The ABC indicators that show students' progress towards graduation and postsecondary training as well as key postsecondary readiness milestones and experiences must be tracked and monitored. In addition, it is

essential for schools and teacher teams to track and record the interventions attempted when students signal they are off-track so their effectiveness can be analyzed and improved upon. This data often lives in different places and effective teams may start with very basic spreadsheets that help to ensure that all students are achieving in the indicators and milestones and that staff are responding when that doesn't occur. The most effective use of these data systems will involve sharing across multiple different agencies and organizations.

REDESIGN COMPONENTS

One of the goals within this framework is to expand beyond traditional approaches to high school redesign. This acknowledges that while the K-12 system has enormous responsibilities and must be accountable for improvement, they cannot do this work alone. In fact, we have seen that even when students graduate from high school have the credentials to attend postsecondary education, many do not make it that next step (Roderick et al 2008). K-12 leaders need the expertise, support, and partnership of others to ensure that students are ready for what's next and have a smooth transition from the K-12 system into their next step.

- Partnerships: School staff have a very focused role in effective redesign and improvement efforts. Especially in high need communities, traditional school staff do not have the time or expertise to meet all student needs and partnering provides the strongest opportunity for student success.
 - ~ **Build Postsecondary Pathways:** Outside partners will be essential in helping expand the framework to include 13th and 14th grades, bring in outside perspective on the skills students need for postsecondary success and provide practical hands-on opportunities for students to gain and apply new knowledge. It is recommended that communities implementing the framework create a partnership team that includes at a minimum, the school district, an employer, and a postsecondary training institution (technical, community college, university, etc.). In communities without as many options, regional partnerships may be considered that work across multiple school districts. The work of these partners may provide traditional supports such as awareness, exposure, and work opportunities but are also valuable planning partners.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: JOBS TO THE FUTURE — PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY (PTOP) ASSET MAPPING PROCESS

Communities and regions participating in the PtoP Network participate in an asset mapping process that brings education and workforce professionals to the region to conduct a series of structured interviews. This process is intended to help understand key stakeholders, work already underway, and resources available in the region. In addition, a formal labor market analysis is conducted to identify needs and trends.

The goal of this process is twofold. One is to garner broad stakeholder engagement in the process. The second is to create a report that can be a foundation for creating implementation plans.

For more information: https://ptopnetwork.jff.org/resource-category/asset-mapping

- Support Most Vulnerable Youth: In our most impacted schools, staff may be trying to support and track more than 50% of students who are identified as off-track. Schools and partners will conduct community asset mapping to identify the public agencies and nonprofits who can help the school provide on-ramps and enhanced supports for students including those in foster care, involved with the juvenile justice system, and/or child welfare agencies and coordinate with school staff.
- Community and Industry Analysis: There are some common analyses that each community should undertake to inform the implementation plan. This analysis should include more formal measures such as most common and fastest growing career clusters, as well as more informal measures such as businesses that could host an intern or provide exposure opportunities. The intention of this analysis is to inform discussion of career pathways and academic course needs, identify opportunities for work-based learning, and better understand the organizations that are invested and supportive of the community. Similar to the partnership ap-

- proach, some analyses may be more appropriately done on a regional level.
- ~ Youth and Community Voice: The effectiveness of partnerships and the sustainability of long-term redesign and improvement efforts depend on a coordinated and engaged effort. Youth, who are the closest observers to the experiences we are seeking to create, should hold an important role in shaping the direction of implementation. Similarly, if the initiative is driven purely by the school or district leadership and the community does not see the school as part of its development, as leadership changes, the initiative may change or disappear alongside the changes. Given this, intentional efforts need to be made up front that ensure that the redesign efforts are informed by and done with youth who are in the schools and communities and the community at large that can help sustain these efforts.

