



Foreword by
Dr. Howard Fuller, PhD

ALTERNATIVE ACCOUNTABILITY POLICY FORUM PROCEEDINGS

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2017 AAPF Summary of Proceedings

RAPSA wishes to express our deep appreciation for the work of four national experts on serving at promise students. These four individuals gave graciously of their time and expertise to develop recommendations for consideration by local, state and national policy makers and practitioners. Their work included reviews of past Summaries of Proceedings, reviews of the 2017 summaries, and use of their research and expertise on serving out of school and other critically at risk youth. Those RAPSA calls “at-promise” students.

These four nationally respected experts included:

Jessica Cardichon, Learning Policy Institute
Alexia Everett, Stuart Foundation
Jorge Ruiz de Velasco, Stanford University
Jonathon Zaff, Center for Promise

Supporting the ongoing work of RAPSA and all who serve at-promise students is an important aspect of education research and policy. The publication of this Summary would not have occurred without the ongoing support of the RAPSA Board of Directors:

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FOREWORD

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD BY FIGHTING FOR THE INTERESTS OF “AT PROMISE” CHILDREN

I want to thank all of you who attended the 2017 RAPSA Policy Forum because of your deep belief that we should never give up on our young people. I love the term “At Promise” instead of “At-Risk”. Too often we use words and concepts that define our neediest brothers and sisters in the most negative terms possible, “At Promise” recognizes the spirit and potential of our young people.

The purpose of this Foreword and of sharing the recommendations here is to be clear about the importance of your work; not just for the “At Promise” young people you serve but for the sustenance of the democracy itself. These young people you work with – without education; without community support; without adults who care, will continue to be swallowed up by the streets and enter prison instead of college.

Each of you know firsthand about the personal and family tragedies that result from the failure to provide hope and opportunity to these young people. The impact goes far beyond what happens to them personally. Their stories impact the very existence of the American democracy. Education of all of our young people remains a key cornerstone to the possibilities of maintaining and improving on our democracy.

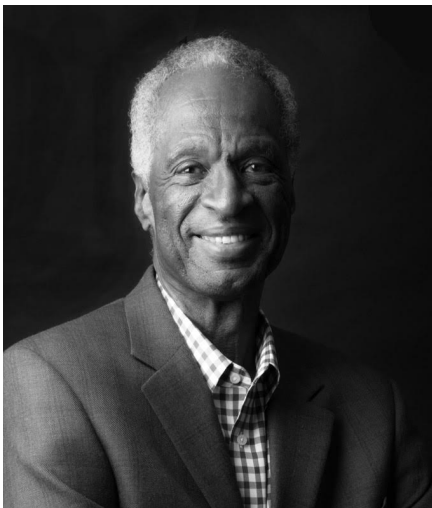
Dr. Kenneth Clark recognized the cardinal assumption of our American democracy is that social change may be brought about by education because education empowers the insight necessary to assert freedom and reinforce social responsibility. These bedrock concepts, social responsibility and freedom, must not be trivialized.

We must provide our young people a sense of social responsibility. Too many young people have no stake in the society because the society has not provided the foundation they need to realize their fullest potential as human beings.

Martin Luther King, Jr. also spoke of the relationship between freedom and social responsibility. Freedom is first the capacity to deliberate and weigh alternatives. “Shall I be a teacher or a lawyer...Second, freedom expresses itself in decision...When I make a decision I cut off alternatives and I make a choice...A third expression of freedom is responsibility. This is the obligation of the person to accept and take the weight for the decisions they make.

The ability of a person to be “free” is largely dependent upon the ability to attain a point of relative economic independence. For most of us that means a decent job. And in most instances a decent job is impossible without an education. But the mission of education is more than job preparation. Being able to be an effective participant in the economic life of a society is a critical ingredient to people being socially and economically productive.

There’s another important aspect of your work with “At Promise” students that I feel compelled to reinforce. We must constantly work at sustaining our democracy by making it even more vibrant; more accommodating for all of its people. We live at a time when we must be reminded that inclusiveness requires positive leadership at all levels to provide unambiguous support for all citizens regardless of their race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, or religious beliefs. Our democracy requires leadership that brings us together not tears us a part.



As education leaders we have much to do to uphold our foundational beliefs that, “all men (and women) are created equal” with unalienable rights of “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” Education is the key lever to make these words real for our most vulnerable children if they are to have any chance to realize these lofty goals.

There are a great many people suffering in what is supposed to be the “greatest country on earth.” It is our duty to not rest until that suffering is alleviated. Those serving “At Promise” youth must stay dedicated to this purpose without becoming fixated on any particular educational method or arrangement to get to that purpose. We must instead be attached to the idea of making sure all of our young people can be engaged in what Paulo Friere called the “practice of freedom”- building their capacity to engage in the transformation of their world.

Dr. Howard Fuller, Ph. D
March 2018

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INTRODUCTION

The 6th annual Alternative Accountability Policy Forum (AAPF) convened 285 educators, advocates and policymakers that work with at-promise students. Forum presenters and attendees from 21 states emphasized that despite obstacles, all students can succeed.

These resilient young people, celebrated at the AAPF as at-promise students, are overage and under-credited; have dropped out; and/or face homelessness, family abuse, incarceration, gang involvement, or other personal circumstances that make regular attendance and academic learning exceptionally difficult.

This year's AAPF was timely due to regulatory changes of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and pending state direction to ensure equal opportunity for students in alternative school settings. Several states including Arizona, California, Colorado, and Kentucky presented their efforts to develop appropriate metrics for at promise students consistent with the Federal law. The 6th Annual AAPF brought together practitioners, researchers and advocates working to ensure that accountability systems meet the needs of the most at risk students.

While there is growing research about serving at-promise students and building alternative accountability approaches, the challenges in implementing these policies and practices remain considerable. Participants were presented with 22 concurrent sessions that addressed: effective alternative accountability policies; workforce, community and post-secondary partnerships; relevant teaching and learning strategies; and addressing student trauma. Our Keynote Session was provided by noted Civil Rights activist, education reform advocate and academic, Dr. Howard Fuller. Our closing session was presented by Congressional education staff experts Mandy Schaumburg and Jacque Chevalier.

In 2014 and 2016, Summaries of Proceedings were published which each made a series of policy recommendations. Many of those recommendations are beginning to be implemented across the Country. For this Summary, four national experts have reviewed those recommendations and proposed some additional policies and practices that will serve schools supporting at promise students. RAPSA greatly values that work from Jessica Cardichon, Learning Policy Institute; Alexia Everett, Stuart Foundation; Jorge Ruiz de Velasco, Stanford University; and Jon Zaff, Center for Promise.

