

Wyoming Dropout Prevention Summit Recommendations*

January 19, 2011

To keep all students on track for graduation we recommend:

1. Districts will develop policies to identify at-risk-students beginning in 3rd grade and continuing through graduation utilizing, at the minimum, data based on attendance, reading level, discipline referrals, and grades.
2. Districts will assign to each identified at-risk student an adult advocate, ideally one who will advise the student through graduation and maintaining a consistent relationship particularly through transition periods. If a student must be reassigned to a different advocate, there must be a transition process implemented to assist in developing the new relationship.
3. The State Legislature will add funding as needed to provide an advocate for every identified at-risk student.
4. Districts will adopt policy that all students in middle and high school grades must participate in at least one co-curricular activity.
5. Districts will provide alternative pathways for at-risk students to satisfy all required proficiencies.
6. Districts will insure that, beginning in 6th grade and continuing through graduation, every student has a 5 year, on-going, career and education plan that is reviewed every semester. Each plan will include information about skills and knowledge needed for multiple careers.
7. Districts will, in cooperation with local businesses, develop incentive scholarship programs for each 6th grade student that accrue funds designated for continuing education or job licensing/training and awarded upon graduation.
8. The state legislature shall enact legislation raising the legally permissible dropout age to 18 years old for students who have not graduated from high school.
9. Districts will facilitate within the regular school day wrap-around services for at-risk students in all schools.
10. The state legislature will fund wrap-around service providers for districts.
11. The state legislature will change the funding model to remove disincentives for early graduation or completion of proficiencies.
12. The state legislature will fully fund dual and concurrent enrollment courses.
13. Districts will increase the number of vocational courses offered.
14. The state legislature, the state board of education, and the department of education will design a state accountability system which considers student growth beyond math and language arts.
15. Districts will insure that every student shall have the opportunity to attend a school with a diverse, rigorous, robust, relevant engaging curriculum.
16. Child labor laws must be adjusted and enforced to encourage that students focus on school.
17. Districts will actively engage the community in an ongoing conversation that promotes an understanding of the effectiveness of schools, the negative impact of students dropping out, and the importance of supporting efforts for all students to graduate.

*Credit is given to WASSP (Wyoming Association of Secondary School Principals) for this list as a culmination of the three Wyoming Dropout Prevention Summits held during 2010 and 2011 with support from America's Promise Alliance

To assist students who are off-track we recommend the following:

1. Districts will provide easily-accessible options for students to restore lost credit.
2. The state legislature will redefine the dropout definition allowing a student who completes graduation requirements within 5 years of entering 9th grade to count as an official graduate.
3. The state legislature will provide an alternate diploma for a special education student who successfully completes graduation requirements as contained in an IEP.
4. Districts will provide diplomas to any identified at-risk student who completes the minimum state requirements.
5. Local principals will have the authority to restore credit for at-risk students who successfully complete assignments needed for a passing grade.
6. Districts will provide an alternative school option for identified, at-risk students who, as determined by the local principal, cannot function effectively in the regular school environment.
7. Any student who chooses to dropout will be assigned a graduation coach who will make regular contacts for a one-year period providing support and encouragement for the dropout to reenter school.
8. A student who requests permission to dropout will first be assigned a graduation coach who will identify the work necessary to receive credit for previous courses, explain other graduation options, and review the quickest path to completing graduation requirements.
9. A student who requests permission to dropout will first meet with a graduation coach who will identify social services to support graduation efforts.
10. The state department of education will track dropouts for a period of 4 years and, to encourage their re-entry, report addresses to local districts.