

## Summary of BERC Research Reports to Date

October 1, 2023

**October 1, 2013**

*BERC Presentation of Qualifications to the Board*

*Chehalis School District Contract: Comprehensive School District Review*

### **1. November 2013: Initial District Needs Assessment**

*Chehalis School District Needs Assessment: District-Wide Synthesis Report*

The BERC Group conducted a district review for the Chehalis School District (CSD). As part of this review, we conducted School and Classroom Practices Studies in all six schools within the district, and we aggregated the results into this report. The purpose of the report was to provide information to the Chehalis School District regarding any areas emerging in school studies that may need system-wide focus and support.

### **2. December 2013: STEM Research Report (Addendum)**

*W.F. High School Chehalis School District: STEM Education Report*

The BERC Group conducted a district review for the Chehalis School District (CSD). As part of the study, The BERC Group analyzed the extent to which W.F. West High School's (WFWHS) Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Program aligns with proposed STEM national standards. This addendum report included a description of the data sources, the context of STEM education, high school outcomes data for STEM students, the results of the review, and conclusions and recommendations.

**February 2014: SAI Treatment Begins**

### **3. January 2015 Newsletter**

In 2013, Chehalis School District set forth a vision to improve student achievement, modernize instructional practice, and prepare students for college and careers. This vision was embraced by the school board and by community partners, such as the Chehalis Foundation. This newsletter prose highlighted Powerful Teaching and Learning, the district-formed instructional leadership teams in each of the schools, the implementation of the College and Career Readiness Committee, data dashboards, and key performance indicators (KPIs).

### **4. June 2015: SAI Summary and Next Steps**

*Chehalis School District Education Initiatives Project: Research Report*

The goal of this report was to provide relevant research and analysis of place-based program outcomes emphasizing effective support structures and emerging promising practices relating to college and career readiness, in addition to interpreting current outcomes of the West/Coffman Scholarship. As a result of exploring the benefit of scholarships, the foundation decided to focus on supporting students rather than funding them. By August, the district had posted positions for College and Career Counselors/Advisors.

### **5. January 2017: SAI Summary and Centralia College Partnership**

*Centralia College Student Services and Academic Program Audit: Research Report*

This study provided an opportunity to assess the economic needs of the country in general and Washington State in particular. It also included a literature review of national promising practices related to school-community-college partnerships. Additionally, an inventory and analysis of current program options and support services at Centralia College provided qualitative data aligned with empirical evidence. Recommendations were offered on how to further develop and expand the college-school district-community partnership. Overall, the goal of this research project was to match current practices at Centralia College with current national promising practices around community partnerships in college readiness programs. In addition to informing current and future work, this study documented past work and provided a blueprint for other communities to consider in their efforts to strengthen their partnerships.

## **6. June 2019: Summer Melt**

### *Decreasing Summer Melt and Increasing Persistence and Completion: Evidence from National and Local Efforts*

This study explored college persistence, completion, and summer melt, contemporary terms used in education to address the transition from high school to, and through, postsecondary success. The report provided a review of relevant literature on summer melt, persistence, and completion, local and national best practices on mitigating summer melt and increasing persistence, and current practices being implemented in the Chehalis School District and local community college. Recommendations were included to build upon current efforts.

## **7. April 2020: CTE Needs Assessment**

### *W.F. West High School CTE Audit: Career and Technical Education Needs Assessment*

This report described why Chehalis School District is focused on CTE and how this connects to the Student Achievement Initiative. As part of their research-based initiative, district leaders recognized the need to focus efforts on the District's CTE program. The report was intended to guide CTE and school leaders in developing their 5 Year Plan for program implementation and improvement.

## **8. 2021: Reengagement**

### *Chehalis School District: Post-secondary Reengagement Study*

Over the past several years, the SAI partnership has expanded to include additional partners, including Centralia College. These partners have continued to build capacity for work around postsecondary education. This study explored reengagement in college, with a focus on the attributes and resources communities leverage to help students return to and complete a postsecondary degree or certification program.

## **9. July 2022: Centralia College Student Loans**

### *Centralia College Financial Aid Student Loan Feasibility Study*

The purpose of this report is to explore the benefits and drawbacks for CC to begin offering federal student loans. Centralia College is among the few colleges in the United States that does not provide federal financial aid in the form of subsidized and unsubsidized student loans. The purpose of this report is to provide guidance to the executive team at CC, so they can come to a decision about whether to provide federal student loans in the future. The report includes research questions and methods, literature review, summary data, and a list of pros and cons for providing federal student loans as part of their financial aid support at CC.

## **10. February 2023: Cornerstone Project**

### *Chehalis School District: The Cornerstone Project*

The Chehalis School District (CSD) has embarked upon the next strategic phase of the Student Achievement Initiative (SAI). College and Career Readiness has been a cornerstone of district work for more than a decade. This research project showed that efforts around college and career readiness rely heavily upon a holistic approach to student support, beginning early in life and continuing throughout post-secondary completion. The report summarizes key areas of district support and provides the district research-based guidance in implementing the new *Cornerstone Project*.

