Best Practices in Dropout Prevention

Report Prepared for the Texas Education Agency by ICF International and the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network

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Preface

House Bill 2237 from the Texas State Legislature includes provisions for a study on best practices in dropout prevention. The following requirements were put forth in the legislation:

Sec. 7.031. Study of Best Practices for Dropout Prevention.

(a) The commissioner shall contract with one or more centers for education research under Section 1.005 or any other public or private entity qualified to conduct education research to:

(1) study the best practices of campuses and school districts in this state and other states regarding dropout prevention programs; and

(2) prepare a report regarding the findings of the study.

(b) The report under Subsection (a) must:

(1) identify any high-performing and highly efficient dropout prevention programs;

(2) identify the dropout prevention programs under Subdivision (1) that have the most potential for success in this state; and

(3) recommend legislation or other actions necessary to implement a dropout prevention program identified under Subdivision (2).

This report, which was authored by ICF International and the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network, contains the results of our comprehensive study. The study authors would like to thank Chris Caesar and Michael Berry at TEA for their guidance and support during this intensive effort. We would also like to thank the following staff at TEA who provided valuable input on the dropout landscape in Texas and on the development of this document: Lizzette Reynolds, Barbara Knaggs, Jan Lindsey, Nellie Reyes, Jim Van Overschelde, and Ertha Patrick. We are truly grateful for the dedication of these experts and others at TEA who are working to address the dropout crisis in Texas.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

This study was prepared by ICF International in conjunction with the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (NDPC/N). It should be noted that ICF staff have been conducting the national evaluation of Communities In Schools (CIS) since 2005, and one of our studies from the national evaluation is included in this review. ICF is also currently conducting an evaluation of CIS in Texas. The final report for this evaluation has yet to be released and thus was not included in this study.

The co-lead of this study, Jay Smink from the NDPC/N, currently sits on the CIS Network Evaluation Advisory Committee.

The methodology and results of this study were thoroughly vetted to numerous stakeholders at TEA, and all dropout prevention programs in this review were subject to the same standards. The results of this study have not been influenced in any way as a result of our other work in the dropout prevention field.

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Executive Summary

Background

House Bill 2237 from the Texas State Legislature includes provisions for a study on best practices in dropout prevention. ICF International, in partnership with the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (NDPC/N) at Clemson University, was tasked with fulfilling the following requirements that were put forth in the legislation:

(1) Identify any high-performing and highly efficient dropout prevention programs;
(2) Identify the dropout prevention programs under Subdivision (1) that have the most potential for success in Texas; and
(3) Recommend legislation or other actions necessary to implement a dropout prevention program identified under Subdivision (2).

In this report, we present "end-to-end" information to help policymakers and practitioners:

- Identify programs that work;
- Classify best practices that are common to effective programs;
- Pinpoint key factors in successful implementation and replication of best practices;
- Understand in what contexts programs work; and
- Identify future directions that can guide Texas policy on dropout prevention.

The information presented in this report can be distilled down to one salient point: Dropout prevention is a complicated endeavor and must involve a wide range of services to tackle a wide range of problems. There are multiple pathways to dropping out of school, and therefore, any dropout prevention program should have a multi-faceted strategy to serve a wide range of students who are at-risk of dropping out.

Methods

Numerous independent efforts have been undertaken to identify evidence-based research, such as the U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse, RAND's Promising Practices Network, and SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices. Typically, when evidence of a program's effectiveness is found, an intervention/program will get a "seal of approval" from these entities. In this research, we wanted to take one additional – and admittedly, ambitious – step: We wanted to not only determine what programs work, but also *why* they work, *how* they work, and *in what situations* they work.

The evaluation team conducted an extensive literature review of research on dropout

prevention programs. For this literature search, a total of 520 titles and abstracts were collected. An initial relevancy screening was conducted, and 291 studies did not pass. The remaining 229 studies were coded using the standards for review, resulting in 38 reports on 58 research studies passing all coding standards. The literature search was supplemented by nominations from key stakeholders at TEA.

The classification of programs was achieved using a three-tier system to identify evidence-based programs with multiple rigorous studies (Tier 1), evidence-based programs with at least one study (Tier 2), and programs that met NDPC/N's standards for quality, even though they were not the subject of published research (Tier 3). The system takes into account the strength of the evidence (internal validity), the number of studies conducted on a program (external validity), the magnitude of the program's effects, and the types of outcomes measured.

Based on these reviews, we were able to classify programs that would have the best chance for replication in Texas. We also disaggregated findings to determine which program components or strategies were linked with success, as well as which programs were successful in given contexts. A summary of our findings on each study component follows.

What are the high-performing and highly efficient dropout prevention programs?

In order to identify dropout prevention programs that are both high-performing and highly efficient, one must look at all types of evidence surrounding an intervention. Following the structure of this report, we identify the best programs, best practices, context for successful replication, and considerations in the implementation of these programs.

Best Programs

Nationwide, the dropout prevention programs having the most effect on the widest range of outcomes associated with and including dropout are:

- *Check and Connect*: The program had meaningful effects[1] on GED certification,

What Does Dropout Prevention Look Like?

Program A: Alternative Schooling

Program A, an accredited alternative high school, engages students at-risk of dropping out and students who have reentered the school system through individualized career based educational tracks. In addition to classroom-based programs, this alternative school provides hand-on practicum in the areas of mechanical engineering, web-based development, hospitality, and architectural and construction technology. Online courses are offered to allow a flexible schedule and students to move at their own pace. Students are also provided personal development opportunities which focus on: anger management, positive communication, decision making, and improving self-concept. Teachers at Program A meet on a monthly basis to assess student and school progress.

