Handouts for
Senate Select Committee on
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From Dr. Raymund A. Paredes
Commissioner of Higher Education
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

All My Children

By David L. Kirp

The Lab School, a Gothic pile across the street from the University of Chicago, is a hothouse for the imagination, a place where preschoolers engage with their teachers to construct a universe of knowledge. The school was founded over a century ago by John Dewey, and its guiding philosophy remains Dewey's belief that "the object and reward of learning is continued capacity for growth."

Carla Young, principal of the Lab School (or, more formally, the Laboratory Schools), acknowledges that sometimes teachers must take the lead, that "there's a need to give kids information – to read to them, to concentrate on the letter of the day." But much is left to the children's imagination. "Families that choose the Lab School like the emphasis on inquiry, social-emotional development, autonomy," she says. "The teaching comes out of the organic life of the classroom."

This is as good as prekindergarten gets. But most of these children are the offspring of faculty at the University of Chicago, and they live in a world where thinking is as instinctive as breathing. What if children in Middle America – for that matter, children in the direst straits – got a Lab School-quality education?

That's the dream of a growing number of people who are working to make preschool available to all.

From Brookline, Mass., to Beverly Hills, Calif., well-to-do parents spend upward of $15,000 a year to secure a place in creme de la creme preschools, for they have long appreciated the value of nursery schools that pique the curiosity of their offspring. At the opposite end of the social spectrum, for the last 40 years, tens of millions of 3- and 4-year-olds from families with below-poverty-line incomes have attended Head Start, the $6.8 billion federal program that delivers everything from know-your-letters drills and playground etiquette to hot meals and dental checkups.

Now middle-class families are insisting on first-rate, publicly supported prekindergartens. From magazines for parents, they have absorbed the findings of neuroscience: the first few years of a child's life offer unmatched opportunities for learning, and prekindergarten is the best investment they can make in their children's future.

Out of this understanding a movement has emerged. "I've been in the field my whole adult life," says Samuel J. Meisels, president of Chicago's Erikson Institute, a graduate school specializing in child development. "Suddenly everyone is talking about universal prekindergarten."

Still, talk is easy. Will states commit the money needed to guarantee quality or try to do preschool on the cheap? A year of good prekindergarten education costs about as much as a year of primary or secondary school, but that's still much more than most states now spend. Equally important is the kind of education – Lab School or skill and drill – that's delivered to 3- and 4-year-olds.

A third of a century ago, richard nixon vetoed legislation that would have underwritten preschools nationwide. "No communal approaches to child rearing," Nixon insisted, playing to his constituency, but how times have changed. The Census Bureau estimates that in 2003 nearly 60 percent of all eligible children were enrolled in preschool, more than double the percentage in 1980. A recent survey found that 87 percent of voters support using public money to send every child to a top-notch preschool. By more than 2 to 1, they favor investing in universal prekindergarten before improving K-12 education.

The states are getting the message. New York, Florida, Georgia and Oklahoma formally guarantee prekindergarten for all children, and about three dozen other states provide programs for poor children. More than three-quarters of a million youngsters are now in state-financed pre-K classes – that's nearly as many as are in Head Start – and their numbers keep growing. This policy change, and the deeper shift in public attitudes, is especially remarkable in an era when the prevailing aspiration is the "ownership society," not the social compact.

A generation ago, Bruce Babbitt, then the governor of Arizona, made children's issues the centerpiece of his state-of-the-state address -- and the press ridiculed him for focusing on "quiche" instead of "meat and potatoes" issues like dams and development. Today, politicians across the red-blue ideological divide are borrowing from the Babbitt playbook because they see the issue as a positive. "In another generation, preschool for all will likely be a reality," says Edward Zigler, Head Start's first director and a professor emeritus of psychology at Yale.

Quality requires money. Research shows that well-educated teachers who know how to use research-based approaches rather than winging it can be the make-or-break factor. Classes need to be small, with a teacher and an aide for no more than 20 youngsters, and there has to be vigorous outreach to parents.

But in some quarters, the sentiment persists that preschool is just a fancy term for baby-sitting. Consider what's happening in Florida. In 2002, 59 percent of the voters supported a state constitutional amendment requiring that by this fall "high quality" preschool be available to every 4-year-old. But not until last December did the Legislature provide any funds, and that delay has schools scrambling to provide for an estimated 150,000 youngsters.

The $400 million that the Legislature approved means schools will receive only $2,500 for each youngster they enroll, about a third of what Head Start spends. And while Florida has adopted tough standards for seemingly every aspect of preschool life, including the requirement that 4-year-olds be taught how to floss their teeth, enforcement will be woefully inadequate. Still, David Lawrence Jr., the former publisher of The Miami Herald who led the campaign for the amendment, describes what has transpired thus far as "an honorable start."

In other states, too, promises have not been matched by policy. New York passed legislation eight years ago that guarantees preschool for all 4-year-olds by 2002. But with Gov. George E. Pataki notably lacking enthusiasm – on several occasions he has proposed axing the program – the money has not kept pace with the mandate. As a consequence, there is space for only about a quarter of the eligible children. California's voters overwhelmingly favor universal preschool – as long as someone else pays for it, which is why a measure on next year's ballot proposes financing prekindergarten by taxing only the superrich.

"Ever since sputnik went up," recalls professor Zigler, decision makers have vacillated between emphasizing cognitive skills "and focusing on the whole child." The skill-and-drill mentality fostered by the federal No Child Left Behind Act, which represents the most ¬cent swing of the pendulum, has reached preschool. Many prekindergartens now stress reading readiness. And because there are only so any hours in a preschool day, they devote less time to encouraging creativity or motivating 4-year-olds to work and play well with others. It is in Head Start that this shift – away from social-emotional development and problem-oriented learning, toward decoding language and numbers – is most fiercely contested. The stakes are high. The outcome will not only mold Head Start but also affect the nature of states' prekindergarten initiatives.

For Wade F. Horn, assistant secretary for children and families in the Department of Health and Human Services, the rationale is simple: from kindergarten on, literacy and numeracy are the essence of what school is about, so it's vital to focus on letters and numbers in preschool.

