



Mapping Change in Washington State

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Models for Change work took place within four local areas of Washington State – King County (Northwest WA), Clark County (Southwest WA), Spokane County (Eastern WA), and Benton-Franklin Counties (Tri-Cities area in Central Washington) – as well as within the Washington State Becca Task Force, a statewide, interdisciplinary group with the goal of helping to keep kids engaged in school and on the path of educational success and out of the juvenile justice system. This work involved a mapping of changes made to truancy processes over the course of the Models for Change work in all four local sites as well in statewide efforts.

Table of Contents

Truancy Process Mapping 1

Methods for Information Collection 1

Mapping Change within Benton-Franklin Counties 2

Mapping Change within Clark County 4

Mapping Change within King County 7

Mapping Change within Spokane County..... 9

Mapping the Becca Task Force 11

Truancy Process Mapping Conclusion..... 17

Appendix A: Models for Change Local Initiative Mapping Assessment 19

Truancy Process Mapping

The mapping exercise undertaken here is an attempt to summarize changes that have taken place across Washington State as a result of the Models for Change efforts. The documentary material on change processes and noteworthy outcomes is organized by county or statewide activity. Information on Models for Change-based outcomes that benefited Washington counties not directly involved in Models for Change is also provided.

Methods for Information Collection

In order to assess the sustainability of the changes made and to document the procedures by which process changes occurred in the Washington Models for Change county sites, CCYJ made available to the WSU team a cache of documents that included both reports from Models for Change county partners and summary documents created by CCYJ. Additionally, CCYJ and WSU collaborated on an open-ended survey of county site teams (with follow-up focus group and in-person interviews) to identify both the changes taking place and to specify the processes by which those changes came about. The joint CCYJ and WSU project team developed both the survey and derivative follow-up interview protocol materials in active collaboration, and the WSU DGSS researchers carried out both the key actor survey and follow-up interviews.

The surveys and interviews involved the project leads and their principal associates and primary school-based and community-based partners who were involved in the Models for Change county-level projects. The task of collecting information from these key individuals involved a two-step process of initial survey distribution, and subsequent follow-up focus group and/or personal interview sessions. The logic underlying the two-step process was to make it possible for individuals to reflect independently of others on the questions posed, and then to arrange for group discussions wherein the differing and more consensual reflections could be shared and discussed.

In a series of focus group and personal interview settings conducted during the latter months of 2012 the data conveyed in this report were collected by the WSU team. In order to promote candor and free expression of views, the focus group sessions and personal interviews were not recorded and transcribed. The three WSU research team members each recorded notes separately, and followed up the on-site sessions with a debriefing discussion and comparison of notes recorded to ensure that concurrence could be reached on what was heard and what was the

proper interpretation of observations to be recorded for formulating this mapping process report. The survey instrument can be found in Appendix A.

The following section sets forth findings on how beneficial changes were pursued, how adjustment of goals was achieved, and what changes are likely to be sustained as indicated by surveys, interviews, and review of published and internal documents.

Mapping Change within Benton-Franklin Counties

Before Models for Change, Benton-Franklin counties lacked resources for truant or drop-out youth to re-engage in school, and lacked mechanisms for communication and coordination among the providers of the limited resources which were available. As a result of the partner counties' Models for Change efforts, the Benton-Franklin Models for Change team reports that significant philosophical changes have taken place among school administrators and staff, juvenile court truancy probation counselors, and even important segments of the general community. The Benton-Franklin Models for Change team engaged in active outreach efforts to the school and community stakeholders, and established a Truancy Working Group to develop a list of shared concerns, prioritize that list, and mobilize community resources to implement changes to address those specific priority concerns. They note a reduction in the amount of truancy petitions filed as the project gained momentum, strong academic improvements (as witnessed by increased attendance, increases in GPA, and credit retrieval) through numerous new programs, and noteworthy re-engagement of youth who had left school prior to graduation.