[1] Effect sizes were calculated for each program outcome, and were considered "meaningful" if they were above 0.2. Effect sizes allow researchers to use a single metric to compare the magnitude of various outcomes. They are usually calculated by dividing the mean difference between the treatment and comparison group by the pooled standard deviation.

dropout rates, attendance rates, credit completion, and dropout recovery. A central component of the program is the monitor, who is responsible for assessing levels of student engagement and for implementing basic and intensive interventions.

- *Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success (ALAS)*: The program, which is no longer in operation, had meaningful effects on dropout rates, attendance, credit completion, and dropout recovery. ALAS targets Latino students at-risk due to low academic achievement and behavioral issues and assigns each of them a counselor, who monitors truancy and attendance, provides students and their families access to services, and updates parents on their child's progress.

- *Career Academies*: The program had meaningful effects on GED certification, dropout rates, and credit completion. Career Academies operate as alternative schools within a larger high school and focus on making students career-ready by combining regular academic coursework with career-centered curricula, having students focus on one career track, and giving them the opportunity to intern with local businesses.

- *Communities In Schools (CIS)*: The program had meaningful effects on high school graduation, dropout, attendance, and math achievement. CIS is a stay-in-school program utilizing a case management model to help students by providing services directly or linking students with other agencies and programs in the community to help them stay in school, post better attendance rates, reduce behavior problems, improve academically, and graduate or receive a GED.

These four programs had the strongest evidence of effectiveness on the widest range of outcomes; however, we cannot conclude that these are necessarily the only programs that are truly effective. Since many of the studies reviewed measured a limited number of outcomes, it may be more accurate to say that these four programs had the strongest – and most complete – evidence of effectiveness.

Best Practices

Our review found that the following strategies were most widely used among Tier 1, 2, and 3 programs and were common strategies used by the programs with the strongest results:

- *School-community collaboration* – recognizes the value of such local entities outside of school as home, places of worship, the media, museums, libraries, community agencies, and businesses in the education of a community's students.
- *Safe learning environments* – involves a comprehensive violence prevention plan, including conflict resolution, and can include social competence, problem recognition and evaluation, goal setting, planning, expecting challenges, controlling anger, and expressing emotion.

- *Family engagement* – involves families to improve factors such as student academic achievement, attendance, attitudes and behavior in school, and expectations of achievement from teachers.
- *Mentoring/Tutoring* – provides students with a caring, trusting relationship between an adult and a youth that includes a one-on-one activity that focuses on academics.
- *Alternative schooling* – provides students with the opportunity to achieve success based on their own personal goals and achievements.
- *Active learning* – employs teaching and learning strategies that engage and involve students in the learning process, including cooperative learning, multiple intelligence theory, and project-based learning.
- *Career and technology education* – integrates academic and career-based skills, giving all students a solid academic foundation regardless of their plans after high school.

What Does Dropout Prevention Look Like?

Program B: Early Education

Program B operates in an early education center and is focused on children 6 months to 5 years of age. Children in Program B are identified as being at-risk as a result of the incarceration of a parent or close caregiver. Program staff are provided intensive training on child development, early literacy, and behavioral management through bi-monthly teacher development sessions. Program B incorporates small reading groups where older children read stories to younger members of the group. The program couples recreational and educational activities in an effort to improve the health and literacy rate of these youth. This program also identifies a family member or close family friend, engaging them in quarterly educational opportunities aimed at encouraging at-home reading. Program B has found family engagement to be a successful tool for continuing the children's educational focus as they enter public school.

Among the 3 Tier 1 programs that had the strongest effects on reducing dropout rates, all were multi-faceted programs employing at least 4 effective strategies. Two programs used school-community collaboration, family engagement, alternative schooling, and active learning.

Key Considerations in Implementation

Programs that use several different strategies have been shown to be effective.[2] By implementing several of the strategies presented in this report, schools are likely to have more success at keeping students in school. We must keep in mind that dropouts are not one monolithic group: there are different types of dropouts, from pregnant/parenting girls, to students who are bored with school, to students who are having difficulty in academic achievement, to homeless students, to students who must quit school to help support their families. Each of these "types" of dropouts brings to the table different presenting problems

[2] Hammond, C., Smink, J., Drew, S., & Linton, D. (May 2007). *Dropout risk factors and exemplary programs: A technical report*. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center.

and risk factors, as well as different pathways to dropping out. An effective dropout prevention strategy must be appropriate for many "types" of dropouts, and by definition, this requires a multi-pronged approach.

When conducting a review of the implementation techniques across all fifteen strategies, two themes emerge. First, there are some tangible elements of success, such as proper staff training and support; family engagement; community involvement and service learning; and school to work programs. In order to learn, at-risk students need specialized attention from caring adults who recognize their individual background knowledge, learning styles, strengths and weaknesses, and career goals – and these adults can also operate as monitors to ensure that students are staying on track. Second, there are many intangibles that go into a dropout prevention program. For example, effective programs must build trust with students, parents, and school administrators. Moreover, effective programs must instill in students a belief that change is possible, and provide strong leadership both within and outside the school. Integrating these overarching themes into the school culture can help change staff and student attitudes toward teaching and learning, thereby creating an environment conducive to reform and keeping students in school until graduation.

What Does Dropout Prevention Look Like?