AAPF participants are leaders in advocating that the education of at-promise students' needs to be the focus of attention at the national, state, and local levels. As a group, they called for a rethinking of policies, practices, and partnerships for building instructional and alternative accountability approaches that support excellence and equity in schools as well as account for the difficult circumstances of at promise students. What follows is a summary of the key points as presented in each session, along with policy and practice recommendations from the 2017 Alternative Accountability Policy Forum.



**POLICY
SESSIONS**
SUMMARIES

DEVELOPING TRAUMA INFORMED SYSTEMS - LESSONS LEARNED

Dr. Amy Lansing

Director of Cognitive and Neurobehavioral Studies in Aggression, Coping, Trauma, and Stress
UC San Diego.

Key elements of developing a Trauma Informed System relevant for schools were reviewed. Ideas for collaborative models between schools and universities were presented to illustrate how research can inform and impact practice. The discussion centered on the process, rationale and implementation of workforce, community and post-secondary supportive partnerships in the direct, wraparound service of academic engagement and trauma-sensitive strategies to promote student growth and healthy development. The session demonstrated how research-informed focus groups and emergent training moves beyond Professional Development to tailor programming for stakeholders; including individualized and relevant student curriculum that support metrics associated with self-identified needs voiced by students - including specific examples that resonate across different school systems in the US.

Lansing demonstrated how utilizing a clinical-research training team that works directly with a variety of risk-immersed youth, can identify and address a wide range of needs (e.g., trauma sensitivity at every level within an organization; de-escalation techniques for frontline staff; Motivational Interviewing and communication skills to promote academic engagement; identification of triggers and acquisition of grounding and mindful techniques for students; as well as self-care and self-compassion for students and staff).

Ongoing research includes:

1. Developing a tailored relevant neurocognitive curriculum for improving student competencies and providing outcome metrics to assess their learning gains (compensatory training adapted specifically for student and teacher identified needs: problem solving, attention, motivation etc.
2. Strategies to reduce barriers to academic/occupational goals
3. Additional staff training and measurement of the impact on staff retention
4. Evaluating changes in student engagement as we adapt to their real learning experience needs.

ESTABLISHING MENTORING PROGRAMS WITH AT-PROMISE YOUTH

Dr. Sara Asmussen and Dr. Lisa DiGaudio
New Dawn Charter High School, Brooklyn, NY

New Dawn Charter High School is a transfer charter school which opened its doors in the Fall of 2012. Now in the sixth year of operation, the school has learned a key piece in supporting the Key Design Elements of its charter: relationships are everything. While advising is an integral part of our instructional program, leadership realized that developing a building wide mentoring program would bridge the gap of relationships students are seeking during their time at New Dawn.

New Dawn operates completely outside of the box. Students attend classes for one week at a time, alternating with internship and research during the other week. Students need to feel rooted to the school community, and by developing special relationships with their mentors, they can talk about personal matters, and get refocused on their studies. Our performance data, specific to persistence and achievement, is higher than other New York City transfer schools in our cohort (by 35%). Perhaps the most telling on the effectiveness of our mentoring program, is that 95% of our students and staff trust school leadership.

In this session, the presenters outlined the benefits of establishing a mentoring program to students at a building-wide level, and shared their best practices at making the most of the mentoring relationship. Participants had the opportunity to share their own best practices from their schools with at-promise students, as well as trouble shoot areas of resistance within the organization.

The presenters also shared the process in building self-awareness and reflection among the students through an audit of their journey towards earning a NYS High School Diploma and provided several opportunities to model the conversation between mentor and student. Participants also received a Mentoring Tool Kit, with sample documents, scholarly article, and sample conversation starters to begin or enhance the mentoring program in place at their own organizations.



DISTRICT-WIDE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING: CULTIVATING CHAMPIONS TO BUILD CAPACITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Joelle Hood, Collaborate Learning Solutions
Justin Brooks, Jerri Jameson, and Dianne Tiner
Kern High School District

Research in the field of Positive Psychology indicates a wealth of positive outcomes when Social Emotional Learning (SEL) skills combine with Tier I PBS systems, including a reduction in maladaptive behavior, improvements in engagement and performance, and enhancements to quality of life indicators including resiliency, social relationships, positive life-skills, and adaptability. However, achieving these outcomes can be difficult; staff wellness and commitment are vital to building district capacity and sustainability. Collaborative Learning Solutions (CLS), to address this difficulty, partnered with Kern High School District (KHSD) in 2016-17 to pilot a Professional Learning/Coaching model called “Social Emotional Learning (SEL) 2.0.” SEL 2.0 had the goal of creating internal champions who could lead SEL development at each of the 23 high schools within the district. Site teams met with an external coach from CLS for eight full-day sessions consisting of in-depth experiential learning that combined research, strategies, and best practices from the fields of Social Emotional Learning, Emotional Intelligence, Mindfulness, and Positive Psychology.

Between sessions, teams implemented their new learning in the classrooms and shared ideas and strategies with colleagues. Specific feedback provided by the external coach and participants



during follow-up sessions enabled teams to build both personal competencies and collective efficacy. Additional coaching, both in person and through an online community of practice, allowed participants to learn from each other and share successes and resources.

The 2016-17 school year was the initial pilot year for this innovative approach to building SEL competencies district-wide. A team from each of the 23 high schools in KHSD gathered together for eight sessions throughout the year and took part in a full day of highly-interactive and engaging Professional Learning. Participants knew that they would be expected to take their new learning back to their classrooms and come back with stories to share-- celebrating best practices and seeking suggestions for overcoming challenges. These SEL Internal Champions also participate in an ongoing online Professional Learning network, supporting each other with ideas, questions, resources, and inspiration.

This session provided first-hand presentations from three SEL Champions and their coach, about how they utilized SEL 2.0 to become catalysts for positive change. Initial results obtained through participant feedback indicated a strengthened sense of self-efficacy among participants, increased engagement for staff, and a renewed sense of passion for reaching and teaching students. Additionally, teachers reported an increased focus on social-emotional wellness for students through specific SEL classes for students, the development of SEL-specific lessons for staff to use in their classrooms and increased student-driven SEL activities like kindness clubs and positive school culture activities. The goal of future SEL 2.0 training is to utilize pre/post surveys and assessments to measure both implementation data and student outcome impact.

A REENGAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP CONNECTING AT-PROMISE STUDENTS TO COLLEGE

Curt Peterson, Anissa Sharratt, Mike Sita, and Molly Ward
South Seattle College and Highline Public Schools

South Seattle College and Highline Public Schools have partnered for over 20 years to serve out-of-school students at Career Link High School. Originally designed as a vocational skills and GED program, it has grown and evolved into a full high school program focused on diploma completion and college transition. All students enter credit deficient - often with significant barriers to school success. The 16 to 21 year old student population is about 75% low income and over 80% students of color. Quarter-to-quarter retention is typically 90% and over 75% of graduates have earned at least some college level credit.

