

Southern Entrepreneurship Program

“Building Futures, Changing Lives”

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University of Southern Mississippi

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Land Grant Youth
Entrepreneurship Conference

State College, PA

Southern Entrepreneurship Program Overview

Where?

- Mid-South region of the United States

What?

- Capitalizes on existing core classes:
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Personal Finance

Southern Entrepreneurship Program Overview

Piloted in 4 high schools in 2007-2008

- Hattiesburg
- Petal
- Gulfport
- Laurel

When?

- During the regular school year

Southern Entrepreneurship Program Overview

Why?

- The Mid-South Region has a long history
 - Pervasive poverty (United States Census Bureau, (2008)
 - Educational underachievement.
 - Brain drain
 - Less-skilled workforce
 - Most of the region's businesses have fewer than 50 employees or less

Southern Entrepreneurship Program Overview

Where is the SEP going in 2008-2009?

- The SEP will expand to no less than ten schools in August 2008
- Additional regional partners identified
- Expectation of 17 schools participating in some form by January 2009
- Expected to be adopted by over 100 schools by August 2009

Southern Entrepreneurship Program Overview

Program Objectives – Objective 1

- Identified one or two classes of fifteen students per school district to participate in the nine-month training program.
 - Juniors preferred
- Program participants were identified in collaboration with the partnering school districts.
- School districts engaged in training using their existing classes.
- Each school and partner encouraged to make it “their” program

Southern Entrepreneurship Program Overview

Program Objectives – Objective 2

- Provided entrepreneurship training through the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) program to the participants.
- This program includes basic accounting and marketing training and also results in the development of a business plan.

Southern Entrepreneurship Program Overview

Program Objectives – Objective 3

- Provided students with QuickBooks training enabling them to be more effective in their fledgling business efforts.

Southern Entrepreneurship Program Overview

Program Objectives – Objective 4

- Increased the likelihood of new entrepreneur success by engaging existing business leaders who served as mentors for the program participants.
- Ideally, program participants were partnered with mentors in similar business fields.

Southern Entrepreneurship Program Overview

Program Objectives – Objective 5

- Provided stimulants for new business development by providing program graduates opportunities to obtain private funding options.
- Program participants presented business plans constructed in the program to panels of funders for funding consideration.

Southern Entrepreneurship Program Overview

Program Objectives – Objective 5 (cont.)

- Business plan competitions were held with awards and support services provided to award winners.
- One business plan per high school received one year's free rent and services at local business incubator.
 - This will continue with future program participants where available.

Southern Entrepreneurship Program Overview

Program Objectives – Objective 6

- Conducted on-going evaluation efforts throughout the program development and implemented processes to assure that all tasks in the effort are completed in an efficient and effective manner.
 - Pretests – August
 - Posttests - May

Southern Entrepreneurship Program Overview

Program Objectives – Objective 7

- Enhanced and sustained the work of SEP partners by enhancing their ability to maintain an ongoing entrepreneurial development program with local funds.

Why SEP and Why Now?

- Project background
 - Result of work started at Delta State University
 - No youth involved in entrepreneurship programs in the region
 - Ready and willing partners

Why SEP and Why Now?

What does it take to be involved?

- Teacher(s)
- Texts
- Training
- Commitment from project partners
- Willing students
- Travel to symposiums/workshops
- Identification of mentors

SEP Retreats

Three retreats throughout the school year.

- Fall – “Getting Connected”
 - What is entrepreneurship?
 - Who are entrepreneurs?
- Winter – “I Am My Own Boss!”
 - Getting funded
 - Staying in business
- Spring – “Building My Future, Today”
 - Business plan competition

Why SEP and Why Now?

- Why will SEP work?
 - Ready need
 - Ready support from government, business, educational, and civic organizations
 - Let's be honest, it's dang sexy
 - Kids get it
 - Use of electronic media

Why SEP and Why Now?