Program C: After School/Mentoring Program

Program C is an after-school program that pairs mentors from the community with children at-risk for dropout. Mentors and youth are paired based on interest and mentors are encouraged to act as a supporting adult to children who often lack this relationship through their family network. Mentors and youth meet weekly to engage in various community service opportunities. Community service opportunities typically involve service learning at local non-profits and are often sponsored by local corporations. Students are also encouraged to identify career paths that they are interested in and once a month their mentors accompany them to local businesses where they gain first-hand experience in the careers of their choice. In the summer, Program C helps match youth with summer apprenticeships and internships.

Context for Successful Replication:

Across all settings and populations, dropout prevention programs had relatively more difficulty "moving the needle" on high school graduation rates. Most programs had more success in helping students get their GED certification and reducing dropout rates, but the high school diploma remains a high bar for most programs.

Overall, our results indicate that dropout prevention programs are reporting successes in various settings and with different populations. The evidence demonstrates that it is possible to achieve positive results using a core set of effective strategies, even among the highest risk populations. Still, the lack of reported success on high school graduation outcomes remains troubling.

What dropout prevention programs have the most potential for success in Texas?

The following three *Texas* programs demonstrated consistent, positive, and meaningful

effects across more than one outcome:

- **Career Academies** (Tier 1 Evidence): Career Academies, which is described above, costs approximately $688 per student. Meaningful effects were found on GED completion, credits, and dropout.
- **Communities In Schools** (Tier 2 Evidence): CIS, which is also described above, costs on average $190 per student. Meaningful effects were found on high school graduation, dropout, attendance, and math achievement.
- **Project GRAD** (Tier 1 Evidence): Project GRAD works with high schools and their feeder schools to prevent dropout and encourage college attendance by providing scholarships, while focusing on classroom management, student performance, parent involvement, graduation rates, and college acceptance rates. Project GRAD costs an average of $550 per student. Meaningful effects were found on reading and math achievement.

Appendix D contains further details on the programs listed above, as well as all other recommended programs.

Three other programs, not currently implemented in Texas, can also be adopted at minimal risk:

- **ALAS** (Tier 2 Evidence): ALAS, which is described above, is no longer in operation. The program would cost approximately $1,314 per student in present dollars. Meaningful effects were found on dropout, attendance, credits, and dropout recovery.
- **Check and Connect** (Tier 1 Evidence): Check and Connect, which is also described above, costs an average of $1,685 per student. Meaningful effects were found on GED certification, dropout, attendance, credits, and dropout recovery.
- **Talent Development High School** (Tier 2 Evidence): Talent Development High Schools is a reform model for schools to help restructure large high schools into smaller learning communities with different goals to address problems with attendance, discipline, student achievement, and dropping out, as well as helping prepare students for post-secondary education and employment by focusing on structural and curriculum reforms. The program costs an average of $350 per student. Meaningful effects were found on attendance and math achievement.

A complete summary of evidence gathered in the course of this review can be found in Table ES1.

Table ES1: Effects by Program, Tiers 1 and 2

▲ Demonstrated a meaningful effect size (0.20 or higher) ⇧ Demonstrated a positive effect size below 0.20 ⊘ Demonstrated a neutral/negative effect

Intervention	Texas Program	School Level	Tier (1 or 2)	HS Diploma	GED	Dropout Rate	Attendance	Reading	Math	Credits	Promotion	Recovery
Accelerated Middle Schools	★	MS	1	Not measured	Not measured	▲	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured
ALAS		HS	2	Not measured	Not measured	▲	▲	Not measured	Not measured	▲	Not measured	▲
Alternative High Schools		HS	1	▲	⊘	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured
Belief Academy		MS	2	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured
Cal-Learn		HS	2	⇧	▲	⇧	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured
Career Academies	★	HS	1	⇧	▲	▲	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	▲	Not measured	Not measured
Check and Connect		ES, HS	1	⊘	▲	▲	▲	Not measured	Not measured	▲	Not measured	▲
Communities in Schools	★	ES, MS, HS	2	▲	Not measured	▲	▲	⇧	▲	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured
Effective Learning Program		HS	2	▲	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured
Job Corps	★	HS	2	⊘	▲	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured
LEAP		HS	2	⊘	▲	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured
Middle College High School		HS	2	⇧	⊘	⊘	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured
New Century High School		HS	2	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	⇧	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	▲	Not measured
New Chance		HS	2	⊘	▲	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured
Project COFFEE		HS	1	Not measured	Not measured	⇧	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured
Project GRAD	★	ES, MS, HS	1	⊘	Not measured	Not measured	⊘	▲	▲	⊘	⇧	Not measured
Quantum Opportunity Program	★	HS	2	⊘	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured
Solution Focused Alternative School	★	HS	2	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	⊘	Not measured	Not measured	⊘	Not measured	Not measured
Talent Development High School		HS	2	⊘	Not measured	Not measured	▲	⊘	▲	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured
Talent Search	★	HS	1	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured
Twelve Together		MS	2	Not measured	Not measured	▲	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured

It is important to note that when assessing evidence, stakeholders should not look for programs that are going to "hit it out of the park" in terms of effect sizes. There is a natural temptation to adopt programs that show the largest effects; however, it is more important to adopt programs that have a strong evidence base (i.e., record of success in multiple studies) and can therefore be adopted with greater certainty that the results can be replicated.

What legislation or other actions are necessary to implement a dropout prevention program?

