



ACTION PLANNING WORKSHEET

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

Name of Summit State or Community: [Ohio](#)

Date and Location of Summit: [November 17, 2008, Columbus, Ohio](#)

Geographical Area Covered by Action Plan: [Ohio](#)

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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? (please cite the source and methodology)

The 2007-08 graduation rate for the State of Ohio is 86.9%, as reported by the Ohio Department of Education Annual Report.

<http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=115&ContentID=34744&Content=57445>

2006-2007 district graduation rate methodology -

<http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=1&ContentID=16209&Content=64318>

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?

For eight of the past 10 years, Ohio's graduation rate has increased. In 1996-1997, 79.8 percent of Ohio's students graduated from high school. While these results demonstrate progress, the challenge remains to ensure that all students graduate with the knowledge and skills needed for success in postsecondary education and the workforce. A closer look at the data shows that not all groups of students are graduating at the same rate. Despite the fact that some gaps between groups of students

have narrowed, black, Hispanic, disabled and low-income students graduate at much lower rates compared to white students.

- 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?**

Research was presented to the statewide planning team and survey data was collected. The statewide planning team also learned from the Cleveland Summit experience to inform the development of a statewide summit. The statewide planning team used the information to develop goals for the Summit with the aid of stakeholders and researchers.

Information and research was collected on best practices in education reform, school accountability, teacher preparation, school financing, and dropout prevention and recovery. The research and data was also utilized in the development of Governor Strickland's Education Reform Plan. Additional information was collected by stakeholders and interested organizations. The research was used by the planning team to inform our policy considerations in the development of a statewide, systemic dropout prevention and recovery initiative. REL Midwest prepared research papers on dropout prevention, intervention, and re-engagement to provide a national research based perspective for the statewide summit. The November 2008 statewide summit, "Supporting Student Success in Ohio," sought input on dropout prevention strategies from local stakeholders including students, educators, and business representatives. Governor Strickland hosted town hall meetings across Ohio in Fall 2008 to learn firsthand of the issues and concerns of students, parents, educators and community members related to the dropout issue and other education issues.

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?**

Ohio hosted a statewide dropout prevention summit in November 2008 in Columbus, Ohio for over 250 participants. The Summit provided state and local leaders to learn more about the impact of school dropouts on state and local educational systems and economy. Speakers included Governor Strickland, CJ Prentiss, Governor Strickland's Special Representative for Closing the Achievement Gap, and Kim Lust, Public Affairs Specialist, State Farm Insurance.

Throughout the summer and fall of 2008, Governor Strickland hosted over 17 town hall events throughout Ohio so stakeholders could participate in building the foundation for his education reform plan. Parents, students, educators, community and business representatives provided the Governor with feedback on ideas to reform Ohio's education system.

The Governor emphasized the state's commitment to provide a strong educational system Governor Strickland delivered a clear message on education reform, based on six guiding principles:

- Develop 21st century learning environments

- Expand learning opportunities
- Provide high quality educators
- Measure students against global benchmarks
- Improve school district accountability.

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?**

Governor Strickland is the chief spokesperson on the state’s education issues and championed the message of education reform across the state. The State Superintendent for Public Instruction, Deborah Delisle, and Eric Fingerhut, Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents, also as key spokespeople for the respective educational areas. CJ Prentiss, Governor Strickland’s Special Representative for Closing the Achievement Gap, also serves as a champion and spokesperson for dropout prevention and intervention.

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 (e.g. 10-year) for your dropout and college-readiness challenges? (Example from Detroit: “Vision- All children and youth in southeastern Michigan graduate from high school prepared for life, work and postsecondary education. Goal- The 30 high schools in the region with dropout rates of 40% or higher will be transformed into small schools or learning communities graduating 80% of youth with an average ACT score of 18 within four years after entering 9th grade.”)**

Vision Statement:

Ohio’s education purpose is the full development of all students to reach their fullest potential to become successful economically, to experience social and emotional well-being, and to function as a productive citizen in a global society. To achieve this purpose, Ohio is striving to achieve a vision of establishing and maintaining student centered, personalized 21st century learning environments that foster and nurture creativity, innovation, and global competence to meet the needs of all students. Ohio will accomplish its purpose and vision by:

- Strengthening its commitment to public education
- Building a stronger link between the education system and the civic and economic well being of the state
- Encouraging students to be creative and innovative
- Identifying educational best practices developed by Ohio’s educators
- Emphasizing the importance of personalized educational experiences and positive student teacher relationships for all students
- Using assessments for accountability and diagnostic purposes
- Promoting education as a shared responsibility between families, educators and communities.

Goal:

All high schools will achieve the state standard of a 90% graduation rate.

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.

Transforming Schools - Ohio will develop student-centered, personalized, 21st century learning environments where student can reach their fullest potential and to become successful economically, to experience social and emotional well-being, and to function as a productive citizen in a global society.

