



COALITION FOR MULTIPLE PATHWAYS

Building Awareness Working Group

April 7, 2009

Meeting Notes

Participants:

Mallory Angeli, California Postsecondary Education Commission

Mike Egan, California Teachers Association

Hilary McLean, California Department of Education (phone)

Arif Shaikh, UCLA IDEA

Merrill Vargo, Springboard

and

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ConnectEd: The California Center for College and Career

Welcome and Introductions

Coalition Convening

The group had a brief discussion of the full Coalition convening and how the building awareness session went. We reviewed the notes and working group members commented on them.

Stimulus Funding

We discussed the federal stimulus funding and how multiple pathways could benefit from this. We agreed that it could be helpful to give districts more information on how they might use the funds, listing possible multiple pathway-oriented items that grants could be used for with one-time expenses and giving districts talking points for pitching the kinds of investments that would pay off for students. We also discussed the Workforce Investment Act funding and how WIA is getting a lot of money and is being asked to spend it fast. This is one time funding that is good for capital or facilities requests. We agreed that we should help having districts and teachers talk with their workforce investment committees. Jose reported that the May 11 Policy Working Group would focus on this topic. Someone commented that there is a lot of pressure on locals to apply for this funding and that they are being lobbied by many.

Ideas for reaching districts were discussed. We agreed that we could send ideas in an email letter telling districts that "this is a movement where you can make an investment that can pay off for children." We could let them know who internal advocates are and send a communications packet for decision makers such as superintendents in the District Initiative (DI) and to DI applicants and their school boards. To reach more broadly, we could submit an article to CSBA or ACSA on this and develop a listserv to tell districts of opportunities. We could share the link to Workforce Investment Boards which has a map of counties and boards. Sometimes a district is involved on a WIB and sometimes not; this is a good time to be involved. Since ACSA has sent some information

to school districts about stimulus funding, someone suggested scheduling a webinar with ACSA for the 30 districts (DI and applicants) who expressed interest in multiple pathways.

Key Audiences

Co-chair Arif Shaikh led a discussion on which key audiences should be our next priority and what specific messages and methods we might use for reaching them.

We reviewed input from the full convening. Some said that if we focus on students we should focus on problems such as drop outs. We should incorporate student voice detailing why they chose pathways and their experience in it. When we discussed teachers and unions, we discussed providing more systemic outreach to teacher unions. We need to actively engage them in the process and have them at the table. It should not just be a rank and file teacher on board to do a project and not just a bargaining representative asked to sign off. In San Diego they made sure that the union was at the table. In Long Beach, the representatives were unclear on what multiple pathways were.

Teachers value the relevance and rigor of multiple pathways and that it will likely get kids to attend and stay in school. CTE teachers also like it because it keeps kids in school; it is not a threat to the existing program but a complement to it. Shared planning time reinforces local control. Teachers concerns are that it is a district driven reform and they usually question top down mandates. They want to know this is not the flavor of the month. They want transparency in the process. However, if 10-30% of membership is laid off, how are we going to staff these programs? Will we have the right mix of teachers left? Teachers might benefit from externships to get more familiar with businesses. WIA or ERA funds might cover this.

Submitting an article in a CTA publication describing teacher driven reform could be useful. Mike agreed to put us in touch with the right person. A teacher might be able to write it or coauthor it. We could also tell the story of one district starting this up, such as SDUSD. This might include how the union was included.

When we target businesses to get engaged in this process, we need to think about what's in it for them—jobs and a prepared workforce. However, we can't treat a sector as a "block" with all in business and industry thinking in the same way. We often think of the Chamber and that isn't always the best proxy. Teach districts to address their business community. We need a template for how to build awareness in their community and how businesses can get involved. Let businesses tell us what they need. We should help nurture matches between schools and workforce needs. Encourage them to look for data on workforce needs in their county with information on where to go to look for that (WIBS, EDD website). We could provide guiding questions for deciding on sectors in which to develop a pathway. We could reach out to local central labor councils. Districts are often targeted toward business, but we may need more connections with labor where many well paying jobs are found.

Parent Brochure

The group reviewed a draft of the parent brochure and made recommendations. It would be good to move the problem statement further down. The group also agreed it should be designed to market to the widest audience so that it might be better to focus on students being bored and not challenged rather than dropping out. The section on "how do I enroll my child" did not seem like good use of space. We should tailor this more to parents of students who have access to a pathway. The brochure is for use in conjunction with meetings but not as a way to organize parents. It can be distributed

through community groups and districts. It might be good to have a focus group with teachers and principal to ask them if they would be comfortable handing this out.

The text of the document captured all the issues. It is worded simply which is helpful. The diagram adds a lot and should stay in the document. People commented that the header term "college" was confusing. It would be more accurate to write "postsecondary" or "college and other postsecondary options."

The colored boxes and headline questions were good. Use of bold text and italics was also good. Under the How Do You Know It Works section, we might use bullets. The large purple box should be broken into two boxes so text may need to be reorganized.

When Carol showed the group the option of a second cover with a photo on the front, almost everyone said they liked the brochure with icons on the cover better. However, Arif pointed out that pictures might be better for populations with limited literacy. He thought the photo and diagram might be good for that.

We discussed translating documents into other languages. Merrill mentioned an IBM tool that was recently developed and supposed to be better than many out there that will translate your website into Spanish. They are testing it now. Carol will contact Merrill to get the contact information and more details.

Arif reported on events that UCLA plans to do for its multiple pathways book launch. Hilary announced a meeting that Jack O'Connell would hold on 4/15/09 to launch discussions on AB2648. The group agreed that announcing that meeting to the broader Coalition was a good idea.

Action Items:

- Look into writing a mass email to districts about the stimulus funding and how they could use it for multiple pathways.
- Call Mike to make contact with someone at CTA about getting an article in a CTA publication.
- Adapt the multiple pathways diagram with changes recommended by the group
- Adapt the parent brochure draft with changes recommended by the group
- Get IBM contact information from Merrill on website translation tool.
- Announce Jack O'Connell's AB2648 meeting to the Coalition