ADULT SCHOOLS GROWTH FORUM

December 1, 2016

Washington, D.C.

Today we have shared our passion for supporting adult education, the students' successes, and the outcomes that result from these models. Based on discussions with various stakeholders, below you will find practices related to adult schools with bulleted examples of specific actions that advance each of the practices. Together, these practices promote opportunities for older youth, low-skilled adults, and families to access and complete high quality, adequately resourced schools.

Now, we ask you to commit to taking action in your area to expand opportunities for adult learners across the nation. Please mark commitments you are willing to make.

Funders/Investors

I will…

Finance the opening of new adult schools

Incentivize diverse program options in my state (e.g., dual-/multi-generation schools; academic, technical, and paid work-based learning components)

Underwrite the compilation of research

Invest in data collection (e.g. polling), research and evaluation on the performance and effectiveness of adult schools

Underwrite an adult schools policy audit

Support the creation of a toolkit for implementing different models

Create cohort/e-list of individuals to support one another in their journey from concept to implementation

Commission a report on adult school models

Host a conference featuring different adult charter and adult school models

Test new financing approaches to grow adult schools (e.g., Pay for Success)

Adopt a community and broker resources to design and implement an adult school

Make adult school development or expansion a priority for funding in your philanthropic or corporate investments

Other: Please, write in your commitment below

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Program Leaders and Programs

I will…

Research what other states are doing across the nation

Assess the interest in expanding adult charter schools and extending the scope of existing K-12 charters to add an adult school to serve older youth, adults, and families

Discuss the advantages of adult schools with state boards of education and state-appointed officials

Create student focus groups to find out what supports are needed and not currently available

Talk to legislators about changing the existing law or creating a new law that allows other models to come into the state

Talk to local government officials about a location that can be used for a community-based model

Convene local educators/staff meeting(s) to determine who is not being served and what supports students need

Speak with local employers about creating a pipeline of skilled workers for unfilled jobs through a partnership with an adult school

Invite guest speakers from community-based adult education programs to speak to local legislators, elected officials, state board of education, etc.

Other: Please, write in your commitment below

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Others

I will:

Increase Information, Awareness, and Research

Research the number of older youth and adults who could benefit from adult schools

Research charter school and adult school laws, regulations, and policies/practices in your state, region, or local community

Research and publicize the benefits of investing public resources in adult schools to the whole family and community including benefits of advancing adults' education and skill levels, connecting families to services, and greater involvement of parents in their children's education

Disseminate Adult Schools Growth Forum proceedings and recommendations within your community

Organize a "get-to-know each other" event with authorizers in your community

Host an Adult Schools Growth Forum in your community

Other: Please, write in your commitment below

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Work to Change Policy and Authority

Gather and share information about who can authorize schools under what conditions in your state/city/community

Promote existing provisions that support adult schools for older youth, adults, and families in communities that have yet to take advantage of these provisions

Create a user-friendly website or other interactive tool that presents current policies in a way that is easily searchable

Develop decision-making tools for older youth, adults, and families that present information about services, resources, performance, and outcomes for programs and schools serving adults

Hold a symposium on the feasibility of innovative models, such as blended learning or hybrid model adult schools

Convene constituents and stakeholders, including authorizers and investors, to determine need, demand, and supply of high-quality, adequately resourced, and effective learning opportunities for older youth, adults, and families

Other: Please, write in your commitment below

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Share Information about Trailblazing Communities and Best Practices

Disseminate information on the benefits of adult schools that offer wrap-around services and the need for new adult schools to secure adequate funding to sustain these services (e.g., early learning centers, counselors and coaches, health services, housing assistance, and other necessary supports)

Conduct presentations at conferences and convenings about your adult school

Become a peer coach for a community that is interested in establishing an adult school

Record and disseminate widely via social media adult learner success stories of students who are being reached by adult schools

Disseminate the importance of adult schools to create and sustain partnerships with higher education institutions and employers to enable your students to earn college credit towards a degree or industry-recognized credentials while continuing to work and learn

Other: Please, write in your commitment below

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Engage Students, Parents, and Community Leaders

Hold regular information sessions for prospective students, parents, and community leaders and organizations to garner support for the opening of new adult schools in their community

Use social media to recruit and engage support from older youth, adults, and families by creating and maintaining a social media presence

Engage students, parents, and community members in the design of adult schools to create a multi-generational community-based effort

Other: Please, write in your commitment below

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