Notes – Early College Task Force Meeting – 12/9/13

Present: Robert Trefry, Judy Resnick; Lola Garcia-Blocker, Robin Golden, Dennis Bogusky, Gail Stevens, Michael Breen, Gillian Thorne, Sally Biggs, Steve Minkler, Bob Henderson, Eliot Ginsberg, Carmen Cid, Emily Byrne (Director of Strategic Initiatives – CT State Dept. of Education).

Task Force members discussed the data compiled from the twelve community colleges in the Early College Continuum Inventory grid. It was clear that the grid needed to be separated into two tables—one table focusing on the College Career Pathways and Dual Enrollment experiences, and one table focusing on the Early College High School models currently in place. More care was needed for defining "high school partnership" students in the current inventory chart. Needed to decide what to do with the ECE column in the community college inventory grid. Not currently a component of community colleges but similar to the CCP model.

Discussion focused on the need for three components to be associated with the data inventory: 1) a form of "outcomes assessment" associated with each type of program, 2) the funding source for the program, and 3) the need for a uniform way of giving college and high school credit for the students' coursework, and evaluating the students' success. More care needed for defining "high school partnership" students in the current inventory chart

Discussion focused on the need to develop some "outcomes" component to the current inventory of data from community colleges – to include # of H.S. students taking college courses, # of students completing the courses, and # of students who are getting college credit for those courses. These data requests had been posed to Arthur Poole, BOR Director of Educational Opportunity Programs in the Department of Policy and Research, for help in developing a baseline data evaluation of the high school partnership students. We expect to review these results at the next Task Force meeting.

Another recommendation was to consider how to deal with high schools that currently do not give high school credit for college coursework taken by high school students. Especially important for students from disadvantaged communities not to lengthen the time towards getting a college degree by asking for doubling of coursework. Need to consider the value of a high school residency as well as the quality of the college course in reflecting the high school experience. The High School Partnership model does not allow 10th graders to take college courses. Need to consider the standards for each of the types of high school-college experiences in the inventory grid community colleges filled out as we develop a model for future such partnerships. More verification needed of the ability to standardize these "credit-granting" procedures across the various CT towns.

Lola Garcia-Blocker went over the list of attributes of best high school partnership programs compiled by the subcommittee and how to approach synthesizing this information into a recommended model.

The Task Force members agreed that any Early College Program to be developed in CT should have as its goal to allow all high school students, regardless of initial preparation, to have the opportunity to develop a core set of skills and gain knowledge to facilitate their entry into the workforce, and prepare them for further college education. Having many hands-on learning experiences for high school students, and the function of business/industry partnerships in providing these experiences, were key elements to a successful early college program.

Michael Breen indicated that we should use the NACEP standards for Concurrent Enrollment Programs (see attached document discussed at meeting - http://www.nacep.org/accreditation/standards/). Two other sets of national standards that were referenced as the source for the list of attributes compiled by the subcommittee included work done by David Conley (2010 book – College and Career Ready: Helping all Students Succeed Beyond High School – see attachment distributed at the meeting), and the National Middle College Consortium research (see attached document).

<Some research on the National Middle College Consortium - Middle College National Consortium's Early College High Schools program emphasize the importance of data driven improvement decisions – characteristics include small school size, college readiness focus, college course-taking opportunities, seminar, advisory and block scheduling.

http://www.mcnc.us/our-data/#sthash.qDuEMs1H.dpbs

Bringing the Best of Early College to Scale – Jam Report 2011 (see attachment) – provides focus group results of what constitutes the best of Early College in both programmatic and policy terms. Report indicates that there is no single Early College model but key attributes are shared. The variation among Early College programs reflects adaptability and may explain success. Successful Early Colleges require robust sustained collaborations between high schools and post-secondary institutions. Early College advocates recognize that they must amplify the data that demonstrates the impact of their work. The benefits gained from participation in Early College programs need to be articulated effectively to garner social, policy and financial resources necessary to sustain and scale these programs. See website below.

http://www.mcnc.us/2012/03/bringing-the-best-of-early-college-to-scale-jam-report/#sthash.NDvKqE0U.dpbs >

Summary of David Conley's key points relative to Task Force discussion: "Conley provides a model to define college and career readiness characteristics for high school students and also provides a format for differentiating between college level and high school level courses."

