



ACTION PLANNING WORKSHEET

Idaho Action Plan to Help More of its Young People Graduate High School, Ready for College, Work & Life

Name of Summit State or Community: Keeping the Promise: Idaho's Summit on Dropout Prevention

Date and Location of Summit: January 30, 2009, Nampa, Idaho

Geographical Area Covered by Action Plan: Canyon County, Ada County and others from southern Idaho

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I. Building Knowledge: Understanding Your State's or Community's Dropout & College-Readiness Challenges

1. What is your state's or community's current graduation rate?

According to the Idaho State Department of Education, in 2003-2004 the graduation rate was 83.98%, in 2005-2006 the rate increased to 88.29% and in 2006-2007 increased again to 89.75%. The method used to acquire these statistics was a cohort method which takes the dropout number from 9th grade through 12th grade, adds them to the number of graduates and then is divided by the number of graduates.

2. What does both national and local data indicate about your state's or community's graduation and college-going rates over the last few years (e.g. over the last 2, 5 and 10 years)? Have the schools' rates been improving or getting worse? How do your local statistics compare with your state and the nation as a whole?

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, Idaho freshman graduation rate has fluctuated between 79.6 in 2000-2001 to 80.5 in 2005 – 2006. Idaho's statistics are considerably higher than those reported in the national statistics. This could be a result of the methodology used to calculate graduation rates by the state. Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Luna is concerned that a lack of consistent reporting of dropouts makes it difficult to ascertain the accurate state of dropouts in Idaho. As a result of the Summit, there is a plan to change methodology, with internal and external task forces being formed to work on that change. Also as a result of the Keeping the Promise summit, the United Way of Treasure Valley which is part of our coalition is now forming the Treasure Valley Education Partnership which in part will work with local schools on drop out and graduation reporting methods to determine more accurate numbers. According to Tom Mortenson, Postsecondary Opportunity, in Idaho 9th graders chances for college by age 19, ranks 42nd in the nation. The same source shows Idaho 48th in the nation for high school graduates going directly from

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high school to college in 2006. And according to the National Center for Education Statistics Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Idaho is ranked 48th nationally, at 65.9 percent in retention rates for first year college freshmen who actually return for a second year of higher education. Another result of Idaho's Summit on Dropout Prevention has been the formulation of a committee by the Keeping the Promise Coalition to "Changing the Mindset" of parents and students who don't see the value of higher education.

3. Please describe what efforts have or will be taken to better understand the issues from key perspectives, such as parents and young people themselves. Explain what data analysis, surveys, interviews or other efforts have or will be implemented to build your knowledge base of who drops out, from which schools, when, and why. What is known, and what do you still seek to learn?

At the Summit we heard from youth through a Youth Panel and Youth participants were actively engaged in the planning process and in reviewing the summit agenda. Young people were also active participants at the event. One of youth panel members has made a commitment to join the Keeping the Promise Coalition. The Changing the Mindset Committee has conducted a non-scientific survey to gain some insight into community thoughts on higher education and the next step is to hold some small focus groups with adults and focus groups with young people to further gain insight. The United Way of Treasure Valley has put a proposal together that has been presented to all Mayors and County Commissioners in the Treasure Valley with the following purpose:

- It is about understanding what our data looks like and agreeing that we are going to work together to solve the problem
- it is about recognizing the barriers our students and families face
- it is about taking a community inventory of what is in place and what is working to overcome these barriers, and incorporating them into the business plan; these community "assets" will include such things as mentor and afterschool programs, community-based organizations, service learning efforts, pre-K and K-16 school support, college awareness programs, parent involvement efforts, job shadow and internship opportunities, grant and scholarship aid, and more
- it is about designing a targeted strategy to incentivize at-risk kids (who are disproportionately represented in the statistics) and help them succeed
- it is about coordinating the efforts of everyone who cares about this issue to make sure we are all marching in the same direction toward the same goals; many times coordination and collaboration requires no additional funding, just working together with a shared purpose
- it is about a collaboratively-designed, phased strategy that helps *all kids* succeed, and helps meet our Jobs 2016 workforce development goals (the proposal is attached)

II. **Rallying Your State or Community: Getting Buy-In to Address the Crisis**

1. What key data and message points have you developed around the issue to secure commitment from your community's and state's leaders and to mobilize the general public? What's the impact of the dropout challenge on your economy, state or city budget, social services, employers, post-secondary institutions, etc? If you don't yet have these data and message points, what are your plans to obtain them?

