

The Franklin-Essex-Hamilton BOCES and the nine component school districts (Brushton-Moira, Chateaugay, Lake Placid, Long Lake, Malone, St. Regis Falls, Salmon River, Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake) are partnering with the Community Intervention Partnership, on a comprehensive dropout prevention program. The Graduation Rate Initiative is an intensive effort to raise the graduation rate to 90% or better by June 2012. Based on the latest available data, the overall graduation rate in the school districts comprising the Franklin-Essex-Hamilton BOCES is 78%, meaning that more than 1 out of every 5 students that enter high school in the region do not graduate. Lake Placid Central School District and St. Regis Falls Central School District had the highest graduation rate at 87%.

The Community Intervention Partnership endorsed the project at their meeting on April 29. The Community Intervention Partnership is chaired by Lesley Lyon, Commissioner of the Department of Social Services and Stephen Shafer, District Superintendent of the Franklin-Essex-Hamilton BOCES. The Community Intervention Partnership is comprised of 65 agencies and organizations committed to the families and youth of the region.

The Graduation Rate Initiative is a sustained effort to raise the graduation rate in the entire region. "This initiative will require a strong working partnership with a broad range of constituencies. Educators, students, families, community agencies and employers will be important partners in this effort," stated Steve Shafer, District Superintendent of the Franklin-Essex-Hamilton BOCES.

"The foundation of a high school diploma opens doors to young adults. Graduates are more employable. Graduates are more likely to pursue post secondary education or technical training. Graduates have advantages in pursuing a career in the military services. In short, they are better able to live as contributing members of American society and to function in the global marketplace," continued Shafer.

"Franklin County Department of Social Services works with many of the highest risk children in the county - children with multiple challenges at home and in school. These are the very kids that are most in danger of not graduating. We really need to work together to find ways to make systemic changes in the lives of these children and families," stated Lesley Lyon, Franklin County Commissioner of Social Services.

Support for the Graduation Rate Initiative is being sought from any group that is committed to the youth and families in our region. Groups wishing to be recognized as supporting partners for the Graduation Rate Initiative should contact Leslie LaRose, Director of Special Services, F-E-H BOCES at 483-5230.

Parents are urged to discuss the Graduation Rate Initiative with their child's teacher or principal. A strong collaboration between home and school is a central foundation for student success. For more information on the Graduation Rate Initiative visit www.fehb.org and click on the Graduation Rate Initiative link or visit the home page of the school district where you reside and click on the Graduation Rate Initiative link.