The Bush administration professes to be agnostic about which teaching methods work best: "I don't believe in scripts for teachers or flash cards or restricting the vocabulary that teachers use in the classroom," says Dr. Horn. But program administrators know that the quickest way to teach children how to recognize letters and numbers is what's called direct instruction – what critics deride as "drill and kill." In direct instruction, children, much like chicks, are fed morsels of information by their teacher. It's an approach reminiscent of Mr. Gradgrind, the schoolmaster in Dickens's "Hard Times" – "Teach these boy and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life."

From John Dewey to Jean Piaget, educators have generally agreed that while didactic teaching has its place, small children learn mainly from interacting and not passive listening, understanding and not memorizing, reading for fun and not simply decoding. "The good news," says Deborah Stipek, dean of the School of Education at Stanford University, "is that children can be taught basic academic skills – fundamentals of reading, writing and mathematics – in a way that uses, rather than destroys, their natural desire to learn. Vocabulary can be taught by conversation, awareness of print developed through reading and talking about books and mathematics learned with games like a pretend restaurant."

Drill-and-skill is not how middle-class children got their edge, Dean Stipek says, so "why use a strategy to help poor kids catch up that didn't help middle class kids in the first place?"

Still, in this age of testing, preschool is no exception. After a 1969 Head Start evaluation seemed to show that achievement gains quickly "faded out," the program emphasized social skills rather than academics. Some centers went so far as to prohibit displaying the letters of the alphabet. But 1998 federal legislation reversed this pattern. It established new academic standards for the program, including the expectation that all Head Start children learn at least 10 letters of the alphabet.

In the last year, nearly half a million youngsters in the Head Start program have been tested, at a cost of $30 million. "Point to B," the tester might ask, or "point to nine." The range of tested skills is narrow, with a focus on reading and math readiness.

In a generally harsh critique published this spring, the Government Accountability Office notes that the Bush administration ¬ontemplates – inappropriately, in its judgment – using the test results to hold Head Start centers accountable for improving their children's scores. "While Head Start is trying to hang on to what is developmentally appropriate," says Kathy R. Thornburg, former president of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, "the testing requirements drive teachers' behavior. Kids can regurgitate what you teach them. Can these kids be social beings who want to learn or have we already squelched their creativity?"

The person at the center of this controversy, Dr. Horn, points out that the scope of the test will eventually be expanded to assess social and emotional development. But he's not troubled that Head Start teachers are emulating Mr. Gradgrind. "Sometimes teaching to the test is really important," he says. "You have to teach the alphabet by teaching the alphabet."

But that's dubious science, says Richard Rothstein of the Economic Policy Institute in an American Prospect article. "There is no evidence that memorizing alphabet letters out of context" – instead of being exposed to books – "predicts later reading skill."

Tensions among the key players came to light in June, when the first nationwide study of Head Start's impact was released. The findings were mixed. On the positive side, Head Start sharply cuts the gap between the scores of the disadvantaged and the average national scores on such preschool skills as recognition of letters, numbers and words. Head Start also increases social and emotional skills and improves the children's health. Results are especially positive for children who enter Head Start when they are 3 years old, rather than waiting another year. But a sizable reading gap remains, and the program has no effect on premath skills.

Dr. Horn's reaction was inoffensive: "While this program has some benefits for kids, it can still be improved." Sarah Greene, president of the National Head Start Association, who has often quarreled with Dr. Horn, says that "those who have resolved to trash Head Start at every turn will twist this data to their ends."

Florida has adopted high-stakes testing with a vengeance. Its 2004 legislation requires that all children be tested at the beginning of kindergarten to determine their readiness. Any preschool whose children don't perform well on the exam risks being put into receivership or losing its financing entirely. The law doesn't take into account the prekindergarteners' background, so it ignores crucial differences. By age 4, a landmark study has found, children from poor families will have heard more than 30 million fewer words than their counterparts from professionals' households. Small wonder, then, that they come to preschool well behind. These are the children who can benefit the most from a word-rich environment, but because they may do poorly on the exam, the legislation gives preschools a powerful incentive to skim off the most advantaged, leaving the neediest out in the cold.

Preschool advocates find that what's happening in Chicago is much more encouraging. Important state and city officials are ardent ¬porters of universal preschool. Gov. Rod Blagojevich was recently praised by Pre-K Now, a national advocacy group, as a "hero": he ¬ successfully pushed to increase state financing 30 percent in each of the last three years. Mayor Richard M. Daley has made the value of a preschool education a theme of his administration. "He really gets it," says Barbara Bowman, who runs Chicago's preschool program, is a founder of the Erikson Institute and has been working with young children for more than half a century. Still, Chicago has a long way to go before quality prekindergarten is a fact of life for every 3- and 4-year-old.

At their best, the state-financed preschools, which serve more than 12,000 Chicago children, offer an education that is comparable to the ¯niversity of Chicago's Lab School. To walk into Laurence Hadjas's preschool classroom in the William H. Ray Elementary School, a few .ocks from the Lab School, is to enter a world of wonders. Ms. Hadjas is a master at mixing traditional instruction with adventuring. In one corner, children are building a bridge with Legos. Seeds are beginning to sprout in the plant box. In another nook, a girl leafs through a picture book. Two boys are feeding a bottle to a doll in the doctor's office. There's a folder full of menus from neighborhood restaurants, and the prices for pizza help teach about numbers. Amid this buzzing activity, the room is a picture of order. The children have learned to take turns, to put their things away, not to mix up the pieces from different games. If I were a 3-year-old, this would be heaven.

Ray is a magnet school that attracts motivated families from miles away, as well as those from the neighborhood. The children constitute a Noah's ark of racial and ethnic diversity. "This is a developmental program," the principal, Cydney Fields, tells parents anxious about how their toddlers will fare in the testing regimen they will soon encounter. "If you want heavy-duty academics, this isn't the place." But, she adds, "it's the way of the world that kids have to test," and so the school has tempered its developmental approach.

Test scores of children at Ray Elementary School do not support the contention that children from poor families require direct skill-and-drill teaching to succeed. Certainly children need a scaffolding of language: How else can they overcome that 30-million-word deficit? How else can they expand their vocabulary beyond sad, mad or glad? But interactive teaching is the best way to do this, Professor Bowman says, and she has research on her side. Several major studies show that when preschool children from poor backgrounds are taught in a problem-oriented way, they do as well academically as those who have been taught mainly by skill-and-drill. They are also more motivated to learn, and later, as teenagers, they're less likely to run afoul of the law.