STUDENT EXPOSURE AND SUPPORTS

Within the framework, students should be meeting a series of benchmarks, some that include experiences that students should have, some that are milestones or

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: SUCCESS MENTORS

Success Mentors is a comprehensive evidence-based approach to addressing chronic absenteeism by providing high-need students with additional supports to enable them to succeed academically and graduate from high school prepared for post-secondary success. The model has been tested at scale in New York City and has seen initial impact in other locations. The model has three main components:

- Consistent and continuous school-based mentoring aimed at uncovering and solving the underlying causes of their absenteeism
- ~ Case managed referrals for identified students to professional supports as needed
- School-wide efforts and early warning systems aimed at keeping all students on track to post-secondary success.

For more information: https://sites.ed.gov/nsaesc/national-success-mentors/

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: YOUTHBUILD

A model for connecting secondary training to career skills, YouthBuild programs support low-income young people in learning construction skills to help build affordable housing and other community assets. During individuals' experience at YouthBuild, they can learn essential job ready skills as well as earn a GED or high school diploma. There are over 250 YouthBuild programs in 26 states. Almost ¾ of program enrollees obtain a high school equivalency credential, high school diploma or industry credential.

For more information: https://www.youthbuild.org/

achievements that students need to be able to demonstrate. In order to build the lived experiences of postsecondary success, students need early and frequent exposure and guidance into what is possible and how individuals can navigate the path to get there. They may also need extra support to develop additional skills, navigate new situations, and address barriers to their learning and engagement. The following components of the framework should be available to all students.

- Process for exploration/awareness: In order to ensure that individuals are able to find a match for their skill-sets and interests, they need to have opportunities to explore career fields, reflect on and investigate their interests and strengths, and identify areas for deeper exploration. These opportunities often begin with in-school activities and expand to include work and education tours, job shadowing, and work experiences. In each phase, facilitated support will help individuals continue to engage, question, and focus their planning. This can be a key role for grade level teacher teams.
- Career counseling: Individuals need support in understanding options, matching to interests and skills, navigating new systems and organizations, and navigating a career plan. This is especially true for students who come from families where they are the first to attend postsecondary training as they don't have a ready group of individuals to rely on. This type of support cannot fall to the guidance counselor alone. The average student to counselor ratio is 482:1 and varies widely by state (NACAC and American School Counselor Association, 2016). Additional individuals, including teachers, partners,

- families, students and others need to be recruited and identified for roles within the counseling approach.
- Case Management/ transition support: Individuals need support as they navigate high school graduation and transition into career and training opportunities. The design should include pro-active structures that help individuals solve challenges and navigate roadblocks within institutions but importantly navigate particular steps that are not often owned by one institution. For instance, ensuring that individuals who have enrolled and been accepted into an apprenticeship program are able to purchase the needed uniform and tools and have transportation to arrive ready for day one or working to reduce "summer melt" which is the substantial documented drop-off from acceptance and enrollment in college and showing up for the first day of courses.
- Scaffolded work experiences: Individuals should experience multiple levels of work experience that enables them to complete real work and ideally be paid for work. This can start when students are still in high school and should expand through grade 14.
- Job specific training: Depending on the pathways that individuals select, training opportunities should be available that are specific to the job to ensure that the individual is prepared and able to thrive in the position. In some cases, this training may be completed on the job and by the employer, where in other cases, this may be completed prior to starting the position.

~ Interventions:

- ~ **Course/skill recovery:** Students arriving to high school already behind need specific supports to ensure they can meet the demands of high school as well as post-secondary work experiences and training opportunities. In addition, for students who struggle upon entering high school, there need to be guick responses that acknowledge where students are and provide opportunities to recover and re-enter the same pathway as their peers. Effective responses share common features, they acknowledge student strengths and target supports to specific areas of need, not general remediation. They have competency-based elements that show demonstration of key skills needed, not based on seat time. Different learning modalities are available that may include instruction within the classroom, computer-based programs, small group rotations in math and literacy labs, and high intensity tutoring.
- Non-academic support: Students and young adults, especially in high poverty communities, face a wide variety of barriers or hurdles to fully engaging in school and work. These can range from transportation issues, family responsibilities, to individual student needs