New academic standards and model curricula must reflect the demands of a 21st century education system. Current academic standards in mathematics, language arts, science and social studies will be revised to be vertically articulated, rigorous, focused, and coherent.

- Vertical articulation: Key academic concepts and skills associated with mastery in particular content areas should be articulated and reinforced in a developmentally appropriate manner at each grade level so that over time students acquire a depth of knowledge and understanding in the core academic disciplines.
- Rigor: the benchmarking of state's standards to international standards to create challenging and demanding standards and curricula for students.
- Focus: limit the number of topics covered in the standards to allow for deeper exploration of the subject matter.
- Coherence: The development of standards that follow the structure of the subject's discipline so that the body of knowledge in the discipline is sequenced from kindergarten through twelfth grade to meet age appropriate learning expectations.

The new state budget also requires the department of education to adopt new operating standards. The new operating standards will make the following changes:

- Leadership teams in each organizational unit within a district;
- Family and community engagement teams in every district to align the districts family and community engagement strategies;
- Collaborative and job embedded professional development strategies which include peer evaluation and cultural competency;
- Coaching and mentoring of educators;
- Collaborative lesson planning time for the teachers;
- Classroom instruction that emphasizes educating the whole child through interdisciplinary, project based, real world, and service learning opportunities;
- The use of positive behavior intervention support strategies.

Ohio will also emphasize the development of creative, innovative, critical thinking, problem solving communication and interpersonal skills through integration with the revised standards and model curricula.

Supporting Students – The new state budget requires the creation of a systemic structure at the school building and district level to enhance and strengthen the important relationship between educators, students, families and communities. The systemic structure includes the use of our existing Family and Children First Council system which is designed to coordinate and align a community's social service providers with the local educational systems. The new state budget requires the

development of family and community engagement leadership teams at the district level. The teams will be responsible to create a 5 year family and community engagement strategic plan, an annual family and community engagement work plan, and annual progress reports. The strategies will be implemented by family and community engagement coordinators at the school building level. The teams will coordinate this activity with the local Family and Children First Councils. In addition, the state budget dedicates resources to establish linkage coordinators as a part of the state closing the achievement gap initiative. All districts with one high school with a graduation rate under 80% must participate in the Ohio Closing the Gap Initiative through district accountability reforms.

Developing Effective Policies – Ohio adopted a systemic and transformational plan to reform the state’s educational system. The plan will be combined with the other state education reform efforts to create an aligned and comprehensive P16 educational system. The other work taking place throughout the state includes the Strategic Plan for Higher Education, the College and Career Readiness Policy Institute, the NGA Career Technical Education Policy Academy, Shifting Gears, Achieving the Dream, and several other initiatives. The new state budget also requires the state superintendent of public instruction to develop an aligned early care and education program at the department and a 10 year strategic plan aligned to the Board of Regent’s 10 year strategic plan.

Employing Data Systems – Ohio is employing several types of data in order to become responsive to the needs of school/district personnel, students and families, and other stakeholders. Ohio is in the process of making important changes to align its P-20 longitudinal data system to facilitate timely and responsive data sharing among those organizations that work with students and families. Data types include statistical data collection as well as timely information from linkage coordinators in school that can provide on-site assistance and intervention for students that may be considered at-risk for dropping out of school, or may require other specialized needs.

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?
(Example from Tulsa: Provide comprehensive social supports at schools to deal with the issues of poverty and the generational dropout crisis. Move to a Community School model for middle and high schools which is currently done in elementary schools.)

Ohio’s House Bill 1 (approved July 2009) mandates that Ohio will review and adopt K-12 academic content standards in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, with emphasis on coherence, focus, and rigor no later than June 30, 2010. The academic standards will be reviewed at least once every five years. The standards will specify core academic content and skills that students are expected to know and are able to do at each grade level and prepare students for postsecondary instruction and the workplace. Students will develop of skills in areas of creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, communication and collaboration. The standards and curricula will help schools and students develop skill sets that promote personal management, productivity and accountability, and leadership and responsibility Academic standards will be expected to be interdisciplinary and project based. Additionally, standards and model curricula will be developed in computer literacy, financial literacy and entrepreneurship, fine arts, and foreign language.

Ohio's new state budget (HB 1) also mandates a revision of the state's operational standards. The new operating standards shall require the following:

- Leadership teams in each organizational unit within a district;
- Family and community engagement teams in every district to align the districts family and community engagement strategies;
- Collaborative and job embedded professional development strategies which include peer evaluation and cultural competency;
- Coaching and mentoring of educators;
- Collaborative lesson planning time for the teachers;
- Classroom instruction that emphasizes educating the whole child through interdisciplinary, project based, real world, and service learning opportunities;
- The use of positive behavior intervention support strategies.

