



Ready by 21 Coalition for Austin and Travis County  
April 9, 2009  
Session Notes

**Chair:** Bob Rutishauser, Workforce Solutions Board

**Participants:**

- Alice Geacone and Tim Eubanks, Austin Voices
- Kemal Taskin, AISD ACCESS
- Dianna Groves, Austin ISD - Guidance & Counseling
- Erica Gallardo-Taft, Boys and Girls Clubs
- Alissa Schram, Capital Metro
- Elizabeth Hummer, CASA of Travis County
- Maria Allen, City of Austin HHSD
- Emily Steinberg & Diane Robidoux, College Forward
- Kelli Sureck, Communities in Schools
- Chantel Bottoms, Community Action Network
- Amanda Teske, E3 Alliance
- Lora Alaniz, GENaustin
- Peg Gavin, Lifeworks
- Christina Gomez-Mira, People's Community Clinic-RGK Downtown Youth Center for Health
- Barbara Ball, SafePlace
- Scout Carr, Skillpoint Alliance
- Athan Schindler, Sumpter & Gonzalez
- Claudette Jenks & Alyssa Peterson, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Raphael Travis, Texas State University
- Sarah McCafferty and Leslie Nairn-Erwin, Theatre Action Project
- Donna Hagey, The Austin Project
- Laurie Seremetis, Travis County CPS Board
- Katie Clark, Travis County Alliance
- Laura Garcia, United Way Capital Area
- Deb Wise and Jeannette Bellemeur, UT Austin - Annette Strauss Institute
- Jenifer DeAtley, Jessica Roe, & Kelly Stolpman YouthLaunch

**Facilitator:** Suzanne Hershey, CommunitySync

**Staff:** Yael Trevino (absent)

**Special Guest:** Karen Finn, Forum for Youth Investment and Results Leadership Group

**Note:** *People who did not sign in may have been left off of the participant list.*

**Next meeting:** Thursday, May 14, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. at Workforce Solutions, 6505 Airport Blvd., Suite 101E, Lone Star Room. Our website: [www.readyby21austin.org](http://www.readyby21austin.org)

**Announcements**

Theatre Action Project invited everyone to the annual Youth Arts Festival on Saturday, May 2nd. The event is a day of theatre, puppet shows, movies, drumming, photography and mural exhibits, all created by local teens. The festival will be held at the Boyd Vance Theatre at Carver Museum (1165 Angelina Street, Austin, 78702). More information can be found at [www.theatreactionproject.org](http://www.theatreactionproject.org)

GENaustin will host breakfast and networking Friday, April 10 at the Mexican American cultural events center. Cost is \$25. More information is at: [www.genaustin.org](http://www.genaustin.org)

**Safeplace** - reminded everyone that May 7th will be Youth Mental Health Awareness day at Austin City Hall. Various activities and exhibits will be available. SafePlace will launch their Start Strong Austin project at that event. More information is at [www.safeplace.org](http://www.safeplace.org)

**Travis County Alliance** announced a new coalition working on preventing underage drinking. Their current focus is community awareness. Katie Clark is their RB21 representative and can be reached at: [Coordinator@TravisCountyAlliance.org](mailto:Coordinator@TravisCountyAlliance.org)

**People's Community Clinic** in conjunction with **American YouthWorks** is now offering a clinic for youth and young adults (ages 16-23). They offer general medical services along with yearly physical exams, STD testing and treatment, pregnancy testing, and birth control. The clinic is known as the RGK Downtown Youth Center for Health and is located at 216 E. 4th Street. They can be contacted at: 512.695.8137

### **Ready by 21 Coalition in Austin/Travis County- Project Work Team Updates**

#### ***Go to College (GTC) Team - Emily Steinberg***

Emily reported the manual has been completed and they are prepared to start presenting to groups in Austin. They will present and discuss the manual at RB21 soon. Additionally, Austin has been selected as one of a handful of locations nationwide to host a Regional College Access forum. The forum will be at ACC and focus on policy and advocacy concerns.

#### ***Youth Engagement Team - Debbie Wise and Sarah McCafferty***

Team reported that the Vision and Voice: Fostering Tomorrow's Leaders event held at the Carver Library on March 26th produced an abundance of information and confirmation of ideas of interest to youth and young adults. They identified new ideas for leadership and engagement and received great feedback from participants. They provided a handout summary of comments from the meeting. Now they intend to take that input toward new efforts, initiatives, and activities.

#### ***Youth Aging out of Foster Care - Laurie Seremetis and Peg Gavin***

Laurie will be stepping down as team lead and is meeting with other members of the committee to plan a leadership transition. Peg indicated there has been progress on getting attention from the legislature on housing needs for youth aging out of foster care. The committee continues to work on education and workforce issues for foster youth, and advocacy work with school systems so that youth aging out will have documentation that they need.

