

Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership

May 31, 2012

9:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

University of St. Thomas / McNeely Hall, Room 100

2115 Summit Avenue / St. Paul, MN 55105

MEETING NOTES

Members/Designees Present:

Steven Rosenstone-Chair, Brenda Cassellius, Karl Aaro, Gary Amoroso, MaryAnn Baenninger, Jim Bartholemew, Paul Cerkvenik, Tom Dooher, Jennifer Godinez, Joellen Gonder-Spacek, Jeanne Herrmann, Grace Keliher, Representative Deb Kiel, Scott McMahon, Representative Carlos Mariani-Rosa, Robert Meeks, Jo Olsen, Senator Gen Olson, Kent Pekel, Eugene Piccolo, Larry Pogemiller, Peggy Poitra, Representative Jeanne Poppe, Sara Radosevich, Fred Storti, Senator Chuck Wiger

Others Present:

Beth Aune, Lois Bollman, Bob DeBour, Tracie Dewberry, Brooks Doherty, Mary Lou Dresbach, Meredith Fergus, Ronald Ferguson, Jane Gilles, Angie Johnson, Thomas Kosel, Janice Kwallek, Emily Lawrence, Irene McAfee, Kevin McHenry, Gregory Marcus, Geoffrey Maruyama, Leslie Mercer, Kate Misukanis, Paul Moe, Mary Parker, , Daniel Porter, Paul Pribbenow, Amy Walstein, Nancy Walton, Gary Westorff, Tiffany Wilson-Worsley, Cliff Wittstruck II

1. Welcome and Introduction

Paul Cerkvenik welcomed everyone to the University of St. Thomas.
Steven Rosenstone asked members to introduce themselves.
Review/approval of the May 2, 2012, meeting notes will take place at our next meeting (Fall 2012).

2. Speaker presentation and discussion

Ronald F. Ferguson, Senior Lecturer in Education and Public Policy, Harvard University

Pathways to prosperity: Balancing the path to college for all to succeed.

Dr. Ferguson began by noting that his focus is on excellence with equity – not just equity. The focus needs to be on helping ALL students reach their potential. For underrepresented groups this means that they have further to go and we much help them reach that potential.

He noted that “college” is not only baccalaureate education. We need to do a better job teaching kids the alternate paths to post-secondary education. Not everyone is

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meant for a four-year degree. However, we need a system that allows for checks and balances so a kid who is meant for a PhD, doesn't become a welder.

How do we make sure all students are on the path?

The U.S. is losing its educational preeminence. All our kids need to do better. Some data make it look as if our high school graduation rates are improving but GED's are mostly what's making it look like we've improved. Other people have studied what the U.S. has done in terms of education, we assumed we were ok so we got lax and now we're behind. White/Asian kids are not leading the world anymore. Each group has a bell-shaped curve. Slide all of those groups together and then close the gap.

At the regional school level, we should not focus on the gap for the state, focus on the groups within the community. Parents from every district should ask, what is the district doing for my kid? This is about making the politics work.

We need sustainability of a shared commitment to address the issues. Organizations have life cycles – many lose focus or cease to exist. We then need to reassign the resources that were supporting that organization.

The key is to get the most powerful people in your state to direct resources to accomplish what we are trying to do. Try to get things done without using coercive force. Identify the moving pieces?

We need a Movement, not a meeting, initiative goal or strategy

He quoted Bill Shore, GlaxoSmithKline, Directory of U.S. Community Partnerships

"It's a sputnik moment. Communities are going to rise or fall depending upon whether they have a workforce." We need to stop having meetings and have a movement"

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He noted that everyone in this room will have a different opinion about which items on this slide are most important to work on. Many think that policies or programs are the first step but you need to start by asking, what are the goals?

When various stakeholders come together, one thing that undermines efforts is complicit agreements – you don’t say or do anything about my shop and I won’t say anything about your shop. Ferguson noted that we all have to be willing to say uncomfortable things and a setting like the P-20 Partnership could be a place where the trust levels can enable folks to be open and honest.