Specific policy and practice changes include the following:

- Implementation and operation of the "Passing Zone," located at Kennewick High School, a program aimed at youth re-engagement. This intervention increased the overall earned class credits of those targeted by the program.
- Creation of the Fast Forward Call Center and Professional Learning Communities for academic re-engagement. Funded by the United Way in partnership with Models for Change, the Fast Forward project funds a full time certified teacher to field calls from the community, youth, and families regarding school re-engagement and placement opportunities. Once the call is placed, youth are generally seen within 48 hours, an educational and social skills assessment is completed, and local school or GED placement is

initiated. The program officially launched September of 2010, and results have been positive with over 248 community contacts made as of March 2013.

- Improved court-school collaborations have resulted in important procedural changes at both the high school and middle school levels. These include on-site participation of court probation personnel who spend much of their time on school grounds, working with teachers and counselors as “advocates” for truancy-petitioned youth who are making a good faith effort to reengage in their schools. In addition, the reception area for BECCA-affected youth, including truancy-petitioned youth, features an explanatory video (alternating in English and Spanish) that has received many compliments for its content and respectful tone. These changes for the better are reflected in 13% fewer initial truancy petitions from 2008 to 2013. In addition, schools are now implementing greater supports in lieu of formal contempt filings, such as the Aventa credit retrieval program offered in the Pasco school district.¹
- The Principals’ Summit concept has become an established practice for learning about effective tools, reinforcing the accomplishments in the Models for Change work and the efforts to understand truancy in the Tri-Cities area, and enjoying the benefits of the social capital built up during the four years of work carried out by the Models for Change Truancy Work Group.
- Many of the meetings and court-school collaborations were located and facilitated by the local educational service district, ESD 123. ESD 123 provides educational services to school districts in Benton and Franklin and other neighboring counties, including Columbia County, Walla Walla County, Asotin County, Garfield County, and Grant County. These rural counties have truancy problems of varying severity (ranging from very little school avoidance to serious absences and associated poor credit completion), and school and juvenile court officials have been in the position of learning directly from the Benton and Franklin county Models for Change activities. The key role of ESD 123 as facilitator of the Truancy Working Group helped the impact of the Tri-Cities counties’ Models for Change work to become disseminated throughout central Washington.

¹ Aventa provides an online learning environment and strength-based education and career planning and care management services. Educationally, youth can engage a rich curriculum that is designed to meet nationally accepted standards applicable for each subject area. It serves grades 6-12 with a teacher to student ratio of 1:28. Course completion rate is 81%, and course pass rate is 71%.

Mapping Change within Clark County

Documentation provided by the Clark County Models for Change team revealed that prior to the Models for Change effort Clark County felt they had a strong need to learn more about the risk factors and the social characteristics of the youth they served. The Models for Change team included juvenile court and school personnel from the local educational services district. This partnership of individuals needed this information broadly, and also with respect to the interventions carried out with individual students. When combined with other data on interventions attempted and outcomes recorded, the county would be in a position to move toward its evidence-based practices objectives. Obtaining such data on individual students would allow for policy changes that better reflected the needs and challenges faced by the students for whom truancy petitions were filed by Clark County schools.

Clark County was able to accomplish the following policy and practice changes:

- Models for Change resources allowed Clark County to conduct research to learn more about their truant youth. This knowledge reinforced effective practices and further informed newer policies and practices. The local research findings were in line with national research which indicated that truancy is often a symptom of a much larger problem with which a youth is being faced.
- With information gathered from local research and program evaluation, the Clark County Models for Change team engaged the community in over forty trainings to share research findings and to provide a more holistic understanding of truancy issues. The 40+ trainings increased community understanding of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) as a public health epidemic, invited community involvement, offered a link with school-based initiatives (Response to Intervention [RTI], Positive Behavior Support, Compassionate Schools Initiative, and Restorative Justice), and aided implementation of compassionate responses to ACEs children. The trainings were well received by the community, and ultimately became available on a sustainable basis through the ESD 112 training catalogue for teachers and administrators.
- As the Clark County Truancy Project (CCTP) began work with the Models for Change NRB partners, it was determined that a screening tool of some type might be useful for uncovering a youth's risk factors and needs in a more efficient and more systematic method than was the case prior to the Models for Change program. With timely assistance from the National

Youth Screening Assistance Project (NYSAP), the CCTP piloted the MAYSI-2 instrument. The instrument provided a systematic and reliable framework for evaluating the mental health needs of youth. One outcome of this effort was the identification of different subgroups of students who present with truancy, and this information has helped to direct how assessed students receive services. For instance, the instrument increases the likelihood that youth with substance use issues receive proper treatment for this presenting problem. The CCTP will continue to use the MAYSI-2 long past the termination of the Models for Change project given its clear value to their truancy prevention and management efforts. Due to the successful implementation and use of the screening tool, the neighboring jurisdiction's Cowlitz County Truancy Project has begun using the MAYSI-2 as well, following practices developed in Clark County from its experience.

