

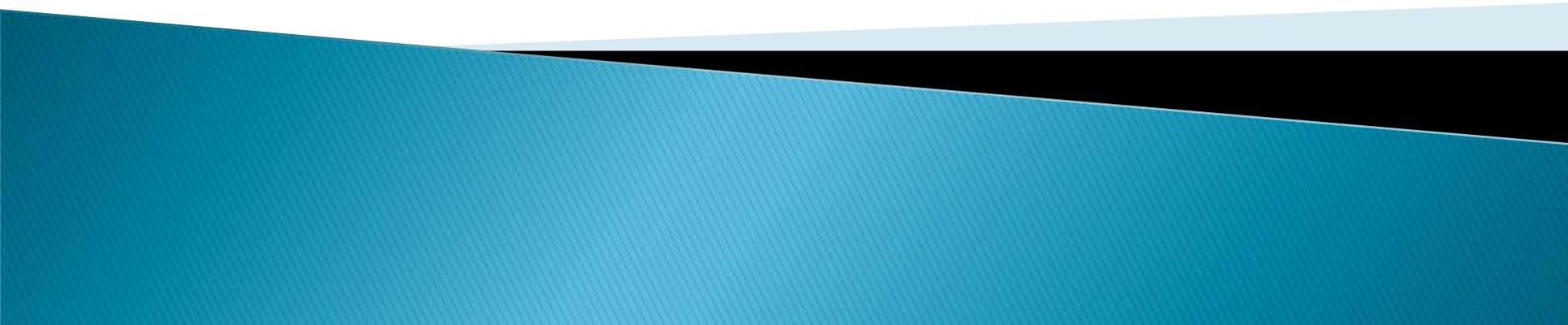
Making Graduation a Reality for ALL Students

Erin Jones
Assistant Superintendent
for Student Achievement (OSPI)
September 28, 2009

For whom will CORE 24 be the greatest challenge?

- ▶ English-speaking students of color
 - ▶ ELL students
 - ▶ Students who were not successful in middle school/junior high
 - ▶ Students who experience trauma or serious illness during high school
 - ▶ Students who are homeless or transient
 - ▶ Students who transfer from another state late in high school
- 

**Why are students currently
not graduating from
high school?**



Some students don't come to high school with the foundational knowledge or ready for the rigor

- ▶ Elementary-level literacy and numeracy skills
- ▶ Lack of experience with the amounts of homework and testing required

HUGE correlation between the number of classes failed first semester freshman year and the likelihood of a student dropping out.

Students do not come to high school with the necessary skills in academic English

- ▶ ELL population is growing
- ▶ Many students being exited prematurely from ELL programs
- ▶ Other populations who often don't speak academic English but do not receive language support:
 - African American
 - Native American
 - Urban poor Caucasian

Students are transient and/or homeless

- ▶ Highly-mobile students may not receive credits when they miss portions of a semester while moving from one place to another
 - ▶ Courses may be different from one district to another making the transition difficult
 - ▶ Students often do not receive counseling or support in course selection or completion
 - ▶ These students are likely to drop out for lack of hope and direction
- 

Students and their families do not understand the graduation requirements

- ▶ Students do not understand that in some school districts missing a certain number of days results in an automatic “F”
 - ▶ Students do not realize they must pass classes in order to receive credit; sitting in a seat does not earn one a credit
 - ▶ Students/families do not understand that certain courses are required in order to earn a high school diploma
- 

Students do not see the purpose of graduating from high school

- ▶ Many students in poverty don't see connection between high school graduation and success
- ▶ These students only know what has been modeled before them:
 - If mom and/or dad did graduate but don't have jobs, students see no correlation between graduation and work
 - If mom and/or dad didn't graduate, students often don't have the support at home to do anything different

Students do not pass the state assessment

- ▶ Approximately 93% of high school seniors passed the WASL last year
 - ▶ This does not account for the thousands of students (approx. 18,000/yr) who dropped out before senior year
- 

