



News for Immediate Release

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First Lady Susan Corbett Updates Education Leaders on “Opening Doors” Dropout Prevention Initiative

Harrisburg – Pennsylvania First Lady Susan Corbett today met with state and national leaders in education and dropout prevention on the progress of her “Opening Doors” initiative.

“Opening Doors” aims to increase the graduation rate in the commonwealth by focusing on middle school students.

Mrs. Corbett led a forum at the Governor’s Residence where dozens of leaders in education and youth services discussed ways to improve the graduation rate statewide.

“Since launching the ‘Opening Doors’ initiative nearly one year ago, I have spent time travelling across the state meeting with superintendents, teachers and students and observing intervention programs that are keeping students engaged in school,” Mrs. Corbett said. “We are pleased to continue moving the initiative forward with the development of an early warning system in Pennsylvania.”

The early warning system is being created through a partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Education and will assist in identifying middle school students who are at risk of dropping out. The secure, web-based system looks at academic progress, attendance and behavior to determine who is at risk.

The early warning system will also provide information about public and private-based intervention services available to keep students on track to graduate.

Mrs. Corbett announced that five Pennsylvania school districts will participate in the first phase of the early warning system rollout. Participating schools were chosen by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

“The First Lady and the Department of Education’s joint efforts to facilitate and champion the development of an early warning system that the school districts of Pennsylvania can use will help keep thousands of students on the path to high school graduation and a better future,” Robert Balfanz, co-director of the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University said.

The early warning system will be offered to schools free of charge. It is being funded by federal and private dollars. Team Pennsylvania Foundation is also providing support for these efforts.

For more information on the "Opening Doors" initiative, visit www.pa.gov/Firstlady.

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Editor's Note:

School districts participating in the first phase of the early warning system include:

- Albert Gallatin Area School District, Fayette County
- Canon-McMillan School District, Washington County
- Erie School District, Erie County
- Harrisburg School District, Dauphin County
- Lancaster School District, Lancaster County

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