Career Link High School offers all courses, state testing, and other requirements needed to earn a diploma on a college campus. The cohort model, new learning environment, close student-staff relationships, and a constant focus on student development create an exciting learning experience and culture that students continually cite as one of the best things about the program. As students near graduation, many are slowly moved into college level coursework. Students taking college courses are closely monitored and supported during this time to ensure a smooth transition into the often daunting college system. The number of diplomas has continued to increase over the past decade and graduates have earned over 75 college scholarships.

There are a number of challenges to this model. Most are related to merging and coordinating two massive education systems that do not integrate. As the partnership moves into its 3rd decade, new initiatives around student employment, increased barrier reduction efforts, and better college transition support are beginning. Serving many communities in the South Seattle area, this college/school district partnership built on trust, flexibility, and total commitment to student success is seeing students earn diplomas and transition to college.

BUILDING BRIDGES TO COLLEGE FOR CALIFORNIA OPPORTUNITY YOUTH: THE ROLE OF CBOS AND PATHWAYS IN COMMUNITY COLLEGE RELATIONSHIPS

Elisha Smith Arrillaga, Ph.D., Ed Trust-West
Linda Dawson and Laurie Pianka, SIATech
Breeanna Decker and Joe Herrity, Opportunity Youth Partnership

California's approximately 500 public alternative high schools serve more than fifteen percent of high school students but account for more than 50% of the state's high school dropouts. Nationwide minority and low income students are overrepresented in alternative schools (U.S. Department of Education). The students in alternative high schools are students who weren't thriving in traditional

schools or who are at risk of not graduating because they haven't passed or completed enough courses, often because of high absentee rates (Ruiz de Valasco and McLaughlin, 2012). In addition to these students in non-comprehensive high schools who are on the verge of dropout, there are more than 700,000 opportunity youth in the state of California. Opportunity youth are young people between the ages of 16-24 who are not in school and not working.

The combination of opportunity youth and alternative high school students in California is an alarming issue for the state. As California's economy is relying on more high skill jobs that require a college education, the population of young Californians still faces tremendous challenges to graduating high school and completing college. However, this is a time when California's comprehensive public high schools and community colleges are riding a wave of investment to improve disadvantaged students' transition to post-secondary education. The Community College Basic Skills and Transformation Program, the new CCCAOE basic skills effort, Adult Education reform (AB86), Guided Pathways, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the CA Department of Education's CA Career Pathways Trust (CCPT) are supporting demonstration of effective practices that better align systems to prepare young people for college and the workplace. However, the voices of opportunity youth and alternative school students, family and staff largely remain absent from these reform efforts.

The innovative practices in several current reforms – incorporating early college credit, improved assessment and placement, restructured pathway course sequences, and transitional counseling – hold the promise of greatly improved college transition and success for vast numbers of Californians. However, if educators and institutions hope to increase the numbers of all students who move on to and succeed in college, we must build our knowledge base about effective practices tailored to supporting continuation school students and opportunity youth as part of these reforms.

The Oakland-Alameda County Opportunity Youth Initiative (OACOYI) and the Santa Clara County Opportunity Youth Partnership (SCCOYP) are both leading efforts where community based organizations (CBOs) are partnering with their local community colleges to increase the number of alternative school and opportunity youth that matriculate to college. This session highlighted (1) how the OACOYI brought together more than fifteen community based organizations to partner together with their local colleges and (2) how SCCOYP partnered with SIATech, a nonprofit charter high school focused on dropout recovery, to create pathways to college. Participants walked away with an understanding of how to build robust connections and true pathways for opportunity youth to college.

NOW WHAT? DEVELOPING POSTSECONDARY OPTIONS FOR REENGAGED YOUTH

Michelle Feist, FHI 360
Kevin Hickey, JVS

Kelly Henwood, San Diego Community College District
Thomas Showalter, National Youth Employment Coalition.

According to a Georgetown University report on future job growth, 65% of jobs will require postsecondary education (a degree or certificate) by 2020. Those jobs that do not require postsecondary offer lower wages and fewer opportunities for advancement. Young people who have disconnected from high school are at a severe disadvantage in this economic climate. Even young people who have successfully reengaged face unique barriers to postsecondary success; the percentage of these students who obtain a postsecondary degree or certificate hovers in the single digits.

During the session, the panel discussed efforts that are helping reengaged youth overcome barriers and increase college attainment rates and career success. Washington, DC, is implementing postsecondary attainment work as part of its citywide Raise DC cradle-to-career initiative. The work in DC is implemented through a “change network” that partners the CBO organizations that reengage young people with local postsecondary institutions that serve this unique population. San Diego is addressing the issue through its Community College District, which serves tens of thousands of its nontraditional postsecondary students with programs that are offered free of charge. JVS in San Francisco is implementing sector-based Career Pathways training programs that provide occupation-specific vocational training, paid work experience and job readiness skills in high-growth sectors. The Career Pathways Programs offer postsecondary training and credentials developed in partnership with local employers.



The presenters discussed the following elements that can increase postsecondary success:

- Intense wraparound services and college navigators that work one-on-one with students for the duration of their postsecondary education.
- Postsecondary programs that are designed for nontraditional students with flexible schedules, low financial burdens, and integrated job training, childcare services and other elements.
- Student financial aid resources that cover both academics and non-academic expenses like transportation, housing, childcare and others that are barriers to postsecondary success.
- Partnerships among postsecondary institutions, CBOs, reengagement centers and K-12 to facilitate transition to postsecondary and increase enrollment and retention rates.
- Access to guidance and counseling prior to postsecondary enrollment so that students can choose an appropriate program.
- Access to local and national data on attainment rates for reengaged youth. Presenters all had to develop local solutions to collect this data and track students and all found that it was a critical element in developing and refining their programs.



HIGH-STAKE STORIES: HOW TO BREAK THROUGH FAKE NEWS WITH REAL LIVES

Matthew D. LaPlante

Associate Professor of journalism at Utah State University and Member Reaching At-Promise Student Association, Board of Director

We live in a time in which everyone has been imbued with the power to “commit acts of journalism,” and administrators, teachers, parents and students can use that power to break through the media cacophony so that taxpayers and policymakers can better understand both the challenges and promises of serving opportunity youth.

Five suggested strategies for leveraging the power of citizen journalism are:

1. Team Tweeting

Engage teachers, staff members, parents and especially students in the work of telling stories that highlight the challenges at-promise students face and the successes these students achieve.