Our focus groups will help us develop the key message point for mobilizing the general public, we hope to accomplish this by fall. We all agree that we need better statistics to help mobilize more of the state leaders and the general public. Coalition member United Way of Treasure Valley's research using a third-party, independent researcher will work with school district personnel to gather and

assess data. The purpose is to arrive at a data set that can be used in the districts to better understand and address conditions for at-risk students, as well as align and coordinate existing efforts valley-wide to more effectively help all students reach their full educational potential.

2. Who is serving or can serve as your state's or community's champion and chief spokesperson around the high school dropout issue? If multiple spokespeople are needed, which leaders – elected officials, business leaders, other local influentials – will be recruited?

Nampa Mayor Tom Dale and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna are spokespersons for us at this point, with other champions developed as the initiative continues to develop.

3. What is your state's or community's vision statement for your young people, related to their successful completion of high school and preparation for college and/or work? What is your quantifiable long-term goal?

Our first vision is to have truly reliable statistics to work from. No one in the coalition believes we have accurate numbers to work with. Our vision is to create a method where students are truly followed from 9th grade through graduation so we can evaluate and motivate our state and communities. Our second vision is to help students and parents understand the value of higher education and what it can do to enhance their lives and our society.

III. Identifying Solutions: Considering and Prioritizing Potential Solutions to Comprehensively Address Your Local Dropout Challenge

The Alliance advocates four focus areas that we believe to be key in addressing the dropout issue at the state and local levels: **transforming schools** including through increasing curricular rigor and relevance, **supporting young people** holistically with wraparound services, **developing effective policies**, and **employing data systems** as a dropout prevention tool.

1. Please identify your highest-priority strategies and/or reforms consistent with *Grad Nation* that your state or community will pursue in order to **transform the schools** that the majority of your local dropouts attend. For each priority, what would you need to do in the next 6-12 months to advance it? Is anything already underway locally to support it? What support or information would help you make better progress?

We are looking into the K16 Bridge program which creates a relationship with a community college and students from the 4th grade beyond high school. The program is designed to help kids explore what career they wish to pursue and helps them understand the relevance of what they are learning now and what classes they need to take in high school to achieve their goals. K16Bridge is a success with the schools and community colleges that have teamed up for this program. It also helps the youth understand how they can go on after high school to achieve their dreams.

The State Department of Education has organized an internal team to begin exploring opportunities to collectively focus on dropout prevention and recovery that include:

- Existing funding streams that relate to dropout (ie- Safe and Drug Free Schools, Learn and Serve)
- Programs that provide technical assistance and support to districts related to dropout issues (Indian Education, LEP, after school programs, Safe and Drug Free Schools)

The SDE will form an external group of stakeholders to focus on this issue and drill down on specific areas that impact dropout including:

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- Lack of consistent reporting of dropouts, difficult to ascertain the accurate state of dropouts in Idaho
- Variances in local truancy policies make it difficult for prosecuting attorneys to charge parents for habitual truants
- Inconsistent systemic focus on building meaningful relationships with at risk students, lack of program options for student support
- Inconsistent methods of cultural relevance / competency throughout the State of Idaho

As far as solutions, areas that have emerged for exploration thus far include:

- Partner with the Hispanic Academic Achievement Task Force and Tribal Schools to focus on cultural competency in Idaho education
- Work with existing grant funds to build a longitudinal student data system that will accurately track dropout rates
- Increase range of options for online academic delivery (Idaho Education Network, Isucceed, etc)
- Review truancy policy examples from throughout the state and create a clear, concise policy example informed by prosecuting attorneys for district implementation
- Create a program guide to establish truancy courts based on the successful models currently operating in Idaho (Judge Murray, Judge Varin, etc...)

2. Please identify your highest-priority strategies, programs, policies, and/or reforms consistent with *Grad Nation* that your state or community will pursue in order to **support young people**. How will more young people, particularly those most in need, receive wraparound supports in and out of school, such as tutoring, afterschool programs, mentors, social services, health care and others? For each priority, what would you need to do in the next 6-12 months to advance it? Is anything already underway locally to support it? What support or information would help you make better progress?

The K16Bridge has a tutoring program included as part of its program. Since the summit, the City of Nampa has passed a resolution allowing employees to mentor one hour a week with pay through the Mentoring Network. A new partner to the coalition, Project Graduation, is developing a mentoring program to meet the needs of the 200 homeless students attending Meridian high schools, once developed; the goal is to replicate the program for other school districts in the state. Project Graduation joined the Keeping the Promise Coalition after the summit. Another new coalition member who joined after attending summit, Leadership First/Gametime, is starting a "School Without Walls" at a local mall. The school will help students achieve their high school diploma and working with local businesses will teach the youth entrepreneurship, helping them start a business. The mall is donating kiosk space for the products and students. He is working with Juvenile Probation and Parole to identify potential students who need to finish school but aren't willing or able to go to a tradition setting. Local cities and Chambers of Commerce are working closely with this project.