- such as mental health supports. Individuals need support in problem solving and helping to remove barriers that are keeping them from being on-track and fully engaging in learning. The evidence is clear that what students seek and what works is support without pity and practical problem-solving capacity. It is also essential that all the adults involved with supporting students in and out of the school have a means and process for coordinating and synchronizing their efforts.
- In school and out of school curated experiences/ projects: Individuals should experience projects and engage in experiences that engage them based on interest and connect them to broader learning opportunities. These experiences should be open to all individuals and not restricted based on assumptions of which students would benefit and which would not, school performance, or the ability to pay. This includes key after school and in school extracurricular activities like debate, drama, chess, robotics, dance, band, and sports. A key goal is for every student to develop a passion project or deep attachment to a team or group.
- School-wide structures that support engagement and high achievement: Schools that are effective at keeping students engaged have a system to ensure that students have and know that they have an adult who knows them and cares about them, a group

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

Early college is an evidence-based strategy for increasing college readiness and success for a wide range of students, particularly those traditionally underrepresented in higher education. Generally, Early College High Schools provide supportive high school environment to help students succeed where they can complete their high school diploma and have access to postsecondary courses while still in high school. Many are designed so that students can receive a high school diploma and an associate's degree by the end of their participation. Impact has been shown in higher rates of accumulation of college credits in high school, higher graduation rates, higher percentages earning associate degrees, and higher percentages enrolling and persisting in college.

of students like them, pro-social activities where they can help others, and a positive school climate where teachers and students get along and support each other. This atmosphere is supported by an expectation and focus on students getting decent grades in challenging and rigorous courses. Lastly, there is a focus on solving and addressing challenges, such as restorative disciplinary approaches, and avoiding exclusionary practices.

Post-Secondary Courses and Training in High School: One of the most effective ways to smooth the transition to postsecondary, is to bring key elements of post-secondary schooling and training into the high school. This may be particularly needed in rural communities or in schools in more isolated towns that are not close to a local institution of higher learning or many workplace learning opportunities. Successful examples include dual credit courses delivered by higher education instructors in the high school, industry certification programs open to both students and their parents delivered by employers in the school, school- and student-lead entrepreneurship and micro-business programs, career academies, and early college programs.

INTENDED OUTCOMES AND METRICS FOR PROGRESS

Table I: This table outlines metrics for tracking progress, key components for the model to be successful and models that can be used to design and inform different components. Each of the key components are further described on the following pages.

INTENDED OUTCOME: HIGHER GRADUATION RATES, INCREASED NUMBERS OF STUDENTS EMPLOYED AND IN-SCHOOL AT AGE 20 **METRICS OF PROGRESS KEY COMPONENTS POTENTIAL MODELS** School based teams JHU - FWS 9th grade on-track Promotion rate New Visions On-track Leadership Number and percentage of stu-Data systems Career Academy (NAF+, JAG+) dents who have: Interventions **Network for College Success** Met entrance requirements of Course/skill recovery CTF+ state university system Non-academic support Participated in college courses Universal strategies on school con-(AP, IB, CTE, etc.) nectedness A GPA of 3.0 or higher Community partnerships to support vulnerable youth A Postsecondary plan Completed application and acceptance into postsecondary training Industry certifications Number and percentage of stu-America Achieves Cross-Sector Data/tracking system dents who demonstrate: Measurement system Competencies 21st Century Skills/cross industry In- and out-of-school curated expecompetencies riences/projects Numbers and percentages of stu-Universal post-secondary guidance Youth Apprenticeship (PAYA) dents participating/ completing: and navigation YouthBuild Scaffolded work experiences Community/industry Analysis Early College New Visions/Jobs First Job or industry-related training Case Management/ transition Community service connected to support school experiences **Exposure and awareness** Scaffolded work experiences Internship and job shadow Paid work experience Job specific training Industry certifications

IMPLEMENTATION

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The proposed redesign effort should focus on a three-to-four-year planning and implementation process with the goal being that all components of the framework are in place by the end of the time period and that the community is starting to see changes in graduation rates and the number of students employed or in training. The proposed implementation process is divided into two types of work.

