



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 14, 2011

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Over 300 Public Educators Meet to Advance College Readiness

The “Pathways to College Readiness and College Success” conference that took place April 13, 2011 in Kingston, Massachusetts, attracted 325 public educators—superintendents, principals, Math and English department chairs, guidance counselors, and college faculty and administrators—with a shared goal of seeing more high school students successfully enter college.

Dr. Charles Wall, president of Massasoit Community College and Chair of CONNECT, pointed out, “Students think that if they passed the MCAS test, they are ready for college. But MCAS is not a college-readiness test.” Noting that the lack of alignment between high school and college expectations causes many students to place into remedial courses, Dr. Wall continued: “That is why we are having this conversation, with both K-12 and postsecondary educators at the table. We’re trying to build a bridge across the gap.”

Keynote speaker Mr. Allison Jones, Fellow for Postsecondary Engagement at Achieve, opened the morning sessions by asking, “What are the 21st century skills our students are going to need? This is exactly what is on your agenda today.” Achieve is a national organization responsible for developing the new PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) assessment that is scheduled to replace MCAS in the 2014-15 school year.

Brockton superintendent Dr. Matthew Malone introduced the lunchtime panel on “Ambitious Innovations and Experiments in Reform” by noting that “Brockton Public Schools ask this question every day: ‘Is this the best we can do, can we do more?’ For more than a decade our courageous teacher leaders have answered ‘yes, we can do more.’”

In the closing conference session, Southeastern Massachusetts K-12 educators expressed strong commitment to “doing more” and asked the colleges and universities for continued collaboration around college readiness. They suggested action items such as dual enrollment classes embedded in the high schools, college readiness liaisons to work with the schools, and ongoing discussions around curriculum alignment.

Conference presentations and videos are available on the CONNECT website:

www.connectsemass.org.

The conference was planned by CONNECT in partnership with the Southeastern Massachusetts Readiness Center, with sponsorship from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, The College Board, and ACT.

CONNECT is a partnership of the six public institutions of higher education in Southeastern Massachusetts: Bristol, Cape Cod, and Massasoit Community Colleges; Bridgewater State University; Massachusetts Maritime Academy, and University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.