The Texas Education Agency and state lawmakers have taken a proactive approach to dropout prevention during the past five years. Legislation such as House Bill 1 and House Bill 2237 has provided not only funding for new statewide programs but also a sense of urgency to local dropout prevention efforts. With that in mind, we recommend further policy refinements that Texas should consider based on this review of best practices in dropout prevention.

Recommendation #1: Texas should prioritize programs that employ as many of the NDPC/N's 15 effective strategies as possible. Programs need to address an array of risk factors and reasons for students dropping out of school.

It is certain that there is no "magic bullet" when it comes to dropout prevention. It is apparent from this research that multiple strategies are needed to serve students who are at risk of dropping out of school. Nineteen of the 21 evidence-based dropout prevention programs that were found to be effective achieved success with multiple strategies (the two interventions that employed one strategy were both state policies). On average, each program used four to five combined strategies to address an array of risk factors.

It may not always be desirable or feasible to implement all 15 strategies. Rather, one must take local context into account, including settings, populations, risk factors, and even political will to implement specific strategies. Context is often a more important consideration than even the program model itself. By implementing several of the strategies presented here at once and targeting various risk factors, schools are likely to have more success at keeping students in school.

Recommendation #2: Texas should provide multiple years of funding to districts/charter schools to develop, implement, and evaluate programs.

Changing students' lives for the better is an arduous process, and it takes a long time for programs to have an effect. Some experts contend that it takes a *minimum* of two to three

years for programs to effect significant change.[3] Other experts contend that educational reforms take at least 3 to 5 years for implementation, evaluation, and institutionalization.[4] In fact, Drs. Jay Smink and Terry Cash from the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network, encourage funding for research and demonstration projects that are 5-7 years in length.[5] Considering that it often takes a year or more to get necessary components of a grant in place before interventions are implemented at the local level, "fix it fast" thinking will not work with dropout prevention programs.

Policymakers should keep in mind that dropout is not a single event; rather, it is a long-term process of school disengagement starting as early as pre-school. Early interventions are critical, as are interventions that focus on transition points in a child's academic career (especially the transition from middle school to high school). This study has demonstrated that dropout prevention is a complicated, multi-faceted process and programs have recorded significant successes in turning around students' lives. However, these successes do take time.

Moreover, we found that programs that serve students across school levels (i.e., in elementary, middle, and high school) tend to be most effective. Evidence-based programs that serve students in multiple school levels, including Check and Connect, Communities In Schools, and Project GRAD, demonstrated higher overall effect sizes than most other programs.

Recommendation #3: Texas should create a Texas Dropout Prevention Technical Assistance (TA) Center to provide training, resources, and support to districts and charter schools. This Center, which could be tied to existing infrastructures such as the Texas Turnaround Centers, would help programs implement effective long-term strategies to improve dropout prevention and high school graduation rates.

TEA representatives indicated that school districts and charter schools are implementing innovative dropout prevention programs at the local level. However, there is a lack of research evidence regarding these local programs, not only in Texas, but nationwide as well. Since a lot of innovation is happening at the local level – which was not captured in our review of evidence – the TA Center will be a way for information to be communicated to other school district leaders and state policymakers across Texas.

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[3] Fullan, M. (2001). *The new meaning of educational change (3rd ed.)*. New York: Teachers College Press.
[4] Quint, J. (2006). *Meeting five critical challenges of high school reform: Lessons from research on three reform models*. New York: Manpower Development Research Corporation. Accessed online at: http://www.mdrc.org/publications/428/full.pdf, December 16, 2008.
[5] Smink, J. & Cash, T. (2008). Improving high school graduation rates and postsecondary success in Alaska and nationwide – What can the Federal Government do? Testimony given in a field hearing to the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, Anchorage, AK, November 15.

Functions of the TA Center could include conducting a statewide needs assessment, carrying out an ongoing environmental scan of factors affecting individual regions and districts, providing direct technical assistance, coordinating peer-to-peer technical assistance, providing training and technical assistance on conducting rigorous evaluations, developing and providing training opportunities, planning conferences, writing publications, reviewing district dropout prevention plans, and developing toolkits. The TA Center should coordinate and/or be tied into the existing infrastructures of the 20 Regional Education Service Centers, the TEA Best Practices Clearinghouse, and the Texas Turnaround Center (TTC). This will ensure that the sharing of best practices is institutionalized and coordinated in the most effective manner possible.

Recommendation #4: Texas should support programs that implement the 15 strategies at the Pre-K, elementary, and middle school levels. This support will ensure that students stay on grade level and on-track to enter high school prepared to graduate college and career ready.

Dropout prevention is something that needs to be thought of as a K-12 (or even P-16) process. However, most research we reviewed focuses on high school programs. Despite the fact that they are two of the NDPC/N's 15 effective strategies, early childhood education and early literacy development were each only implemented by one program in our review. Moreover, only three of the programs we reviewed were implemented at the elementary school level and six were implemented at the middle school level.

It is imperative that more attention be given to dropout prevention efforts in middle schools. This is a particularly critical time in a child's development, as it is the last best chance to impact behavioral changes and is a time when a base is being built for future academic achievement in high school.

Recommendation #5: Texas should continue to focus programs on ensuring that students in Texas graduate and are college and career ready.

Many dropout prevention programs we reviewed were able to keep students in school in the short-term, but very few reported success in getting them through to graduation. Effect sizes for high school graduation are generally small – and most programs have a negative effect on graduation (probably due to the fact that students in these programs are moving toward a GED credential). High school graduation remains the most challenging outcome for dropout prevention programs.

Recommendation #6: Texas should identify and remove policies at the local and state levels that create disincentives for recovering students who have previously dropped out of school.