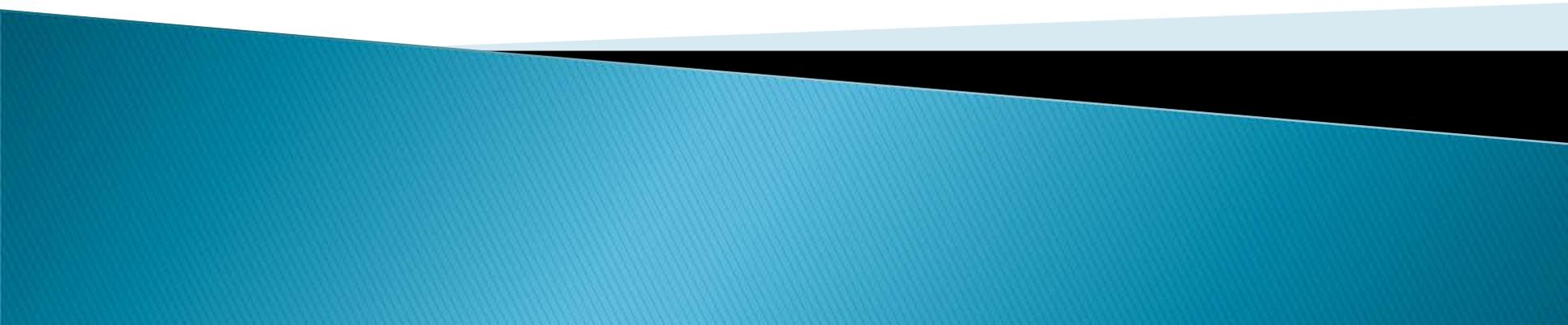
**Biggest problem:
Lack of counseling and
guidance for students!!!**

- ▶ Students do not have a post-secondary plan to enable them to make clear decisions about courses that will lead to their future dreams
 - ▶ Individual students are not receiving guidance on course selection and are forced to make selections on their own
- 

- ▶ Achievement Gap Reports all said students of color are often not counseled to take higher-level courses that will lead to college entrance
 - ▶ Students in poverty have similar experiences – culture of low-expectations
- 

- ▶ Many students are not encouraged to take foreign language or upper-level math courses
 - ▶ Students and parents are not regularly informed about their progress towards meeting the requirements for graduation
- 

**How can you make sure ALL
students receive regular
opportunities for guidance
and counseling?**



Navigation 101

- ▶ Provide more opportunities for students to have access to Navigation 101, beginning in middle school (so they come to high school prepared to make the most of every opportunity)
 - **Caveat:** Navigation 101 is only effective if teachers are well-trained in the curriculum and given the right opportunities to work with students

AVID

- ▶ Provide more opportunities for students, particularly in urban, very ethnically diverse, communities to have access to AVID programs
 - Provides for weekly counseling opportunities
 - Provides academic support for students as they take more rigorous course loads
 - Provides training in college–readiness skills
 - Creates a graduation and college–going culture in a classroom or even in an entire school

Challenge: Giving students credit for the class. Often schools aren't sure how to provide credit for AVID.

GEAR-UP

- ▶ Program focuses on secondary schools (middle and high school) with high free-and-reduced lunch numbers
 - ▶ Provides grants to be used for tutoring, mentoring and training for educators
 - ▶ Students receive counseling with a focus on creating a college-ready transcript
 - ▶ Students visit colleges annually and have the opportunity to interact with college students from similar backgrounds
- 

MESA

(Math Science Engineering Achievement)

- ▶ Program offered in collaboration with a local college or university
 - ▶ Seeks to encourage students of color and women to pursue degrees and careers in these fields
 - ▶ Students receive regular support in math and science classes
 - ▶ Students visit college campuses
 - ▶ Students receive guidance support to help them take necessary courses for high school completion and college attendance
- 

Training for high school counselors

(since not every school has Navigation 101)

- ▶ Assure that all high school counselors are trained in the objectives and expectations of CORE 24
 - ▶ Provide trainings for high school educators so they can support the few counselors in a building (often 1 counselor for every 300 to 400 students – doesn't provide for very effective counseling situations)
- 

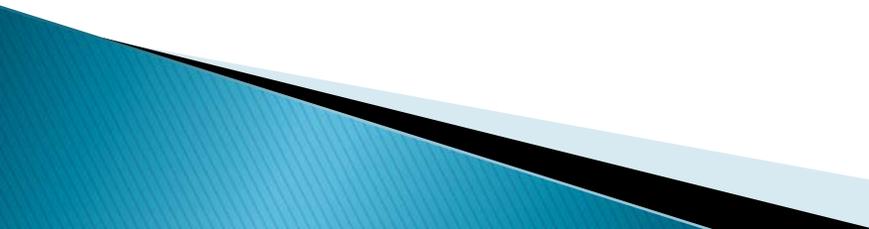
How can we assure that students stay engaged in school so they have a chance to complete enough courses to graduate?