## **11. June 2023: SAI College Completion Study**

### *The Completers Research Brief*

During the 2022 – 2023 school year, the Chehalis Key Performance Indicator (KPI) team worked to operationally define and identify data sources that allow the Chehalis School District, The Chehalis Foundation, and Centralia College to use common language and metrics to accurately track College Completer data, key to the SAI success measures.

## **Possible Future Studies in Discussion:**

**TBD**

### **June 2024: 10-Year Follow-up Study**

*Chehalis School District Follow-up Needs Assessment: Ten-year Synthesis*

The BERG Group conducted a district review for the Chehalis School District (CSD) in 2013 as a baseline study that determined district needs. As a result of the original study the district launch the Student Achievement Initiative (SAI). The current study serves as a 10-year summary and synthesis report to determine, recognize, and celebrate SAI successes and to continue to guide future initiative needs and strategies. As part of the follow-up study, we conducted School and Classroom Practices Studies in all four schools within the district, and we aggregated the results into the district report. The purpose of the report was to provide information to the Chehalis School District regarding areas of growth and any areas emerging in school studies that may need system-wide focus and support.

**TBD**

### **Centralia College Alternate Placement Study**

*Centralia College English and Math Alternative Course Placement Study*

The purpose of this study is to determine if existing English and Math college placement tests at Centralia College are any more accurate than various alternative placement measures utilized in recent years.

## **BERC Recommendations**

According to current trends, approximately 70% of WF West graduates are likely to *eventually* attend college, join the military, or pursue an apprenticeship program sometime within 8 years of graduation. Conversely, approximately 30% of graduates are *not* likely to *ever* attend college, join the military, or pursue an apprenticeship program within 8 years of graduation.

### **Tier 1**

*Initiatives to date show evidence of 70% of graduates attending college, joining the military, or pursuing an apprenticeship program within 8 years of graduation. These students seem to be benefiting from Tier 1 SAI successes including, PTL, College Advisors, Naviance, Mentor Program, Centralia College initiatives, and much more (See Centralia College Student Services and Academic Program Audit: Research Report for Details).*

### **Tier 2**

Although approximately 70% attend college within 8 years of graduation, only approximately 50% are reaching the goal of receiving a living wage credential. Approximately 20% are attending and not completing within the 8 years. Recommendations provided in the *CTE, Summer Melt, and Reengagement* reports will likely help the 20% of graduates who attend college at sometime within 8 years, but do not complete. These students will likely benefit from Tier 2 strategies, including full implementation of current programs: Centralia College reengagement strategies, WF West CTE College Credit and Pathways, Early awareness of the value proposition, Community Business partnerships, etc.

### **Tier 3**

While 70% of graduates are entering post-secondary programs, approximately 30% of WF West Graduates show no signs of attending college, joining the military, or pursuing an apprenticeship program. These students must be identified early and must receive comprehensive, targeted, support if there is to be any likelihood of receiving a living wage credential within 8 years of graduating. These students must receive *intensive* Tier 3 proactive interventions that include early identification, early family education, and strategic planning.

In my opinion, Tier 3 students should be the immediate focus for further program development. There are three key recommendations in the Reengagement report that address Tier 3 intervention needs:

**1. Develop a comprehensive, collaborative data base capable of predicable analytics**

One hallmark of large-scale promise programs is the development and maintenance of comprehensive, longitudinal databases to track students into their postsecondary option. In Tennessee, Krissy D'Alessandro shared that they maintain a database that allows them to understand students holistically, from attendance, grades in high school, contact points with career and college counselors, financial aid information, and any additional data points. She shared that she is able to call up any student and see their path and progress. This allows those working with students to understand their unique needs and develop a plan specific to those needs. This also helps with relationship building and provides an opportunity to maintain contact with students who may disengage from their education. Additionally, using a predictive model to better understand which students are less likely to enroll or attend college may help counselors and teachers strategically target those students with early intervention efforts.

**2. Early Reengagement Strategies with at-risk students**

When looking at survey responses from CSD students, those that did not enroll, or complete college scored items focused on college relevance and personal efficacy low. Krissy D'Alessandro, from TNAchieves, shared that students need to see the value proposition of reengagement. Although the CSD and CC are already implementing several strategies to engage students in relevant college awareness and career interest activities, there continue to be students that do not see the value in college, or do not believe they will be successful. One strategy to consider would be to use the predictive model during Junior year to determine students at risk for not enrolling. Using this data, school leaders can make a strategic effort to reengage those specific students in their education before they officially disengage.

**3. Continue to develop college level course taking in high school**

Although 60% of CSD students already take at least one college course while in high school, one consideration is to build a CTE Running Start Pathway, providing opportunities for students interested in certification program to earn college credits in relevant CTE coursework. There is currently an underrepresentation of students who receive FRL benefits and students of color in college level coursework, which should be explored more fully to provide equitable support for career and college success to all students throughout the district.

**Thoughts about the 70% goal:**

Keep 60% goal for Classes of 2022 – 2027.

Announce an increase to 70% for Class of 2028 and following (I think this is current 6<sup>th</sup> graders). This provides motivation to **develop** Tier 3 interventions, **implement** Tier 2 strategies, and **maintain** Tier 1 successes. It also keeps the SAI goal of 70% ahead of Washington State, which is where you should be.