- Internal Redesign: This is high school focused and will be led by school and district leadership. It will include leading the self-assessment, identifying structural changes that will support implementation, leading the implementation of school based key components, and ongoing monitoring and adjustment.
- External Redesign: The second part of redesign is a process that will involve external partners. This will be focused on redesigning how students interact with the high school, postsecondary institutions, and employers and engaging all of these groups in the development of this plan. The goal of this process is to design and connect opportunities that keep students engaged in appropriate opportunities and pathways and provide the transition supports and connections needed.

Planning Team

In each community, it is recommended that a partnership or group be formed to lead external work and to inform efforts for internal redesign. This group will build and lead a common implementation plan, engage partners in providing supports, compile and share data to understand need and impact, and determine the best areas of focus.

Engaging Students as Co-Designers

As the primary individuals that high schools are designed to serve, students should be included and engaged as key

co-designers of the internal and external experiences and be represented on the planning team. Students have the ability to assess their own educational experiences and contribute substantive ideas to discussion of improvement and redesign. Principles of youth development should guide the engagement of young people in two ways: first in contributing to the redesign plan and the partnership work and second, in voicing regular feedback about how the work is being experienced by young people. In the design phase of assessing the school and prioritizing work for the initial two years, students should be included in answering key questions. This may take the form of student interviews, focus groups, surveys, student led climate assessments, and opportunities to shadow students' experience. In a concrete way, any structure for exploration and decision making that is established should include youth representation.

INTERNAL REDESIGN

School Self-Assessment

In order to establish a common starting point and develop a better understanding of the foundations that exist in a school, a school team will need to lead reflection and planning activities with school staff. A school design team will review current practices and structures in light of what research shows to be effective practice in high school. A process of learning together as a team about redesign options, interviewing students and families, reviewing data and background information, undertaking a rigorous self-assessment of practices, and creating a plan for implementation can take 3-6 months.

The four areas of redesign used by the Cross State High School Redesign are recommended as a structure for self-assessment. In each of these organizing areas, the team will ask a series of questions and examine information about current approaches.

| ORGANIZING ADULTS | TEACHING AND LEARNING | |
|---|---|--|
| How adults are organized in a school is a foundational driver of its outcomes. If the daily interactions of teachers, administrators, partners, parents <i>AND</i> students leave them more satisfied, more productive, more supported, more connected and more engaged, evidence shows that the school will achieve greater success. | Studies and evidenced based resources have identified seven key domains: Creating Challenging & Caring Classrooms; Using the Learning Sciences; Coaching; Aligned Using Integrating Developing. | |
| Questions to consider include: ~ How are relationships built and maintained (between students and between adults and students)? ~ How are adults/staff deployed that meets student needs and staff needs? ~ How can teachers (and other staff) function as a team for maximum student success? | Questions to consider include: How does learning happen in your building and how do you know? Which students need what kinds of additional support, and how will it be delivered? Is your curriculum/pedagogy aligned with 21st century needed skills and knowledge? | |
| STUDENTS AT THE CENTER | POSTSECONDARY PATHWAYS | |
| | | |
| "Students at the Center" examines the evidence-based research that highlights core principles to consider when redesigning high school experiences to increase, Student motivation, Engagement, and Active participation in their learning. | Evidence and research-based materials identify core principles to consider when redesigning the high school experience to enable all students to graduate with a strong and supported pathway to postsecondary success. As you design pathways, they should reflect high school as a beginning and not an ending. | |

Prioritization

The internal redesign team will establish a basic implementation plan with selected areas of focus for each year. Effective school improvement, turnaround, and redesign efforts take on manageable tasks and strategies each year, keep a clear focus on achieving them each year, and acknowledge that sustainable change often takes multiple years to be successful. After completing the self-assessment, redesign teams will select which new components to be added and which can be developed over time. Sites piloting these efforts have at times divided the components into those already in place, new components that

are in the implementation phase, components being piloted and those components where planning is just starting. A sample template showing the phasing in of components over two years is included as Table BCD and Table XYZ. The goal for this prioritization and planning is to ensure that all components are implemented by year 3 or 4.