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? *(Example from New York State: "1. Ensure that each student is connected to one caring adult in school, by structuring mentoring programs that can be implemented with limited resources. 2. Engage the community in the mentoring process, especially during afterschool hours. 3. Provide quality afterschool programs that can increase student voice and provide social, emotional, physical and intellectual support to youth. 4. Identify and enhance mechanisms of improving student engagement in the educational process.")*

The new state budget adopts a new funding system, the Ohio Evidence Based Model (OEBM). The funding model for the first time in the state's history will provide intervention service, summer school, school counseling, limited English services, enrichment activity and student wellness funding as a part of the foundation funding system.

H.B. 1 (approved July 2009) also states that districts with a three year average graduation rate of 80% or less will implement strategies prescribed by the Governor's Office of Closing the Achievement Gap, which dedicates resources to support linkage coordinators, community engagement teams. To help districts achieve performance goals, districts will receive assistance with developing annual spending plans which must be approved by the State Superintendent of Instructions and the Governor's Closing the Achievement Gap Initiative. Linkage coordinators will who will serve as mentors and coaches to students identified as being at-risk of not graduating and coordinates students' participation in academic programs, social service programs, out-of-school cultural and work-related experiences, and in-school and out-of-school mentoring programs, based on the students' needs. The linkage coordinator will coordinate remedial disciplinary plans and work with school personnel to gather student academic information and to engage parents of targeted students. The linkage coordinator will serve as a liaison between the school and the governor's closing the achievement gap initiative and establish and coordinate the work of academic promotion teams, which shall address the academic and social needs of the identified students. The membership of teams in different schools may vary and may include the linkage coordinator, parents, teachers, principals, school nurses, school counselors, probation officers, or other school personnel or members of the community. The creation of a systemic structure of student supports at the school building and district level will enhance and strengthen the important relationship between educators, students, families and

communities. The systemic structure includes the use of our existing Family and Children First Council system which is designed to coordinate and align a community's social service providers with the local educational systems. The new state budget requires the development of family and community engagement leadership teams at the district level. The teams will be responsible to create a 5 year family and community engagement strategic plan, an annual family and community engagement work plan, and annual progress reports. The strategies will be implemented by family and community engagement coordinators at the school building level. The teams will coordinate this activity with the local Family and Children First Councils.

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?

Ohio made significant progress in education reform with the passage of HB 1, the state's biennial operating budget bill. Several strategies were included in the bill that will encourage high school completion, (described in # 2) and promote college and work readiness, including replacing the current graduation test with a college and work ready assessment system that includes 1) a nationally standardized assessments that measures student competencies in science, mathematics and English language arts, 2) end-of-course exams in science, mathematics, English language arts, and social studies, and 3) a senior project to assess the student's mastery of core knowledge, communication skills, critical thinking, real-world and interdisciplinary learning, personal management skills, time managements, work ethic, and enthusiasm.

The requirement for aligned development of a P16 educational system between the state superintendent of public instruction and the chancellor of the board of regents in the new state budget is an important step for the development of effective policies to encourage high school completion and college readiness in Ohio.

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?

(Example from Iowa state: "Access multiple state agencies' data, complete analysis and establish state level baseline and targets. State Team will provide relevant local data to Community Teams to assist in their planning and ongoing monitoring of progress." Other example drawn from Grad Nation: "We will develop an early-warning system that tracks individual students starting in elementary school along key indicators, like attendance, behavior, and course completion, to help us identify and direct supports and services to young people most at-risk of dropping out.")

Data collection will be supported by linkage coordinators who will work with school personnel to gather student academic information and serve as a liaison between the school and the governor's closing the achievement gap initiative. A new, evidence-based funding model will provide information on best practices from across the state. Ohio is in the process of making important changes to align its P-20 longitudinal data system to facilitate timely and responsive data sharing among those organizations that work with students and families. Data types include statistical data collection as well as timely information from linkage coordinators in school that can provide on-site assistance and intervention for students that may be considered at-risk for dropping out of school, or may require other specialized needs. The new state budget also requires

the chancellor of the board of regents and the state board of education to develop a P16 education technology plan to guide the strategic development of services to benefit students across the educational system.

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

(See Part 4 of Grad Nation, pp. 76-90, for help with this area of planning.)

- 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 Governor’s Office will coordinate and sustain the work outlined in this action plan and will convene stakeholders to participate in additional dialogue. The Governor’s Office for Closing the Achievement Gap, the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Board of Regents will support the Governor’s Office as needed.

- 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?**

Successful implementation of these changes will require significant resources (financial and human), especially during this challenging economic climate. While HB 1 dedicates resources to districts to begin making changes, Ohio may need assistance with developing the academic standards, model curricula, and the college and career readiness assessment system.

