

High Schools That Work

September 2008



What is *High Schools That Work*?

- Initiative of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) begun in 1986 to raise achievement of career and technical students
- Key practices culled from the best reform efforts in the country at that time
- Now over 1100 high schools in 32 states
- MA joined in 1995 with 11 sites; over 40 different MA schools have participated
- Currently 10 sites

High Schools That Work

Why Massachusetts Joined

- Goals and key practices aligned with Education Reform goals
- We were looking for a school restructuring model that worked for vocational technical schools and comprehensive high schools with career and technical programs
- Whole school reform - not just career and technical education
- We liked their use of data to measure the success of improvement efforts

National Review of Reform Models

- American Institute for Research, under contract from 5 educational organizations (AASA, AFT, NEA, NASSP, NAESP) analyzed 24 reform models and found that *HSTW* was the only secondary model that could document positive effects on student achievement





Mission

- The mission of HSTW is to improve the academic and technical achievement of career bound students by implementing 10 key practices that look at what is taught, how it is taught, what is expected of students, and how teachers work with each other, with parents and with the community.

High Schools That Work Goals

- Increase the math, science, communication, problem-solving, and technical competencies and the application of learning for career-bound students to the national student average
- Blend the essential content of traditional college prep - math, science and language arts - with quality vocational & technical studies by creating conditions that support school leaders, teachers and counselors in carrying out the key practices



HSTW Key Practices

- Setting higher expectations and getting career bound students to meet them
- Increasing access to challenging career tech studies
- Academic studies that teach the essential content from college prep through functional and applied strategies
- Program of studies including upgraded academic core and career major

HSTW Key Practices

- Structured system of work-based and school-based learning
- Organizational structure and schedule that allows academic and vocational technical teachers to work together
- Each student actively engaged in the learning process

HSTW Key Practices

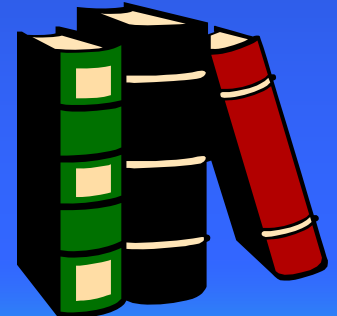
- Involving each student and his/her parent(s) in career guidance and an individualized advising system
- Structured system of extra help
- Keeping score by using student assessment and program evaluation data for continuous improvement

HSTW Elements for Success

- Organizational structure that allows involvement of whole faculty in decision-making for improvement
 - site committee
 - subcommittees for curriculum, professional development, guidance and public information, evaluation
 - site coordinator or co-coordinators

HSTW Elements for Success

- Recommended curriculum
 - 4 years of English at college prep standards
 - 4 years of Math inc. Algebra I&II, Geometry and one higher level course
 - 3 years of Science inc. at least 2 college prep level lab sciences
 - 3 years of Social Studies
 - 1 semester of computer applications
 - 4 years in career or academic major



HSTW Elements for Success

- Higher expectations
- Professional development including site-based efforts, state-run sessions and the *HSTW* summer conference
- Three-year data-driven action plans

HSTW Elements for Success

- Technical assistance site visits every three years
- Technical assistance visit report lists best practices, next steps and major challenges with recommendations for meeting those challenges

HSTW Assessment

- Student assessment and survey and teacher survey are required in even-numbered years
- Derived from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
- Prepared and analyzed by Educational Testing Service (ETS)
- Provides comparison scores from national samples and schools with similar characteristics

Components of the Assessment

Student Survey

Transcript questions

Questions about experiences

Achievement tests in

Reading

Mathematics

Science

Teacher Survey



Purpose of the *HSTW* Assessment and Surveys

- Identify the classroom and teacher practices that are associated with higher student achievement
- Identify teacher professional development needs
- Identify students who have met the criteria for the Award of Educational Achievement

High Schools That Work



- Award of Educational Achievement is given to students who meet or exceed performance goals in English, math and science and who complete the recommended curriculum in at least 2 of the 3 subjects

High Schools That Work

Results of the Assessment

- Most important indicators for success in English, Math and Science have been:
 - completion of the recommended English curriculum
 - reading books outside of class
 - daily or weekly writing assignments of 1-3 pages that were graded

www.SREB.org

- Visit SREB's website for information on outstanding practices, publications and conferences



MA *HSTW* Information

Maryellen McDonagh

State *HSTW* Coordinator

mmcdonagh@doe.mass.edu

781.338.3932



www.doe.mass.edu/cte/hstw