

Reconnecting Youth Part 3

November 4, 2009

Reconnecting Youth Part 3 was convened by the MESD and the Portland Schools Foundation. The proposal is a transition center process to identify and reconnect youth who are not currently accessing an education option and not accessing state school funding. Drafts of screening documents for students and education providers were also presented and discussed.

Three groups were formed (community based education providers, school districts, and "other") to address these questions.

1. **How do I see my organization's role in the proposed model and what's my connection to it?**
2. **Questions about the model and gaps.**
3. **What are you willing to do to make this happen?**

There is not a next meeting proposed at this time. Proposed next steps are:

- 1) Obtain commitments from "early adopter" district supts on 11/20.
- 2) Utilize "MESD Finders" to screen education providers and disconnected youth in the "early adopter" districts.
- 3) Reconnect as many youth as possible and prepare a report for the next Reconnecting Youth meeting and for the Superintendent Council.
- 4) Subcommittees continue to work on details like legal agreements, communication tools, etc.
- 5) Small group meets to plan next meeting

Summary of common questions from the group discussions:

Answers from Ron Hitchcock's perspective:

Funding:

Q: How much does it cost to educate the kids?

A: Depends on the costs of the education provider, process don't create new costs.

Q: How are the "finders" funded?

A: MESD funds the finders.

Q: What's a cost effective way to fund the "finders"?

A: Easy, MESD funds the finders. Very cost effective for everyone else.

Q: How do the dollars flow?

A: A youth is placed on a district roll, becoming a student and generating SSF funds. SSF funds follow the student to an education provider chosen by the student. If provider has an agreement with a district to split SSF then obviously the agreement is still in force

Q: Is there overall support for a transition center process?

A: Individual districts and providers can create their own process or use the MESD process. The MESD process will be available to any willing partner. No entity is forced to participate.

If the question is about funding support – each district or provider still provides funding to support their own process. No new money (beyond SSF for reconnected students) is needed. No new buildings are needed. No new models are needed. No new education providers are needed. The only new support needed is a district allowing a disconnected youth to attend a out of district program.

Q: How to get school districts to participate? (agreements)

A: Ask . If they say “no” we’ll leave the door open. If they say “yes” we’re off and running.

Finding & reconnecting:

Q: How do we find the kids?

A: MESD finds them so “we” don’t have to.

Q: Once we find them, what is the process of reconnecting, what do we actually do?

A: Enroll them in an existing program.

Q: How do we make sure they are connected with something that will work for them?

A: We ask them what they want. We stay in touch and make changes to placements if needed.

Capacity:

Q: What is the current capacity and what are the potential demands?

A: Providers create and limit their own capacity. Providers can easily double their capacity to meet the needs of disconnected youth by simply doubling their hours of operation. No new building capacity is needed. Staffing level is a function of student demand. Student demand is limitless.

Ongoing support for students:

Q: How do we insure that once students are reconnected that they receive ongoing support?

A: The education provider is the primary support provider, an element which should be embedded in the program. Additionally, the “finder” who enrolled the youth will stay connected.

**Issued raised by community based education provider group:
(Open Meadow, LEP High, PCC)**

- Cost to educate these kids?
- Ensuring district participation
- Capacity of options
- Differing definitions (?) & authorization by districts
- All “out of school” youth are not equal in ease of funding, serving . . .
- Who are the finders? How are they funded?
- How do support services attach to/persist with students?
- Concern re the predictability of influx for receiving schools
- What is the specific funding flow?

**Issues raised by school district representative group:
(MESD, PPS, Gresham Barlow, Parkrose, Alpha)**

Roles	Questions/gaps	Commitments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help find kids • Outreach • School districts—allow SSF to follow kids/agreements • Schools advocate to find & service kids • Schools take other districts’ kids/agreement • Assure it is a best fit • Promise to work collaboratively • Oversee ESD education options & services • Answer parent questions regarding options, connect information with parents • Provide support to programs: assessment, transportation, monitoring progress • Model dissemination (access, replication of best 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student screening doc. needs to include student interests, passions, skills, desires, strengths • Capacity issues • Forward funding-great year 2 (increase share of Mult. Co. funding-share that \$) • Collect capacity data!/Quantify the gap between demand & capacity • How do we find the kids? • How do we go get them? • What is success? • Solution: SSID #'s of kids without regard for records (?) • How do we reengage the kids? • Where is the support to do this, personnel and resources • What is the process for finding the kids? And how to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring to Supts. Council on Nov. 20 • MESD will find the kids • Additional funds ADM add to resolution dollars (?) • All providers provide descriptions on common template about what they provide, common definitions • Give info to a point person in a consistent format • PPS: share what they have learned, systems & procedures developed, also \$7500 • Draft agreement • Messaging/marketing • MESD will create a unified tool, data clearinghouse (?)

Roles	Questions/gaps	Commitments
practices) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a network/clearinghouse • Include others in Community Based Alternative /Education providers group (CMACs) • Provider network/ match kids 	do so economically? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there/could there be a process to send out a notice at the 10 day drop point, with options? • Everyone should do the same process across the county(not 8 different processes) • Use resolution dollars to fund • Do we predict more #'s of kids? 	

Issues raised by “other” group:

(DHS/child welfare, Mult. Co. Community Justice, CCFC, Ed NW, LRT)

Roles	Questions/gaps	Commitments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help find youth, act in loco parentis • Kids in foster care, planning for them to receive educational services • Tracking educational progress, transitional planning • Support services, mental health, tutoring, housing etc • Technical assistance/training (for both dropout prevention & for when the students return) (ED NW) • Transition & placement support part. For highest risk kids (probation) • Multi disciplinary planning • Involve youth in planning Engage the Youth Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring district participation • How to make it attractive to districts • How easy will it be to refer & begin services? • Identify the other system players involved in the youth lives & their responsibilities for services & support • Communication/sharing of information • Is there currently a system for tracking kids who go over the 10 day drop period? • Is there a communications plan? • What would be the relationship between existing service providers & the new model? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training & technical assistance (Ed NW) • Work on confidentiality issues (Child Welfare), release of information • “Staffing” for kids • Continue the dialogue, possible seed \$ (LRT)