- 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?**

HB 1 provides a framework for school and district accountability which will be monitored by the Department of Education.

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

- 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:
 - Focusing on the middle school years, especially providing service-learning and career exploration opportunities in and out of school.
 - Linkage coordinators will assist schools, students, parents and community members in elementary and middle schools in which less than 50% of the

students have attained a proficient score on the fourth or seventh grade achievement assessments in English language arts or mathematics.

- b. Improving young people's access to quality health care, including promotion of SCHIP and Medicaid public health insurance programs
 - i. Education of the whole student is an important principle of the new education transformation adopted in the new state budget. The process of educating the whole student involves more than simply providing for his or her academic needs. The physical well being, as well as the emotional and social development of the student, is just as important as the academic development in providing a well rounded valuable and enriching experience. The new budget provides the following;
 - 1. Providing Resources for School Health and Wellness: Understanding that physiological needs, when not met, can impede the learning process. The new budget provides resources to address health and wellness needs of Ohio's students. As a part of the funding model, each organizational unit is provided resources to provide student health and wellness services at the organizational unit level.
 - 2. Establish a School Health and Wellness Advisory Committee: The new budget creates a committee of the Department of Health, Department of Education, the Board of Regents, the Board of Nursing, and other critical stakeholders to make recommendations as to the appropriate content and level of professional training a licensed school practical nurse and a school nurse should have to obtain a professional license through the Department of Education. This committee will also make recommendations as to best practices for health and wellness for the entire school community – students, faculty, and staff – which will truly establish these positions as more than individuals to handle the day-to-day health needs of students but also the long-term health and well-being of the entire school community.
 - 3. Administration of Medications: The new budget amends the current law that permits any designated school staff to administer medication to students. Such actions and their related decisions should be made by qualified health professionals. The new budget permits only qualified health care professionals or those trained by a health professional to administer medications to our students.
- c. Creating community hubs (e.g. schools, afterschool programs, community centers) where coordinated wraparound supports are available to young people and their families.
 - i. HB 1 provides for the creation of a systemic structure of student supports at the school building and district level to enhance and strengthen the important relationship between educators, students, families and communities. The systemic structure includes the use of our existing Family and Children First Council system which is designed to coordinate and align a community's social service providers with the local educational systems. The new state budget requires the development of family and community engagement leadership teams at the district level. The teams will be responsible to create a 5 year family and community engagement strategic plan, an annual family and community engagement work plan, and annual progress reports. The strategies will be implemented by family and community engagement coordinators at the school

building level. The teams will coordinate this activity with the local Family and Children First Councils.

- d. Engaging parents and caregivers to increase graduation and college readiness rates.
 - i. HB 1 provides resources for family and community engagement liaisons, which are funded at a ratio of one for every 75 students in poverty. These individuals may provide assistance to families in addressing these non-academic barriers to student success. The new budget also provides for linkage coordinators for those schools with the lowest graduation rates for high schools and the lowest performance rates for elementary and middle schools.
- e. Supporting young people in foster care so they graduate from high school prepared for college, work and life.
 - i. HB 1 provides resources for family and community engagement liaisons, which are funded at a ratio of one for every 75 students in poverty. These individuals may provide assistance to families in addressing these non-academic barriers to student success. The new budget also provides for linkage coordinators for those schools with the lowest graduation rates for high schools and the lowest performance rates for elementary and middle schools.
- f. Developing young people's financial literacy.
 - i. The new budget requires the adoption of new academic content standards that will emphasize the development of 21st century skills to prepare students for postsecondary instruction or the workplace. Twenty-first century skills are defined in the recommendations to include:
 - a. The development of creative, innovative, critical thinking, problem solving, communication and interpersonal skills.
 - b. The development of information, media, and technology literacy skills.
 - c. The development of skills that promote flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self direction, global and cultural competence, productivity and accountability, responsibility and leadership.
 - d. The development of computer, wellness, financial, and entrepreneurship literacy.
 - e. Encourage the use of interdisciplinary, project based, real world, and service learning instructional strategies.
 - f. Require a periodic review of the standards and curricula.
 - ii. The state board of education must also adopt business education standards as a part of the new education system in Ohio.
 - iii. The new budget requires the development of a model Life and Career Readiness curriculum to be made available to districts at the middle and high school grade levels. The model curriculum will focus on the development of like skills, financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and career and college readiness.

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.

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. *Please be as expansive and forthright as you can. We will use your feedback to ensure that the most useful resources are provided to our Dropout Summit states and communities through our website, training and technical assistance, and other means.*

Successful implementation of these changes will require significant resources (financial and human), especially during this challenging economic climate. While HB 1 dedicates resources to districts to begin making changes, Ohio may need assistance with developing the academic standards, model curricula, and the college and career readiness assessment system.