The Texas Legislature should consider evaluating policies that may serve to discourage

dropouts from re-engaging in the education system or penalize schools that attempt to recover them. Policies that return dropouts to the same environment with the same services and programs that failed to keep them from dropping out of school in the first place – or accountability policies that penalize schools for recovering dropouts – reduce the likelihood that dropouts will re-enter the education system. In addition, a lack of re-entry options, such as alternative education programs, for such students impact the state's ability to recover its dropouts.

Additional Policy Considerations

Practitioners and policymakers should also keep in mind that the absence of research on a given program or strategy should not limit their consideration. Quantitative research simply provides one piece of evidence to help stakeholders determine which programs or strategies to adopt. Other considerations include qualitative evidence (i.e., success stories), cost of implementation, feasibility, training requirements, and politics. The following policy considerations do not have a quantitative evidence base at this time, and are therefore not supported by our research; however, they do represent the "cutting edge" in the dropout prevention field:

- *Promote the use of Individual Graduation Plans (IGPs) for all students beginning in the sixth grade.*
- *Develop and utilize an early warning system.*
- *Pilot a graduation coaches program.*
- *Conduct more research on typologies of dropouts and reasons why students drop out.*
- *Strengthen the linkages between K-12 and postsecondary education.*
- *Focus new initiatives on attendance.*

* * * * * *

We can say for certain that there is no "magic bullet" when it comes to dropout prevention. Changing students' lives for the better is an arduous process, and it takes a long time for programs to have an effect.

This research has demonstrated that dropout prevention is a complicated, multi-faceted process. In presenting "end-to-end" information on the subject, we hope this will move the field forward and ultimately, help policymakers, practitioners, and researchers in their work to ensure that students are provided the support and given the opportunity to live up to their potential.

I. The Dropout Crisis from a National Perspective

For most Texas residents, graduating from high school is the minimum standard of achievement needed for a successful future. With many jobs requiring some form of post-secondary education – from certificates to four-year college degrees – a high school diploma alone is not a guarantee of a high-paying job. However, a high school diploma does leave a graduate well positioned to follow a variety of pathways to career success that are not available to dropouts.

At a time when post-secondary options are more important than ever, the plight of the high school dropout is a serious one. Without a diploma, dropouts face increasingly bleak career prospects tied largely to entry-level employment. They also may remain far behind in a technology-driven age where career adaptability is not simply a plus, but a requirement. According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, a high school dropout earns an average of $9,000 a year less than a high school graduate. This difference translates into an earnings loss of $260,000 over a lifetime.[6]

Many factors contribute to students dropping out of school, including poverty, low literacy and achievement levels, parenting responsibilities, and the need to earn money through employment. Policymakers in Texas and across the nation are taking a more nuanced view of the issue, and with increased urgency, as evidenced by renewed attention on root causes of the dropout problem and strategies to address them.

This report provides an overview of the dropout problem, both nationwide and in Texas, along with a variety of strategies deemed effective in addressing the issue. This section summarizes data from Federal and State sources, highlights recent trends, and examines the many different methods used by policymakers to calculate the magnitude of the dropout problem.

National Trends

More than half a million young people drop out of high school each year.[7] From a historical perspective, dropout rates among whites, Hispanics, and African-Americans largely declined

[6] U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2206). *Income in 2005 by educational attainment of the population 18 years and over.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
[7] Heckman, J., & LaFontaine, P. (2007). The American high school graduation rate:trends and levels. Bonn, Germany: Institute for the Study of Labor.

during the 1970s and 1980s, but largely stabilized in the 1990s.[8] Despite an expansion of government resources on K-12 education, dropout rates have changed little during the past 15 years.

Researchers and government agencies utilize several other criteria to measure school success and dropout rates. One statistic popular among researchers for many years is the percent of individuals age 16 to 24 who have dropped out of school, a population that includes current cohorts of students as well as young adults. Using this standard, the U.S. posted a dropout rate of 9.3% in 2006, based on the Federal government's *Digest of Education Statistics*. Males had a higher dropout rate than females – 10.3% compared with 8.3%, respectively. The dropout problem is most acute among lower-income and minority students. Hispanic students had a dropout rate of 22.1% in 2006, nearly four times the rate for whites. African Americans posted a dropout rate of 10.7%, while the rate for whites was 5.8%.[9]

Data also show that dropouts often are clustered at low-income, urban high schools. Half of all dropouts and two-thirds of minority-student dropouts are concentrated in just 12% of America's high schools.[10] Moreover, only one of every five high school students attends a school with an exemplary graduation rate, defined as a school with a completion rate above 90%.

A particular pressure point for students is the 9th grade, which has the highest failure rates of any grade in high school. Students retained (i.e., held back) in the 9th grade are especially likely to drop out of school, according to the National High School Center in *Developing Early Warning Systems to Identify Potential High School Dropout*.[11]

Key Indicators

To effectively assess the dropout issue, it is imperative to gain a detailed understanding of the methods used by Federal and State governments to define a school dropout. While educators may have extensive anecdotal findings on individual students, the Federal government and states utilize several different strategies to measure the extent of the problem. On October 28, 2008, U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced

[8] Kaufman, P., Alt, M.N., & Chapman, C.D. (2001, November). *Dropout rates in the United States.* 2000. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
[9] Snyder, T.D., Dillow, S.A., & Hoffman, C.M. (2008). Digest of Education Statistics, 2007 (NCES 2008-022). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC.
[10] Balfanz, R. & Bridgeland, J. (2007). A plan to fix 'dropout factories'. *Christian Science Monitor*, November 23, 2007. Accessed online at: http://www.csmonitor.com/2007/1123/p09s01-coop.html on November 24, 2008.
[11] Heppen, J.B. & Therriault, S.B. (2008). Developing early warning systems to identify potential high school dropout. Issue brief prepared by the National High School Center. Accessed online at: http://www.betterhighschools.com/pubs/ews_guide.asp, November 24, 2008.

a new policy for all states to use common procedures and formulas to measure dropout and graduation rates. These changes will take place within two years, and Texas should not have any difficulty adhering to these new procedures considering that their measures of dropout and graduation are for the most part consistent with these new guidelines.