2. Teach Media Literacy

Students are already engaged in telling the story of their school experience online; those who are armed with an understanding of the rights and ethical responsibilities of citizens as consumers and producers of media are better equipped to tell those stories with fairness and accuracy.

3. Ask for Amplification

Social media messages live and die on the power of shares. Students, parents, staff members, teachers and community supporters are more likely to share a school’s social media stories if they are frequently reminded and encouraged to do so.

4. Create a Star

Almost every school faculty includes someone whose personality is a perfect fit for a larger stage. A weekly series of videos featuring short monologues or mini-lessons from funny, inspiring or empowering teachers can amount to “YouTube gold,” and can be used to carry a school’s other social media messages to wider audiences.

5. Share Real Context

The truth about working with opportunity youth is that poverty, family instability, physical ailments, untreated mental illness and abuse conspire to create uncomfortable and sometimes heart-breaking realities. This context shouldn’t be ignored. Successes set against a lack of context are stories that sink on social media. Student struggles should never be exploited, but students who are willing to share the challenges they have faced as they pursue their educational goals can be encouraged and assisted in doing so.

THE LIFE-CHANGING POWER OF ABUNDANT READING

Jan K. Bryan
Ed. D. VP, National Education Officer, Renaissance

According to Wandell, reading is “probably the hardest thing we teach people to do in the education system” (see Patience, B., 2008). Our brains are masterfully designed, at birth to focus on sound and facial recognition; however, “nothing in our evolution prepared us to absorb language through vision” (Dehaene, S. 2009). Advances in brain imagery allow a deeper understanding of the sight, sound, and meaning centers at work when we read. We now see how the brain physically restructures to create complex neural networks among these centers as we learn to read, and how these networks continually multiply when we read.

This session considered reading from a life-changing perspective and considered policies and instructional practices that support adequate daily amounts of time for meaningful reading and writing. Mike Schmoker’s seminal 2011 work, *Focus*, advocates for 90 – 120 minutes per day of purposeful reading and writing shared among the English Language Arts and across the content areas.

The power found in 90 – 120 of daily reading minutes becomes evident through the lenses of vocabulary acquisition and building background knowledge. Students engaged in independent reading independently acquire massive amounts of vocabulary over time—tens of thousands of words from kindergarten through the twelfth grade.

Words serve as tools for conceptual development as a word is a mental representation for a comprehensive set of specific knowledge (Vygotsky, 1986). While reading, students develop intricate networks among the vision, hearing, and sensory centers of the brain to form these mental representations. Fueled by acquired vocabulary and a growing body of background knowledge, these networks set the stage for deeper conceptual thought, meaningful discussions, and advancement in school and beyond.

The impact of building vocabulary and background knowledge is exponential. Explicit correlations among vocabulary acquisition, background knowledge and career advancement exist. In other words, the more developed your vocabulary, the greater your opportunity for job advancement (O’Connor, J. in Litemind, 2007). Policies that focus on daily, abundant reading, discussion, and writing offer at-promise youth unprecedented opportunities to establish and continually expand massive neural networks.

In closing this session, we advocate for policies that consider time for reading as an indicator of proven pedagogy and vocabulary acquisition as one of many authentic measures of reading achievement.



A SYNTHESIS OF ACADEMIC INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENTS IN ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOLS

Dr. Nicole Pyle and Mrs. Sally Brown, Utah State University School of Teacher Education and Leadership
Dr. Dan Pyle, Weber State University Department of Teacher Education

Presenters informed participants about the rationale, methods, and findings of a systematic review of academic interventions implemented with students ages 14 to 22 who attend alternative high schools. There is a need to review the available research of academic interventions implemented in alternative high schools and identify which instructional practices are most effective from improving outcomes for this population in these contexts.

To date, no systematic review that addresses the effectiveness of academic interventions with students who attend alternative high schools is available. In our broad review of all academic interventions implemented in alternative high schools, we found 12 studies published in peer-reviewed journals from 1970 to October of 2017. Our findings are limited to the inconsistent reporting of intervention characteristics. Overall, the academic interventions resulted in favorable academic outcomes. However, the studies were of low methodological quality. Researchers infrequently reported fidelity of implementation which limits our understanding if the intervention was delivered with quality as



it was intended. Further, few researchers administered standardized measures which minimizes our generalizability of broader academic achievement impact than the researcher-developed measures administered to evaluate the intervention specific outcomes.

In conclusion, we highlight three points from our presentation that we hope will influence future policy. First, our systematic review of peer-reviewed, published research of academic interventions with students who attend alternative high schools synthesizes the very little, available, research evidence of instructional practices in alternative high schools. Second, while the findings, in general, indicate improved outcomes, our analysis of the academic interventions in the 12 studies warrants caution in interpreting these findings due to the limited reporting of intervention characteristics. Third, there is a dire need for high quality academic intervention research in alternative high schools to inform researchers, educators, and policy makers of effective academic interventions to improve academic outcomes with youth who attend alternative high schools.

The preliminary findings reported in our presentation indicate that we have scant research evidence to identify evidence-based practices implemented with fidelity in academic interventions in alternative high schools conducted with high methodological quality to assert what instructional practices are most effective in what content areas with which student characteristics in what alternative contexts.

USING STUDENTS AT THE CENTER RESOURCES TO STRENGTHEN INSTRUCTION

Terry Grobe and Krista Sabados
Jobs For the Future

What is Students at the Center? Students at the Center, a Jobs for the Future (JFF) initiative, synthesizes and adapts for practice current research on student-centered learning approaches that lead to deeper learning outcomes. JFF and its partners aim to provide practitioners and policymakers with tools and information that encourage setting ambitious goals for student learning and making real improvements in teaching and learning. Students at the Center research and resources lift up programs, practice and policy that help all youth become college and career ready in our rapidly changing world and economy—with special focus on underserved youth and students of color. We believe all students need concrete opportunities to acquire skills, knowledge, and dispositions needed for success in college, the workforce, and civic life.

This session centered on four core principles of student-centered practice:

1. **Learning Is Personalized:** Together educators, parents and students customize learning experiences—what, how, when, and where youth learn and the supports they need—to students' individual developmental stage, skills, and interests. Many applications of personalized learning emphasize the role of student agency in personalizing learning and use of technology to enable differentiation.
2. **Learning Is Competency-Based:** Students move ahead, based not on age or course credits, but on their ability to demonstrate learning milestones and ultimately mastery of core competencies and bodies of knowledge.
3. **Learning Takes Place Anytime, Anywhere:** Time is fully utilized to optimize and extend student learning and to allow educators to engage in reflection and planning. Youth have equitable opportunities to learn outside of the school day and year in a variety of settings and received credit or competency recognition for this learning.
4. **Students Have Agency and Ownership Over Their Learning:** Students have frequent opportunities to direct, reflect, and improve on their own learning. Students are supported to take increasing responsibility for their own learning using strategies such as self-regulation, collaboration, self-assessment, help-seeking, self-advocacy, and creativity.

