



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Mick Zais
Superintendent

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TO: The Honorable Nikki R. Haley, Governor
The Honorable Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr., Senate Finance Committee Chairman
The Honorable W. Brian White, House Ways and Means Committee Chairman
The Honorable John E. Courson, Senate Education Committee Chairman
The Honorable Phillip D. Owens, House Education and Public Works Chairman

FROM: Tina Jamison, SCDE
Dr. Sabrina Moore, SCDE

DATE: November 30, 2012

RE: Proviso 1A.23 - "Dropout Prevention and High Schools That Work Programs"

High Schools That Work

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Overview of Program

High Schools that Work (HSTW) is an effort-based school improvement initiative. It is founded on the conviction that most students can master rigorous academic and career/technical studies if school leaders and teachers create an environment that motivates students to make the effort to succeed. Run by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), the HSTW school improvement design provides a framework of goals, key practices, and key conditions for accelerating learning and setting higher standards.

There are two companion programs to HSTW: Making Middle Grades Work (MMGW) and Career and Technology Centers That Work (CTCTW).

Growth

All high school sites are required to participate in a whole school reform initiative based on the HSTW 10 key practices as mandated by EEDA. Currently, all but 8 high schools have joined HSTW. Over half of the middle schools in South Carolina participate in MMGW. Forty-one percent of SC's Career and Technology Centers participate.

HSTW Sites Added	MMGW Sites Added	CTCTW Sites Added
2012: 0	2012: 0	2012: 0
2011: 1	2011: 10	2011: 0
2010: 1	2010: 10	2010: 16
Total: 192	Total: 135	Total: 16

Every new site must complete a New Site Development Workshop. The workshop lasts for 3.5 days, and the sites develop a plan of how they are going to implement the initiative at each of their sites.

Training and Development

In 2011-2012, 22 HSTW sites and 20 MMGW sites received Technical Assistance Visits (TAVs) from the SCDE. TAV reports to the schools provide baseline information, challenges, and action steps to help school leaders assess where their schools are in relationship to the HSTW Key Practices. The reports guide school leaders and teachers in prioritizing next steps for implementation of school improvement.

The TAV teams for high schools consist of the following:

- Math Teacher
- English Teacher
- CATE Teacher
- Social Studies Teacher
- Science Teacher
- Guidance Counselor
- Middle School Representative
- Higher Education Representative
- SCDE Representative
- Trained Team Leader
- Parent/Community Representative (optional)

The team provided feedback to each site by evaluating “Promising Practices and Challenges” from the following areas: (1) Rigor/High Expectations/Extra Help (2) Leadership (3) Student Engagement (4) Data (5) Guidance (6) Parent/Community Involvement (7) CATE (high schools only). Each site was provided a brief exit report power point, and then each site received a 35+ page report with recommendations included.

In 2011-2012, 12 HSTW sites and 10 MMGW sites received Technical Review Visits (TRV’s) from the SCDE. These visits were conducted over a 1-2 day period and provided schools with a status report as to the degree of implementation with the framework. The reports focused on Rigor/High Expectations/Extra Help, Use of Data, and Student Engagement. Each school received recommendations in the report.

Assessments

The South Carolina Department of Education divides HSTW/MMGW sites into two cohorts for testing purposes. Cohort 1 was given the NAEP-based HSTW assessment and MMGW survey in 2012. Cohort 1 HSTW sites were required to assess 60 twelfth graders, and MMGW sites were required to administer the survey to all certified faculty members and eighth graders.

Highlights

1. Support: Schools cite a superior level of customer service by the SCDE team, who provides each site with answers to questions, support, and resources for the programs.
2. Collaboration: We have partnered with Schools to Watch so that middle schools could begin to get recognition for having best middle school practices in place.
3. Innovation: Last year, SCDE piloted two “Best Practices” visits so that educators across the state could come see best practices in place at schools. Over 40 educators took part in the visits and the feedback was very positive.
4. Engagement: Team members who have served on TAV teams ask to go back again and again because of the great experience they had previously. We maintain the fidelity of the TAV by having trained team leaders who are experienced in leading teams.

Dropout Prevention Programs

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Introduction/Background

The Education and Economic Development Act of 2005 (EEDA) requires that an evidence-based, at-risk student program be implemented in each high school in South Carolina (S.C. Code Ann. § 59-59-10 *et seq.*). To assist districts in meeting this requirement in 2011–12, the SCDE set aside approximately \$3 million in EEDA funds to award to districts through At-Risk Student Innovation Competitive Grants and At-Risk Student Supplemental Formula Grants. Districts that received EEDA funds were required to implement or sustain evidence-based programs designed to assist students at risk of dropping out of school prior to graduation and/or not graduating on time.

Program Summary for School Year 2011–12

- According to reports submitted by districts and high schools statewide, all public high schools in South Carolina have implemented an evidence-based at-risk student program designed to ensure that students at risk of school failure receive the opportunity to complete the necessary requirements to graduate with a state high school diploma and to build skills that prepare them to enter the job market successfully.
- During school year 2011–12, a total of 61 schools representing 21 school districts received innovative grants to implement an evidence-based at-risk student intervention model, and a total of 52 schools, representing 33 districts, received supplemental grants to support existing evidence-based at-risk student initiatives.
- According to reports submitted by districts/schools, all schools utilized one or more of the at-risk indicators supported by research to identify their target population. [See Table 1.]

