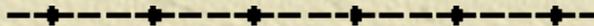




Stop the leak!

Increase High School
Graduation Rates



What do we know?

- ✦ Students at risk for not completing high school can be identified very early (some believe as early as kindergarten).
- ✦ Drop-out statistics have remained “stable” over time indicating that effective prevention programs are not in place in most settings.
- ✦ High-school dropouts earn less money and require more support from human services organizations than high-school graduates. The human cost is high, and so is the economic cost.

20,122 Washington State Students Dropped Out of School in 2006-2007...

*National High School Center: Approaches to Dropout Prevention: Heeding
Early Warning Signs With Appropriate Interventions 10/07*

http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_ApproachesToDropoutPrevention.pdf

The key indicators that researchers have identified as indicative of who is most likely to drop out are:

- ✦ poor grades in core subjects,
 - ✦ low attendance,
 - ✦ failure to be promoted to the next grade, and
 - ✦ disengagement in the classroom, including behavioral problems.
-
- ✦ The Shelton School District found health issues to be a major issue for those who drop out.

*National High School Center:
Approaches to Dropout Prevention: Heeding Early Warning
Signs With Appropriate Interventions*

Most future dropouts may be identified early. One key study indicated that more than half of sixth graders with the following three criteria eventually left school:

- attend school less than 80 percent of the time;
- receive a low final grade from their teachers in behavior; and fail either math or English (Balfanz & Herzog, 2005).
- Eighth-graders who miss five weeks of school or fail math or English have at least a 75 percent chance of dropping out of high school. (Neild & Balfanz, 2006).

Retention in middle grades, and even elementary school, is associated with dropout.



Early Warning System Steps:

(National High School Center Report)

1. Establish a data system that tracks individual student attendance, grades, promotion status, and engagement indicators, such as behavioral marks, as early as fourth grade.
2. Determine criteria for who is considered off-track for graduation and establish a continuum of appropriate interventions.
3. Track ninth grade students who miss 10 days or more of school in the first 30 days



Early Warning System Steps:

(National High School Center Report, continued)

4. Monitor first quarter freshman grades, paying particular attention to failures in core academic subjects.
5. Monitor Fall semester freshmen grades, paying particular attention to failures in core academic subjects.
6. Monitor end-of-year grades.
7. Track students who have failed too many core subjects to be promoted to tenth grade.

Building Bridges Report Recommendations:

✦ Bridges Project Recommendation 1.1.A and 1.1.B To Legislature:
By 2015 set statutory goals for percentage of students graduating percentage of dropouts reengaged in education;

✦ 1.2.A and 1.2.B To Legislature:
Direct state agencies to provide: protocols and templates for records/data sharing professional development for state agency staff about at-risk youth research

✦ Potential SBE policy considerations:

- Provide recommended percentage targets to members of the Legislature
- Use the designated percentage as a target in **SBE's Accountability Index**.

Building Bridges Report Recommendations:

- ✦ Bridges Project Recommendation
2.1 To Legislature: Continuing funding for Building Bridges Program adjusted to include state-level direction to P-12 system schools to include full continuum of dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval activities in School Improvement Plan process.

- ✦ 2.2 To Legislature: Basic education funding for **early warning** systems that analyze school and district dropout patterns and **in-time student progress monitoring**. (*My emphasis... S. F.*)

- ✦ **Potential** State Board of Education consideration:

At a minimum, advocate for the continued development of personalized student progress monitoring data that can identify students who demonstrate early warning indicators.

Building Bridges Report Recommendations:

- ✦ **Recommendation 2.3** To the Legislature: Enhancements to public education to motivate students and address nonacademic barriers to learning including:
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
 - Enhanced funding for career and technical education
 - Enhanced funding for the learning assistance program and modification of the program to allow for nonacademic issues
 - Improved funding ratios for pupil support staff
 - Improved funding for school health services

Potential State Board of Education consideration:

- Increase the early school leaving age from 16 to 18.
 - **Related Initiative**: Core 24 CTE credits with additional elective CTE options.
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- A Sept. 2008 U.S. Depart. of Ed. **Dropout Prevention** report recommended the assignment of knowledgeable adult advocates to students at risk. Advocates do not need to be teachers or classified staff (but they could be.)
http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice_guides/dp_pg_090308.pdf

Building Bridges Report Recommendations:

- ✦ **3.1** Establish a statewide dropout retrieval system with goals for basic skills gains, high school graduation, college and work readiness skills, and industry credentials or certificates.
- ✦ **3.2** Develop a single comprehensive regulatory framework to guide and govern dropout retrieval programs that includes: 1) Eligibility requirements based on nonattendance, credit to age ratio, and/or recommendations from third parties (i.e. juvenile justice staff, foster care case managers, DSHS case managers) to ensure appropriate student placement. 2) Standards for required program service elements (case management, specialized instruction, teaching qualifications, access to support services) and program outcomes. 3) Standards for billing and reimbursement methodology.

Potential State Board of Education policy consideration:

- ✦ Review and update (if appropriate) the guidelines for approval and implementation of alternatives to Carnegie credit-based high school graduation requirements

Building Bridges Report Recommendations:

- ✦ 3.3 Establish the authority for regional partnerships to design services for 16 to 21 year old youth who have dropped out and are not likely to return to high school and identify a lead agency to contract for such services. Partners and eligible contractors should include school districts, ESDs, workforce development councils, community and technical colleges, skills centers, nonprofit organizations, and other governmental or tribal entities.

Potential State Board of Education policy consideration:

“Establish the authority for regional partnerships to design services for 16 to 21 year-old youth who have dropped out and are not likely to return to high school...”

✦ **Other Considerations:**

- Academic support and enrichment to improve academic performance (Targeted intervention)
- Programs to improve student’s classroom behavior and school and identify a lead agency to contract for such services. (Targeted intervention)
- Personalized learning and instruction (School-wide intervention)
- Rigorous and relevant instruction to better engage and prepare students (School-wide intervention)

✦ http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/dp_pg_090308.pdf

Summary of Potential SBE Contributions:

- Provide recommended graduation percentage targets to members of the Legislature
- Use the designated percentage as a target in **SBE's Accountability Index**.
- At a minimum, advocate for the continued development and use of student data that can identify students who demonstrate early warning indicators.
- Increase the early leaving school age from 16 to 18.
- Review and update (if appropriate) the guidelines for approval and implementation of alternatives to Carnegie credit-based high school graduation requirements.
- “Establish the authority for regional partnerships to design services for 16 to 21 year-old youth who have dropped out and are not likely to return to high school...”



Stop the leak!!