In the session, participants identified where they saw practice in action or opportunities for strengthening practices with focus on programs serving off-track or out-of-school youth. We flagged states such as Oregon and Colorado where policy support for competency-based learning encourages implementation of this student-centered approach. Participants also got connected to the variety and breadth of research, practice examples and tools available on JFF's dedicated website: www.studentsatthecenterhub.org



EMERGING STATE STRATEGIES FOR ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY

Carinne Deeds, Senior Policy Associate, American Youth Policy Forum
Dr. Jennifer DePaoli, Senior Research and Policy Advisor, Civic Enterprises
Dr. Christopher Mazzeo, Director, Center for Research, Evaluation and Analysis and REL Northwest, Education Northwest

As state plans for school accountability under the Every Student Succeeds Act come forth, education leaders around the country are grappling with the best ways to ensure high-quality alternative schools while also allowing them flexibility to successfully fulfill their missions.

Panelists previewed two forthcoming resources related to accountability for alternative education settings:

1. [A policy brief designed to help education leaders better understand the framework of accountability for alternative education](#)
2. [A toolkit outlining the systems and processes states can use to ensure robust and relevant accountability for alternative schools](#)

The policy brief examines state definitions of alternative schools, how states are approaching the overall design of alternative accountability systems, specific measures that are responsive to alternative education settings, and mechanisms for continuous improvement. The toolkit discusses the various intricacies of developing a comprehensive system of alternative education, including processes, stakeholder engagement, and guidance for quantitative and qualitative analysis. All panelists will reflect on the general purpose of accountability systems in alternative education and their role in ensuring the quality and continuous improvement of alternative education institutions.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION IN KENTUCKY: SUPPORT, RECOGNITION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Christina Weeter

Director, Division of Student Success, Kentucky Department of Education

Pursuant to Kentucky Revised Statute 160.380 an “alternative education program” is defined as “a program that exists to meet the needs of students that cannot be addressed in a traditional classroom setting but through the assignment of students to alternative classrooms, centers, or campuses that are designed to remediate academic performance, improve behavior, or provide an enhanced learning experience. Alternative education programs do not include career or technical centers or departments.” This definition became effective July 12, 2012 and since that time there has been steady growth in the number of alternative education programs across the state. As of the 2016-17 school year, 65% of Kentucky school districts have at least one alternative education program.

Because alternative education is considered a program, not a school, alternative programs have different accountability requirements as well as fewer opportunities for school-level funding, such as Title I. However, they are also not eligible to be identified as the lowest-performing schools in the state because they are technically not schools. While this level of accountability may not be as stringent as it is for schools, there are other aspects of accountability and transparency that are similar. For example, they must report the same student-level data to the statewide student information system, which uses this data to publish a publicly-facing School Report Card, just as other schools do. For the past several years the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) has also published an annual report on alternative education programs that includes data on the scope of alternative education, alternative student characteristics, enrollment patterns, as well as behavior and academic data. In addition to transparency related to alternative program data, these programs are monitored by KDE as part of its federal consolidated monitoring process. KDE has established an annual process to conduct required monitoring of schools and districts receiving federal funds on a rotating basis, and though alternative education programs may not receive the same level of federal funds as regular schools do, in order to minimize disruption that site visits inevitably cause, alternative programs are included in this monitoring process for compliance with alternative-specific statutes and regulations. The alternative monitoring process includes a self-assessment of program quality using a tool that has been developed based on national quality indicators and state regulations.

Additionally, programs provide evidence to support the self-ratings prior to a site visit by the KDE team. Following the examination of data from the student information system, self-assessment ratings and accompanying evidence, and the site visit, KDE issues a report to each individual program that

identifies strengths, opportunities for improvement and suggested resources to address them, and any compliance issues identified. In the event a district is monitored that has multiple alternative education programs, district-level recommendations may also be issued, if appropriate. They are encouraged to follow up with KDE if they are interested in additional support or guidance they may need for continuous improvement.

OPPORTUNITY MEASURES: VALIDATING UNIQUE STUDENT OUTCOMES AND SCHOOL SUCCESS

Mike Epke, New America School Thornton
Jody Ernst, Jim Griffin and Liz Hackett, Momentum Strategy & Research
Jennifer Turnbull, New America Schools

A consortium of Colorado alternative education campuses (AECs) and Momentum Strategy & Research (a research organization promoting alternative school accountability) are working together as the Opportunity Measure Consortium to demonstrate how unique measures of student progress and school success can be validated for accountability purposes. This year's demonstration program builds on recommendations from Colorado Department of Education's 2015 AEC SPF Workgroup https://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/2015_aec_awg_final_report calling for the integration of qualitative and mission-specific measures into AEC accountability.

The term "Opportunity Measures" generically describes the impact of schools' unique program offerings and outcomes for which the school could be given "credit" by external stakeholders, but which are not currently included in applicable accountability arrangements. Examples among this year's participating schools include comprehensive mental health services provided by one school, with another school's review featuring their program of child care and parenting skills for teen parents. In addition to parties traditionally involved in school accountability (district and state), stakeholders for the purposes of these efforts may also include funders, local community partners, as well as schools' internal audiences (e.g., the students' families). We believe Opportunity Measures provide schools with a richer story of successes more closely aligned to the values and missions at the core of alternative schools.

Ultimately, we believe that increasing innovation and diversification within accountability measures for unique schools and programs strengthens public accountability overall. This demonstration project will test this theory (with a small group of volunteer schools) and allow us to document the process and provide evidence to Colorado stakeholders on how Opportunity Measures can be used in a valid and reliable way.

Under this year's Demonstration Project, participating schools submit their Opportunity Measure materials and documentation for review and rating by a five-member panel. Following review of the applicable materials, each panel will use review standards and a rating rubric to assess:

a) The school's impact on their students, families, and community

b) The degree to which the school has documented that success.

The ratings done by panelists will be used internally by the project team to get a better understanding of how these Opportunity Measures can be used for accountability purposes. Participating schools are also looking forward to their panels' feedback for recommendations to improve services to students or the how they track and monitor key outcomes. Each review panel includes alternative school peers, members with both subject-matter and accountability-related expertise, and leaders involved in alternative school and K12 policy. Each panel is specifically constituted to match the schools' specific measure and focus.



TRENDS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN STATEWIDE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR YOUTH IN ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS UNDER ESSA

Jorge Ruiz de Velasco, Stanford University Graduate School of Education

Carinne Deeds, American Youth Policy Forum, Washington, D.C.

