

The National Alliance On the American High School

PRESS RELEASE

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The National Alliance on the American High School Announces Receipt of Two Major Grants to Establish Formal Organization

“Alliance sends clarion call ... to change the system.”

October 23, 2002 Washington, DC – The National Alliance on the American High School (HS Alliance)—which will be conducting a meeting of all its partners in Chicago, October 24-25—was the recent recipient of three-year funding totaling \$501,383 from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The HS Alliance will continue to be housed and staffed by the Institute for Educational Leadership. With this new support, the HS Alliance will advance its mission to foster high achievement, close the achievement gap, and promote civic and personal growth among high school-aged youth.

To achieve this mission, the HS Alliance will leverage the diverse efforts of its partners, which include over 40 public and private sector organizations at the national and regional levels. Each of these partners has been working in some way to address the fact that the nation’s high schools and other institutions are failing to prepare students for college and the workforce. However, as extensive as these various efforts may be, most have been implemented in isolation, making it difficult to share lessons learned and best practices, as well as to advocate for practice, policy, and research that improves the academic and development outcomes of high school-aged youth. The HS Alliance was formed to help corral and marshal the strategies and tactics of its members to:

- 1. Build opportunities for shared learning and concerted action about practice, policy, and research among organizations engaged in initiatives designed to improve academic and developmental outcomes for high school-aged youth.**
- 2. Inform policy, research, and practice at the federal, state, and local levels.**
- 1. Increase public awareness and engagement to support the development of effective practices and policies that improve academic and developmental outcomes of high school-aged youth.**

“By bringing together a diverse group of policy, research and advocacy groups, foundations, education institutions, and employers to share their efforts on improving the nation’s high schools, this new coalition will help advance the important work of helping every student succeed,” says HS Alliance partner Susan Frost,

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executive director of Alliance for Excellent Education. The HS Alliance will also help to develop and strengthen the efforts of its partners. As partner Betsy Brand, co-director of the American Youth Policy Forum, observed: “This Alliance allows us to expand our reach—influencing the policy debate and change process—to many more states and communities, thereby increasing our effectiveness in improving high schools.”

Gerald N. Tirozzi, executive director of the National Association of Secondary School Principals and one of the HS Alliance’s founding partners, adds that making a positive, significant impact on outcomes for high school-aged youth will require a concerted and coordinated effort: “Reforming America’s high schools calls for a major act of collaborative effort from all of the players on the ‘stage of secondary school reform.’ The HS Alliance sends the message—a clarion call—as to the types of programs, initiatives, and interventions necessary to change the system. It represents a beacon of hope for transforming the grades 9-12 system.”

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation was established in 1930 “to help people help themselves through the practical application of knowledge and resources to improve their quality of life and that of future generations.” Its programming activities center around the common vision of a world in which each person has a sense of worth; accepts responsibility for self, family, community, and societal well-being; and has the capacity to be productive, and to help create nurturing families, responsive institutions, and healthy communities.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is dedicated to improving people's lives by sharing advances in health and learning with the global community. The foundation was created in January of 2000, through the merger of the Gates Learning Foundation, which focused on expanding access to technology through public libraries, and the William H. Gates Foundation, which focused on improving global health.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation and The Chicago Community Trust have provided initial funding for the HS Alliance’s formation and meetings. The HS Alliance is housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) – a non-profit, nonpartisan organization established in 1964 in Washington, D.C. Over the past two years, IEL Senior Associate Monica Martinez has worked to develop the HS Alliance and will now serve as its senior advisor. Naomi Housman, who is based at IEL, has been selected by the HS Alliance Steering Committee to serve as the HS Alliance Coordinator. She served for the past two years as assistant director of outreach for the National Clearinghouse for Comprehensive School Reform. Ms. Housman has focused her career on serving public schools systems, particularly those at the secondary level in high poverty, urban communities.

Please visit www.hsalliance.org to learn more about the HS Alliance and its recently released report on state policy, *All Over the Map*.

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