

Absenteeism

Why is this an issue for McDowell?

- Travel
- Student engagement
- Teacher engagement
- Parent engagement

Strategies that the large group came up with – across subcommittees

Adult Education

- Educate parents on the importance of child coming to school, through FAC, Parent Teacher conference
- Educate and assist parents in areas contributing to their children's absenteeism:
 - o Substance abuse
 - o Nutrition
 - o Health care
- Parent advocate to accompany parent to school

Student mentoring

- Internships/incentives for attendance and achievement
- Mentoring program – We Can, Broader Horizons, church involvement, 4-H

Policy

- Institute a proactive truancy policy (not reactive)

Home visits

- Home visitation by teachers at least 2 times a year
- Implemented through more structured programs
- Provide compensation for home visitors
- Home visitation that starts as a positive, not a threat

Incentives and Reward Programs

Building relationships

- Door to door canvas with multiple purposes:
 - o Fundraising for teachers village – creates community buy-in
 - o Collect contact information of interested community members to keep them in the loop
 - o Collect data on families
 - o Build relationships

- Community schools
 - o Increase health care availability in schools and county (dentists, mental health)
 - o Substance abuse counselling
 - o Mental health provider for students – “Project Aware”

Instruction

- Consistency in professional staff
- Engaging instruction – hands-on, project-based learning
- Real world experiences in instructional strategies (connections)
- Vocational programs at the middle school level and up

Cross Agency Collaboration

- Parent education (early)
- Coordination of services (courts, truancy officers, teachers and school administrators, parents)
- Clients on public assistance mandated to take parenting classes
- Mental health/social workers
- Agency support monitoring
 - o CPS
 - o DHHR
 - o WV Workforce
 - o AAA
- More support from the court system

3rd Grade Reading

Why is this an issue in McDowell?

- Early education instruction – need to align
- Lack of access to books
- Schools, large classroom sizes
- High Teacher turnover
- Lack of family engagement

Strategies that the large group came up with – across subcommittees

Technology

- Promote literacy “app” for parents to provide to children
- Home libraries

Reading

- Increase number of books that go home with children
 - o Incorporate books into a backpack program
- Utilize public library
 - o Family night at the library
- Bus library – put books on the bus for students
- A county campaign to get babies/toddlers signed up for Imagination Library (Dolly Parton’s program for books monthly in the home)
- Encourage reading at home
- Kids book club

Early ID/Supports

- Make kindergarten’s main focus – reading, pre-literacy, work exposure
- Create a committee co-chaired by board office employee ahead of community organization (united way, save our children?)
- Integrating services (literacy) birth-3rd grade
- Focus on pre-literacy skills with child care providers and pre-schools
- Birth to Three – for early identification and treatment of physical and development concerns

Mentoring/volunteers

- Establish reading/mentoring program
- Community volunteers for reading programs to work with school children
 - o Send volunteer readers into schools
 - o Create read aloud programs at the elementary level
- A community literacy awareness campaign for the national campaign – youtube videos, presentations and pins, etc. “I Read” – using Greenbrier County model
- Do a large AmeriCorp reading coach grant to place VISTA/school

Incentivizing

- Accelerated reading program geared toward incentives and rewards versus graded
- Interesting strategies i.e. computer to teach reading
- Send books home from parent-teacher conferences (incentives)
- Private industry reading incentive programs (i.e. pizza hut)
- Implement recognition program to make it “cool” to succeed/achieve
- Reading to animals program
- Reading challenge competition
- Celebrating the successes is crucial for children
- Summer school programs expanded

Instruction and PD

- PD around instruction strategy – phonics, literacy, word recognition

- Has a consultant working with teachers and has training days
- Partners are First Book, Tug River health association, big creek people in action
- Duplicate principal mentoring program with teacher mentoring program
- More time with experienced, high performance teachers to train younger teachers with best practices
- Read a chapter of a book every day in classroom
- Waiver – put K, 2nd or 3rd graders together and teach reading. “ungraded” but yet check for benchmarks
- Incorporate technology
- Work on ways to improve vocabulary – word exposure
- Continue phonics work

Access to books

- Publicize or advertise availability of books at family literacy centers
- Work with local hospitals (maternity ward/pediatrics) to put a book baby program in place
 - 5 or 10 books given to each child born in McDowell
 - Another set of books on every birthday
- Classroom library for every classroom
- Partner list and intro all partners
 - Carolyn – point person
 - Support by providing networking, bring ideas
 - More books in the school – 1 book a month for kids from birth to start of school – partners: big creek, first book, imagination library