Jody Ernst, Momentum Strategy and Research, Denver, CO

Amy Schlessman, Rose Operating System for Education, Tucson, AZ

This session featured a panel of experts focused on understanding how states across the country are considering the unique characteristics of alternative options schools in the state school accountability plans. The implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 requires states to articulate how they are incorporating alternative options schools in the over-arching design of state school accountability systems. This process is opening the door for education leaders to reexamine the role that alternative options schools play in ensuring that all students have an effective pathway to college and career readiness.

Panelists examined how states are defining alternative schools, how states are approaching the overall design of alternative accountability systems and specific indicators of continuous improvement. Panelists discussed how some states are building policy consensus on accountability approaches that balance the need for common measures, with the need for customization and innovative program design.

The American Youth Policy Forum representative discussed opportunities under ESSA to support accountability for youth in a variety of alternative settings. AYOF also shared some early trends from development of state accountability plans under ESSA.

The Momentum Strategy and Research representative discussed common themes observed during Momentum's work assisting stakeholders with the development and early implementation of alternative accountability plans in key states, including Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Nevada, Michigan, and Ohio.

The Rose Operating System for Education spoke about their active engagement in developing the alternative school metrics for Arizona and specific aspects of that state's alternative school accountability design recently approved by the Arizona State Board of Education.

MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT RE-ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Judith Martinez
Colorado Department of Education.

The road to measuring effectiveness in student re-engagement began with the passage of Colorado House Bill 09-1243 – Concerning Measures to Raise the Graduation Rate in Public High Schools. This landmark piece of legislation created the “student re-engagement grant program to provide grant moneys to local education providers to use in providing educational services and supports to students to maintain student engagement and support student re-engagement.”

The authorizing legislation for Colorado’s Student Re-engagement Grant (SRG) mandates that “outcomes and effectiveness of the service” be evaluated. Measures include: academic growth; reduction in dropout rate, and increase in graduation and completion rates. In addition, the Colorado Department of Education requires grantees to report on process measures including: method and tactics focused on dropout prevention and student re-engagement; status on performance measures; descriptions of student success and program challenges; and actions taken to sustain the work. In 2016, 3-year SRG grants were awarded to 10 local education agencies representing 35 schools. In the first year of the grant, 3,685 students were served, with the majority in 9th grade (32 percent) and 12th grade (29 percent). Re-enrolled out-of-school youth accounted for 15.4 percent of those served. The student population served frequently had a history of course failure, low attendance, behavior and discipline issues and high school mobility. End-of-the-year reporting by grantees indicated



that 86 percent of students served experienced positive outcomes - 38 percent are continuing with services, 30 percent completed services and 669 students graduated (18%)! The most common elements of the funded programs involved: credit recovery options; enhanced counseling and mentoring; assessing and enhancing school climate; and creating individualized graduation plans.

During the session, Panelists covered important considerations in developing effective student re-engagement programs.

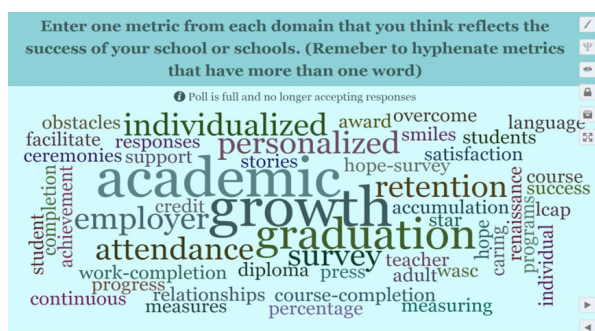
1. **A Real Alternative** - Students are excited to re-engage into schools and programs that are flexible, offer multiple pathways and options and provide opportunities for confidence-building wins.
2. **Build Strong Relationship** - Value relationships with students. Students, who are connected with school, attend school.
3. **Measure What Counts** - Evaluate your program. Get students involved in identifying what works and what can be improved. Regularly analyze student data to monitor progress and look for trends.
4. **Power of Partnership** - Create a network of support to remove barriers and create a pathway of opportunities.
5. **Tell Your Story** - Communicate your success to administrators and community stakeholders. Student success stories help make a case for sustainability.



RETENTION AND OTHER MEASURES TO DEMONSTRATE SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES FOR AT-PROMISE STUDENTS

Janice Delagrammatikas and Dr. Diana Walsh-Reuss
Come Back Kids, Riverside County Office of Education, Riverside, California.

Empirical evidence points to the need for alternative program metrics to measure the success of students below grade level, over-age, and/or under-credit enrolled in alternative programs. Since it is clear that success looks different for different students, participants examined strategies to balance quantitative data with qualitative student successes and used this information to discuss interventions to meet individualized needs through an interactive session.



Although many states utilize different metrics to gauge the success of their alternative students and schools, common themes have emerged regarding the use of multiple measures, meaningful and appropriate indicators, and a trend toward accountability for continuous improvement rather than mandating impracticably absolute performance standards. Alternative schools want to be held accountable for their results; the

accountability must be meaningful and appropriate. Consequently, the most central and significant indicators are those that focus on school connectedness and engagement, academic indicators, and successful student transitions that can be used to inform best practices for targeted intervention.

California’s State Board of Education has established that alternative schools need separate criteria/ methodologies consistent with the California Accountability System indicator domains and has convened an Advisory Task Force on Alternative Schools led by the Gardner Center at Stanford University and the California Department of Education. The Task Force’s work is focused on three overarching areas: (1) Local Indicators, (2) State Indicators, and (3) Emerging Best Practices. The Task Force is currently considering changing from the four-year cohort graduation rate to a one-year graduation rate as a state indicator. Local accountability measure categories under consideration are an alignment with Local Control & Accountability Plan’s (LCAP) eight Priorities, Early Warning Indicators, Transition Rates, Credit Attainment, and Attendance Stabilization. The eight LCAP Measures are basic services, implementation of state standards, parental involvement, pupil achievement, pupil engagement, school climate, course access, and pupil outcomes.

Come Back Kids (CBK), a charter school developed by the Riverside County Office of Education, reengages students to complete their high school education through personalized learning

opportunities. Students are prepared for success in college, career and the community through rigorous academics, post-secondary opportunities, and safe and supportive learning environments. CBK has contributed to raising Riverside County's overall graduation rate by more than 10 points over the past seven years. In addition to increasing high school completion, student retention and persistence rates viewed as an important marker of CBK success and indicate areas of potential intervention strategies.

STARTING WITH STUDENTS

Nelson Smith

Senior Advisor, National Association of Charter School Authorizers

An important feature of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers' (NACSA) work is developing accountability frameworks that gauge the academic, operational, and financial performance of charter schools. Such frameworks use state accountability data within a broader matrix of factors informing authorizer decisions.