Some of the key terms in this discussion include: annual dropout rates; longitudinal dropout rates; high school completion rates; and "promoting power". Following is a brief outline of the various terms and their usefulness:

- **Annual dropout rates:** Sometimes called the "event" dropout rate, this measure is the percentage of students who actually drop out of school in a given school year.

- **Longitudinal dropout rate:** The percentage of students, typically from grades 9-12 or grades 7-12, who drop out prior to graduation.

- **High school completion rate:** The percentage of 7th or 9th grade students who complete high school on schedule with their class.

In addition, some researchers advocate the use of additional criteria such as "promoting power," which may help schools better forecast dropout rates. Promoting power compares the number of enrolled high school seniors with the number of 9th grade students four years earlier. Although the promoting power measure is an easy to implement metric that can be used across schools, districts, and states, it is not an appropriate predictive tool because it does not account for *net* migration. For example, promoting power can be above 100%, if students stayed in school and other youth moved into the district. In states with high migration rates such as Texas, this measure may not be as appropriate as in other states.

Within the Federal government, the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) uses an annual default rate model to gather national data. NCES defines a dropout as an individual enrolled in school the previous year who did not return at the start of the current school year and who has not graduated high school, transferred to another public or private school, temporarily absent due to suspension or illness; or has died.[12]

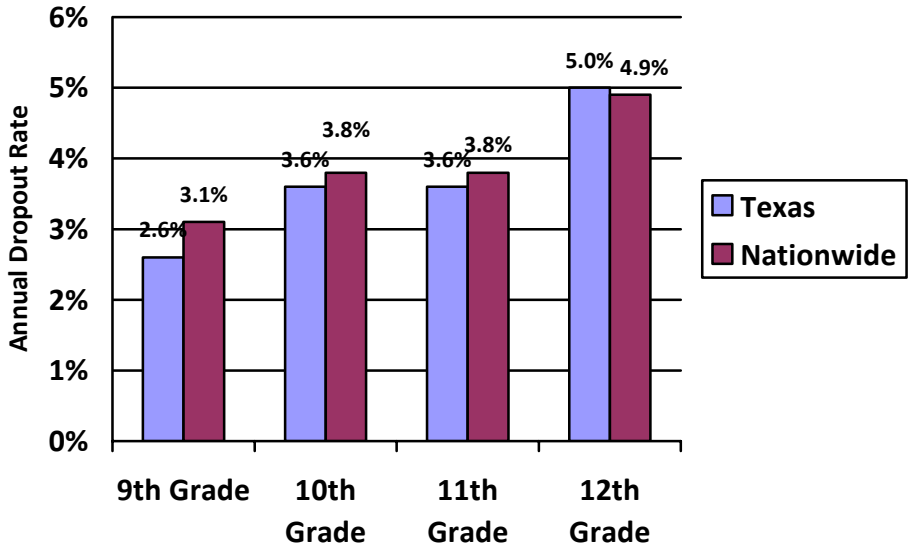
Based on those criteria, the department reported an annual dropout rate of 3.9% in 2004-05 for all high school students in grades 9-12. Among individual states, Alaska had the highest rate with 8.2%, while North Dakota had the lowest at 1.9%. With a dropout rate of 3.6%,

[12] In 2003, the Texas Legislature amended the Texas Education Code to adopt the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) definition of dropout. Students who dropped out during the 2005-06 school year were the first to be reported using the NCES definition.

Texas fell slightly below the national average. Among states with large populations, Florida and California fared somewhat better with dropout rates of 3.5% and 3.1%, respectively. With a 5.7% annual dropout rate, however, New York had one of the nation's highest rates of students dropping out.[13]

A grade-by-grade analysis of this dropout data largely shows Texas below national averages (see Figure 1). Only in 12th grade did Texas' annual dropout rate exceed the national average, and at that level it was only by a slight margin (a 5% dropout rate statewide compared with a 4.9% rate for high school seniors nationally). At other high school grade levels in 2004-05, Texas had slightly lower dropout rates than the U.S. average.[14]

Figure 1: Grade-by-Grade Dropout Data, Texas v. Nationwide



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2004-05 dropout rates by grade

Differences by Gender and Geography

Nationally, more males than females dropped out of school in 2004-05. The 4.4% annual dropout rate for males was a full percentage point higher than the 3.4% rate for females. Annual dropout rates for African-American and Hispanic students were 6% and 5.8%,

[13] Common Core of Data – Numbers and Rates of Public High School Dropouts: School Year 2004-05. Accessed online at: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/hsdropouts/findings.asp, November 24, 2008.
[14] Ibid.

respectively, while the rate for whites was 2.8%. Native Americans had the highest dropout rate among all ethnic groups at 6.7%. Despite their lower rates, whites accounted for 41% of the nation's dropout population that year. African-Americans and Hispanics each represented about 26% of the nation's dropouts.[15]