- Clark County Models for Change coordinated the development and facilitation of the truancy workshop model. The workshop represents an active collaboration between Clark County school districts, ESD 112, and the Clark County Juvenile Court. Piloted in January 2011, the workshop is the first intervention step after a truancy petition has been filed, instead of the initial court hearing. This process change has had a positive impact upon youth and families by providing more immediate and individualized care in a process that forestalls formal court processing.
- Clark County Models for Change has engaged system partners in improving and expanding collaboration and coordination through development of a cross-system working agreement, information sharing resource guide, cross-system training, and creation of an integrated data system. This accomplishment has greatly assisted in the provision of services to the youth and families for whom truancy is a problem. The combination of better risk and assessment of needs information and inter-system communication has provided a case management oriented truancy intervention process with much greater potential for impactful intervention.
- Another new practice implemented through Clark County's Models for Change initiative is a cross-system training effort. The cross-system training process supports the use of the information sharing guide as well as to educate more fully service providers, juvenile court staff, social service agency personnel and schools regarding the needs of status offending youth. The trainings provide agency staff the opportunity to network and share policy and practice changes within each agency.

- The Models for Change key actors working in Clark County reported on their MacArthur program experience as one reflecting a strengthening of a longstanding collaborative tradition in the county. The key actors in the Clark County Models for Change program were particularly likely to comment on the insights resulting from work with entities in the NRB and the gaining of deeper appreciation for the importance of data collection and use of relevant data in the periodic Models for Change Steering Committee meetings.
- Many of the initiatives in Clark County have influenced practices in neighboring Cowlitz County. The court systems cooperate frequently with respect to providing services to students with truancy problems in both counties, and will share in the collection and use of the MAYSI-2 diagnostic tool long into the future. The two counties are similar in many respects in that they feature a mixture of urban, suburban, and small-town settings for at-risk youth, and the clear need for better diagnostic tools and more well-integrated and timely intervention in school avoidance behavior is recognized in both county settings.
- The inclusion of Professor Clay Mosher as the local university research partner served to both inform practice by the academic insights he could relate and provide guidance practitioner insight and guidance for his own report, “Evaluation of Responses to Truancy in Clark County, Washington: Background Factors and Outcomes” (January, 2013). The report prepared by Prof. Mosher documents the reflections of the Steering Committee as it assessed insights derived from the analysis of MAYSI-2 data, data on ACEs, survey data collected at truancy workshops, and patterns of pre- and post-juvenile justice system contact. The major outcome reported in the Mosher report is that the baseline for truancy operations in the County prior to the implementation of the MAYSI-2 was 44% positive outcomes (defined as returning to school with regular attendance, degree completion or GED, 21% had negative outcomes (no positive change), and the remainder (35%) has neutral exits. With the finding that the negative outcome youth frequently present with ACEs, the new knowledge that has been gained about effective management of ACEs-affected youth should permit an improvement upon this baseline level of performance in the future.
- It is evident from the mapping survey and the follow-up focus group session held with the Steering Committee that the strong ethic of restorative justice which characterized Clark County prior to the MacArthur Foundation’s involvement in that county has been deepened and reinforced by the Models for Change program.

Mapping Change within King County

Documents provided and reviewed concerning King County revealed pre-Models for Change concerns similar to those of Clark County. The King County Models for Change team sought to obtain a broader and deeper understanding of the diverse at-risk youth they served, and also sought to improve communication across various at-risk serving entities in the state's largest and most metropolitan county. In addition, the King County Models for Change team sought to develop new and expand existing intervention processes for at-risk youth featuring elements of education-directed and school engagement-related activities.

The major county strategies that resulted in noteworthy systems change require community and agency partners working together to combine, coordinate and/or improve services designed to re-engage youth in education as a viable alternative to incarceration and recidivism.