EXTERNAL REDESIGN

This framework demands external work in forming, convening, and facilitating the partnership. The school will require additional resources and support, as the totality of this work will stretch their limited resources and capacity

and the vision for this framework is that students receive a more seamless experience as they leave high school.

The process of self-reflection and engagement with internal stakeholders will help the team begin drafting an implementation plan. However, the community planning team will own the overall vision of the project and lead efforts on the external redesign.

External Partnerships

External partners on the community planning team can begin meeting while the school redesign team is beginning their work and identifying year 1 areas of focus. While a core team will be involved in planning, many other additional partners may be added that help broaden the perspective, provide additional expertise, or to provide a particular service. Potential participants of the core community planning team include:

- School district (LEA) leadership must participate.
 This could be a single district or ideally several local school districts will undertake this work together.
- Any postsecondary education and training organizations (2- or 4-year colleges, technical schools, etc.) that serve that region;
- ~ Student and family representatives;
- ~ Major employers in the region;
- Partners with vested interest/ability to help clear obstacles or exert influence within the region i.e., municipal government, judicial districts, state department of education, etc.;
- Various student support/post-secondary pathways partners or non-profits (examples might include Jobs for America's Graduates/JAG, United Way, Jumpstart, etc.);
- Youth Supporting or youth focused social service agencies, like Child Welfare, Homelessness supports, juvenile detention related agencies (this list will be customized to the needs of a specific community and available resources);
- ~ Community Leaders

The purpose of the planning team is to connect the school (and thus the students and families) to an environment with resources and opportunities that cannot be created or connected by the school alone. The planning team will

guide this work and develop the necessary pathway connections and monitor the overall implementation plan.

A school and/or school district will be participants on the partnership team but should not lead or facilitate the team. The partnership team will undertake a process that includes several critical steps.

Convening the Partnership

As part of the launch of the partnership team and the internal and external analysis, the team will need to assess their readiness for engaging in an initial three to four year implementation effort. Some of the key areas for discussion that may signal the readiness to move forward and fully engage in implementation of the framework.

- Level of commitment of School System(s) leadership
- Level of participation and commitment by community leadership (might be local government, a collective action organization, City Council or County Commissioners, or the Mayor's Office)
- The types of jobs including the presence of "good jobs' within the region i.e., actual opportunity exists for which students can be prepared. Good jobs are jobs that pay a living wage, offer benefits, and include opportunities for advancement/upward mobility within an organization or field;
- Level of willingness of partners who can contribute time and resources;
- Willingness to engage in honest conversations about race and poverty, which may underlie much of the economic and workforce data;
- A committed convening organization with resources to devote.

Some communities may consider facilitation from an organization or individual that can act as the trusted broker as serve as the facilitator of the group. A local organization could be chosen to convene, facilitate, and support the partnership. Guidance on how to choose an appropriate convener includes identifying a local or regional organization that meets the following criteria:

- Trusted organization, has influence but also perceived as objective/neutral;
- ~ Has resources to devote to this work (staff time,

data analysis capacity, etc.);

- Has relationships that can be leveraged to invite partners to participate (muscle is needed to get the right partners to the table);
- Believes this to be mission-critical work and will serve as the champion/currently serves as a community-level agent of change;

The convening organization will need to align all the partners around a defined problem, common language, and a shared vision for the work. The convening organization may lead the asset mapping process and local/regional data analysis.

Regional Asset Mapping

Each local team will undertake an asset mapping process that should include looking at leading industry partners/ employers in their region and an analysis of BLS data for their state and region. This data should include projected growth of specific jobs in the region over the next five and ten years, as well as expected wage growth, current average salaries in a specific field, and what training is required to be eligible for specific jobs. This kind of data will support the development of specific pathways, the need for individual business or industry partners, and will give the team critical information about the kinds of exposure/ training/preparation students will need to be successful adults, earning living wage jobs in that geographic area. For example, expected growth in the field of welding may lead the team to realize that 1) this job requires specialized training/certification; 2) the options for such training

are currently limited to a small number of people annually and should be expanded to include young people; and 3) the local community college has the capacity to start another training and certification program for welding, with classes that students could access through dual enrollment.

