

To: Colorado Stakeholder Committee: Increasing the High School and

College Success of Underrepresented Youth Through Early College

**Designs** 

From: Jobs for the Future (JFF)

Date: June 8, 2012

Re: Notes from May 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting

It became evident during our meeting that, as a Stakeholder Committee, we have moved into the direction of policy development and preliminary policy recommendations. The group engaged in a lively conversation pertaining to the preliminary findings incorporating JFF's initial analysis presented on February 17, at the team's initial meeting, and additionally, incorporate findings emerging from the presentations of programs who are currently implementing this type of model and programming for their students.

### What is our group goal and vision over the course of the next couple of months?

The goal is for the development of policies consisting of a set of underlying principles to ensure that current and future intensive pathways are meeting certain quality assurances, while providing flexibility based on local circumstances and still encouraging innovation.

#### What approach should the group take?

The committee grappled with the question of what approach to undertake as we have moved toward the policy development phase, with the following options coming to the forefront:

- Should the group focus on making recommendations to strengthen existing standalong programs, such as early college high schools; or
- Should the group focus on the development of policy recommendations that would have a greater impact on a larger number of students, e.g., focus on concurrent enrollment and where it can.

The committee is interested in an approach that incorporates both of the strategies above.

# Who is the target audience for the policy recommendations developed by the Colorado Stakeholder Committee? How can the committee maximize the impact and influence of the final set of proposed policies put forth the state?

The group acknowledged the relevance of the goals and conversations being had by members of the group, and how Colorado is a "hotbed" of cross-sectional workgroups/advisory committees examining the integration of P-20. In light of this upswing in activity, members of the group raised some concerns about the degree of impact the Committee's suggestions will have on the educational policy and practices in Colorado.

As was discussed during our first meeting, the generated policy recommendations would be shared with the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, the State Board of Education, and the Colorado Concurrent Enrollment Advisory Board.

However, the existence of other working groups throughout the state, who are also exploring the alignment across high school and college, present additional opportunities to plug into the recommendations for expanding the role of the committee. One idea to emerge during the conversation was that the Concurrent Enrollment Advisory Board could be a possible vehicle for which to pursue the development of policy and procedures for early college designation. *During the August meeting, we will have further conversations about a dissemination strategy for the set of final recommendations put forth by the stakeholder committee.* 

## What new legislation impacting the work of the committee was passed during the 2012 legislative session?

Senator King and Chad Marturano, Director of Legislative Affairs, at the CDHE provided the Committee with a summary of relevant legislation passed. (See Appendix A)

### What are the current threats and challenges to the Committee's work in Colorado?

Members of the team identified several threats and challenges to the Committee's work. These included:

- State Communications to local agencies about the changing landscape of enrollment. Local districts, and practitioners were unaware of upcoming policy changes, such as the phasing out of Postsecondary Education Options program (PSEO) and Fast Track programs. This has tremendous impact on how programs are implemented on the ground. For example, under PSEO, students and their families are primarily responsible for paying the tuition and fees associated with taking a concurrent enrollment course, and then had to seek reimbursement from their local districts.
- Lag in policy implementation. Passage of the Dropout Recovery Act has raised concerns about the lag of implementation date. This affects the current

programs such as Gateway to College, which has now reportedly been left unfunded during the current year.

### What preliminary policy recommendations emerged during the course of our conversation?

#### **Small Group Preliminary Recommendations:**

- Include remediation rates (using Accuplacer) as a measure of postsecondary/workforce readiness in state accountability system (currently grad rate-25%, disaggregated grad rate 25%, dropout rate-25%, ACT)
- Provide incentives to schools/districts that make improvements
- Explore criteria/process for ECHS designation

#### **Senator King's Policy Recommendations:**

- Create a parallel CTE gtPathways core
- Area vocational funding for ECHS
- Perkins funding for early colleges
- Building funding through Certificates of Participation or BEST
- Joint ownership of facilities through building corporation
- Categorical funding increase for CTE
- Allowing early colleges to become accredited to issue certificates/degrees
- Create sustainable concurrent enrollment agreements for financial stability

### Appendix A

**Summary of Recent Legislative Activity in Colorado (2012)** 

Bill	Description	Implications for our Work
SB 47	<ul> <li>Enables local school district, charters to administer Accuplacer to students in grades 9-12.</li> <li>Assessment is to be used for diagnostic purposes and students are expected to provide</li> <li>Funding was allocated for the purposes of this goal:</li> <li>1.0 million for year 1, which covers all students in grades 9-12 to take the Accuplacer once.</li> </ul>	Districts must create the system to determine whether or not students take the Accuplacer as at the start of 9 <sup>th</sup> grade, or in the later grades.
SB 1043 Early graduation	<ul> <li>Students having completed high school course requirements are allowed to continue as concurrent enrollees.</li> <li>The state expects this bill will affect about 10-15% of Colorado's student population.</li> </ul>	
HB1146 Dropout Recovery Act	<ul> <li>Local Education Providers (LEP's) can recuperate dropouts between the ages of 16-21, and receive PPR funding, as long as the student is enrolled in at least 7 credit hours at the college. These are really diploma-granting programs.</li> <li>Under this legislation, districts are allowed to collect PPR, and colleges are allowed to collect COF.</li> <li>Allows students who are "at-risk" of dropping out, but who are still enrolled in school to participate in the drop-out recovery program</li> <li>The school district is expected to cover the costs of tuition as negotiated with the college partner, and must be included in the partnership agreement.</li> <li>Returning dropouts can finish their high school requirements at a local community or junior college through completion of concurrent enrollment courses, including developmental education courses. Students are permitted to enroll in basic</li> </ul>	Concerns for programs such as Gateway to College, which was left out of the legislation.  Raises concerns about the legislative lag from policy approval to date of effect.  What supports are being put in place for programs that will not be funded until next year?

Bill	Description	Implications for our Work
	<ul> <li>skills courses, regardless of their high school grade level.</li> <li>The law does not impose a limit on the number of concurrent enrollment courses a student may enroll in. This is left up to the discretion of the higher education institution.</li> <li>At-risk not defined in statute, districts decide</li> <li>There are no supports for students once get on campus</li> </ul>	
HB 12-1155 Improvement in College Completion	<ul> <li>Concerns aligning remedial and developmental education</li> <li>Colorado Commission of Higher Education was mandated to revisit college entrance requirements and identify students needing remediation.</li> <li>Reduction in the number of credits covered under the College Opportunity Fund (COF) from 145 to 140 credits (arts and science degrees usually require 120 credits)</li> <li>Allows four-year institutions to offer developmental courses delivered via a more flexible approach, e.g., modules.</li> <li>Differentiates math skills requirements based on a student's intended program of study</li> <li>Requires data on a student's enrollment, placement, persistence and completion be shared with school districts</li> <li>Students scoring at developmental level in a subject area are allowed to enroll in a credit-bearing course in the area, while also receiving "supplemental academic instruction." (ala a special education pull-out approach?).</li> </ul>	