King County was able to accomplish the following policy and practice changes:

- A primary focus of Models for Change activity was to build a stable high school re-engagement system. That system, PathNet, provides an infrastructure of support for the educational re-engagement of youth who have dropped out of school and/or are in need of an alternative route to educational attainment. Connection points between the systems of juvenile justice and education were strategically built for bridging the opportunities of immediate support for school/work reengagement. Outcomes of the PathNet pilot project revealed that 81% of participating youth completed a strength-based assessment and youth driven plan, 74% of students were re-engaged in their education, and 30% of re-engaged students earned GED or High School diplomas.
- With the help of the Vera Institute, a descriptive analysis of youth who entered PathNet was conducted in 2011 and then replicated in 2012. The purpose of these analyses was to provide PathNet and other stakeholders with an overview and increased understanding of the young people who were participating in the program — including their risks, needs, and program activities — as well as to highlight their preliminary outcomes related to educational attainment, vocation, and justice system involvement, with the larger goal of helping PathNet leaders refine the program in ways that allow them to most effectively serve at-risk youth.
- *GEDplus* is a PathNet initiative designed to generate a direct route to employability for youth who have dropped out of high school. The initiative was developed and validated over the

course of Models for Change work in King County. *GEDplus* constitutes an integrated learning model that provides immediate connections to workforce development, career training, and post-secondary study.

- In 2009, the King County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office, working in collaboration with the Washington State Becca Task Force and CCYJ, and in close consultation with the National Center for School Engagement, launched the Youth R.E.A.C.H. truancy post-filing diversion program. The mission of the program was to develop a meaningful and effective post-filing diversion program to assist truant youth in improving attendance and reengaging in school life. Over the course of three years the initiative reached youth throughout the King County area, in both Highline and Bellevue School Districts, utilizing a 3-tiered approach to re-engaging at-risk youth in positive community and school involvement. This framework involves the implementation of school engagement workshops, community truancy boards, and case management for youth disengaged from school. An analysis by the Vera Institute of Justice showed a notable decrease in juvenile justice system involvement among youth post-program, and very few program youth advanced to a preliminary truancy court hearing. Of concern in the analysis was an increase in the rate of unexcused absences and an increase in days of school discipline, with both increases driven mostly by Highline youth.²
- A master Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that serves as the key policy document in setting forth a common vision and expectations for a successful collaboration between schools, juvenile courts, and service providers was developed for stakeholders wishing to collaborate in service to at-risk youth. This MOU has provided a very useful framework for enhancing the effectiveness of truancy case management, providing interventions that can draw on a much broader range of potential services and opportunities for educational re-engagement than was the case at the start of the Models for Change initiative.
- Given the large size of King County and its broad geographic reach, incorporating urban, suburban and rural areas, the change dissemination process in King County has been mostly focused on taking smaller-scale pilot programs to greater scale across diverse county settings.
- The King County “brown bag” sessions for those in the juvenile courts working on truancy were initially largely preoccupied with administrative issues, but have become energized and

² It should be noted that issues with data quality and consistency were raised as general concerns with the implementation of the program, and data findings may reflect these concerns.

enlivened with Models for Change topics of innovative practices and the active sharing of individual and group insights gained from reflecting on practice. Some participants became increasingly aware of promising practices elsewhere in the county that would be appropriate for their own circumstances, and those with noteworthy ideas to share had a convenient friendly forum in which they could do just that without undue need for preparation.

Mapping Change within Spokane County

The Spokane County Juvenile Court sought MacArthur Foundation support to improve outcomes for youth with respect to increasing alternatives to secure confinement and court involvement. This mandate stemmed, in some significant part, from a Spokane Community Stakeholders' meeting held in 2007 in which a clear message was sent regarding the need to address the difficulties faced by youth at risk for dropping out of school and engaging in chronic truancy. A promising community-based intervention operating out of the West Valley School District since 1996 was identified as a potential solution to addressing these problems. The program is known as the West Valley Community Truancy Board (WVCTB), and the Spokane Models for Change team sought to utilize this program as a model throughout the county and beyond. As such, they proposed generating a replication toolkit to facilitate the implementation of the WVCTB process in other school districts.