Why regional?

While public schools are bound by geographic boundaries in terms of who they serve, those enrollment zones do not coincide with how employers recruit employees and how students access higher education or career training. Schools, on their own, will think about partnerships, pathways, and jobs within their specific geographic boundaries but that is a limiting and potentially isolating view of the work. A regional team will look more broadly to the economy, jobs, and resources within a geographic area that coincides with where people live, commute, work, raise children, and invest their salaries. A regional purview might mean that several school districts should work collaboratively in this effort, as the region includes multiple LEAs. This approach will support better alignment with economic and industry realities. The team will want to review data for their region that comes from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, their regional Workforce Innovation and Opportunity board (WIOA), and their state or regional workforce commissions. Some places will have organizations that coordinate responses to workforce and economic data by publishing user friendly reports, aligning and publicizing training opportunities, and communicating trends with the public.

PROGRAM SAMPLE: FERRIDAY HIGH SCHOOL (CONCORDIA PARISH, LA)

This partnership might pull data and partner with:

- ~ Central Louisiana Economic Development Alliance;
- ~ Concordia Economic Development;
- ~ Concordia Community Development Center;
- Louisiana Workforce Commission (the state department of labor and coordinator for the WIOA state plan);
- Sixth Planning District Consortium (the local workforce development board that covers Concordia Parish); and
- ~ Ferriday Housing Authority (which convenes the Youth Committee)

All of the above organizations have data and work for which they are responsible and should be part of the partnership team's outreach, if not contributing members of the partnership team.

POLICY SUPPORT

While much of this work can be achieved within current policy constructs, local, state, and national policy may need to shift in order to better support implementation and local partnerships may find it valuable to advocate policy change. Based on Everyone Graduate Centers' (EGC) more than twenty years of experience working with schools and the expertise and progress in particular cities and states, there are enabling factors that can support the momentum behind this work and create incentives for participation and focus.

Leaders of the partnership will need to review state policies and determine where alignment can better support implementation. Key policies that can help reinforce implementation:

- When there is alignment of state high school graduation requirements with the entrance and admissions requirements of the state university system, there is better coherence for students about what is expected and creates a clear opportunity for all students to have the option to attend the state system if they meet all requirements.
- Including career exposure and preparation into state high school graduation requirements enables all students' opportunity and incentivizes participation in work based learning experiences. Potential options include different scheduling options, pathways approaches to graduation, and multiple demonstrations of knowledge.
- Inclusion of career and college preparatory data, such as matriculation, on accountability frameworks for high schools shows secondary schools that their preparation matters and provides an additional incentive to participate in partnership that bridge the gap between secondary and postsecondary.
- Generally, policies that can incentivize participation and alignment across systems have the potential to

increase the types and level of services that students are able to receive.

At the district level, there are additional considerations that can provide additional support for the framework.

- Policies that support collaboration and planning time: Depending on the school size, the school schedule and structure can enable many of the key components, especially those that enable teams of adults to work together, conduct analysis, and identify needed supports. Policies that make it harder for this collaboration make it harder to engage all staff members in important parts of the work and can limit the effectiveness.
- Staffing model: Policies that determine staffing for schools determine whether there is more or less flexibility to develop teams, create advisories, or decrease student to counselor ratios.
- School budgeting: Schools need access to funds for a variety of expenses that may include student incentives, transportation, or even the (small) cost of convening partners for this process that may not fit into traditional budgeting procedures or processes.
- Accountability process and District support structures: Schools that are trying to redesign their schools and/or implement this framework may need additional time to be able to make and see the changes. This may include support in negotiating leading indicators of progress that do not focus solely on state assessment scores and examining whether different supports or mandates are needed from the district to support the improvement efforts.

