



The Northwest Team

Collaborating to ensure all youth reach proficiency in their academic and character development

Summary of October 1, 2004 NW Team Meeting

Participants: Kathryn Dube, Kay Simpson, Kathy Flynn Woodland, Jeff Scavron, Raphael Nazario, Milta Franco, Julia Arroyo, Lilliam Robles, Virgilio Berrios, Bill Diehl, Tanya Lieberman, Juan Cruz, Edwin Comacho.

Review of NW Team Meeting Notes from September 10th:

There were a few small changes to the notes from the Sept. 10th meeting that are reflected in the final version that will be forwarded to NW Team members.

Update on SUS Activities:

Notices were handed out regarding the Mason Square community event scheduled for this Saturday, October 2, 2004 at STCC. All are welcome. Team members were reminded of the October 29th Summit Reconvening Event from 8:30 AM – 11:15 AM at the Mass Mutual Conference Center in Chicopee.

Kay Simpson also announced an upcoming event at the Springfield Museum on October 23-24th that is celebrating Latino Art and asked for support in getting neighborhoods to attend. Several team members suggested bringing the art program to the NE as many individuals and families that need to be involved will not go downtown. They recommended making linkages with the Campus Center and other space in the NE that is available. Kay will work with Milta Franco of NEON to help expand future opportunities.

Open Discussion & Recommendations:

1. Improving Communication Efforts—discussion around how to improve communication regarding SUS:

- Cheryl Gorski, SUS Campaign Manager will be sending out a newsletter via e-mail about every 2 weeks or so to all SUS team participants to update on community happenings around the city
- Continue community mobilization at the neighborhood level with the NEON workers
- Ensure goals set are appropriate and realistic—for the youth and for family/community involvement
- Begin to align and build a supportable infrastructure for the work around the Governing Board of NEON—the focus on the North End
- Make the outreach message clear and aligned to NEON to foster 1.) Overall Educational Improvement, 2.) Increased Graduation Rates of NE youth, and 3.) “Stay in School”

- Align Step Up Springfield meetings with the NEON Zone meetings and create a common agenda with SUS a critical focus
- Schedule large meetings in the community around Step Up

2. Steps to Ensure Capacity Building for NEON Workers

- Efficacy Training possibly set up for the week of October 18th with Lourdes from the Efficacy Institute who can provide training in Spanish and potentially can also help with the development of SUS outreach materials in Spanish for NEON to use
- Set up a “Train the Trainer” for NEON workers to continue to work with the 11,000 people in the North End around SUS

Bill Diehl from CYDE opened a discussion on strategies and options for community partners to work with in helping youth reach proficiency in literacy, math and character development:

- NEON workers began a lively exchange of ideas for engaging parent and families in helping support youth in the North End, including:
 - Work with teachers to have them let NEON workers know when a youth is getting under a “C” average in school work.
 - See the character development piece as a family issue and get families actively involved
 - Encourage broader use of the REACH program and set up a kiosk & swipe machines in more areas in the NE—will help in identifying where and when youth are “hanging out” and attending programs while encourage incentives for participation—expand REACH efforts (Raphael will work with NEON)
 - Develop literature in Spanish to provide to neighborhood parents and families as well as other gathering places
 - Create outreach opportunities with messages and materials available for community gatherings, churches, health fairs, music, block parties, “Kids Day” with community police, etc.
 - Use and expand on opportunities such as the “Digital Storytelling Film Festival” to help families and youth get engaged by showcasing community stories
 - Create tighter linkages with after school programs

Next Steps for North End Work:

- Training for the NEON outreach workers
- Help prepare outreach workers and frontline staff working with youth in the community to talk with educators
- Build opportunities for engaging children of incarcerated parents and those whose parents are suffering from long term illness.
- Develop materials and brochures on SUS in Spanish for distribution throughout the NE neighborhoods
- Set up community SUS outreach opportunities through existing efforts such as school open houses and those mentioned above
- Work with the 4 schools and principals in the NE==create information for use at Site-based meetings
- Work with Eric Maldonado of the NE Citizen’s Council to engage SUS message in Council’s work with families in the area
- Work with the PTO
- Ensure SUS messages are available regularly on the Radio

- Reach out to Father Juan at Blessed Sacrament

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29TH, SUMMIT RECONVENING
MASS MUTUAL CONFERENCE CENTER
8:30 AM – 11:15 AM**

Please RSVP to Cheryl Gorski at 413-693-0207

NEXT MEETING

November 12, 2004

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

NEON Office or Brightwood Health Center Conference Room (TBD)