Out of this beginning, the following changes have been made within Spokane County:

- A replication toolkit has been developed that facilitates the systematic replication of the WVCTB process. The toolkit has been modified so that it is valuable for use with students of high school and middle school ages, and the process it describes has been replicated widely in Spokane County. The toolkit has been shared with educational and court personnel in other counties and governing groups in Washington State, including those in Jefferson, Skagit, Pierce, Okanogan, and Mason counties and the White Swan, Kelso, and Colville Confederated Tribes. A draft version of the Toolkit was used in five school settings in Spokane County – the East Valley School District (with middle and high school students), the Mead School District, and three high schools in the Spokane Public School District. The toolkit has also been shared with interested parties in other states, including Louisiana, New Hampshire, Colorado, Illinois, North Carolina, Minnesota, Wisconsin, New York, Kansas, West Virginia, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Utah, and Texas, and the US Territory of Puerto

Rico. (The second section of this report, “West Valley Community Truancy Board Outcomes and Replication,” provides more detailed information on the toolkit and documented community truancy board outcomes.)

- A promotional video featuring actual participants in the West Valley School District truancy intervention process was developed to improve information dissemination regarding the replication toolkit.
- The Check and Connect process of systematic follow-up and long-term mentoring (a certified evidence-based process) has been pilot-tested in the West Valley School District as an added feature of the Community Truancy Board process. An analysis was carried out to assess the benefit of this component of the WVCTB process for more fully informing other school districts interested in the replication of the WVCTB (see West Valley Community Truancy Board Outcomes and Replication section of this report). Given the high level of interest in the process, and particularly in the Check and Connect systematic follow-up and supportive advocacy/monitoring element of the WVCTB process, the Spokane County Models for Change team hosted a Check and Connect training session in Spokane attended by over 50 people working in the truancy area, the vast majority of whom were from counties other than Spokane.
- A truancy manual highlighting the WVCTB process was created and disseminated to all Spokane County school districts at the annual Court/School districts Truancy Meeting in September of 2010, and outreach efforts were made at yearly All Schools Meetings henceforth. This manual differs from the community truancy board toolkit developed by the Spokane County team in that the manual applies only to Spokane County Juvenile Court processes related to BECCA truancy filings.
- Efforts to enrich communication on truancy were made via the updating of the Spokane County Juvenile Court Website, which provides timely information on Models for Change projects and products.
- A county-wide consortium (including Spokane County Juvenile Court, Spokane Public Schools, Spokane Regional Health District, and Greater Spokane, Inc.) submitted and obtained a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to further develop the WVCTB as a pre-filing intervention after 4 unexcused absences by middle school-grade youth.

- Some of the key actors in the Models for Change effort, via surveys and interviews, recalled how their greatest accomplishments came in the area of juvenile court representatives building relationships in the public school community in order to facilitate the timely replication of the West Valley School District process. They were successful in bringing the similarly-sized East Valley School District and the Mead School District into the Models for Change replication network, and subsequently three high schools within the large Spokane Public Schools District volunteered to serve as pilot replication sites in the final year of the Models for Change funding period. The effective sharing of information on learning gained from Washington’s Models for Change county initiative sites deserves particular attention as well. This sharing has resulted in collaborations between schools and community organizations such as Priority Spokane, and success with respect to obtaining funding to further implement and explore the concept of the Community Truancy Board implemented at the middle school level. More information regarding this outcome appears below in the discussion of the West Valley Community Truancy Board.

Mapping the Becca Task Force

Models for Change funding also provided staffing for the Washington State Becca Task Force (BTF), a statewide voluntary organization founded in 2002 by the Honorable Norm Maleng, King County Prosecuting Attorney, and Washington State Supreme Court Justice Bobbe Bridge (ret.). This group features active stakeholder group representatives who include statewide education leaders, state legislators, Superior Court judges, county prosecutors, defense attorneys, law enforcement leaders, local public school system officials, treatment providers, and juvenile court administrators. The mission of the BTF is three-fold: (a) help keep kids in school and out of the juvenile justice system by promoting the intent, goals and outcomes of the Washington State Becca Laws (Truancy, At-Risk Youth and Child in Need of Services); (b) ensure adequate funding for the courts, schools, and programs that implement the intent of the Becca legislation; and (c) collaborate on statewide Becca reform efforts through the coordinated efforts of members and the implementation of a targeted strategy. Since the goals of the BTF parallel the goals of the Models for Change project so closely, it is possible to identify several noteworthy examples of how the Models for Change effort greatly enhanced the effectiveness of Models for Change

site work and promoted BTF development of truancy policy reform that was both research-based and data-driven.

