



NCSE

National Center for School Engagement

**Lessons from
Community Research about
Homeless and Highly Mobile Students**

**NAEHCY Conference
Building Futures Through Education
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Presenters

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WBPD Components

- Utilizes Participatory Action Research (PAR) to study and improve educational practices for homeless and highly mobile students in the U.S..
- Joins PAR with asynchronous online learning to increase school engagement of homeless and highly mobile students.
- Participants join WBPD as a team



Uniqueness

- PAR offers the opportunity for participants to take action on what emerges in their study.
- Asynchronous technology enables participants to log-in into the WBPD website (www.wbpd.org) and discuss important issues at times that are convenient for them



Why Focus on Homeless and Highly Mobile Students?

- 50% of the US has moved in the last five years.
- Educational practice has not changed to meet this challenge and pre-service preparation continues to prepare teachers as though they will be able to practice their classroom management strategies in a stable school environment.



WBPD Goals

- Ensure homeless students receive equitable and excellent services through the public schools
- Disseminate research findings to reach a broad national audience interested in homeless
- Work to assure that homeless and highly mobile students have the tools and resources they need to graduate from high school and pursue higher education



WBPD Audience

- Recruited educators in schools known to have issues with homelessness and high mobility
- Teams include both educational roles of an administrator and a teacher and community-based member
- Process geared towards research



Inquiry Process

- Quick exercise to illustrate



- What assumptions do you have about homeless and highly mobile student?



Surfacing Assumptions

H&HM students:

List the things you believe about Homeless and Highly Mobile Students

Surfacing Assumptions

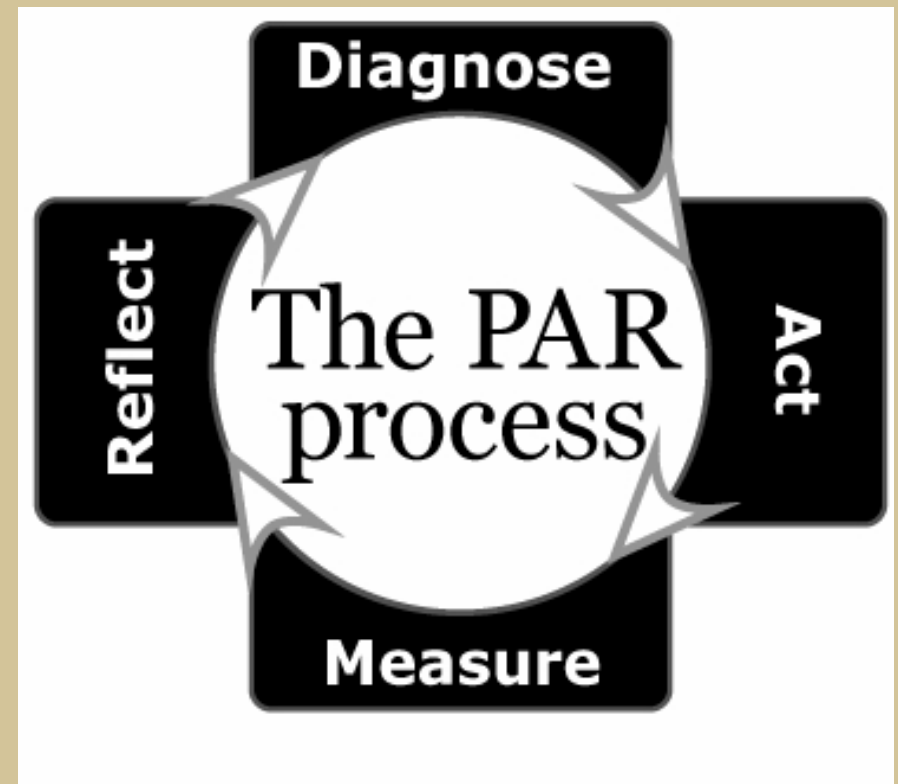
H&HM students:	Qualitative data
<p>List the things you believe about Homeless and Highly Mobile Students</p>	<p>List qualitative evidence that backs up this statement.</p> <p>Includes things you have been told by others.</p>

H&HM students:	Qualitative data	Quantitative data
List the things you believe about Homeless and Highly Mobile Students	List qualitative evidence that backs up this statement. Includes things you have been told by others.	List quantitative evidence that backs up this statement.