Regional analyses show some differences in dropout rates at the high school level. Public school students in the Midwest were least likely to drop out of school, posting an annual dropout rate of 3.4%. Dropout rates in the Northeast, South, and West were approximately 4% annually. There were some regional differences based on the size of high schools as well. In the Northeast and Midwest, for example, larger districts tended to have higher dropout rates, while the South and West often had their highest dropout rates in smaller districts of 1,000 or fewer students.[16]

State Trends in Texas

Texas has won kudos for its commitment to data integrity on the dropout issue. The Texas Legislature adopted the NCES dropout definition in 2003, and starting in the 2005-06 school year, dropouts were categorized using this new metric. The Education Trust, a national advocacy and research group, called Texas a leader in developing a statewide system with unique data identifiers that provides an efficient, effective way to monitor student progress throughout their school careers.[17]

Annual Dropout Rates in Texas

The annual dropout rate in Texas for 2006-07, or the share of students leaving during that school year, was 3.9% for grades 9-12. This rate reflected a slight increase from annual dropout data for the previous year (Table 1). The rate was highest among African-American students (5.8%), closely followed by Hispanic students (5.4%). Hispanic students also represented the majority of school dropouts in Texas. The annual dropout rate for white students was 1.9%, nearly one-third the dropout rate for Hispanics.[18]

While accounting for about 42% of all grade 9-12 enrollments in Texas, Hispanic students represented 58% of dropouts. African-Americans were also overrepresented among the

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[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Hall, D. (2007). *Graduation matters: Improving accountability for high school graduation*. The Education Trust, August. Accessed online at: http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/5AEDABBC-79B7-47E5-9C66-7403BF76C3E2/0/GradMatters.pdf, November 24, 2008.
[18] Texas Education Agency. (2008, August). *Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools 2006-07.* Austin, TX: Author.

dropout population, while whites were underrepresented. In 2006-07, whites accounted for nearly 40% of enrolled high school students but less than 19% of dropouts.[19]

Table 1: Annual Dropout Statistics in Texas, by Race/Ethnicity 2005-06 and 2006-07

	% Grade 9-12 Enrollment	% of Dropout Population	Annual Dropout Rate
African-American			
2005-06	15.3%	22.3%	5.4%
2006-07	15.0%	22.0%	5.8%
Hispanic			
2005-06	40.6%	56.6%	5.2%
2006-07	41.8%	57.6%	5.4%
White			
2005-06	40.5%	19.7%	1.8%
2006-07	39.5%	18.9%	1.9%

Source: *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 2006-07*

A variety of characteristics and risk factors were associated with annual dropout status in Texas for the 2006-07 year. For example:

- Among overage students, or those who have been retained in grade at least once, the annual dropout rate in grades 9-12 was 11%.
- For limited English proficient students in grades 9-12, the annual dropout rate was 7.6%.
- Among migrant and immigrant students, the annual dropout rates were 6.3% and 5.3%, respectively.[20]

Annual dropout rates also increased as students moved through school. High school seniors in Texas had a dropout rate of 6.1% in 2006-07. The annual dropout rates in grades 9-11 were below 4%. Among different ethnic groups, African-American seniors had a 9.6% dropout rate, while the rate for Hispanics was 9.1%. By comparison, the annual dropout rate for white seniors was considerably lower, at 2.5%.[21]

[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.

Interestingly, while males had higher annual dropout rates than females in grades 9-11, the rate was reversed among seniors. Nearly 7% of females dropped out in grade 12, compared with a 5.6% rate for males. The trend was particularly pronounced among minority students, as African-American and Hispanic females each had a 10% dropout rate during their senior year in 2006-07.[22]

Longitudinal Dropout Rates

Texas also has the ability to report on the progress of students from a 9th grade cohort who dropped out or graduated from high school four years later. Of nearly 300,000 students in a 9th grade cohort who were scheduled to graduate high school in 2007, 86.7% either graduated or were continuing in high school for an additional year. Another 2% had earned General Educational Development (GED) certificates. About 11.4% of students had dropped out of school, according to TEA.[23]

These longitudinal rates also show significant differences based on gender, ethnicity, and other student characteristics. Hispanic and African-American students had longitudinal dropout rates (16.4% and 17.2%, respectively) that were three times the rate for whites (5.3%) for the class of 2007. Over the four-year period, the rate was slightly higher among males (11.9%) than females (10.8%). Students who were economically disadvantaged had a dropout rate of 17.3%, or almost six percentage points above the state average. Asian/Pacific Islander students had the lowest dropout rate, at 3.8% for the class of 2007.[24]

When broken down by student characteristics or program participation,[25] the longitudinal dropout rate shows some major differences among key groups of at-risk students. For example:

- More than one-third of English as a Second Language (ESL) students – or 36.3% – as well as one-third of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students – or 34.6% – had dropped out between 9th and 12th grade;
- Among immigrant students, the dropout rate was 38.4%, the highest for any individual category;
- Migrant students posted a longitudinal dropout rate of 24.6% for the class of 2007, more than double the state average; and
- Special education students had a dropout rate of nearly 14%.[26]

[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid. The class of 2007 consisted of 290,662 students.

Longitudinal dropout rates for the class of 2007 also show increases from the previous year's cohort. The 11.4% dropout rate was up more than two percentage points from the previous year, and the data showed increases for many groups. The dropout rate among Hispanic students increased from 13.1% to 16.4%, while the rate for African-American students moved from 13.3% to 17.2%. The dropout rates for males and females also increased for the year. Further details are included in Table 2 below.[27]

Since TEA started the transition to the NCES definition of dropout in the 2005-06, year-to-year comparisons on dropout rates are no longer possible. Therefore, in Table 2 and hereafter, it is not advisable to make inferences about trends in dropout rates in Texas.