- Can SEP work for me?
 - Use of regional partners
 - Community Colleges
 - WIRED Initiative
 - Economic Development Organizations
 - Chambers
 - School Boards
 - Media

Resources / Inputs

- Resources provided by Trent Lott Center/USM
 - Capital:
 - My time
 - Graduate Assistant
 - Travel to sites
 - Assistance for retreats
 - Telecommunications and printing

Resources / Inputs

- Resources provided by SEP Partners
 - Assistance for retreats
 - Food
 - Travel
 - Publicity
 - Assistance for texts
 - WIRED

Resources / Inputs

- Resources obtained from
 - Public entities
 - University/community colleges
 - Mississippi Technology Alliance
 - Economic development organizations
 - Private sources
 - Banks
 - Research and technology transfer organizations
 - In-kind donations

Resources / Inputs

Lessons Learned

- People/entities want to help
- Involvement of regional partners
- Networks matter
- Involvement of mentors
- Economic development organizations

Getting SEP Started

Program implementation

- Met with school superintendents, boards, principals, and teachers
- Generated support from local communities
 - Economic development organizations
 - Chambers
 - Civic organizations
- Started with a lot of faith and phone calls

SEP Networking

Ning Site

- www.smyeps.ning.com
- Designed with the students' assistance
- Created with the end user in mind
- Highly adaptable
- Best practices
- Input from participants
- **FREE!!!!!!!**

SEP Outcomes

Knowledge

- Ice Cream marketing
 - Tropical Concoctions
 - College Connections
 - Death By.....

SEP Outcomes

Knowledge

- Getting funded
- New networks
- Presentation skills
- FBLA entrepreneurship competition

SEP Outcomes

Knowledge

- First generation college students
 - Juniors first year
 - Seniors dually enrolled in community college
 - Mentors for first-year students
 - Decrease in high school drop out rates
 - Higher educational expectations

SEP Outcomes

Goals/Objectives

- Of the four schools, 58 of 70 students that started the program finished it
- Business plan competition
 - The Snow Shack
 - Sea Flight
 - Uniform Corner
 - Udders

SEP Outcomes

Goals/Objectives

- Seven businesses functioning with 7-10 expected to start in the next year
- Nearly half indicated that they no longer wanted to be entrepreneurs
- Gaining support from external partners
- Recruitment of schools is not a problem
- Managing growth

Long Term SEP Impacts

Growth Phase

- Over 100 schools by 2009
- Minimum of 15 students per high school
- Over 1,700 program participants expected to have completed the program by summer 2010
- New businesses
- College entrants