H&HM students:	Qualitative data	Quantitative data	Needs verification?
List the things you believe about Homeless and Highly Mobile Students	List qualitative evidence that backs up this statement	List quantitative evidence that backs up this statement.	<p>Consider the strength of the evidence to make the case of the truth of the statement.</p> <p>1 – Very, very weak 10 – very, very, strong case</p>

Research cycle

- 1) **Diagnose** – Evaluate factors that contribute to status quo (data collection and analysis)
- 2) **Act** – Plan and implement action to increase effectiveness
- 3) **Measure** – Evaluate action taken
- 4) **Reflect** – Review process and determine additional steps



BACKGROUND



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Overview

- **WBPD began in Colorado in 2003-2004** with 18 educators and community members representing nine schools and a homeless shelter for youth.
- **In 2005, National Center for School Engagement** became sponsor and project to Arkansas, Texas and Virginia
- Since it began, **98 participants in 34 communities** have been involved.
- **8 states involved** - Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, North Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Washington



The National Center for School Engagement

- An initiative of the Colorado Foundation for Families and Children
- Launched in September 2003
- Promotes school success of students at highest-risk of dropping out of school



Mission

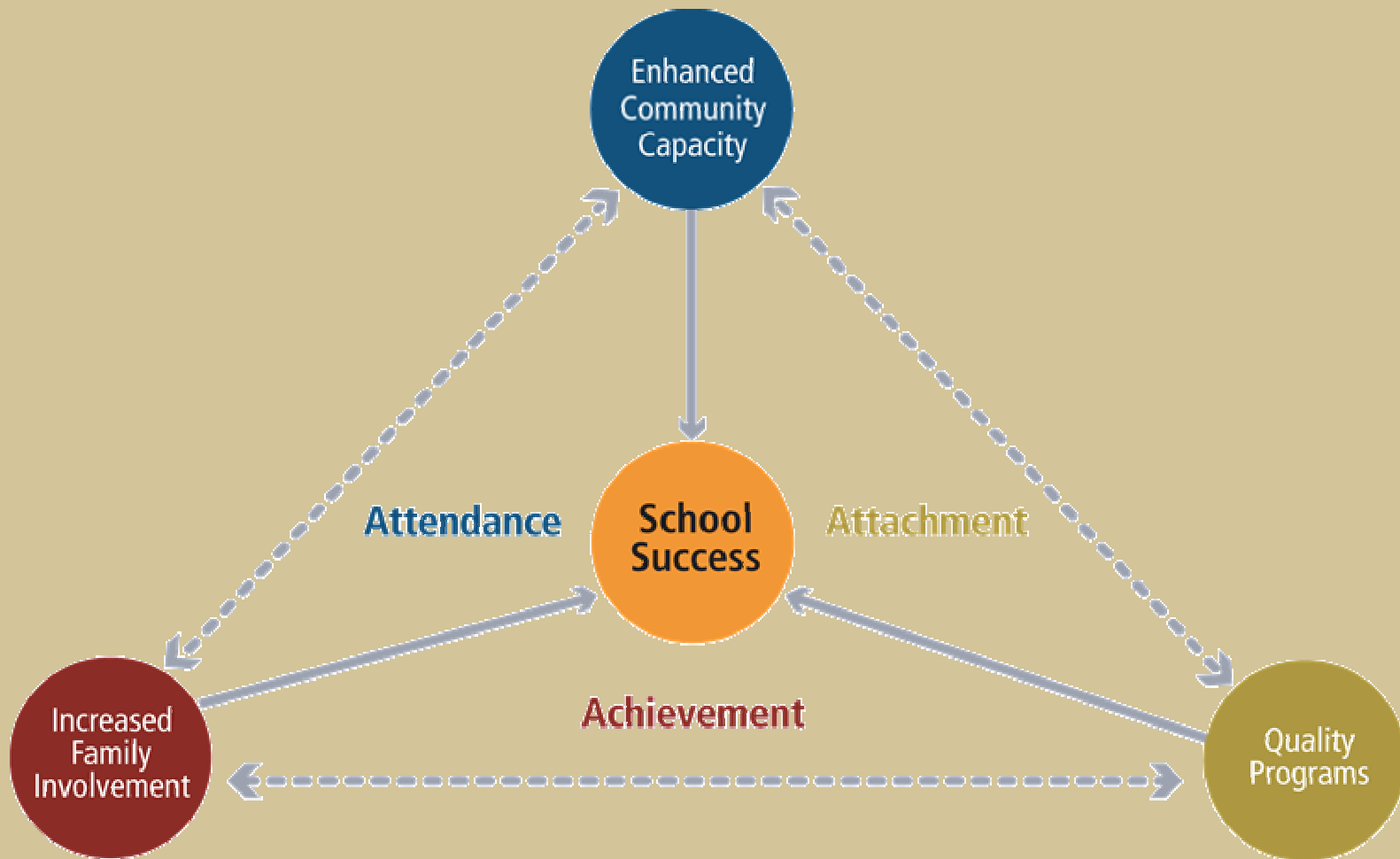
To ensure school success for at-risk youth and their families by improving school engagement.



Theory of Change

- School success is based on integration of **attachment, attendance, and achievement.**
- NCSE uses the Theory of Change to develop and implement strategies that ensure school success and school completion.





