

SB08-212: Colorado's Alignment Bill
Co-convened Regional Meeting: **Ft Collins, CO**
February 12, 2009
Comments Posed by Participants

Comment:

Our table has a strong disagreement about the simplistic "writing and math" deficiencies.

A question was raised about who decides which competencies are essential for college success and if those competencies translate to post-college use.

Comment:

Workforce competencies are different in different industries, different generations of business.

Comment:

Workforce basics need to be taught to all students according to their ability: 1) making a good first impression; 2) completing application correctly; 3) how to access community resources in this regard. SWAP is a jobs program that helps high school students with barriers to employment explore careers in their interest area and help them connect. Partnership between school districts and DVR.

Comment:

Postsecondary needs to obviously include vocational training programs; and be recognized!

Comment:

It seems to me that the business world does not understand how a kid (special ed) can graduate with a regular diploma, but cannot read. The curriculum has been modified or the student's needs are highly accommodated.

Comment:

Weld County needs a vocational / technical school. There needs to be an alignment with the high schools and such a school.

Comment:

PSD (Poudre School District) board of education had expert panels of authors, business leaders, scientists, entrepreneurial people, educators answer all of these questions – their answers or the videos of those meetings might be useful to you as they represented groups not usually at these types of meetings.

Comment:

We need a system that breaks the "time" constraints: students can move more quickly through PK-20 if they are ready (without penalty); and students can move more slowly if necessary, without closing doors, future opportunity....

COMMENTS Posed by Participants

Comment:

Reducing remediation is good goal – eliminating assumes that everyone must be ready at the same time. It also requires that secondary and postsecondary use the same definition and measure of competency.

Comment:

Ultimately – if we expect students to demonstrate mastery of the non-academic skills discussed tonight, then we need to examine (evaluate) more how educators do their jobs instead of how students master materials. We should look to more project-centered integrated units that give students opportunities to be involved in highly engaging authentic learning activities.

Comment:

Aside from content is how the material is delivered. How teachers teach content in a relative environment is critical. For example, integrate technical content with “real world application” within content delivery.

Comment:

Thank you for inviting us here. This has been very informative.

Comment:

Excellent team of facilitators; fine work coordinating this feedback session.

Comment:

Key to workforce readiness will be partnering around internships and service learning experiences.

Comment:

Worry that we are tracking kids into careers early and not allowing exploration of work and liberal arts.

Comment:

With increased graduation rates, electives like CTE (career & technical education) are being cut – those workforce-related courses [that] students who are unmotivated or who will drop out may find success in.

Comment:

We need to be careful in saying that all students are graduating without “soft skill,” without “hirable skills,” etc. The vast majority of high school students are doing amazing work – let’s celebrate this fact. Public education can surely improve but we are doing very well with the student population.

COMMENTS Posed by Participants

Comment:

Let's celebrate our successes and quit beating ourselves up! We need to celebrate public education if it is going to grow. Again, public education is doing very well given every measure!

Comment:

Concern: teacher certification does not make for good teachers. Schools need to be able to hire whoever the best candidate for a job is. It is absurd that public schools could not hire Alan Greenspan for economics, George Bush for civics, or Yo Yo Ma for music.

Comment:

Higher education needs to adapt to needs of older students who return to upgrade or learn new skills.

Comment:

Undocumented students should be treated as state residents for college.

Comment:

Encourage the Commission to use the years of consistent assessment using Accuplacer to continue. Using Accuplacer in high schools could assist with skill alignment for college readiness.

Comment:

I came from Denver and want to ensure that we consider immigration trends and English language acquisition as they impact a student's ability to be successful. Surprised this wasn't specifically mentioned in other themes from around the state.

Comment:

Concern: please drop the "21st century" language: our students need to know the basics and those are the same as they always were. As our students graduate, they'll be ready for any century if they are as ingenious and civic-minded as Ben Franklin, as creative as Michelangelo, and as wise as Socrates.

Comment:

Remember English language learners.

Comment:

No mention (or little) of disability or disability-related issues / needs as it relates to workforce and postsecondary readiness.

COMMENTS Posed by Participants

Comment:

When we speak of diversity – let's remember the disabled.

Comment:

If we have kids in school 365 days per year, appropriately 10 hours per day, we will be fully able to impart all of these skills and knowledge.

Comment:

It is a mistake not to make some differentiations in "readiness" relative to student goals. If we shoot for a bland [sic] [blended??] workforce / postsecondary, we will have high school graduates not ready, for example, for freshman college engineering, physics, biology, etc.

Comment:

Discussion and / or legislation needs to better define / present "postsecondary" v. "workforce" ready – for example, the second is almost necessarily a subset of the first.

Comment:

Concern over the rising cost of higher education. Tuition increases year after year are pushing this out of reach for many students.

Comment:

This discussion is the precursor to a 12th grade CSAP; exit readiness scores becomes [sic] – accreditation.