The Lorraine Hansberry Child-Parent Center, attached to the Daniel Webster School, is just a few miles but a social light-year from Ray Elementary. Situated in a dicey neighborhood on Chicago's West Side, it has no hope of attracting students from afar. More than 90 percent of the children are black, most come from poor families and many are being raised by a single parent. Elsewhere, these children might already be lost, but here they seem to thrive.

For nearly 40 years, the Chicago public school system has been operating Child-Parent Centers like Hansberry in some of the city's poorest neighborhoods. These centers, which over the years have enrolled more than 100,000 youngsters, educate children from preschool through third grade in small classrooms with well-trained teachers. They bring parents, and sometimes grandparents, into the school, provide instruction in everything from cooking to computers – and enlist them as allies in their children's education.

There's considerable variation in pedagogy among the Child-Parent Centers, and Hansberry stresses direct instruction. Its textbooks teach reading by repeating a limited number of words in successive lessons, adding a few new words with each lesson. In Lilian McAfee-Jackson's preschool classroom, the children are singing the alphabet song: "Now I know my ABC's, I'm as happy as I can be."

'We have a great track record," says Sonia Griffin, longtime manager of the early childhood program. "Our children are succeeding, and not just in school." It's essential that children learn to read, of course, and at Hansberry, as elsewhere, the direct instruction technique has improved test scores in the early grades.

Yet if children are going to realize their potential, they need freedom to explore. A 2004 study of the Child-Parent Centers, carried out by Arthur Reynolds, a professor of social work, and his colleagues at the University of Wisconsin, reaches that conclusion. While preschoolers whose teachers took a didactic approach did better at the end of kindergarten, the reverse was true later on. Children who were in preschool classrooms that emphasized child-initiated learning had higher eighth-grade reading scores and higher rates of high school graduation. Professor Reynolds's research shows astonishing long-term effects for the program as a whole. Compared with youngsters who attended typical preschools like Head Start, children who went to the Child-Parent Centers in the early 1980's were nearly 30 percent more likely to have graduated from high school and 40 percent less likely to have repeated a grade.

The latest results, yet to be published, show that they are significantly more likely to have enrolled in a four-year college and significantly less likely to have seen the inside of a jail.

What makes these findings especially significant is that this is a large, publicly run program with a long track record. It's a program that could be adopted anywhere. But despite the school district's commitment to preschool, Chicago is having a hard time supporting it. It costs about $8,000 a year for a child to attend a Child-Parent Center. When measured against the results, that's an amazing bargain – for every dollar invested, there's a $7.10 return to society, according to the Reynolds study. Yet most preschool models are cheaper, and public financing is scarce.

"These centers should be a model for the city," Professor Bowman says, "but when fewer than half of all eligible low-income kids have any program at all, it's a tough call." Citing costs, Chicago has closed some of the centers.

The price tag for partly subsidized, year-round centers for children from birth to age 5 is $50 billion, according to a recent Brookings Institution estimate. If these centers were free for everyone, the cost would nearly triple. Such public generosity seems inconceivable, but it's how things are done in France, where almost every child attends an ecole maternelle and the poorest children get the most support, including the best teachers. Imagine the Lab School changing places with Hansberry.

Nearly a century ago, John Dewey declared that we "should want for every child what a good and wise parent wants for his child," and "anything else is unlovely and undermines democracy." Surely this is true of preschool.

Strategic Plan
for
OUTREACH AND SUCCESS
in support of
CLOSING THE GAPS BY 2015

THE ROADMAP TO A COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE

Division of Outreach and Success
Participation and Success
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

July 2005

PARTICIPATION AND SUCCESS GOALS*
CLOSING THE GAPS BY 2015
The Texas Higher Education Plan

GOAL 1: CLOSE THE GAPS IN PARTICIPATION

By 2015, close the gaps in participation rates across Texas to add 500,000 more students.

STRATEGIES FOR THE STATE

I. Make the Recommended High School Program (college-preparatory courses) the standard curriculum in Texas public high schools, and make it a minimum requirement for admission to Texas public colleges and universities by 2008.

II. Recruit, prepare and retain additional well-qualified educators for elementary and secondary schools.

III. Ensure that all students and their parents understand the benefits of higher education, and the necessary steps to prepare academically and financially for college.

- Carry out a sustained statewide public awareness campaign on the value of a college education, the preparation required, and financial aid available; and

- Establish coordinated P-16+ informational, motivational and academic programs to prepare students for college.

IV. Establish an affordability policy that ensures students are able to participate and succeed in higher education by:

- Providing grants and scholarships to cover tuition, fees and books for every student with financial need;

- Setting tuition and fees in a manner that closes gaps in participation and success; and

- Establishing incentives that increase affordability through academic and administrative efficiencies in the higher education system.
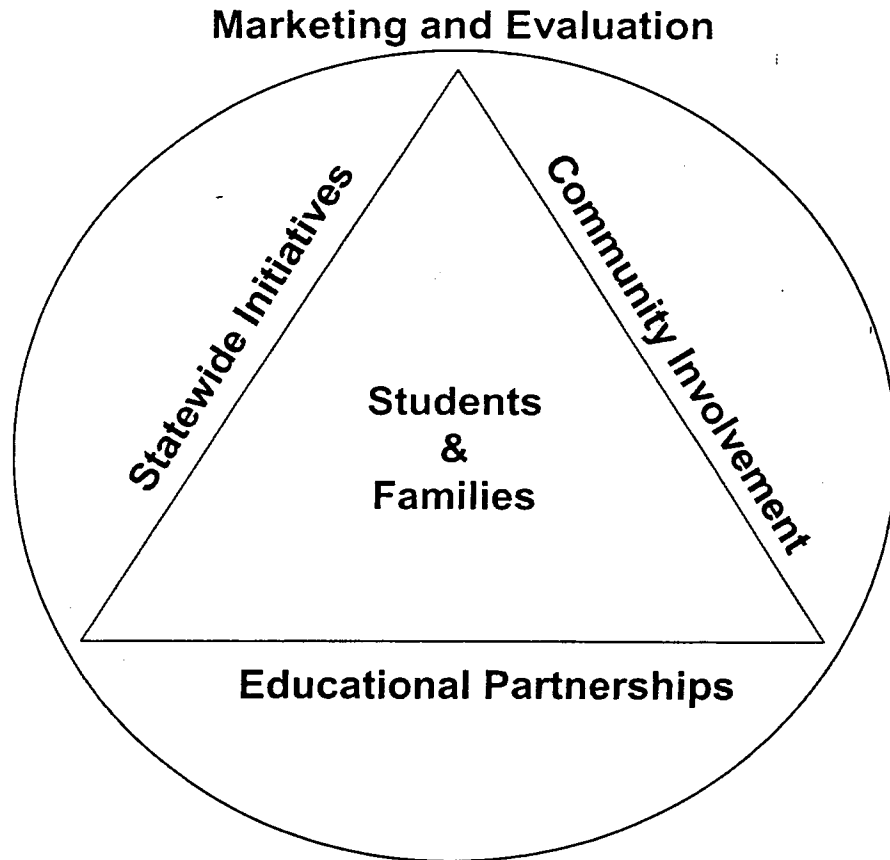
GOAL 2: CLOSE THE GAPS IN SUCCESS

By 2015, increase by 50 percent the number of degrees, certificates and other identifiable student successes from high quality programs.