**The THREE DOMAINS:
Lessons Learned
based on 2003-2004 Cycle**



Access to Educational Resources

**Addressing the issues
that get in the way of
education**



Access to Educational Services

1. A need for accurate data
2. Need for professional development
3. Need to coordinate services with community agencies as well as to arrange transportation
4. Transient or highly mobile life styles and living situations frequently exacerbate attendance issues.
5. Primary needs may not being met because of the lack of fixed and steady housing include: health, hygiene, lack of regular meals or adequate clothing, etc.
6. Need for access to services without labels and stigma



Welcoming School Culture

**Setting up a safe
social/emotional
context for
learning**



Welcoming School Culture

1. Arriving students and families **need an orientation** to the school and school culture of which they are about to become a part.
2. **Overcoming the stigma** of homelessness and diversity issues – low SES.
3. **Parent Involvement** may be difficult and may require adjustments in educational practice. However, given the opportunity, parents can and will contribute to their children's learning and achievement.



Welcoming School Culture

4. Students need a **social life**.
5. Students exhibit social **need for consistency, comfort, security, safety and quiet**.
6. Need for **behavioral training and conflict resolution** to offset aggressive behaviors.



Flexible Instructional Strategies

**Systems to help
students succeed
in their
education**



Flexible Instructional Strategies

1. Need flexibility in ways students can **earn credit** within the district.
2. **Contextual instruction helps** students transform abstract concepts into concrete solutions.
3. **Need for quick assessment,** remediation when necessary and a school norm of high expectations for all



Flexible Instructional Strategies

4. Flexible instruction; self regulated learning and **learner centered** orientation are beneficial practices to disadvantaged students.
5. **Set student up for success** if they transfer on to another location.



WBPD National Study: 2005-06

- **41** educators and community members: primarily urban populations
- **18** research projects completed
- **Met once** for training, then locally in community teams.
- Provided online facilitation and instruction
- Received \$1000 stipend
- Support from CDE and other state Title X departments



This year: 2006-07

- **39** educators and community members: from five states – Colorado, Georgia, North Carolina, Wisconsin and Washington.
- **1st National Training** to held September 29 – October 1, 2006 in Colorado.
- **Increased accountability** through rubric tied to stipends.
- **Increased facilitation** of Communities of Practice.



This year: Areas of Study

- Increasing academic achievement of homeless/highly mobile students
- Building awareness/understanding of how homelessness & high mobility impacts student learning
- Creating welcoming school climates to facilitate student transitions
- Engaging parents and community members in the education of homeless/highly mobile students



RESULTS



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In their own words...

- *Action research supports the belief that educators have the capacity to build their own evidence-based practices. Colleagues have expressed interest in wanting to learn from my work.*
- *I have grown in my capacity as an educator through my willingness to admit my limitations and seek collaboration in the interest of all our students.*



Significant Results

24 schools and 15 school districts have benefited from WBPD action research:

- Increased parent involvement
- Improved assessment of educational and basic needs
- Fostered understanding of the strengths and challenges of students who are at high-risk of school failure.



Significant Results

Over 1600 homeless and highly mobile students and their families have been directly impacted by WBPD team actions:

- Increased reading and math skills
- Improved study skills
- Developed positive relationships
- Parents more active in their children's learning.



Significant Results

- **Over 6000 students** have been impacted by WBPD participants' efforts to create programs, enhance services, and create welcoming school climates.
- **Over 34 rural, small towns, suburbs, and urban areas** gained greater awareness of how homelessness touches the lives of children, youth and families in their communities.



Significant Results

Since 2004, WBPD teams have **completed 29 studies**, which contribute to our knowledge base of research-based practices to improve instruction and support for students who have faced difficult transitions and multiple school changes.



Examples

- Schools in 4 states addressed issues of **welcoming school culture**
- Several **developed protocols** for school office staff and communication (information folders going home to parents; after school recruitment flyers)
- Learned about **emergency planning** to cope with national disasters



More Examples

- **Overhaul of the assessment program** took place.
- **Parent/child homework group** was organized at a site near a transitional housing program for families.
- Developed **welcoming kits**
- **“Lunch Bunch”** tutoring and social time



Making A Difference

I gained personal knowledge that I have made, and will continue to make, a difference in the lives of the children.



Panel Discussion

- *My role*
- *How I heard about WBPD*
- *Why my state got involved*
- *Reflections*



FAQs

- How do people get involved?
- Do you organize your own team?
- Why a stipend?
- Do I need to bring funding to the table?



Recruitment and Benefits

- NCSE recruits teams in partnerships with sponsors. *Starts in Spring.*
- Based on participation and completion of yearlong commitment, each participant is eligible to receive a stipend of \$1000.
- Participants may be eligible for up to 6 graduate credits from Adams State College.



Funding & Sponsorship

- States may consider accessing funds from federal programs such as, *Special Education, Migrant Education, Title I, Title III, Title X and 21st CCLC*.
- Potential funding - *School Improvement Plan* dollars.
- Title X State Directors in Colorado, Arkansas, North Carolina, Texas, and Washington, all accessed Title X funds to sponsor teams.



Funding & Sponsorship

Sponsorship covers:

- On-going technical assistance, online facilitation, and materials
- Expenses associated to the team's attendance at a required training held in Colorado
- Stipends for each participant.



For More Information

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