NACSA has also addressed accountability for alternative charters serving students with serious challenges. Such schools often lag on conventional measures of achievement. NACSA has sought to maintain high standards of school accountability while expanding the use of mission-specific measures that recognize disparities in student populations.

Currently, state accountability systems rely on a narrow group of academic metrics. At least 18 states use some variation on A-F rankings that consider proficiency, growth, gap-closing, and college/career readiness -- all but the last rooted in standardized tests.

Innovative work being done in the alternative sector shows that it is possible to marry standards-based accountability with a student-centered approach to school evaluation. Rather than maintaining separate silos for "standard" and "alternative" accountability, we have the technical means to create unified systems that measure outcomes but also take into account every student's starting point. The primary stumbling blocks seem to be mechanical (failure of school/district/state databases to connect) and legal or jurisdictional barriers to sharing student data.

Why is this approach needed? Because students don't sort themselves as neatly as state accountability systems suggest. Colorado, with its well-articulated system of alternative accountability, requires that 90% of a school's population fit into a qualifying category (former dropout, pregnant/parenting, substance abuse, etc.). But there are plenty of "conventional" schools across the country with substantial populations of such students, and they get no particular credit for welcoming them and seeing them through to graduation.

By Starting with Students, we can bring the lessons of alternative accountability into the mainstream, and give all public schools greater incentives to retain and succeed with "at-risk" students.



A MULTI-PRONG STRATEGY TO ADDRESS YOUTH DISCONNECTION- FLIP THE SCRIPT: THE SAN DIEGO STORY

Ian Gordon, Executive Director, Youth Development Office San Diego
Omar Passons, Chair, Youth Council, San Diego Workforce Partnership (SDWP)
Laura Kohn, Director of Center for Local Income Mobility (CLIMB)/SDWP
Naomi Moore, Senior Peer Job Coach at CONNECT2Careers/SDWP
Roshawn Brady, VP at Access, Inc.
Rebecca F. (Becky) Phillipott, Education Policy and Program Development Professional, former administrator San Diego Unified School District, Dropout Prevention.

Four years ago we started a journey known as PATHWAYS. It began when research informed us that nearly 53,000 young people ages 16 to 24 were disconnected from work and school, known as Opportunity Youth, in San Diego County. In 2014, the San Diego Youth Development Office (YDO) received a grant from the Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund, managed by the Aspen Institute's Forum for Community Solutions, to focus our efforts on the successful reconnection of Opportunity Youth through community collaborations that remove barriers, connect the various systems that touch their lives, and begin to scale effective pathways to jobs and long-term, family-sustaining success. YDO convened stakeholders, including the San Diego Workforce Partnership and the San Diego Unified School District and formed the multi-sector PATHWAYS collaborative. Together the collaborative provided reengagement, mentoring, case management services, workforce and employment services to 232 Opportunity Youth over a three-year period.



The results of the pilot program formal evaluation found that:

- Participants were 10% more likely to remain in school than students who didn't receive reengagement services
- 67 participants who were at severe risk of dropping out remained enrolled in school
- Average GPA rose from 1.84 to 2.04
- 49% graduated high school
- 105 became employed

Points to highlight include:

- In-school youth at severe risk of dropping out and recent dropouts are disproportionately young people of color and from underserved areas in the City of San Diego.
- When provided with the right supports from schools in partnership with community based workforce service providers, these youth report positive impacts on personal and emotional support, career goals and employment.

This pilot has spawned reconnection efforts by San Diego Workforce Partnership and San Diego Unified School District and their community partners. There is a movement afoot to cut the rate of disconnection and half-the-gap between the area with the highest rate of disconnection and the county average, focusing efforts on resources on underserved communities ([#opportunitySD](#)) initiated by the San Diego Workforce Partnership and launched in a community-wide symposium called Flip the Script. This effort includes community organizations, and community members – including the youth themselves. It also requires multiple public and private funding streams and a theory of change that is based on proven best practices.

A CONVERSATION ABOUT ACCOUNTABILITY CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH AUTHORIZING SCHOOLS SERVING OPPORTUNITY YOUTH

Leslie Talbot, Founder and Principal, Talbot Consulting

Vanessa Threatte, Executive Deputy Director for Best Practices & Partnerships,
SUNY Charter Schools Institute

Darren Woodruff, Chair, DC Public Charter School Board

Session Purpose: To create a forum for open dialogue regarding challenges associated with authorizing schools serving majority opportunity youth using approaches underway in NY and DC

The Fundamentals of Charter Authorization for Schools Serving Majority Opportunity Youth Populations:

1. It is crucial for schools serving opportunity youth to clearly define their student populations. For instance, opportunity youth typically experience ongoing emergent conditions that include one or more of the following life circumstances: court-involvement, chronic absenteeism, suspensions/expulsions, pregnant or parenting, physical and/or cognitive disabilities, physical and/or mental health challenges, food and/or housing insecurity; substance abuse, domestic violence, foster care, and are off-track to graduate high school in four years. Several authorizers and state education agencies have established minimum enrollment thresholds to designate schools serving opportunity youth based on a set of life circumstances and/or performance indicators. For example, the DC Public Charter School Board has established a minimum enrollment threshold of 60% accordingly.
2. Most authorizers will not establish alternative measures of student progress for schools serving opportunity youth. Typically, charter school and student performance measures must be consistent with federal and state regulations. Therefore, some authorizers may request or work collaboratively with schools serving majority opportunity youth to establish enhanced or additional accountability measures. To guide this process, schools serving majority opportunity youth may want to begin by developing their own definition of student success. Next, use your definition of student success to establish academic and nonacademic accountability measures. These enhanced or additional accountability measures should be model-aligned, mission-driven, and provide unequivocal data on the school's value-added. Then, identify and employ metrics to measure school and student progress towards achieving these measures. In other words, it should tell an objective story about your school and students. Lastly, create and disseminate frequent dashboards to inform program and practice, and your authorizer. Communicate these results to key stakeholders, and in your annual report.