STRATEGIES FOR THE STATE

I.   Focus college and university efforts on increasing graduates in education, engineering, computer science, math, physical science, allied health, nursing and other critical fields.

II.   Carry out the state's Uniform Recruitment and Retention Strategy and other efforts aimed at making college and university enrollment and graduation reflect the population of Texas.

III.   Fund colleges and universities to reward increases in retention and graduation from high quality programs.

IV.   Create incentives and requirements for seamless student transitions among high schools, community and technical colleges, universities and health-related institutions.

V.   Make partnerships and collaborations between the business community and higher education institutions a part of the culture of these organizations.

* The goals as stated in this document reflect the current goals of *Closing the Gaps by 2015.*

THE ROADMAP TO A COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE

Marketing and Evaluation

Statewide Initiatives

Community Involvement

Students
&
Families

Educational Partnerships

Go
Education. Go Get It.

THE ROADMAP TO A COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE

MISSION

To create and sustain a college-going culture in Texas that prepares all students for the academic rigor and discipline needed to enter and successfully participate in college.

INTRODUCTION

The state's higher education plan, *Closing the Gaps by 2015*, establishes goals, targets, and strategies for improving student participation and success in college. As part of the plan's strategies, over the past four years, the Coordinating Board (Board) initiated and implemented a College for Texans campaign designed to increase successful college participation by Texas students. The goal was to increase by 500,000 the number of new students who entered Texas colleges and universities, particularly focusing on the 300,000 students who were not expected to attend if participation rates did not change. Activities undertaken in the past focused on applying for financial aid, on raising awareness of the economic advantages of a college education, on involving local community groups in the campaign's activities, and on creating Go Centers on high school campuses, which were designed to assist students in understanding the college application process.

During the spring of 2005, staff conducted a review of the actions undertaken thus far and accumulated as much data as possible about the future direction of the campaign and outreach initiatives. Staff concluded that it is time to modify the direction of the initiatives.

During the previous four years, the Board's efforts have focused primarily on the activities of the College for Texans Campaign. This Roadmap includes campaign-related efforts, but its aim is broader, recognizing that systemic action must be taken if the state is to achieve the goals of Closing the Gaps. This systemic action will take the form of creating a college-going culture. To accomplish this objective, the Board will focus its efforts on targeted areas of the state that have large numbers of students not successfully completing postsecondary education.

While the Board will coordinate activities relating to outreach, it also will make a concerted effort to "decentralize" its activities. The Board can not meet the goal on its own—nor should it have to. The need to have more Texans participating in higher education is a statewide need and needs statewide support. The Board now must build capacity at the regional and local levels if students are going to receive the sustained, ongoing support they need to meet their educational goals. Texas colleges and universities and their public school partners must be the vanguard of this initiative. Statewide agencies and associations that touch the lives of parents and students also must be committed to the goal of creating a college-going culture in Texas. In addition to creating new partnerships, the Board must strengthen its links to existing agencies and foundations that already are working to address the broader issues of successful college participation in Texas.

Using this Roadmap, the staff anticipates building on the support provided through Legislative appropriations and through individual, foundation, and corporate contributions to the College for all Texans Foundation. The Coordinating Board staff will work more closely with the Foundation to develop pilot projects and initiatives that foster innovative approaches to assist students and their parents, and meet their educational goals, creating a college-going culture, whereby each student expects to attend college and prepares to be successful, is the means to build a strong future for Texas.

STRATEGY 1
EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Create/strengthen strong ongoing partnerships between local school districts and institutions of higher education.
- Create new or support existing regional P-16 Councils to develop, implement, and sustain a college-going culture in their communities.
- Provide appropriate data to regional P-16 Councils to assist in the development of a plan of action that promotes high student achievement.
- Strengthen regional P-16 Councils by creating and funding a series of initiatives that encourage collaborative action at the local level.

STRATEGY 2
COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

Create, develop, and sustain a strong commitment to a college-going culture within local communities.
- Create new or support existing Community Councils to develop, implement, and sustain a college-going culture in their communities.
- Provide appropriate data to Community Councils to assist in the development of a plan of action that promotes high student achievement.
- Strengthen Community Councils by creating and funding a series of initiatives that encourage collaborative action at the local level.

STRATEGY 3
STATEWIDE INITIATIVES

Build strong relationships among state agencies and statewide organizations in order to create support for the mission.
- Create a State Advisory Council to develop, implement, and sustain a college-going culture throughout the state.
- Provide appropriate data to the State Advisory Council to assist in the development of policy statements to build support for the Mission among each entity's membership.
- Support the State Advisory Council by creating and funding a series of initiatives that encourage collaborative action at the local level.

STRATEGY 4
MARKETING AND EVALUATION

Market and evaluate outreach activities and initiatives with respect to Educational Partnerships, Community Involvement, and Statewide Initiatives.
- Implement a sustained statewide public awareness campaign to achieve the Participation Goal of *Closing the Gaps by 2015.*
- Evaluate outreach Initiatives to determine progress made and identify needed improvements to the Objectives and Actions for achieving the Participation goal of *Closing the Gaps by 2015.*

Colleges for Texans Targeted Areas

EXPLANATION OF ROADMAP ACTIVITIES

Purpose of the Roadmap: The Roadmap is the strategic guide for achieving the College for Texans (CFT) mission of creating a college-going culture in Texas by enlisting those who will accomplish the mission--local communities. It is designed to foster and enhance relationships between and actions by all of the "players" in education. By working together with local chapters of statewide associations, by building strong partnerships among local educational institutions, and by developing supportive community activity, CFT initiatives will increase involvement in and commitment to a college-going culture by parents and students. The goal is to build such a strong foundation in the community that the effort will be sustained long after 2015.