3. Please identify your highest-priority policies or reforms consistent with *Grad Nation* that your state or community will pursue in order to **develop effective policies** at the local or state level that encourage high school completion and college readiness. For each, what would you need to do in the next 6-12 months to advance this priority? Is anything already underway locally to support it? What support or information would help you make better progress?

Rich Jarvis, who is a Keeping the Promise Coalition member, State Farm Agent and State Legislator, stepped forward to take action by drafting and carrying a bill in the legislature to raise the dropout age from 16 to 18. Currently, students may drop out of school at the age of 16, with no questions asked. Unfortunately, the bill did not pass, but Representative Jarvis will continue to work with the Dropout Prevention Coalition and his fellow legislators to gain support for the passage of this bill in the next legislative session. This bill was supported by local judges who hold truancy courts, because their

hands are tied with the young people who are 16 because they legally can drop out so these students can't be mandated by the court to not miss school. The State Department of Education is also working on a variety of policies to strengthen efforts to keep students in school. One of the areas is helping local districts develop strong policies on truancy and replicate the successful truancy courts that are in place in Canyon County. For more information on this, please see information in our response to question # III. 1.

4. Please identify your highest-priority strategies, programs, policies, and/or reforms consistent with *Grad Nation* that your state or community will pursue in order to **employ data systems** that identify those young people most at-risk for dropping out and drive appropriate supports and services. For each, what would you need to do in the next 6-12 months to advance this priority? Is anything already underway locally to support it? What support or information would help you make better progress?

Department of Education and the United Way of the Treasure Valley are both working on statistics that can better help us determine our true dropout and graduation rates. This will help us identify where we need to direct support and services to young people most at-risk of dropping out.

IV. Organizing for Long-Term Success: Getting the Right People on Board, Committing to Action, Ensuring Accountability, Securing Resources, and Tracking Progress over Time

1. What group or committee will coordinate and sustain the work outlined in this action plan? What leaders does it have from various sectors – business, education, nonprofit, government, faith, etc.? (Please submit group's roster along with this plan.) Who else is needed? Who convenes the group, how often, and what sub-groups or committees does your effort need?

The Keeping the Promise Coalition made up of a vast number of businesses, political leaders, non-profits, citizens and other coalitions, will continue to work on the action plan. (see roster pg. ?) This group will continue to meet on a regular basis to achieve our goals.

2. What financial, human, and other resources are needed in order to begin acting on this plan? What resources are currently available, what will potentially need to be blended, and what new resources will need to be sought to do this work? Who might help secure additional resources to fill the gaps, and/or what funders (or others) may be approached? Will your state or community set a resource goal along with the outcome goal?

Donations from businesses along with remaining funds from the America's Promise Alliance grant, and a grant from State Farm Insurance will help us implement this plan. Dedicated human resources are always the biggest challenge, along with keeping the momentum from such an incredible summit.

3. How will your community or state evaluate its dropout prevention efforts to ensure it is making a difference? What is the plan to monitor and track the progress being made on its developed goals? How will you maintain visibility around the local dropout prevention issue by reporting to the public on the progress being made?

We are still developing the larger evaluation system. Much of this will be determined once we have more realistic numbers to work from.

V. Staying Connected to the America's Promise Alliance: Identifying Long-term Interests, Priorities, and Points of Alignment

1. As part of our Alliance's goal to reach 15 million young people with more supports (i.e the Five Promises) by 2012, America's Promise has committed to resourcing and advocating for certain strategic priorities. Together, we are always looking for states and communities that share similar interests and that may provide effective models for policy and practice, investment opportunities and other points of alignment, including possible technical assistance from our Alliance partners. Please describe if your action plan has strategies specific to:

- a. Focusing on the middle school years, especially providing service-learning and career exploration opportunities in and out of school.

We have a Business Committee in our Keeping the Promise Coalition that is exploring the possibility of a program to take career ideas into the middle schools or offer a career fair to encourage students to begin thinking about their future and to make contacts for the career they desire to pursue.

- b. Improving young people's access to quality health care, including promotion of SCHIP and Medicaid public health insurance programs
- c. Our state law does not allow the state to promote SCHIP, but there are non-profits who have taken up the promotion cause, they will be invited to the table.
- d. Creating community hubs (e.g. schools, afterschool programs, community centers) where coordinated wraparound supports are available to young people and their families
- e. Engaging parents and caregivers to increase graduation and college readiness rates.

The Changing the Mindset Committee is doing the research now to develop a community campaign to involve businesses, parents and youth to increase graduation and college readiness rates. We are also exploring the K16 Bridge program which also involves parents in the process of preparing their children for higher education.