“Some things are uncomfortable – do something that challenges your identity.” he said.

Dr. Ferguson shared his model which includes five key groups; each with two major roles. They are shown on the graphic below and include:

GROUP	ROLES
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parenting • Home-school relationships
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refining teaching • Team review of student work
Peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer culture • Cooperative Learning norms
Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation to world of work • Jobs and apprenticeships
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports for families and children • Places to belong and connect

Dr. Ferguson made the following points about the five groups.

Parents

Distinguish parenting from parenting engagement.

Parents need to know they should communicate continually. Babies are learning from the minute they are born. Some have said – narrate life to your baby.

Teachers

One of the most effective things that people/schools do is watch each other teach. We have the kids tell us what kind of instruction they are receiving. Study your students work in order to understand what they are thinking. Kids think they know something coming in – we need to understand what they know.

Peers

With kids there is a conspiracy to succeed – peer pressure to be cool or do what's thought to be cool and trying to fit in.

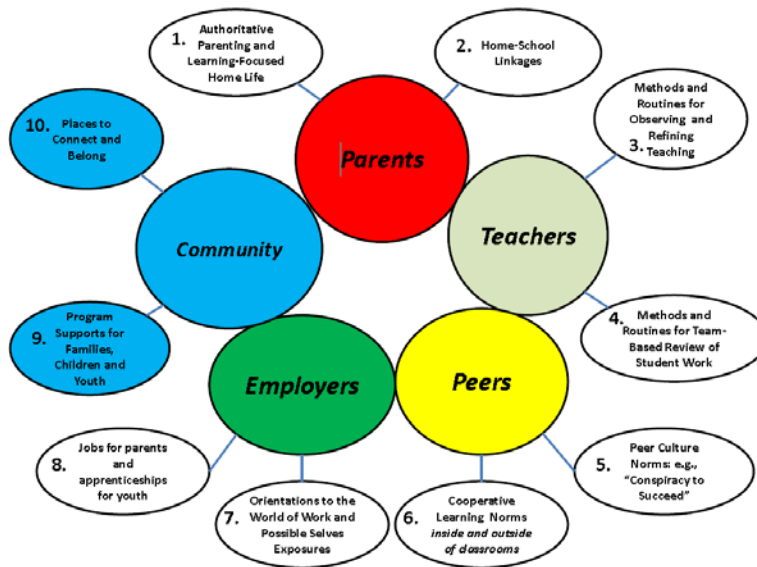
Employers

Everyone will play a role in closing the gap – for example, in Boston there is a private organization that works with employers to bring working employees into 5th grade classrooms – these employees talk to the kids about what their life story from 5th grade and how they got where they are now. For middle and high school students, tours to work places help open their eyes to the workforce world.

Community

Create a youth registry where kids go online and complete a survey/profile of what they doing, how life is going, jobs applied for, did they get the job or why not. Provide incentives – movie tickets, etc. Right now, youth activity is not being tracked.

He summarized by saying, PARENTS, COMMUNITY, TEACHERS, EMPLOYERS, PEERS are all part of the process for closing the gap. All of these groups need a shared understanding and shared commitment/responsibility of working toward the goal. The major players from groups within each of these sectors need to drive the work/mission.



QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION

Have you seen a mediator that has been able to take all these five groups and their components and make this happen?

Ron Ferguson: There are some workforce employment boards that do some of these things. No one is doing everything, but everyone can do something.

Are there any places doing small interventions with parents?

Ron Ferguson: This is being worked on. We're talking about launching a campaign to do just this.

The main dynamic that drives options is the funding strategy. Get the powerful people to impose their will and how it will be done. Once the senior elites get really active, the people at the middle and bottom get worried. "If you take the steps to raise the stress level, then you know you've done your homework."

3. **Next steps**

Chair Rosenstone thanked Dr. Ferguson for a thought-provoking discussion. A small group will work over the summer on a plan for our next steps. Recommendations will be made at the next P-20 Partnership meeting in Fall 2012.