Selection of the Target Areas: CFT activities will be focused on three areas of the state: the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex, the Gulf Coast area, including Houston, and South Texas. These three target areas include the largest percentages of students who do not successfully participate in postsecondary opportunities. By concentrating on those areas, the Coordinating Board (CB) can use limited resources more effectively.

Responsibilities of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (CB) Program Directors: CB Program Directors oversee statewide activities related to the CFT initiative and are accountable for the development of strong regional networks. Each Program Director is responsible for one of the CB target areas, and within these areas is responsible for working with the regional P-16 Field Specialist to creating a college-going culture as evidenced by significant increases in the college-going rate at targeted campuses. These campuses are selected by the CB. Additionally, CB Program Directors develop materials for statewide dissemination, participate in local P-16 and community councils in their target areas, and work with statewide organizations and agencies to promote a consistent message on a college-going culture throughout Texas.

Purpose of the Statewide Advisory Council: The State Advisory Council is composed of executive directors or their designees at state associations or agencies that impact the health or educational services of students and families. The Council will collaborate on policy statements that support the College for Texans mission and the creation of a college-going culture in local communities. Adoption of policy statements by the Council will promote a unified voice on the mission and hasten its exposure through local chapters of the statewide agencies and associations. Examples of task force membership would include representatives from the Texas Association of Secondary School Principals, Texas Association for Community Colleges, Independent Colleges of Texas, etc. The Commissioner of Higher Education appoints members to the Council.

Purpose of the Regional P-16 Councils: Regional P-16 Councils are composed of representatives of the public and higher education institutions in a specific area. The councils' purpose is to establish a coordinated plan of action that supports the College for Texans mission of creating a college-going culture within member institutions. Activities in the plan should provide an articulated approach toward assisting and supporting students' efforts to participate and succeed in postsecondary education. These activities include academic developmental programs, financial aid awareness, and career counseling options.

Purpose of the Community Councils: Community councils are composed of representatives from the regional P-16 Council as well as businesses, media, public health, and community representatives that are committed to creating a college-going culture within their local area. Its plan of action supports that of the regional P-16 councils and provides important support structures that enhance student opportunities to succeed in postsecondary education. These activities include scholarships, promotional campaigns, and incentives or recognition awards for high academic performance.

Purpose of the P-16 Field Specialists: Through the use of P-16 Field Specialists, the CB will oversee and offer assistance to the P-16 and Community Councils in their target area. This support includes: participation in all meetings of the councils, preparation of reports on progress made within the target areas, and development and dissemination of materials for use by councils in their specific venue. Additionally, the P-16 Field Specialists serve as mentors to target campuses selected by CB staff. Support will also include development of a Go Center on or near each campus; professional development and workshops for counselors and teachers on college preparation and career awareness; attendance at quarterly P-16 Field Specialist meetings.

Selection of Targeted Campuses: By reviewing various criteria including current college-going rates, student demographics, and TAKS scores, the CB has designated high school campuses throughout the state as targeted campuses. Like the targeted areas, these campuses will be the focus of efforts by both P-16 Field Specialists and Community Councils.

Identification of the HB 400 Schools: The HB 400 schools are those high school campuses that for any two consecutive years of the last five years fall into the lowest 10 percent in the state in the percentage of students graduating from high school and enrolling for the following academic year in a college or university. (House Bill 400, 77th Texas Legislature, 2001, requires that each of the schools partner with a local college or university and develop a plan to increase the college-going ratio of its students.)

Purpose of the Student Success Advisory Committee: The Student Success Advisory Committee serves as an advisory committee to the Commissioner of Higher Education (previously called the Transfer Issues Advisory Committee). The scope and membership of the Student Success Advisory Committee will be broadened to address all issues related to student success including retention, developmental education, transfer, and graduation.

Purpose of the Formula Advisory Committees: There are three separate advisory committees to the Coordinating Board representing the public universities, public two-year colleges, and public health-related institutions which develop formula funding recommendations for the Commissioner of Higher Education and the Coordinating Board. In April prior to the legislative session, the advisory committee formula recommendations are considered by the Board. The Board's recommendations are submitted to the Legislative Budget Board and Governor for use in making appropriations recommendations to the legislature.

Purpose of the Ambassador Programs: These programs, which will be initiated in 2005-06 at the Coordinating Board and the Texas Education Agency, provide recognition for employees who give their time to inform public school staff and students about college and financial aid awareness, or who conduct campus visits to colleges and

universities as part of their work assignment. Ambassadors must attend training sessions sponsored by Board staff and will receive materials that may be used as handouts or part of a presentation. If the program is successful, it will serve as a model for state associations and organizations that participate on the State Advisory Council.

STRATEGY 1
EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Road Map Strategy	Objectives	Actions

Create/strengthen strong ongoing partnerships between local school districts and institutions of higher education –
 	
• Create new or support existing Regional P-16 Councils to develop, implement, and sustain a college-going culture in their communities.
 	
• Provide appropriate data to Regional P-16 Councils to assist in the development of a plan of action that promotes high student achievement.
 	
• Strengthen Regional P-16 Councils by creating and funding a series of initiatives that encourage collaborative action at the local level.
	1. Restructure the operations of Coordinating Board's Outreach Initiatives unit to assure that it supports regional efforts to create a college-going culture within each public school.	• Update annually the list of target high schools and HB 400 schools.
		
		• Review efforts with target high school campuses on an ongoing basis and determine most effective practices.
		
		• Redefine Program Directors responsibilities to include:
		  o Overseeing work of P-16 Field Specialists (FS);
		  o Working with State Advisory Council to assure support for regional efforts;
		  o Assisting with the development of grant applications for the CFAT;
		  o Providing latest research, both Texas and national, on successful practices;
		  o Highlighting best practices through newsletters, web, etc., and
		  o Research and sharing best practices.