FUNDING STREAMS

This work will require a creative and knowledgeable approach to braided funding. There are potential federal, state, and local funds that can support this work, including but not limited to:

- ~ Perkins (Career and Technical Education CTE): This is the main federal funding source for career and technical education (CTE) programs. The Perkins Act is the primary federal funding source for high school, college and university CTE programs that are critical for preparing youth and adults for jobs in local and regional economies. Federal funds go to states who disperse the dollars to local school districts or institutes of higher education to support the development and materials/supplies/equipment needs of career preparatory pathways. Perkins was reauthorized in 2018 and Perkins V introduces a comprehensive local needs assessment that will require local recipients (e.g., local education agencies, area technical centers, etc.) of these funds to consult with a variety of groups, including educators, administrators, business and industry representatives, parents and students to complete the local needs assessment process. There is an opportunity to engage with and influence your state's plan for CTE.
- Title 1 School Improvement: This is federal money that goes to states and every state must have a 7% set aside for targeted improvement work with schools that are identified for improvement. One of the designations is to identify high schools with lower than 67% graduation rate. Local school districts or regional education agencies are the applicant for funds. Note that these funds are distributed in different ways depending on the state. In some states, funds are distributed by formula, others are distributed based on a competitive grant process, and others may identify particular partners for districts to partner.

- Medicaid and State CHIP funds: These programs at both the federal and state level offer funding streams which can support preventative health care for young people through school-based health care centers, using patient revenue (reimbursement for patients seen or treated). While models may vary from community to community, Medicaid is the most common source of funding for school-based health centers. In addition, almost twenty states currently offer state-based funding for the creation and support of school-based health centers.
- Workforce development and Opportunity Youth: Several agencies within the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) support youth employment and training efforts. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), formerly known as the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), increases the proportion of federal Title I workforce funds to be spent on out-of-school youth in local education and training programs. Guidance about applying for WIOA funding has been provided by CLASP's WIOA Game Plan, the Enough is Known for Action series from Brandeis University's Center for Youth and Communities and the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, and Heartland Alliance's WIOA Planning Implementation Toolkit. The organizations that are recipients of these funds varies and may include cities, counties, or nonprofit organizations.
- National Service: Through the federal Corporation for National and Community Service, the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) helps communities scale solutions to longstanding problems, including improving outcomes for opportunity youth. This agency manages a portfolio of SIF grants to communities, including the SIF Classic, SIF Pay for Success, and the Knowledge Initiative.

- Higher education transition grants: There are federal and (often) state funds for both college and community-based transition programs that seek to support and ease the transition from high school to college. Institutions of higher education are the usual recipients of these grants and receive funding to provide additional supports. Some programs will target specific populations like students with intellectual disabilities, but others will be less restrictive. Sources of funding include federal aid, the GI Bill, philanthropy, scholarships (for college-based programs) and funds from the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA).
- Department of Justice mentoring funds: These are federal funds disbursed annually by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention for youth mentoring. There are specific targeted categories of young people as well as more general mentoring initiatives allowed. This might be a source of funding that could be folded into work with DOJ and/or state juvenile justice leadership as members of the partnership.
- PELL Grants: These grants are the primary vehicle for federal need-based aid for individual students based on family income, for college degrees as well as short term certificate programs (that last as little as 15 weeks, at a community college or community-based job training program). The grant was expanded to include career training programs and can be a more flexible source of funding for individual young people. Pell grants can support dual enrollment as well. These grants are awarded to individual students to pay costs.
- Foster Care Funds for Higher Education: There are numerous scholarship programs and a number of state programs that support higher education for youth who have spent time in foster care and/or who are in foster care at the time of their high school graduation. It is worth understanding what is available in each state and how guidance staff may need to support young people who are eligible for these funds.

COSTS OF THE MODEL

There are short term costs associated with each of the two parallel strands of implementation, the internal redesign work, and the external redesign. In both cases, it is

recommended that additional funding is identified for at least three years to offset the new initiatives, additional time needed, and capacity building. Potential costs are captured in the table below and will depend on what is already available locally.