SEP Evaluation

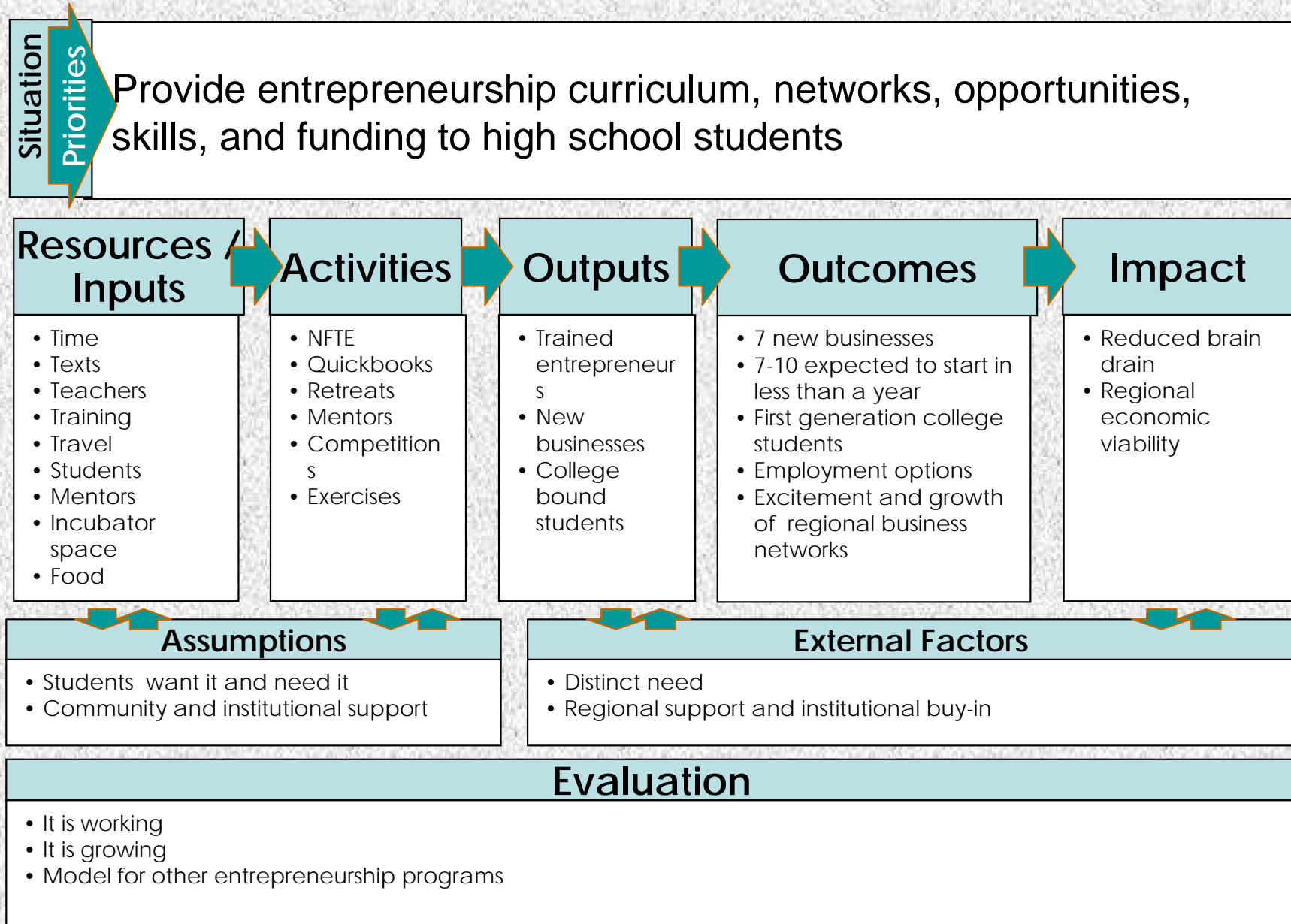
Evaluation measures for 2008

- Students and teachers surveyed at the end of school year
- Results used for program enhancement

Evaluation measures for 2008-2009

- Pretests
- Posttests
- Results to be distributed back to the schools and to the communities

Program Logic Summary



SEP Today and Beyond

Community college program

- Working with Workforce Training Programs in community colleges
- Currently piloting
- Expected to be adopted state-wide

Displaced worker program

- Working with the Governor's Office, the Montgomery Institute and others

SEP Today and Beyond

Umbrella entrepreneurship structure

- Youth
- Community college
- University
- State and local programs
- WIRED
- Other interested organizations

2009 Mid-South Entrepreneurship Summit

SEP Partners

- The Trent Lott National Center for Excellence in Economic Development and Entrepreneurship
- University of Southern Mississippi
- Jones County Junior College
- Pearl River Community College
- East Mississippi Community College
- Delta State University
- The Montgomery Institute

SEP Partners

- Mississippi Development Authority
- Area Development Partnership
- Jones County Economic Development Authority
- Harrison County Economic Development Authority
- Smith County Economic Development Foundation
- Greater Biloxi Economic Development foundation

SEP Partners

- Biloxi Chamber of Commerce
- Gulf Coast Business Technology Center
- Business Launch Point
- The WIRED Initiative
- Pine Belt Innovators
- Small Business Development Center
- Petal Chamber of Commerce

SEP Partners

- Hattiesburg School District
- Petal School District
- Laurel School District
- Forrest County School District
- Gulfport School District
- Smith County School District
- West Jasper School District

SEP Partners

- Columbus City School District
- Biloxi School District
- Cleveland MS School District
- Pine Belt Innovators
- Hybrid Plastics
- Noetic Technologies
- Mississippi Technology Alliance

SEP Partners

- The Peoples Bank
- Whitney Bank
- Beecher Carlson
- Community Bank
- U.S. Small Business Administration
- Howard Advanced Technology Center
- **AND GROWING!**

Questions?

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