	2. Develop regional expertise by creating or strengthening/refocusing existing consortia that support the Roadmap mission and the goals and objectives of *Closing the Gaps by 2015*.	• Create full-time P-16 Field Specialists for three targeted areas of the state (Metro-3, GC-4, SoTx-5)
		
		• Hire P-16 FS with primary responsibilities that include:
		  o Providing ongoing assistance and support for targeted schools as determined by CB Program Directors;
		  o Establishing/supporting P-16 and Community Councils;
		  o Developing/supporting regional plans that support a college-going culture and participation in respective regions; and
		  o Attending quarterly meetings in Austin, as well as monthly telephone/video conferences to track progress.

	3. Increase outreach activities with IHEs and ISDs that further the goals and objectives of *Closing the Gaps by 2015*.	• Develop P-16 Council regional plans that detail how a college-going culture in every public school and IHE will be created with educational institutions in the respective area. Plans will include: o MS/HS/IHE Bridging programs to assure students start school year on

		grade level; ○ Collaborative professional development models that support better understanding of what ISD and IHE faculty need to support high academic expectations; and ○ Joint commitment to supporting college-going culture and participation. • Work with ISDs and IHEs to increase college credit opportunities through dual credit, early admission, College Board Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Tech-Prep. • Update FACTS CD and distribute. • Work with ISDs to design, print and distribute grade-appropriate bulletin boards for each classroom helping to create a college-going culture. • Create class activities in partnership with TEA and ISDs for each grade level to deliver the college-going message in the classroom as manifested in events such as College Awareness Week.
	4. Identify and implement general strategies to achieve Success targets identified in *Closing the Gaps by 2015*.	• Provide incentives for Texas public colleges and universities to improve developmental education, retention, and transfer by creating vertical teams of faculty by discipline to align curriculum from high school through baccalaureate programs.
	5. Identify the causes of student attrition from freshman to sophomore levels and sophomore to junior levels at public colleges and universities.	• Collaborate with Colleges of Education, Colleges of Business, and/or Colleges of Arts and Sciences during 2006-07 to examine the student drop-out rates to determine when and why students drop-out between the freshman and sophomore year and between the sophomore and junior year. • Review of retention data of Texas public colleges and universities: ○ determine which institutions have highest and lowest retention rates freshman to sophomore and sophomore to junior years; ○ survey institutions with retention rates above XX percent (to be determined after review of data) and create linkages with peer institutions with lowest retention rates; ○ create matrix of best practices based on effective, research-based retention programs; and ○ disseminate matrix to enrollment management directors at institutions

		via the website. (NOTE: The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and Tom Scott with the University of Texas at San Antonio, have a research project currently underway that may provide this information.) • Use the Student Success Advisory Committee to work with Texas public colleges and universities in targeted regions with highest attrition rates from freshman to sophomore and sophomore to junior years to develop specific retention activities to include, but not limited to: o increasing faculty advising functions and provide appropriate training; o re-recruiting students who have dropped out; o implementing "easy re-admit" policies; o integrating learning communities and service learning into the curriculum; and o identify best practices and make available.
	6. Identify and address the causes of low transfer rates from public two-year colleges to public universities.	• Support the organization of vertical teams of university and community college faculty at the local level to review lower-division transfer courses by discipline to help ensure student success upon transfer. • Work with public colleges and universities in targeted regions with the lowest transfer rates to develop specific transfer activities to include, but not limited to: o a degree audit program, if not already available; and o focus collaboration between "feeder" community colleges and receiving universities, especially regional universities in targeted regions.
	7. Identify the extent of students seeking an associate's degree who drop-out/stop-out and develop action plans as appropriate.	• Develop strategies for encouraging higher education students who complete 45 or more hours to return to higher education. • Analyze data on students who have completed 60 or more hours without degree attainment to determine how close degree attainment is. Collaborate with Student Success Advisory Committee and institutions with highest number of students in this category to develop strategies to promote graduation of these students.
	8. Identify the extent of students seeking a bachelor's degree who drop-out/stop-out and develop action plans as appropriate.	• Work with the Student Success Advisory Committee and institutions to develop strategies for encouraging higher education students who complete their junior year to return to higher education.

		• Identify students who have completed 120 or more hours without degree attainment to determine how close degree attainment is – work with Student Success Advisory Committee and institutions with highest number of students in this category to develop strategies to promote graduation of these students.

STRATEGY 2
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Road Map Strategy	Objectives	Actions

Create, develop, and sustain a strong commitment to a college-going culture within local communities –
 	
 • Create new or support existing Community Councils to develop, implement, and sustain a college-going culture in their communities.
 	
 • Provide appropriate data to Community Councils to assist in the development of a plan of action that promotes high student achievement.
 	
 • Strengthen Community Councils by creating and funding a series of initiatives that encourage collaborative action at the local level.
	1. Develop community expertise by creating Community Councils in targeted areas that support the Roadmap mission and the goals and objectives of *CTG2015*.	1. P-16 FS will support or create Community Councils that develop a regional plan for creating a college-going culture in its respective area.
		Membership on each Community council will include civic and business leaders as well as one ISD and IHE representative from regional P-16 Council and media reps.
		Plans will include:
		  o Activities reflecting how community organizations will collaborate with educational institutions to support high academic expectations for all students;
		  o Ways in which civic orgs. and businesses can reward and honor students who attain high academic expectations and successfully attend college;
		  o Initiatives that provide student scholarships;
		  o Strategies that encourage employees to go back to college; and
		  o Recommendations for how civic orgs and businesses will support parent and community awareness programs to reinforce importance of college-going plans.

STRATEGY 3
STATEWIDE INITIATIVES

Road Map Strategy	Objectives	Actions

Build strong relationships among state agencies and statewide organizations in order to create support for the mission -
 	
• Create a State Advisory Council to develop, implement, and sustain a college-going culture throughout the state.
 	
• Provide appropriate research and data to the Advisory Council to assist in the development of policy statement.
 	
• Support the statewide advisory council by creating and funding a series of initiatives that encourage collaborative action at the local level.
	1. Increase collaboration between the Coordinating Board's Division of Outreach and Success and the Texas Education Agency (TEA).	• Participate actively in Early College HS Pilot Programs with TEA.
		
		• Analyze student performance on 10th grade college readiness indicators to develop recommendations for teacher pre-service/in-service training.
		
		• Work with the Commissioner of Education, TEA, and local ISDs to make the senior year of high school more relevant.
		
		• Review research provided by CB staff on best practices and encourage incentive funding for expansion of such activities.
		