1. Provide more guidance for students
 - To help students develop plans for their futures
 - To help students get the support they need to make wise decisions about course selection
 - To help students get the physical and emotional support they need to be successful
- 

2. Allow students greater access to a variety of courses that count towards graduation and towards skills-based professions, not necessarily 4-yr institutions:
- More CTE offerings:
 - Childcare
 - Mechanics
 - Shop
 - Engineering
 - Photography
- 

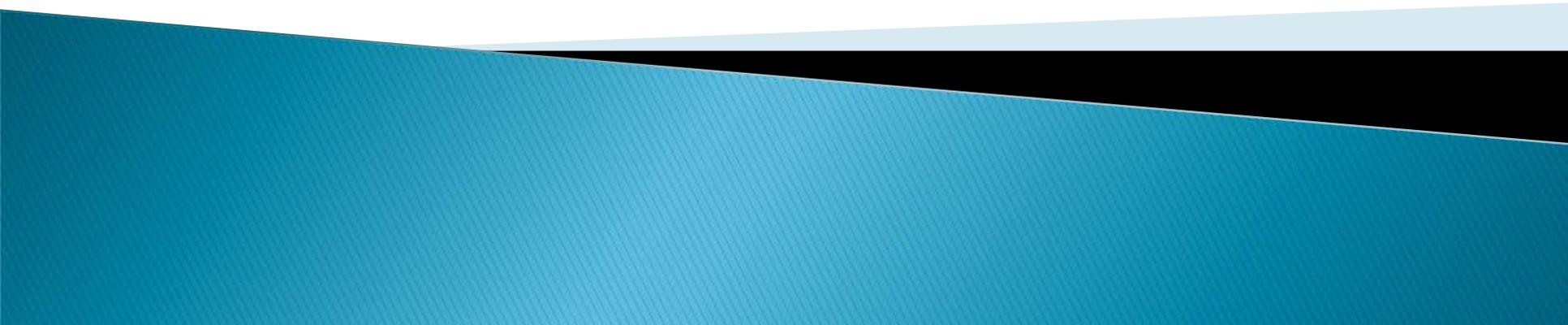
3. Provide a variety of ways for students to make up courses

- On-line course offerings
 - Portfolios-style substitutions for students who must be absent long-term due to illness or family emergency
 - Advocate for more alternative school models to meet the needs of “non-traditional” students
- 

4. Provide ELL students with the support they need to graduate:
- Appropriate credits for ELL courses taken that will lead towards meeting graduation requirements
 - Alternative methods for ELL students to earn credits:
 - Could students take courses in their “home” language, like the ConEvyt (from Mexico) program for Spanish-speaking students?
 - How could students who come to the US in the middle of high school receive credit for the work they have already done in their countries?
- 

5. Standardize course offerings and expectations within a district and across the state:
- Make sure Algebra I means the same thing in Seattle as it does in Tacoma
 - Make sure an “A” in Bellevue means a student has reached the same standard as a student receiving an “A” in Spokane
 - A student moving from one region to another should be able to transition easily from a course in one school to the same course in another school
- 

Other concerns...



Some schools don't have enough of the necessary course offerings for all students to meet the requirements of CORE 24

- ▶ Many schools do not have enough of the necessary course offerings, particularly in foreign language and math, to allow ALL students access to the courses they will need to meet the CORE 24 requirements

How do you propose to remedy this problem in the face of these difficult economic times, when staff are being cut from buildings?



You are not responsible for providing training for teachers, but if you are going to advocate for CORE 24 requirements, who should you partner with to make sure you are not setting students up for failure?

PESB

- ▶ Brief all members of PESB on the philosophy and new expectations of CORE 24
 - ▶ Encourage them to include new standards that will reflect the need for teachers to be trained to help students meet these new requirements
- 

OSPI

- ▶ Brief the leadership team of OPSI on the new requirements of CORE 24
- ▶ Allow them to advise you on their concerns about the implementation of CORE 24
- ▶ Work with them to get the necessary professional development support to assure that educators are prepared to support CORE 24 if it comes to pass

There would be nothing worse than to require something that our system is not prepared to support...something that will lead more students to drop out or not graduate.

Communities of color

- ▶ Whether or not CORE 24 is passed, there are several groups that would be great partners and advocates for you if they bring them on board now:
 - The METT (includes representatives of all the ethnic groups and low socio-economic)
 - The Working Group (members from each of the 5 Achievement Gap Committees)
 - The Achievement Gap Accountability and Oversight Committee

Student/Family advocacy groups

- ▶ State PTA
 - ▶ Seattle Family Support Workers Program
 - ▶ Federal Way Family Empowerment Program
 - ▶ Office of the Education Ombudsman
 - ▶ Ethnic Commissions
 - ▶ CISL
- 

CORE 24 and the argument for high expectations

Every parent would say they have high expectations for their children!

Every parent would say they want a higher level of rigor and opportunities for their children to be challenged!

Every student entering high school hopes to graduate!

We need high expectations for ALL kids! The next question is: How do we provide the missing support to make this a reality?



Contact me...

Erin Jones

CISL@k12.wa.us

(360) 725 – 6503