P-16: The Last Education Reform

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Tennessee P-16 Network at Nashville
March 21, 2006
“In the 21st Century, the issue for America will not be slavery, or civil or women's rights. The issue will be educational opportunity.”

A Federal Approach to P-16, A White Paper for the House Appropriations Sub-Committee, Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies
A P-16 system of education forged at the local and regional level, responsive to its community and supported by state and the federal governments is the single most effective way of achieving educational opportunity for all.
Web Published in 2005

First in a series of three books

P-16: The Last Education Reform
Book One: Reflections on School Restructuring and the Establishment of Local Preschool through College Compacts

Joseph A. Rockford, Ph.D.
with the support of the State Educational Partnership

Tennessee P-16 Network at Nashville • March 21, 2006
Why the Book?

- The work you are doing at a local and regional P-16 level is important...

- In fact, it is critical to the future economic security of your state and the nation

- The story needs to be told
Why the Book?

- It is also the story of the conditions under which school reform … must take place and how a P-16 system of education is rapidly becoming the only answer for communities, states, and the nation.
“Today, Americans are feeling the gradual and subtle effects of globalization that challenge the economic and strategic leadership that the United States has enjoyed since World War II …we are worried about the future prosperity of the United States.”
Communities and regions must develop a powerful collective, education centered vision for their future.
It is a hot and humid August in 2019 as Sabatha Jones enters the David Student Center at Walsh University for new student orientation. This is the day that she and her family have hoped and planned for, ever since she started first grade in the Canton City Schools. Around her are equally hopeful new students from Massillon and Alliance, Navarre and Beach City. Indeed, it seems that students are here from everywhere in Stark County. Sabatha is no stranger to college coursework. Already, she has an associate degree. She earned this from Stark State College of Technology in a combined fifth high school-college year in the Canton City Schools.
The first class of 100 low income, first generation college students, working towards a high school diploma and associate degree in four years enters ECHS.
Changing a Culture
Toward a 30% Increase in Degree Attainment
in Stark County, Ohio

Stark County is the 7th largest county in Ohio. In 2001, it had the highest percentage of students graduating from 4-year colleges among Ohio counties. Stark County also has the highest percentage of students graduating from 2-year community colleges. Stark County also has the highest percentage of students graduating from high schools. Stark County also has the highest percentage of students graduating from 4-year colleges.

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The remediator of this document presents strategies used in Stark County since 2001 to improve the percentage of students graduating from 4-year colleges. The State of Ohio must make policy decisions that would lead to higher graduation rates among high school students.
To achieve an 80% college going rate, Stark County must send an additional 1200 HS graduates a year on to college.

A series of converging strategies and programs will reduce that number by 600 for the graduating class of 2006.
Today’s Reform Strategies

- A look at one of today’s chief reform strategies and...
- why it’s not sufficient
HS Standards and Tests
Alone Won’t Get Us There

- Tests swimming in a sea of standards
They will never enable your community, state or the nation to achieve the goal of sending more kids on to college unless those standards and exams are aligned with what students need to know and be able to do to succeed in higher education and the workplace.
HS Standards and Tests
Alone Won’t Get Us There

- They do very little to alter belief. Ultimately, as a single set of measures, they may prove woefully inadequate in terms of altering assumptions and raising expectations.
In essence, standards and testing are a tool for achieving equity in the K-12 system. Our current view is too narrow. Equity today must mean P-16. The more we focus on exit tests from high school or in fine tuning K-12 standards alone, the less we do to prepare students for college. Our view must be total system – P-16.
A P-16 Strategy

- New and powerful ideas can emerge for standards and testing
Why Parts of P-16 Won’t Get Us There

“We can whenever and wherever we chose successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us. We already know more than we need in order to do this. Whether we do must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven’t so far.”

- Ron Edmonds
“There is no Rosetta Stone of Education out there waiting to be discovered. I believe today that most of our issues are centered around capacity, rather than knowledge, and that capacity can best be recognized by communities that focus their resources within a P-16 framework to support all children and the instruction of those children.”—Joe Rochford
Adequate resources exist in nearly all communities to educate every child well through college...if we have the collective political will to focus and coordinate those resources.

Breakthrough strategies will help create that will.
What is a Breakthrough Strategy?

- A strategy so compelling that it begins to re-order and coordinate efforts across multiple sectors and profoundly alters beliefs and actions.
A Typography of Local and Regional P-16 Efforts

- From the forthcoming *P-16 The Last Education Reform Book Two: Emerging State and Local Efforts*
A P-16 Lesson

- Two goals are all you need
Everybody else wants to reform your education system

“The notion of top down models, rather than community outside models persist...it is problematic whether such models might ever succeed in, and of themselves.”
You Are In the Best Position to Reform Your System
Some Other Lessons

- It’s not the state or national economy which should matter to a local or regional P-16; it’s your economy.
- Collaboration, instead of competition
- Understand the difference between programs and strategies
Some Other Lessons

- The Psychology of Communities
- Access is critical
- A matter of balance
We Began Education in this Country as a Local Concern

“It is therefore ordered that every township in this jurisdiction, after the Lord hath increased them to fifty households shall forthwith appoint one within their town to teach all such children”

-The Old Deluder Act (1647) From Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England
Closing

- Local and Regional P-16s in Tennessee carry tremendous potential.
- You are in the forefront of states in the nation in establishing a network of such P-16s.
Why is this Important?

- Achieving consensus on what education is, and should be, in the United States needs to remain an ongoing process involving all levels of our national existence...that consensus will become increasingly critical to maintain our quality of life and economic security.
Building that consensus and the attendant political will must begin locally.

It can best begin through the establishment of local or regional P-16’s focused on the educational and economic needs which are specific to their own locales.
Last Education Reform

- “What we have seen is ‘wave’ after ‘wave’ of reforms… virtually everywhere in the country. We have seen vast amounts of energy and uncounted millions of dollars expended on such reforms.

- Appreciably and arguably, we have not found the results we have wanted. It is time for the last education reform.”
That reform begins with YOU!
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