- f. Supporting young people in foster care so they graduate from high school prepared for college, work and life
- g. Developing young people's financial literacy

If your plan does not include any of the above but your state or community has strong interest in developing one or more of these strategies, please note accordingly.

We are including young people in foster care but have not singled them out as a focus.

2. How can the America's Promise Alliance best support your state or community with the implementation of this dropout prevention plan? The Alliance is interested in hearing how we can best assist you in your dropout prevention efforts, including resources we can provide, relationships we can facilitate, and any other needs your community may have.

We will keep you informed as we progress and see if there are areas you can help so we can carry out the implementation of our plan. Thank you for your patience in receiving this report.

Keeping the Promise Coalition Members 2008/2009

Tom Dale	Mayor, City of Nampa
Tom Luna	Idaho Superintendent of Public Instruction
Sharla Arledge	Public Information Officer, City of Nampa
Kelly Houston-Staskey	Executive Director-Serve Idaho, Governor's Commission on Service & Volunteerism
	Safe & Drug-Free Schools Coordinator- State Department of Education
Matt McCarter	
Allison Westfall	Nampa School District
Andrew McVicar	Public Affairs Specialist- State Farm Insurance
Belia Paz	KWEI Radio
Bob Sobba	Caldwell City Council Member
Byron Holtry	Nampa School District
Carmela Ramirez	Idaho Department of Labor
Christopher Veloz	Northwest Sales and Distribution
Deb Yates	The College of Idaho
Debra Ujiiye	Northwest Nazarene University
Diana Brown	Caldwell Chamber of Commerce
Dick Brulotte	Vallivue School District
Dorena Schrader	Parent
Garret Nancolas	Mayor, City of Caldwell
Gary Larsen	Superintendent- Nampa School District
Georgia Gunstream	Nampa Chamber of Commerce
Hollie Linder	Northwest Nazarene University
Ileana Cordova	Boise State University
Jennifer Deroin	Mentoring Network & Idaho Meth Project
Jennifer Oxley	The College of Idaho
Jennifer Phillips	The College of Idaho
Jesus de Leon	Caldwell School District
Jim Barnes	Healthy Nampa-Healthy Youth
John McGee	Senator-(R), Caldwell
Juan Martinez	Boise State University
Kaytlin Schrader	Nampa Mayor's Teen Council
Keith Krone	Vallivue School District
Ken Cortez	Metalcraft & Hispanic Business Association
Ken Taylor	Mercy Medical Center
Kenrik Goettsche	Nampa Mayor's Teen Council
Kirby Ortiz	Gem State Communications & Hispanic Business Association
Laurie Boston	Southwest District Health
LeAnn Simmons	United Way of Treasure Valley
Linda Garcia	Caldwell Chamber of Commerce
Lisa Gabiola-Weitz	Caldwell Chamber of Commerce

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Lynda Clark	City of Nampa
Maggie Colwell	Assistant to the Mayor, City of Caldwell
Margie Gonzalez	Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs
Mark King	The Salvation Army, Nampa
Melissa Gentry	Boys & Girls Club of Nampa
Mitch Minnette	Boys & Girls Club of Nampa
Pam White	Nampa City Council Member
Pat Charlton	Assistant Superintendent, Vallivue School District
Patti Anne Lodge	Senator-(R), Huston
Rick Weaver	Publisher- Idaho Press Tribune
Rodney Sterns	Nampa School District
Roger Quarles	Superintendent- Caldwell School District
Ronnie Finley	Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections
Sally Craven	Community Affairs, KTVB Media Group
Sam Galan	Selland College of Applied Technology
Sergio Gutierrez	Judge- Idaho Court of Appeals
Shiloah Wilson	YMCA-Caldwell
Steve Torrano	OGsBAD
Tammy Payne	Healthy Families Network
Terry Blom	College of Western Idaho
Trish Usabel	Marketing Director-Idaho Press Tribune

New Coalition Members Since the Summit

Carol Supino	Nampa Chamber of Commerce
Dawn Kinnaman	WTV Young Life
Dawn Dreesbach	Nampa Chamber of Commerce
Derrick Boles	Leadership 1 st /Gametime
Dick Brulotte	Vallivue School District
Jim Rice	Parent/ Attorney
Marilyn Whitney	Idaho National Laboratory (INL)
Rachele Klein	Allied Waste Inc.
Rich Jarvis	State Farm Insurance
Shane Bauges	Peppershock Media
Tony Ruiz	BSU Student (speaker in youth panel)
Jamie Chatham	Nampa Mayor's Teen Council
Jennifer Pennington	Leadership 1 st
Bill Bach	University of Phoenix/ Project Graduation

