

Michael, I am writing with some resources that I hope will assist your thinking about serving the needs of disengaged youth – or those at-risk of disengaging – in Maine. Helen Duffy, the National High School Center liaison who supports the New England Comprehensive Center’s work, and I collaborated on this response.

Specifically, you asked three questions, but it occurred to me as I did some of this resource that there are a number of ways one might frame the issue of disengagement. So as you scroll through these resources, please keep in mind that I cast a wide net – and thought I might provide a broad interpretation of the questions you posed.

- **What states have good models for transition planning that are geared to all students?**

I’m sure you’re already familiar with the National Secondary Transitions TA Center funded by OSEP: <http://www.nsttac.org/> Part of the center’s web site is dedicated to Indicator 13, which albeit is specifically geared towards students with IEPs, the web site at one point posted each state response to the indicator. This part of the web site is no longer active, but it might be worth contacting the Center directly to follow up, as they might have a higher awareness of models geared towards all students.

You also might want to check out the National High School Center’s archived webinar that focused on the issue of transitions into high school. It can be found at: <http://www.betterhighschools.org/webinar/default.aspx>. Part of that presentation addressed some of the indicators for students at-risk of experiencing difficulties in making the transition from middle to high school.

In addition, a report developed by EDC provides suggestions to support students preparing for transitions. The report, called “Charting an Inclusive Journey through School, Work, and Life: Successful Transition Planning for All Students” suggests ways that schools, families and students can ease the transition process. That report is attached to this response. You’ll notice that New Mexico is featured as one state that requires all eighth grade students to develop a “next step” plan.

Another resource – one that takes a slightly different cut on the issue is The National Evaluation and Technical assistance Center for the Education of Children and Youth who are Neglected, Delinquent or At-Risk (NDTAC). NDTAC has some resources that might provide you with some things to think about as you consider the issue of engagement. Their home page is located at: <http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/nd/default.asp>.

Although they target youth in (or at risk of joining) the juvenile justice and foster care systems and group home settings, their resources might provide you with some ways to think about the issue of transitions more broadly. (In fact, you'll see that NDTAC spotlights Maine's legislation that formalizes a specific procedure for transitioning students by requiring every school district to convene a formal reintegration team for each student who returns to public school from residential care in the State of Maine.)

Their library has a wealth of resources that you might peruse.

For example, NDTAC recently featured a number of resources on mentoring.

[http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/nd/resources/spotlight/spotlight\\_archives.asp#sept06](http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/nd/resources/spotlight/spotlight_archives.asp#sept06)

There are programmatic resources in the section on curriculum:

<http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/nd/resources/library/curriculum.asp>

One resource you might find interesting in the curriculum section of the site is a report called "Preventing Youth Delinquency: Identifying School Risk and Protective Factors." The following is a summary from their web site:

"Although a strong body of research on what makes a student at risk for delinquent behavior exists, few studies have examined the variables within schools that exacerbate or counteract these risks. The results of EDJJ's three multimethod studies suggest that school-level characteristics can help minimize the risks for youth delinquency. Using both quantitative and qualitative procedures, these studies examined three school characteristics related to delinquency."

Another resource you'll find there is "Alternative Education: From a 'Last Chance' to a Proactive Model." This article examines alternative education programs as a proactive response to the needs of children for whom traditional school structures are not effective and explains the components of alternative education programs that promote academic excellence and high expectations.

NDTAC recommends involving a number of agencies in support of students, including partnerships between schools and community-based organizations and their site provides resources that may be of interest for youth development and engagement. The portal for those resources can be found at:

<http://www.nydic.org/nydic/toolkits/index.htm>

I have also attached a copy of a school-level description you might be interested in. It's called: "Growing Toward Systemic Change: Developing Personal Learning Plans at Montpelier High School" and traces the growth of a community-based learning program for a small number of students to a more systemic approach that includes personalized learning plans for all students.

- **What states (other than Maine) have IEP driven models that would be good starting points for transition-For-All" direction?**
- **What policy or legislative language do you know of that would/could support this type of change?**

Unfortunately, I was less successful finding resources for these last two questions. I am not sure that New Mexico moved from an IEP-driven model to a transition for all model. But it will provide a starting place for thinking about transition plans for all students.

Some states are beginning to focus on career exploration as part of a student's academic planning. The two states I discuss below have taken an approach that incorporates career planning into their graduation standards.

Kentucky is launching a new Web-based system that automatically creates Individual Learning Plans for every middle and high school student. The program will allow students as early as 6th grade to begin plotting their futures -- from exploring careers and colleges to creating resumes and learning about financial-aid options. The program's career-matchmaker function lets students complete an interest survey that matches them to 40 professions. The site then shows students information about those careers, including video interviews with people in those professions, and allows them to see the corresponding college majors, along with the colleges that offer them. Schools are not required to use the Web-based system, but they are required to complete plans for each student as part of the state's new graduation requirements. And the state board of education is considering strengthening that condition by holding schools accountable for the plans by including students' completion rate in the state's student-testing system. <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Instructional+Resources/Individual+Learning+Plan/default.htm>

Pennsylvania recently launched its new Academic Standards for Career Education and Work today. The new standards give students, as early as first grade, the opportunity to begin exploring career options and offer graduating high school students a comprehensive set of tools to explore opportunities for post-secondary education and jobs.

We hope these resources help your work with the Governor's Taskforce. It should be clearly pointed out that the resources we provided for you are not research-based and nor a scientific sampling nationwide; but are resources we discovered when researching your questions. If you have additional questions, feel free to contact us.