Themes of compiled Early College Task Force's List of Best Attributes of Early College Programs:

Early College Programs must replicate the academic rigor experience of college work (with clear high school to college curriculum alignment), emphasize career development skills for workforce entry, have NACEP-vetted instructors, have well-articulated credit transcripting guidelines, involve business/industry input, collaborations and internships to generate flexible, productive, career-empowering high school student experiences, and provide appropriate tutoring/advising support.

The collaborative relationships require a formal MOU, describing shared resources, and enabling regular stakeholder meetings. Professional development of high school and college staff/instructors needs to be ongoing to facilitate program development and implementation at the start and into the future. Data collection, assessment, and frequent collaborative data review are needed to provide guidance for program improvement.

Other Task Force discussion points: "The technical high schools are already working on the type of model to have in connection with the community colleges, with better alignment of curriculum between the two types of institutions. Our student population is diverse and we need to reach out to all of them. The technical high schools have a strategic plan going to deal with these issues of high school/college transitions".

Need to consider the importance of providing high school students opportunities for a one-year college certificate to be as important as providing them an opportunity towards achieving an advance towards their associate degree. Need to reduce time in high school and the cost towards a college degree by facilitating the high school students taking college level courses. Need to expand and enhance the CCP program to include career and technical education coursework.

To what end are we doing this Early College Program? To generate more high school students going into the Connecticut workforce with credentials that will get them ahead in the lifelong learning pathways.

Need to first expand and enhance the existing CCP program. Then, move on to do some Early College programs such as the Norwalk P-TECH initiative. One section of this first report will be a recommendation for attributes/standards to use in improving and expanding the College Career Pathways model. The next section of the report would be for the stand-

alone Early College Program model. Connect this process to the use of Charter Oak College's distance learning coursework in the process.

The goal is to get high school students ready to go into the workforce and have the capability to do college level work in a program that allows for better skills enhancement of those high school students. One of the models needs to get students in the technical high schools to have better skills for the workforce beyond their training in the high school. These high school students are looking to enhance their skills and the community colleges are to provide the pathways through their coursework to allow this smooth transition in skills enhancement.

Next steps for the Task Force – refine the information in the inventory grid with clear definitions. Outline the program models for technical high schools and other high school students to move into greater skills enhancement for the workforce. Develop a grid for the community colleges to assess what attributes of good early college programs they already have and to plan to move into the next level of career pathway enhancement for their high school partnership students. We need a list of must-haves for any of these transition pathways to be successful for the students. Curriculum alignment, rigors, vetted instructors and using the NACEP standards are all the categories – include larger high school collaborations. David Conley's work, NACEP and the Middle College National Consortium national standards – need to also include the concept of having high school students achieve "competencies" and having the community colleges and businesses work together to define such "competencies" for workforce career development pathways.

Recommendations – A hands-on technical type of credentials achieved by the high school students, above their high school training – the access to greater learning than at the technical high school for students in technical education – as in Naugatuck Valley CC, Asnuntuck and Quinebaug Valley CC. For NVCC we need to get more information on their manufacturing program. Explore more the funding systems for CCP students to be exposed to college career pathways. Better training for STEM workforce. In terms of career technical education, the current TCE programs need to be strengthened and aligned to the community college expectations. Open up after school programs at the technical high schools and at the community colleges to provide more career training opportunities for all high school students to go into the Connecticut workforce. More certificates need to be available for high school students to gain better access to the workforce in all careers. Lastly, we need to develop a framework for the Early College Program Assessment – outlining components to assess, and what assessment methods to follow for each component.

TO DO: Robin Golden will see if possible to interview a small subgroup of existing model partnership members to get a better picture of existing high-school/community college partnerships. Robin will have an office in the BOR 39 Woodland St. building, first floor, starting December 16, 2013.

We need each Task Force member to submit to Carmen Cid a two-line description of the expertise/experience they are bringing to help meet the goal of this Early College Task Force – we also need a picture to post both the member description and picture on the BOR Early College Task Force website.

Next Early College Task Force Meetings (after surveying 12/9/13 attendees):

Thursday, December 19, 2013 - 8 am – BOR Board Room 123 – 39 Woodland Street

Monday, December 23, 2013 – 1 pm – BOR Board Room 123 – 39 Woodland Street

We will need to get conference call calling instructions for the above meetings and staff support to make sure this is working during the meeting.