Table 1

Number and Percent of Schools that Utilized a Specific At-Risk Indicator to Identify Their At-Risk Student Population		
At-Risk Indicator	Number of schools that included the indicator in the selection process	Percentage of schools that included the indicator in the selection process
Attendance	84	40.78%
Behavior/Disciplinary Issues	71	34.47%
Academic: Grades	104	50.49%
Academic: Course Credit	78	37.86%
Academic: Standardized Tests	80	38.83%
Academic: Over-aged for Grade	62	30.10%
Limited English Proficiency	25	12.14%
Lack of Interest or Conflicting Interest	41	19.90%
Abuse - Physical and/or Emotional	21	10.19%
Socioeconomic Environment	46	22.33%
Homeless or without a Parent	31	15.05%
Teen Parent	27	13.11%

Desired Outcomes

- Regulations approved by the South Carolina Board of Education and the General Assembly in 2007 established desired outcomes or performance criteria based on the specific needs of the at-risk population and on the nature and structure of the particular model implemented in a district/school. Reports received from districts/schools revealed the following outcomes:
 - 26,936 students participated at-risk student programs during 2011–12 that were financially supported by EEDA and/or are included in the *At-Risk Student Intervention Implementation Guide*.
 - 26,625 (98.8%) of the students identified in 2011–12 who participated in an at-risk program that was financially supported by EEDA and/or included in the *At-Risk Intervention Implementation Guide* were enrolled in school during 2012–13 or have graduated. [See Table 2.]
 - Since 2007–08, an average of approximately 29,000 students annually have participated in EEDA funded and/or endorsed at-risk student programs.

- Each year between 2007–08 and 2011–12, over 96 percent of the students identified as at-risk and participated in one of the EEDA funded and/or endorsed programs reenrolled in school the year after they participated in the program or graduated at the end of the academic year during which they participated. [See Table 2.]

Table 2

Percent of At-Risk Students Who Remained in School or Graduated after Participating in an EEDA Funded and/or Endorsed Program

School Year	Number of Students	Percent Remained in School or Graduated
2007-08	21,065	97.2
2008-09	32,623	96.1
2009-10	31,667	97.1
2010-11	34,148	98.7
2011-12	26,936	98.8

- Since 2008-09, the dropout rate for students who participated in evidence-based EEDA funded and/or endorsed programs has continued to decrease. [See Table 3 and Chart 1.]

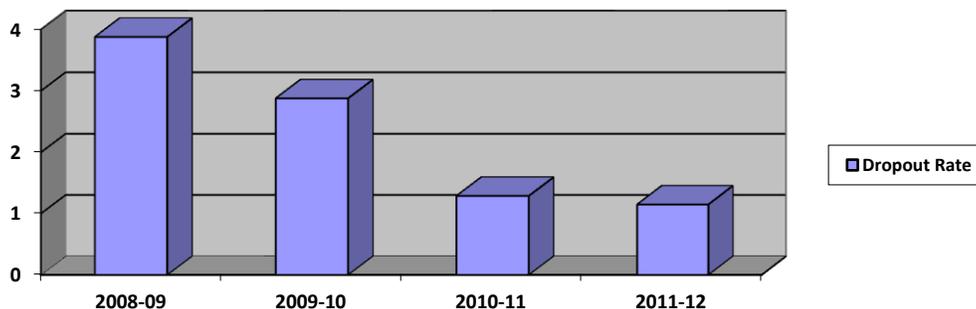
Table 3

Dropout Rate for Students Who Participated in an EEDA Funded and/or Endorsed Program

School Year	Dropout Rate	SC Dropout Rate
2008-09	3.88	3.4
2009-10	2.88	2.9
2010-11	1.29	2.8
2011-12	1.15	TBD

Chart 1

Dropout Rate for Students Who Participated in an EEDA Funded and/or Endorsed Program



- The average daily attendance for students who participated in EEDA funded and/or endorsed programs in 2011–12 was 90.6%.
- Seventy-eight percent (78%) of schools reported a decrease in discipline referrals for students who participated in EEDA funded and/or endorsed programs in 2011–12.

- Ninety-two (92%) of the schools reported a more positive attitude toward school and learning among students who participated in EEDA funded and/or endorsed programs in 2011–12.
- The mean grade point average (GPA) for students who participated in EEDA funded and/or endorsed programs in 2011–12 was 2.33.
- Ninety-nine (99.2%) of students who participated in EEDA funded and/or endorsed programs completed an Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) in 2011–12.

Continuing Emphasis

- During school year 2011–12, the early warning system used by educators to identify students who have a combination of factors that could increase their probability of dropping out of school prior to earning a diploma or not graduating on time, was made available statewide. The system, the Student Potential Performance Snapshot (SPPS), was developed by SCDE representatives and is, therefore, provided to districts at no cost.
- Technical assistance relative to program implementation and assessment will continued to be available to districts.