The paragraphs that follow are a mapping of the processes and outcomes of the BTF. These activities have been accomplished during three important developmental stages:

1. Initial Organization and Action Stage
2. Subgroup Action Stage
3. Policy Recommendation Stage

After documenting the consensus-based truancy-related public policy recommendations of the BTF, the process by which these outcomes were accomplished will be discussed, focusing on some of the key players and methods of communication used in getting to consensus on juvenile justice reform recommendations pertinent to truancy.

Initial Organization and Action Stage

When the Becca Bill became law, a major criticism was the lack of funding and understanding of roles within these two systems for the requirements on schools to track attendance and initiate action against students and/or parents through court filings for truancy. A building of bridges between schools and juvenile courts was necessary in order to achieve positive outcomes for at-risk youth and for the Becca Bill to serve its purpose. The original advocates for the legislation, and some newly recruited partners in advocacy, came back together in 2002 to develop and share best practices and to maintain advocacy for truancy monitoring and intervention, creating the Washington State Becca Task Force (BTF). Upon the formation of the Center for Children & Youth Justice (CCYJ) in 2006, CCYJ took the initiative to provide organizational support to the effort. The BTF meets regularly throughout the year with an ever-growing voluntary membership base working around a consensus model.

Subgroup Action Stage

Funding from Models for Change allowed the early planning for consensus building on legislative and policy recommendations to take shape. This task included the formation of a policy recommendation workgroup subdivided into subgroups. Such subgroups were charged with researching, discussing, finding areas of agreement, and drafting specific recommendations

which could then be brought to the entire BTF for review, revision, and ideally adoption as a consensus recommendation. The subgroups established were as follows:

Allocation/ Re-Allocation of Funds: Group charged with making recommendations related to changing the existing funding scheme for Becca, including appropriate apportionment of funds among stakeholders, while considering how accountability will be maintained.

Preservation of Mutual Accountability: Group charged with making recommendations related to the identification of strategies for maintaining accountability in truancy cases among all parties involved (e.g., courts, schools, youth, and families), monitoring outcomes and measuring success, balancing sanctions with incentives, and addressing the gap between the number of eligible truant youth versus identified/ targeted truant youth.

Pre-Court Intervention: Group charged with making recommendations related to the establishment of pre-court practices examining best and promising practices and policies for truancy reduction and ensuring academic success (diversion, intervention, prevention, dropout prevention) currently in place statewide, and ensuring that the court is the place of last resort for truant youth.

School-Based Statewide and Local Policy: Group charged with making recommendations related to reform of school-based policies that have the effect of pushing students out of school (e.g., uniformity in defining unexcused absences, activities for addressing truancy, long-term suspension/expulsion, withdrawal policies, etc.), a review of current research and best reengagement practices, and an analysis of local practices.

Credit Retrieval and Reengagement: Group charged with making recommendations related to increased opportunities for credit retrieval and school reengagement for chronic or habitual truants deficient in school credit and at high risk of high school dropout based on an examination of current research and best practices, analysis of local practices, and consideration of the implications of HB 1418 on reengagement in Washington State.

Secure Detention: Group charged with making recommendations related to the elimination or reduction of the use of secure detention in truancy/status offender cases based on an examination of current research and best practices, analysis of local

practices, and consideration of the implications of reducing or eliminating detention in truancy cases.

Court Process Subgroup: Group charged with making recommendations related to the improvement of the truancy court process based on an examination of best practices and current research, an analysis of local practices, and identification of areas for improvement in the truancy court process.

As draft proposals were developed and shared among subgroups and then shared with the Becca Task Force members in their monthly meetings, the process moved into the final stage of recommendation finalization and ratification.