		• Coordinate activities with TEA and its P-16 Division to assure coordinated action on achieving the Roadmap mission and the goals and objectives of *CTG2015*:
		  o Develop joint plan to address critical retention gaps throughout the P-16 continuum;
		  o Develop teacher/counselor workshop modules that address the mandate on college awareness information to middle school students and support TEA's dissemination efforts of the modules;
		  o Coordinate information dissemination to ISDs about Outreach activities and resources available to support elementary, middle, and high school efforts;
		  o Work with P-16 Division at TEA to determine other federal and state projects that can be worked on collaboratively; and
		  o Highlight college readiness standards for the TAKS exams.
		
		• Work with TEA and test company to include in score reports to parents for 10th and 11th grade students, the student's status in reading, writing, and mathematics for enrollment in dual credit courses and for college readiness;
		
		• Work with TEA on activities for high school seniors who have not achieved the 11th grade TAKS college-readiness standard to become college-ready; and
		
		• Collaborate with adult basic education

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		staff (Harris County Department of Education) to implement initiatives in support of the Roadmap mission and the goals and objectives of *CTG2015*.
		• Work with TEA to create its own College Ambassadors Program.
		• Coordinate joint funded project with TEA and the Coordinating Board, issue an RFP for the implementation of the Texas Online Preparation for College Admission Test (TOPCAT), a free online ACT/SAT test preparation package to be marketed to appropriate student audiences. Formal evaluation is planned.
		• Research pre-packaged web-based tools that allow students, parents, counselors, and teachers to monitor steps to college preparedness.
	2. Engage staff throughout the Coordinating Board to support Roadmap mission and the goals and objectives of *Closing the Gaps by 2015 (CTG2015)*.	• Hold quarterly meetings of CB staff to review Outreach activities, products, and materials to recommend ways in which the Roadmap mission and the goals and objectives of *CTG2015* can be incorporated into other agency activities, and to support ongoing improvements in Outreach activities. • Develop Coordinating Board "Ambassador Program" that enables staff to provide sessions and use materials to support Roadmap mission and the goals and objectives of *CTG2015* at alma maters, local community groups, or other venues. • Work closely with Coordinating Board Tech-Prep staff to involve both high schools and community colleges in joint college enrollment activities. • Ensure that future Outreach activities will be coordinated, streamlined, and research-based, evaluated and coordinated between CB divisions.
	3. Seek the assistance of the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) in support of Outreach activities and initiatives.	• Work with TWC to place a modified Go Center in each TWC location statewide. • Encourage unemployed workers with less than a high school education to pursue a GED and then enroll in community/technical colleges. Work with TWC and local workforce development boards to encourage current workers to attend community/technical colleges part time to work towards an associate degree and then transfer.

| | 5. Develop strong relationships with state agencies, associations, and foundations in order to expand awareness and commitment to the Roadmap mission and goals and objectives of *Closing the Gaps by 2015*. | • Expand awareness of the Roadmap mission and the goals and objectives of *CTG2015*.
  o Create monthly newsletter on Outreach activity and successes.
  o Review legislation and policies that support and/or conflict with Outreach activities.
  o Propose and develop materials that can support other initiatives with other agencies.
  o Develop leadership models/sessions for regional councils to use at their consortia meetings on variety of Outreach Initiatives.
  o Develop monthly activities to expand understanding of research and success in the field.

• Develop partnerships with statewide agencies, NGOs, and associations that support Roadmap mission and the goals and objectives of *CTG2015*:
  o Identify statewide associations that will work with Outreach activities and initiatives on increasing student participation in college;
  o Begin ongoing communication with Education Service Center directors to assure communication flow to school districts; and
  o Work with Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation on issues related to financial aid and college outreach. |
| | 6. Identify and implement general strategies to achieve Success targets as identified in *Closing the Gaps by 2015*. | • Broadening of the charge of the Transfer Issues Advisory Committee and create the Student Success Advisory Committee with the task of advising the Coordinating Board and staff concerning the following:
  o developmental education;
  o retention;
  o transfer; and
  o graduation, especially in critical fields.

• Make presentation to the Transfer Issues Advisory Committee to garner support for the broadened mission.

• Establish criteria for designating "Commissioner's Colleges" and "Commissioner's Universities" for colleges and universities that commit to instituting research-based student success programs:
  o identify 5-8 institutional markers from review of literature on developmental education, retention, and/or transfer;
  o institutional commitment to come from the highest level – chancellor or president;
  o willingness to begin implementation |

		as early as fall 2006; ○ commitment to grant writing collaboration with Coordinating Board; and ○ identify grant opportunities and facilitate grant writing efforts to secure special funding for Commissioner's Colleges and Commissioner's Universities. • Host regional workshops targeted to governing boards, chancellors, presidents, provosts, chief academic officers, faculty representatives, and other academic leaders to address retention from an academic perspective. For FY2006, this would include the following workshops and/or meetings: ○ Summer and fall 2005: Regional meeting in Houston area, Dallas area, or South Texas to focus on retention from an academic perspective; ○ October 10, 2005: Annual Governing Board meeting hosted by Coordinating Board; ○ October 26, 2005: Coordinating Board meeting Major Policy Issue discussion; ○ November 2005: Statewide meeting to focus on developmental education; and ○ TBA: State-level meeting to focus on retention as an academic issue. • Refine developmental education and retention components to be addressed by each college and university in its Uniform Recruitment and Retention Strategies plan to include short term objectives and action plans addressed in this document. • Review national and state research on student success including, but not limited to, developmental education (to include accelerated schools/accelerated learning) and retention. • Develop an RFP for FYP 2006 to engage universities in developing centers of excellence for developmental education that would include conducting appropriate research and creating masters and doctoral programs for developmental educators. • Work with the Texas Community College Teacher Association on two projects: ○ urging select universities to provide good professional development for college and university developmental educators that will help them understand the needs of, and effective techniques for, adult

		learners; and
		
		o supporting college developmental educators, college academic faculty, and high school teachers in a combined effort to align the curriculum and make better use of the senior year.
		
		• Provide information to institutions on developmental education, retention, and transfer best practices by appropriate means including, but not limited to, the Coordinating Board's annual Star Awards, regional and state-level workshops and conferences, and a webpage dedicated to such best practices.
		
		• Refine the RFP components for First Generation federal funds to ensure stipends and other activities support the retention and transfer of freshmen to the sophomore level and sophomores to the junior level.
		