#### ***Quality Assessment and Professional Development Team - Laura Garcia***

Laura reported on a recent session to review accomplishments and needs held on March 27 for YPO assessors and trainers. They have had significant movement in assessments and trainings with more training dates being scheduled for Active Learning and Building Community modules.

#### ***Youth Services Mapping (YSM) - Suzanne Hershey***

This team reported on a recent presentation of the new YSM system to the AISD superintendent's cabinet. The website was well received by those in attendance. The team is currently recruiting organizations to Beta test the system. They are targeting a summer launch of YSM for service providers, followed by training for school personnel (once the system is populated with provider data) in early fall.

### **Update on the process to develop community outcomes and indicators and a compact for children and youth (Steering Committee initiative)**

Karen Finn, Senior Fellow with The Forum for Youth Investment and expert in results based accountability spent three days in Austin working with various partners and players in this initiative. At this meeting, she presented background on the development of outcomes and indicators and offered her conclusions regarding Austin/Travis County efforts.

Karen began by discussing Gambone research (Gambone, Connell & Klein 2002), a project about youth wellbeing and readiness for life where three areas were measured: productivity, health, and

connectedness. They rated wellness looking for 2 of 3 categories to be rated well. The results of this study were that: 2 in 10 youth were doing poorly, 4 in 10 were okay, and only 4 in 10 were doing well.

She went on to explain that The Forum for Youth looks at leadership in communities for accountability, as well as, family, community and school supports for children and youth outcomes. She shared her experience working through the Governor's Office in the state of Maryland. Maryland came up with nine outcome statements which later became part of legislation. The ninth - about teens - was added after the initial eight when they realized that the first eight were all about children and early childhood. They then developed 25 indicators for the nine outcomes and annually collect and report data on the indicators, with color-coded results, to provide a visual of progress. Identifying and prioritizing the outcomes and indicators was a year long process in Maryland, but has withstood test of time through three governors and several mayoral terms. The state holds public hearings around the results.

#### RB21-Austin participant question and observations

How much did MD have to compromise indicators because data not available across counties? This question included concern for self-reported data that may not be accurate. Karen reminded participants that changes in self-reported data can still be used to measure trends in behavior since the degree and direction of its limitations are likely to remain consistent, even if the data themselves are not exact. She went on to point out that the underlying information in those imperfect data sources can be used in measuring overall intentions of the outcomes.

Karen described the results for the Maryland efforts as productive and beneficial with accomplishments such as: Statewide Positive Youth Development plans at the state level and Action Agendas for children ready to enter school at state and local levels. From their work a statewide RB21 Action Agenda emerged. Other successes included: Community Partnership Agreements that focused on prioritized local outcomes/indicators; Specific strategies for children with intensive needs: 1) local access mechanisms, 2) wrap-around care coordination; and measurement of Outcome statement for Children enter school ready to learn that indicated significant progress with their state Action agenda. Maryland agreed on a way to standardize assessment on "ready to learn." In the 7 domains measured in the 2001-02 school year when the action agenda started, Maryland had 49% ready to learn. Within five years, by concentrating their efforts and measuring progress, they had 68% of children fully ready to learn in kindergarten.

Karen asked how Austin RB21 maintains passion and investment by participants. Emily, who leads the Go to College committee, discussed the challenges they have faced including discouragement around waning participation. They reconsidered invitation list and who is new to scene since committee initiated. With some effort, they successfully regenerated interest and had more people assisting with completion of their Go To College guide, which is now receiving great feedback.

Regarding young adults in Maryland, Karen discussed their use of the indicator "% Idle youth" which is 18-24 yr olds with no degree beyond high school, not working, and not in school. Ultimately they were able to make recommendations to the governor's cabinet for how to address these results.

RB21 definitions of terms were provided for continued discussion. Karen shared a definition of Outcomes as: A condition of well-being for children, adults, families, or communities, and Indicators are measures that quantify results related to the outcomes. Karen added that Outcomes should be stated in clear language, with short statements that capture the end-state rather than steps along the way. Population-level outcomes can only be achieved by combined efforts of communities.

Karen had used a prioritization process the day before to have CAN partner agency representatives assess indicators according to:

Communication Power (with the public, general population)

Proxy Power (of central importance and can "bring along" other indicators)

Data Power (strong data is available and can be disaggregated by geography, demographic group, etc.)

## **Karen's view of RB21-Austin**

### Strengths

Consensus building process

Diversity of stakeholders

Connection to moving trains (E3 Alliance, CAN, etc), those efforts already in progress

Developed outcomes and indicators across developmental areas and all age groups

### Recommendations

Prioritization of outcomes and indicators to create a manageable work focus

Feedback from other constituents

Get actual data and color code the dashboard

Use dashboard by bringing people together to look at contributing factors

The PowerPoint slides Karen used for presenting information at this meeting are available upon request through RB21 Austin.

## **General Session Closing**

The general session closed at 10:30 for a quick networking break, followed by Work Team breakout sessions beginning at 10:40.