The Recommendation Stage

Drawing on the work of the subgroups, the BTF developed a set of consensus-based recommendations for truancy system reform in Washington State. These recommendations were divided into five subject areas that organize and prioritize a total of 19 policy and legislative recommendations. In what follows, five subject areas are identified and an overview and general description of the intent of the subject area recommendations is provided.

Early Intervention, Utilization of Court as a Last Resort and Reduction in the Use of Secure Detention in Truancy Cases

This first subject area includes a total of nine recommendations. These seek to address the issue of adequate funding of initiatives for reducing truancy and also efforts to implement evidence-based interventions to track outcomes for youth and to intervene on their behalf. The goal of these recommendations is to take an integrative systems approach that highlights the importance of building positive relationships between families, schools, and communities, including an overriding goal to exhaust all restorative justice avenues prior to utilizing detention.

Among the more detailed recommendations there is clear evidence of ideas arising from the county-level Models for Change efforts. In particular, Recommendation 2a calls for the use of appropriate screening and assessment instruments on the order of the MAYSI 2 in use in Clark County and a call in Recommendation 3 for more robust involvement of Washington State's Educational Service Districts (ESDs) on the model of the Clark County Models for Change program. Similarly, Recommendation 3c calls for greater interagency collaboration for truancy

reduction, prevention and intervention, citing specifically the examples of the Clark County Truancy Program (CCTP) and the Benton-Franklin Juvenile Justice Center partnership with the region's school districts and local ESD.

Monitoring of Outcomes and Student Success

This second subject area includes three formal recommendations and seeks to provide guidance with respect to improving fairness by implementing uniform standards for assessing outcomes. Consistent with this, the BTF recommends that:

While some degree of variation should be permitted given the differences among jurisdictions, the measure of success for truancy programs, practices, and policies should be the same in order to ensure that school districts and courts are held mutually accountable for implementing the intent, goals, and outcomes of Washington's truancy laws...Success should be defined and individualized for each truant youth as well as monitored by school districts and reported to courts.

The recommendations include suggestions for variables that should be monitored for all youth and how to address issues related to differences in language and children's academic status. Of particular concern was the problem of the juvenile court not having sufficient information on the youth who fall under their responsibility for overseeing educational re-engagement. In this regard a consensus was reached on the need to amend RCW 28A.225.035, sections 2 and 13 as follows:

(Sec. 2) The (truancy) petition shall set forth the name, date of birth, school, gender, race, and ethnicity of the child and the names and addresses of the child's parents, and shall set forth whether the child and parent are fluent in English and whether there is an existing individualized education program, and the child's current academic status in school...

(Sec. 13) If the court assumes jurisdiction, the school district shall report to the court any additional unexcused absences by the child, actions taken by the school district, and an update on the child's academic status in school no later than three months from the date that jurisdiction is assumed by the Court. For subsequent hearings, the school district shall regularly report the preceding information to the Court.

From this recommendation, Senate Bill 6494 was sponsored by Senator Hargrove and passed in the 2011-2012 legislative session. SB 6494 requires that once a court assumes jurisdiction for truancy the school district must update the court about the child's academic status in school, with the first report no later than 90 days from the assumption of jurisdiction. Different counties are implementing this statute differently, however many counties are utilizing progress reports as a tool for updating the court on a truant child's academic status. A BTF subgroup was formed to create a model progress report to assist the counties in implementing the monitoring provisions of SB 6494.

Affirmative Steps toward Reengagement of Youth in Education

This third subject area is concerned with utilizing existing standards to create uniform definitions of terms such as "absence" and to prompt better tracking and intervention utilizing both existing and newly developed electronic systems such as the CEDARS statewide database. A statewide definition of excused and unexcused absence was created in WAC 392-400-325 and adopted by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, starting in September 2012. This area of policy recommendations also seeks to encourage efforts to re-engage youth who are lost to the system or deeply or chronically disengaged. Lastly, this area identifies the importance of reversing trends that occasion the defunding of Alternative Learning Experiences (ALEs).

