2010 Reach Out to Dropouts Walk: Questions and Answers

Q: When and where will this happen?
A: The 5 comprehensive high schools and Scavo will be open from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. on Saturday, September 25, to provide an opportunity for both conferencing with and begin the re-entry process for students not yet enrolled in school. These schools will also send out visitation teams to speak with students and parents at their homes.

Q: How will the list of students be created?
A: Schools will submit lists of students who have not shown up for school by the 10th day of the new school year (Thursday, September 9). District volunteers will attempt to contact the parents by phone Tuesday, September 21 to see if the students are still at the address on file.

Q: What happens on the Reach Out to Dropouts day?
A: Volunteers will be contacted by e-mail or phone to confirm their school assignment prior to the walk. It is requested that volunteers arrive at assigned schools by 9 a.m. and plan to remain until noon. Schools will have identified parking. Volunteers will sign-in and meet the school staff where he/she will be assigned to a team.

Q: What should a volunteer bring and wear?
A: Dress in cool clothing. By all means, wear very comfortable shoes. Volunteers may want to wear a hat and bring sunscreen and an umbrella or rain poncho, just in case. There will be no rain day.

Q: What will the school provide for the visitation teams?
A: The school planning team will provide:
- A segment of the student lists, along with sheets to record information
- Maps of the area they will visit
- Door hangers with district contact information for those not at home
- Pens, pencils and highlighters
- Name tags; district employees should wear their district ID badge

Q: Who will be on the visitation team?
A: Each of the teams on each campus will consist of at least one school/district staff member, community volunteers. Each team will have 3-5 members.

Q: What will the team do?
A: The campus teams will:
- Visit as many students as possible from their list (6-10 per team) within the morning period (from 9 a.m. – noon).
- Provide information to assist students with any obstacles they may encounter in their return to school. Students will be asked to either go to the school that day to begin the process, or they may take the contact card and meet with those at the school during the following week.
- Notations made by the team members, including verification of student’s demographic and contact information, will be returned to the identified contact at the school so follow-up procedures may begin taking place. Follow-up procedures will be planned and carried
out by teams at the school in order to track the students through the re-enrollment process. Ongoing support will be offered so that students will remain enrolled and successful. Members of the School Student Assistance Team, the Success Case Manager and the Counselor will provide this support.

Q: What security measures will be in place?
A: Security measures will include:

- Screening of volunteers:
  - Volunteers must register online through the United Way website prior to September 14 (10 days before the event)
  - As part of the online volunteer registration, volunteers must select yes authorizing United Way to perform a search of the Iowa Sex Offender Registry.
  - Volunteers must attend a volunteer training prior to the day of the event and show picture identification and will receive a t-shirt to wear the day of the event.
  - The day of the event, volunteers must again show picture identification and have their t-shirt to volunteer.
  - Des Moines Police Department School Resource Officers will be at their designated schools the day of the event.
  - Des Moines Police Department dispatch will be alerting all officers on duty the day of the event that volunteers will be out throughout the community visiting homes.
  - Each team should have an operable cell phone so that any emergency calls may be routed to the team.

Q: What must a volunteer do to prepare for the walk?
A: All volunteers must:

- Sign up for the day with United Way of Central Iowa website.
- Participate in required training sessions to be a part of visitation teams.
- Be willing and eager to collaborate in the dropout recovery process and to help students and parents to overcome obstacles to completing their education.
- Commit to the time block of 9 a.m. until noon at the assigned campus.
- Wear the Reach Out to Dropouts T-shirt.