Some of the costs are for of startup and should be seen as short-term investments in long term change. However, some of the costs we have outlined should be examined by the district in terms of how schools are funded, period. For instance, schools that do not have money for teacher training should not be viewed as needing "extra" funds -- they need access to levels of funding and/or staffing that all schools should have.

| INTERNAL REDESIGN WORK | EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIP/PATHWAY WORK | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Full or part time staff for the redesign team Funds to pay teachers for additional time Contracting with individuals or organizations to provide needed training Transportation costs for students Incentives for students Additional staff or parts of positions to ensure guidance support and/or true teams Costs of dual enrollment | Contracting with staff or an individual to provide external facilitation for the process Costs for space, materials, and other expenses for meetings Costs of dual enrollment or training programs Transportation (for work exploration, internships and apprenticeships) Funds to cover upfront employment costs (uniforms, tools, transportation, etc.) Additional staff to ensure guidance support for students | | | |
| SAMPLE | | | | |
| 1 FTE: Assistant Principal focused on redesign efforts (District funded) \$5k: Funding for staff time for additional training and staff retreat (State grant) \$20k: Online system, training, and transportation for career exploration activities (Local foundation) \$15k: Pilot of up to 15 students taking a dual enrollment course (Community college reimbursed by state) | In-kind: Meeting space for monthly meetings and stakeholder events (Community college) \$75k: Funds for transition services and workforce readiness costs for Opportunity Youth (County through WIOA funds) \$10k: Hiring of facilitator for developing the partnership and facilitating stakeholder engagement events (local foundation) | | | |

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: IMPLEMENTATION SAMPLE

This example is included here to highlight how the framework will play out differently in different contexts and also exploring the level of analysis and partnership that will be required.

| iversal career exposure/prep pathways (path- ys are small and limited in size, plus state has entified that pathways are not aligned with |
|--|
| ys are small and limited in size, plus state has |
| entified partners from higher education and dustry uctures for dual enrollment and/or formal reer training portunities for academic catch up/remedian or basic education (in a community where on % of the adult population has a college degree d 42% did not attain a high school diploma) acher team structure rmal plan/curriculum for career exposure/expration y strategic vision for pathways to graduation the parish (and creating a portfolio of options |
| |

| FERRIDAY, LOUISIANA: SAMPLE, CONT'D | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER | POTENTIAL PARTNERS | | |
| According to regional workforce data: In 2019, the leading industries in Concordia Parish were Retail, Health Care and Social Services, Manufacturing, and Public Administration. How do we expand /create opportunities in new industries with higher wages? How do we link the school's efforts to workforce development? How can pathways be re-aligned with local/regional opportunity? What are the most impactful ways to structure career connections and connect academic learning for students at Ferriday? How can JAG be leveraged for their existing knowledge of the community and relationships with industry? How to best support teachers (the majority of whom are new and uncertified)? | Central Louisiana Technical Community College LSU Agricultural Center Riverland Medical Center Regional workforce organizations like Central Louisiana Economic Development Alliance JAG | | |

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE SCHOOL YEAR 2019-20 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

| SUMMER | SEMESTER 1 | SEMESTER 2 |
|--|---|--|
| Meeting with Parish leader-ship and school leadership to seek agreement on scope of work for school year Identify partners/asset mapping of Concordia Parish Training for team members Identification of key components | Review of school, community, industry data Review of school course pathways and assessment of current CTE pathways and state guidance Mapping of in-school experiences for career exposure and exploration Support for robust EWS implementation and teacher teams | Identification of additional partners and creation of partner engagement structure Student interviews and shadowing, opportunities for student voice and feedback created Create/update/revise data system for collection of tools Identification of additional measurement tools |
| | Implement 2 selected com- ponents with specific grades i.e., 9th and 10th grade | Piloting of additional components (i.e., work based activities for exposure and hands-on application) |







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