Leadership of the State's Educational Service Districts

As the title implies, this subject area seeks to improve collaboration of existing entities with respect to truancy and dropout prevention consistent with Models for Change principles. It identifies Educational Service Districts (ESDs) as being an underutilized resource in facilitating communication in this regard. Learning occurring in the Models for Change county initiation sites is directly mentioned in the recommendations as well. Recommendation 1a under this subject area is of particular interest in this respect, and reads as follows:

Key representatives at each of the nine ESDs in Washington State should be convened to plan for advancement of truancy/dropout reduction, prevention, intervention and retrieval in partnership with key stakeholders, including Juvenile Justice and Educational Representatives. Effective strategies employed by MfC Sites should serve as models for advancing these efforts.

Funding for Implementation of the State's Becca / Truancy Laws

This subject area relates to research, some of which comes directly from the work of university partners and NRB agencies in Washington's county-level Models for Change initiation sites, supporting early intervention and provides guidelines for providing financial resources that support the upstream intervention regarding school avoidance behavior and inconsistent school attendance. This important topic is illustrated by the following quote:

In light of national research which indicates that early intervention is critical for reducing truancy and these recent findings, funding should be concentrated in identification, prevention, and early intervention services aimed at reducing truancy before a truancy petition filing is required under RCW 28A.225.

This is an empirically supported plea for a re-direction of state resources towards earlier interventions. Creating earlier, upstream interventions has been a main focus throughout all the sites in the Models for Change initiative, with literature reviews and evaluations also focusing on the need for better funding for early interventions.

Truancy Process Mapping Conclusion

The dissemination of insights gained from each of the county sites and the statewide efforts was greatly facilitated by four specific channels of communication. First, CCYJ arranged early on for periodic all-sites meetings to both instruct the various Models for Change-engaged key actors on the latest MacArthur Foundation developments and to facilitate cross-site communication and learning. These sharing periods in the meetings grew from rather brief accounts to much more detailed exchanges of information and learning achieved as the Models for Change project matured. Second, the annual Washington State Becca Conferences sponsored by the membership of the Becca Task Force provided a second forum for the effective dissemination of truancy intervention learning in the Washington. Multiple presentations were made by key actors at Becca Conferences over the course of Washington Models for Change. Third, the annual State Juvenile Justice Conference provided for opportunities for the Models for Change county initiation sites to disseminate their learning and insights to interested parties from across the state. Finally, the Annual Models for Change Systems Reform in Juvenile Justice Conferences convened in Washington, DC and hosted by the Foundation have provided an

important opportunity for the dissemination of Washington state truancy-related learning to a national audience.

These channels of communication have been important forums to showcase the innovations in process, changes in attitude, and creative solutions that have been developed through Models for Change work in Washington State. The statutory changes and focus on upstream interventions are illustrative of a thoughtful and productive examination of the local and statewide climate regarding truancy and at-risk youth and an analysis of the needs of the children involved in the system.

APPENDIX A

**Models for Change Local Initiative Mapping Assessment
Benton Franklin Counties
[King, Clark, Spokane]**

Truancy Process Mapping of Sustainable Improvements and Dissemination Patterns in Local
Juvenile Justice System Operations

Preface

As the Models for Change local initiatives in our state wrap up, we are interested in documenting program changes, new ideas for system improvement, and sustainable initiatives that have been developed in the area of truancy in Washington State as a consequence of the Models for Change work done in King County, Clark County, Spokane County, and Benton-Franklin Counties. With that objective in mind, we ask that you reflect upon the following questions in preparation for our focus group session.

In what part of Benton Franklin Counties' Models for Change truancy work were you involved, and in what capacity?

Thinking back to the early days of your involvement, were the problems identified and the goals set for improvement in the original grant application ones that guided your effort throughout the project? Did any "mid-course corrections" take place that you think are worthy of note?

Looking back on the project, do you think you accomplished what you sought to achieve?

Yes () No ()

If YES, please list those accomplishments. (If your successes were replicated elsewhere, please indicate those instances of dissemination of favorable impact.)

If NO, can you list other accomplishments that were hoped for but proved difficult to accomplish?

We face resource difficulties with respect to services provided by the state and other governments. In your opinion, what accomplishments in the area of truancy prevention and school re-engagement that you listed above are likely to be sustained after the conclusion of the Models for Change program?

What Models for Change truancy reduction accomplishments are unlikely to be sustained?

What steps might be taken to improve the likelihood of sustainability for those accomplishments in potential jeopardy?