3. Frequent reasons for charter proposal or renewal denial for schools serving majority opportunity youth include:
 - A lack of specificity or focus on strategies to address challenges faced by the target population
 - Heavy reliance on anecdotal information, rather than on student progress towards mastery of college and career readiness skills
 - A lack of communicated knowledge and/or too little emphasis on student acquisition of in-demand skills for local employment and 21st century jobs
 - Insufficient demonstration of capacity to address the learning challenges associated with opportunity youth
 - Inability to quantify school design elements
 - Little evidence that school stakeholders understand the local context, and have partnered with community representatives and organizations that can support the school's efforts.
4. Work collaboratively with your authorizer to negotiate enhanced or additional accountability measures early during your first charter period. Do not wait until your first annual report. Once you have identified enhanced or additional measures internally, establish growth targets for each. Identify a peer school that matches your minimum opportunity youth (as defined above) enrollment threshold, and find a peer school with the same enrollment characteristics to ensure an apples-to-apples comparison measure. Then connect with your authorizer to negotiate the measures and metrics that will be used to demonstrate your school's value-added. Confirm a format for reporting this data in your annual report. Lastly, your school's most prominent key stakeholders should participate in these negotiations to alleviate any difficulties faced during the process. For example, you may want to include the board chair, school leader, parent/student, local employer, and juvenile justice and/or community-based organization representative.

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2017 AAPF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2014 and 2016, Summaries of Proceedings from the Alternative Accountability Policy Forum were published which each made a series of policy recommendations. Both the 2014 Summary prepared by WestEd and the 2016 Summary prepared by PACE included eight similar recommendations.

1. Allow the use of multiple metrics to measure individual student progress
2. Allow an alternative cohort for dropout recovery
3. Adopt reengagement rates without penalties
4. Equitably fund alternative schools that serve at-risk students
5. Adopt a flexible school day and calendar
6. Pursue partnerships to provide wraparound supports
7. Offer differentiated and individualized instruction
8. Deliver a relevant curriculum

In addition, the 2014 Summary prepared by WestEd included two other recommendations

- Focus on individual student learning gains
- Offer a competency based academic curriculum

The 2016 PACE Summary included these additional recommendations

- Invest in information, data systems and technology
- Keep policymakers informed and accountable

The policy advisors recognized that many of those recommendations are beginning to be implemented across the Country. This Summary of Proceedings includes new policy topics that were among the November 2017 sessions. Each policy advisor identified one or two issue areas to develop a policy recommendation based on the session summaries and their expertise. These recommendations were then analyzed by the entire team to develop the 2017 recommendations.



2017 AAPF POLICIES

1. SCHOOLS OF EDUCATION SHOULD PREPARE FUTURE EDUCATORS TO SERVE AT PROMISE YOUTH

Schools of education have an important role to play in preparing educators for working with trauma-impacted youth. Schools of education should do more to train future teachers and administrators how to engage in settings with at-promise youth. Schools of Education should provide course work and practical experiences to their students on how to most effectively work with this unique population. In addition to experiences that enable current and future teachers to engage with and understand the lives of at-promise youth, Universities should provide a strengths-based underlying theoretical (and philosophical) foundation. Teachers and administrators need a foundation to recognize the traumatic life experiences that too many of these youth bring with them to school. Teachers and administrators also need training to recognize that all youth, including at-promise youth, have the potential to succeed academically and throughout their lives. The role of schools of education (and the broader society) is to provide the next generation of education leaders with the supports that youth need and with the training to leverage youth's competencies. As reports by the Center for Promise and others demonstrate, when these supports are provided, youth will thrive.

Supporting Document:

http://www.americaspromise.org/sites/default/files/d8/2016_10/FullReport%20DontQuit_23mar16_0.pdf

2. STATES SHOULD PROVIDE METRICS FOR ASSESSING TRAUMA AND FOSTERING SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL HEALTH

States could provide schools with well-validated tools for measuring SEL and school climate. Well-designed and well-implemented measurement tools can help educators make strategic decisions about needed investments in student services, programs, and professional development. These can range from measures of school climate and students' social-emotional competencies to diagnostic measures, such as protocols for observing and reflecting on educator practices and school structures. In addition, state agencies and districts should provide schools with resources and technical assistance as they seek to advance SEL. Data alone will not drive school success. Staff need to be trained to analyze and act on the data they collect and to implement high-quality programs, professional development, and school organizational changes that support students' development. State-level support may include technical assistance for program development or the facilitation of peer learning networks, as well as providing state and federal funding to support schools' efforts

Supporting document:

<https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/encouraging-social-emotional-learning-new-accountability-brief>

3. PROVIDE LOCAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT CONNECTING WITH AT-PROMISE YOUTH

As the Center for Promise concluded in the 2015 report, *Don't Quit on Me*, teachers, administrators, counselors, and other adults in the school community can play large and small, but essential roles in connecting with students. Encouraging connections enable educators to understand the lives of their students, and identifying when something is going wrong in their students' lives. Strong positive relationships with school staff provide opportunities for youth to build their social competencies, set and maintain high academic expectations, and be more engaged learners. Unfortunately, educators often have limited training in recognizing how adverse experiences may affect a student's academic progress and on how to develop deep connections with students. Investing in professional development and pre-service training on the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences on educational outcomes, career preparation, and emotional well-being can be one of the more consequential non-academic actions a school can take. Schools should implement programs that work with schools to identify youth experiencing multiple adversities and to provide options for supporting them. In addition to strengthening the competencies of faculty and staff, States should provide sufficient resources for school-based mental health programs to adequately support young people who have experienced multiple and chronic adversities.

Supporting document:

http://www.americaspromise.org/sites/default/files/d8/2016_10/FullReport%20DontQuit_23mar16_0.pdf

4. ESTABLISH LOCAL ALTERNATIVE ACCOUNTABILITY ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

Schools and districts should establish clear student identification (eligibility), counseling and placement policies and induction procedures for students into alternative settings. Such policies and procedures should be written, transparent, and available to all students, parents and community stakeholders to promote greater parent understanding, school accountability, and community engagement. Past research has found that clear and transparent student placement processes can have enormous impact on the instructional capacity of the school, school climate, student performance, and community reputation of the school. Additionally, professional associations of school administrators, counselors, and teachers should take the lead to develop model procedures and standards that would guide local practice and reflect student-centered objectives.

See for example:

https://gardnercenter.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Raising%20the%20Bar_Building%20Capacity%20Report.pdf

5. SUPPORT COMPETENCY BASED/PERSONALIZED LEARNING FOR AT-PROMISE YOUTH

States and districts should support the use of personalized learning strategies which contribute to higher student outcomes. These can include smaller class sizes, longer class periods (which are associated with smaller pupil loads for teachers), advisories (classes in which teachers meet regularly with students to advise and support students with their work), teaming (a few teachers share the same group of students and regularly discuss students' progress), and looping (teachers stay with the same group of students for more than a year). For example, a study of 820 high schools in the National Education Longitudinal Study found that, controlling for student characteristics, schools that restructured to personalize education and develop collaborative learning structures produced significantly higher achievement gains that were also distributed more equitably across more- and less-advantaged students. Other studies have found improved student and teacher relationships and increased student engagement, as well as improved student achievement, as a result of these strategies.

Supporting document:

<https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/pathways-new-accountability-through-every-student-succeeds-act>







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