		• Identify and highlight national programs, through the regional and state-level workshops and conferences and other appropriate forums, that promote student success including, but not limited to:
		  o *Achieving the Dream* [Lumina Foundation for Education];
		  o Bridges to Opportunity project [Ford Foundation];
		  o Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE);
		  o Building Engagement and Attainment for Minority Students (BEAMS) project [NSSE and Lumina Foundation for Education]; and
		  o Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year project [National Resource Center and the Policy Center for the First Year of College].
		
		• Combine the Recruitment and Retention Conference with Seamless Transitions Conference and narrow focus to student success issues supported by proven practice and research.

	7. Identify the causes of student attrition from freshman to sophomore levels and sophomore to junior levels at public colleges and universities.	• Broaden the charge and activities of the Student Success Advisory Committee on issues related to retention specifically from the freshman to sophomore year and the sophomore to junior year at public two-year and four-year institutions and make appropriate recommendations to the Commissioner and the Board for implementation of retention activities statewide.
	8. Identify and address the	• Transfer data of Texas public colleges

| | causes of low transfer rates from public two-year colleges to public universities. | and universities in order to:
   o determine which institutions have highest and lowest transfer rates;
   o survey institutions with transfer rates above XX percent (to be determined after review of data) and create linkages with peer institutions with lowest transfer rates; and
   o create matrix of best practices based on effective, research-based transfer programs.

• Analyze the success of the Houston Community College System transfer pilot and if successful, encourage replication across the state.

• Work with Board's Formula Advisory Committees on providing financial incentives for:
   o colleges or universities to re-recruit students who have not completed an associate's or baccalaureate degree; and
   o universities to provide easy transfer of drop-outs/stop-outs to component institutions within a system. |
| | 9. Identify and encourage replication of successful developmental education programs/activities across the state. | • Review, analyze, and publish findings of developmental education data from Texas public colleges and universities to determine which institutions successfully:
   o remediate students out of developmental education courses and/or activities into gateway courses;
   o retain remediated students from freshman to sophomore courses; and
   o graduate remediated students from certificate, associate, and baccalaureate degree programs.

• Analyze and report on Phase II of the math developmental education study to determine where successes are occurring and work with Texas public colleges and universities to develop appropriate activities and programs to increase student completion rates

• Survey Texas public colleges and universities to determine effectiveness of TASP policies and practices as compared to TSI policies and practices for use in identifying statewide deficiencies as well as "best practices" and determine appropriate next steps to improve practices. Recommendations for improving developmental education practices and policies as result of study:
   o develop strategies to reverse the trend statewide showing decreases |

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		for academic advising activities at colleges and universities from fall 2000 to fall 2004.
		• Work with TEA to determine high schools with the lowest and highest production rates of students requiring developmental education to identify opportunities for reducing the need for developmental education.
		• Determine the effectiveness of combining the Developmental Education Plans into the Uniform Recruitment and Retention Strategies Plans of each college and university to eliminate unnecessary duplication.

STRATEGY 4
MARKETING AND EVALUATION

Road Map Strategy	Objectives	Actions

Market and evaluate outreach activities and initiatives with respect to Educational Partnerships, Community Involvement, and Statewide Initiatives.
 	
• Implement a sustained statewide public awareness campaign to achieve the Participation Goal of *CTG2015.*
 	
• Evaluate outreach Initiatives to determine progress made and identify needed improvements to the Objectives and Actions for achieving the Participation goal of *CTG2015.*
	1. Evaluate all outreach activities and initiatives and modify as needed.	• Develop RFP for evaluation of key components of all outreach activities and initiatives, including:
		   o Impact of Go Centers on supporting achievement of the Roadmap mission and the goals and objectives of *CTG2015;*
		   o Efficacy of media campaign; and
		   o Impact of regional consortia on building awareness of all outreach activities and initiatives.

	2. Develop and implement an evaluation plan for Field Specialists.	TBA
	3. Receive ongoing updates regarding formative evaluation findings.	TBA
	4. Create a dynamic, multi-media marketing campaign that supports the efforts of regional and statewide organizations at achieving the goals and targets of *Closing the Gaps by 2015.*	• Develop a multimedia marketing three-year plan that prioritizes what materials will best address the needs of the all outreach activities and initiatives and have the greatest impact in achieving the Roadmap mission and the goals and objectives of *CTG2015,* including: o Create a three-year plan that indicates what groups Outreach Initiatives staff should work with on developing, disseminating, and assessing success of media developed to address targets.

		○ Develop an RFP for a consulting firm that will include: ■ Create focus groups to review draft materials and determine appropriateness for target audiences of materials. - Recommend venues and appropriate co-sponsors for media development and dissemination. - Produce all published materials in both Spanish and English. - Redesign College for Texans website. - Expand message included in materials available for Go Centers and other venues. - Review input from Coordinating Board and TEA staff on agency priorities and research on targeted populations of outreach activities. - Develop and mail Governor's letter to 8th, 10th, and 12th graders annually. - Promote Financial Aid Awareness Month to include telethons. - Create and promote College Awareness Week. - Develop specific outreach materials and activities for First Gen students. - Develop brochures, Public Service Announcements (PSA's) and other materials that address, as examples: ○ Needs and concerns of students from generational poverty, including issues related to family responsibilities, responsibilities to community and responsibilities to self and others; ○ Value of community college options, emphasizing the appeal of an associates degree both in career choices and to 4-year institutions; ○ Importance of continuing College Tech-Prep program at partner community colleges; ○ "Go Back and Get It" for students who graduated from high school in last four years; and ○ Develop materials for high school dropouts to encourage them to seek GED. - Develop and disseminate targeted communication from Commissioner to specific audiences.

		• Create mobile Go Centers including both wheeled and portable kiosks for use in malls, at community centers and local events.
		
		• Create review group to suggest print and video materials for consideration for other groups to use.
		
		• Create bi-lingual insert for newspapers.
		
		• Develop "Education Go Back and Get It" materials
		
		• Scan available materials created by other organizations to determine those that support the Roadmap mission and the goals and objectives of *CTG2015* and that are appropriate for targeted audiences.
		   o Through focus groups or an advisory group of target audiences, review print and video materials for consideration.
		   o Correspond with those entities with materials that will support the Roadmap mission and the goals and objectives of *CTG2015* to determine the possibility of co-branding by Coordinating Board.