

CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION TASK FORCE

Draft Recommendations of the At-Risk Working Group



OBJECTIVE 1: DEVELOP AND SUPPORT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS TO REDUCE CONCENTRATED POVERTY IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.



Specific Recommendations	Policy and Implementation Considerations
<p>1.1: Explore the use of lottery mechanisms, including optional preferences or weights, to advantage at-risk students.</p> <p>1.2 Develop and support programs to provide at-risk students and families with all necessary information and resources to access excellent educational options and succeed in school.</p> <p>1.3: Explore the development of policies and programs designed to increase socioeconomic diversity in schools.</p>	<p>1.1.1: Consider the appropriate threshold for eligibility for an at-risk preference (e.g., only schools with less than 25% at-risk students may implement the preference).</p> <p>1.1.2: Examine and develop methods to identify pre-Kindergarten students who may be at risk.</p> <p>1.1.3: Explore the development of an at-risk lottery preference for at-risk PK3, PK4, or K students matriculating from a CBO with which the school shares an educational program.</p> <p>1.2.1: Work with a partner organization (e.g., DC School Reform Now) to develop an “education navigator” program to provide individualized counseling on school choice options for families throughout the My School DC process.</p> <p>1.2.2: Streamline school-quality information available to families.</p> <p>1.2.3: Investigate ways to better connect students and families with the agencies responsible for providing mental health supports, including mental health services provided in schools, and understand preexisting advantages and disadvantages to accessing resources and services.</p> <p>1.3.1: Consider developing a citywide diversity plan with benchmarks for at-risk students or students from low-income families.</p> <p>1.3.2: Identify and implement policies, such as the use of magnet programs, designed to equitably distribute at-risk students without placing the burden of moving schools solely on at-risk students.</p> <p>1.3.3: Explore data around students who travel across the city to attend a higher-performing public school.</p> <p>1.3.4: Explore the establishment of zip-code or census-tract lottery to create deliberately diverse schools.</p> <p>1.3.5: Conduct a feasibility study for city-run school busses on high density routes.</p> <p>1.3.6: Consider additional funding incentives, at the student, school, or LEA level, designed to increase socioeconomic diversity.</p>

OBJECTIVE 2: INVEST IN EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY, SHARE, AND EXPAND PROGRAMS THAT SERVE AT-RISK STUDENTS EFFECTIVELY.



Specific Recommendations	Policy and Implementation Considerations
<p>2.1: Create more cross-sector options for education, training, and credentialing for our off-track and disengaged youth at all ages and grade levels.</p> <p>2.2: Explore ways to identify and evaluate promising practices from individual schools or LEAs that are getting the best results for at-risk students.</p> <p>2.3: Focus resources on early intervention programs and early literacy development.</p> <p>2.4: Create opportunities to share best practices for serving at-risk students across sectors and LEAs</p>	<p>2.1.1: Examine policies that would allow LEAs/schools to provide students with cross-sector credit recovery options.</p> <p>2.1.2: Investigate options around creating cross-sector “opportunity academies.”</p> <p>2.2.1: Explore the possibility of citywide, cross-sector definitions of common elements of school design and program offerings at the schools getting the best results with at-risk students.</p> <p>2.2.2: Identify and build on existing, evidence-based practices, such as OSSE’s pilot of the Check and Connect program, and ensure that such practices are scalable and subjected to statistical rigor.</p> <p>2.2.3: Identify the costs and obstacles to scaling successful program offerings.</p> <p>2.2.4: Expand on — and make available citywide — effective practices for ensuring the presence of positive, in-school “anchors” that support students and help reduce the number of students in high school who are not on track to graduate on time, possibly as part of the Every Day Counts! Initiative.</p> <p>2.3.1: Engage parents and families in developing and implementing proposals to improve early childhood language and literacy development.</p> <p>2.3.2: Explore the feasibility of a citywide public campaign to highlight and promote early literacy.</p> <p>2.3.3: Identify and expand access to evidence-based programs designed to promote early literacy.</p> <p>2.4.1: Plan and facilitate a convening and/or community of practice for cross-LEA, practitioner-level working groups.</p> <p>2.4.2: Explore the feasibility of a coordinating framework or authority for family support collaborative groups.</p> <p>2.4.3: Consider a commitment among sector leaders to collaborate in identifying and replicating effective models for serving at-risk students as part of a coordinating school planning process.</p>

OBJECTIVE 3: BOLSTER AND SUPPORT CITYWIDE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE.



Specific Recommendations	Policy and Implementation Considerations
<p>3.1: Ensure robust, cross-sector commitment to Every Day Counts! initiative, with ambitious and measurable objectives.</p> <p>3.2: Explore ways to further focus citywide efforts on the barriers to attendance for particular segments of the student population.</p> <p>3.3: Foster school- and practitioner-level collaboration and sharing of best practices.</p>	<p>3.1.1: Build community and parent awareness of citywide attendance-improvement efforts.</p> <p>3.2.1: Identify and build on existing, evidence-based practices, such as OSSE’s pilot of the Check and Connect program, and ensure that such practices are scalable and subjected to statistical rigor.</p> <p>3.2.2: Consider furthering high-profile partnerships among government agencies, local sports teams, and public schools to further support a citywide attendance campaign.</p> <p>3.2.3: Explore ways to incorporate root-cause analyses into existing and future efforts to improve attendance.</p> <p>3.2.4: Consider focusing efforts on early childhood grades and involving parents of young children to develop and strengthen the perception that early childhood grades are an essential part of the education curriculum (even if not compulsory).</p> <p>3.3.1: Create mechanisms to assist LEAs in adopting best practices and allowing practitioner-level collaboration, possibly through a convening and/or community of practice.</p>

OBJECTIVE 4: EXPAND AND STRENGTHEN CITYWIDE, CROSS-SECTOR APPROACHES TO SHARING DATA AND INFORMATION.



Specific Recommendations	Policy and Implementation Considerations
<p>4.1: Explore the expansion of the RaiseDC Bridge to High School Data Exchange to facilitate school-to-school sharing of data at additional transition points along the education continuum.</p> <p>4.2: Understand the needs of schools and LEAs with respect to the effective use of student data and information.</p>	<p>4.1.1: Monitor, report, and make necessary adjustments to existing data exchange efforts, including the Bridge to High School Data Exchange.</p> <p>4.2.1: Explore the creation of a citywide technical assistance program for schools that are sending and receiving data and information at key transition points, and whether a government agency or nonprofit entity should manage such an effort.</p> <p>4.2.2: Explore the feasibility of launching a citywide data platform or clearinghouse to allow all schools to access student records as appropriate.</p>

OBJECTIVE 5: PROVIDE THE RESOURCES NECESSARY TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS.



Specific Recommendations	Policy and Implementation Considerations
<p>5.1: Explore the possibility of reexamining the definition of “at-risk” for the purpose of per-pupil funding.</p> <p>5.2: Explore the possibility of conducting a school-level needs analysis to better match resources to student- and school-level requirements.</p>	<p>5.1.1: Consider whether immigrant students who are not yet eligible for TANF are excluded from at-risk status.</p> <p>5.1.2: Consider whether time limits on eligibility for TANF can impact at-risk designation, and whether WIC eligibility could be an additional eligibility criterion.</p> <p>5.2.2: Consider whether a government entity (e.g., DME) could manage or commission a school-level analysis of need with respect to resources for at-risk students, modeled on the Master Facilities Plan’s focus on the condition of individual facilities.</p> <p>5.2.3: Explore the use of a survey instrument, for teachers, administrators, and possibly families, designed to identify gaps in supports and services provided to at-risk students.</p>