Table 2: Texas Longitudinal Dropout Rates, Grades 9-12, by Student Group

	African American	Hispanic	White	Male	Female	Economically disadvantaged
2005-06	13.3%	13.1%	3.9%	9.3%	8.3%	13.7%
2006-07	17.2%	16.4%	5.3%	11.9%	10.8%	17.3%

Source: *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 2006-07*

Data Projections

Both the Federal government and researchers have systems in place to analyze future trends in high school completion and school dropout rates. In *Projections of Education Statistics to 2016*, the U.S. Department of Education reports that the number of public high school graduates nationwide should increase by 6% from 2004 through 2017; however, state-by-state growth varies widely. Texas is projected to experience an increase of 19% during this period, according to this report. The figure is consistent with expected increases regionally of 18% in southern states and 12% in western states.[28]

[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Hussar. W.J., and Bailey, T.M. (2007). Projections of Education Statistics to 2016 (NCES 2008-060). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.

Conclusion

Policymakers at the state and national levels have invested considerable time, expense and effort to develop comprehensive data on the school dropout problem. In Texas, the most recent dropout data is in many ways consistent with national trends. For 2006, the 2.6% dropout rate in Texas[29] was below the 9.3% rate reported nationally.[30] However, the state faces many of the same challenges as other states – chiefly, differences in achievement and success among specific socio-economic and ethnic groups. By adopting the NCES standard definition of a high school dropout, Texas is poised to collect significant, nationally relevant data in the years ahead, and to adjust policies and approaches accordingly.

[29] Johnson, R.L. (2008). *Dropout counts reported by the Texas Education Agency continue to swell*. San Antonio, TX: Intercultural Development Research Association. Retrieved November 25, 2008 from http://www.idra.org/IDRA_Newsletter/October_2008_Student_Engagement/Dropout_Counts_Reported_by_the_Texas_Education_Agency_Continue_to_Swell/

[30] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2008). *The Condition of Education 2008* (NCES 2008-031), Indicator 23.

II. The Dropout Crisis in Texas

In many ways, the Texas K-12 school population is unique among U.S. states. Its ethnic diversity presents school administrators with both opportunities and challenges, while the sheer geographic size of the state adds complexity to statewide reform efforts. In addition, the varied size of Texas school districts – with many small districts and a few 'mega' districts – makes it difficult to adopt 'one-size-fits-all' models for educational improvement.

In the 2001-02 school year, Hispanics became the largest single ethnic group in Texas in terms of student enrollment. From the 2000-01 school year to the 2006-07 school year, the number of Hispanic students increased by 28.7% while the number of white students declined by 4.4% (Table 3). Enrollment among African-American students has grown by 12.8% during this period. Overall, Texas student enrollment has increased by about 12.7% during this time.[31,32] The following table provides a snapshot of changes in K-12 enrollment by race/ethnicity.

Table 3: K-12 Enrollment in Texas, by Race/Ethnicity 2000-01 and 2006-07 School Years

	2000-01 Enrollment	% of Enrollment	2006-07 Enrollment	% of Enrollment	% Increase
African-American	585,609	14.4%	660,785	14.4%	12.8%
Hispanic	1,646,508	40.6%	2,118,867	46.3%	28.7%
White	1,706,989	42.0%	1,631,680	35.7%	-4.4%
Native American	12,091	0.3%	15,784	0.3%	30.5%
Asian	108,422	2.7%	149,817	3.3%	38.2%
Total	4,059,619	100%	4,576,933	100%	12.7%

Source: Texas Education Agency, Division of Performance Reporting, Academic Excellence Indicator System 2000-01 and 2006-07 reports

In addition, student enrollment data show that more than half of Texas K-12 students are economically disadvantaged. With this high poverty rate comes diverse challenges, both in terms of academic achievement and dropout prevention. Economically disadvantaged

[31] Texas Education Agency (2007). Academic Excellence Indicator System, 2006-07 State Performance Report. TEA Division of Performance Reporting. Accessed online at: http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/2007/state.html, November 24, 2008.

[32] Texas Education Agency (2001). Academic Excellence Indicator System, 2000-01 State Performance Report. TEA Division of Performance Reporting. Accessed online at: http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/2001/state.html, November 24, 2008.

students are more likely to drop out of school, and addressing the needs of these students is an ongoing concern from the elementary years onward.[33]

Texas districts enroll a sizable number of students who are limited English proficient (LEP). In 2006-07, approximately 15% of students had LEP or bilingual status. Nearly 11% also were receiving special education services.[34]

Table 4: Texas K-12 Enrollment by Student Characteristics, 2006-07

Bilingual/ESL	14.8%
Special education	10.6%
Economically disadvantaged	55.5%
Limited English Proficient	16.0%
At-risk students[35]	48.3%

Source: TEA, Division of Performance Reporting, Academic Excellence Indicator System 2006-07 State Performance Report

Comparing enrollment with graduation data in Texas is illustrative in documenting the challenges facing education leaders. While Hispanics are the largest single ethnic group in K-12 enrollment – accounting for nearly half of all students – their share of high school graduates is subtantially less. While Hispanics make up more than 46% of public school enrollment in Texas, they represented only 35% of high school graduates in 2007, according to TEA.[36]

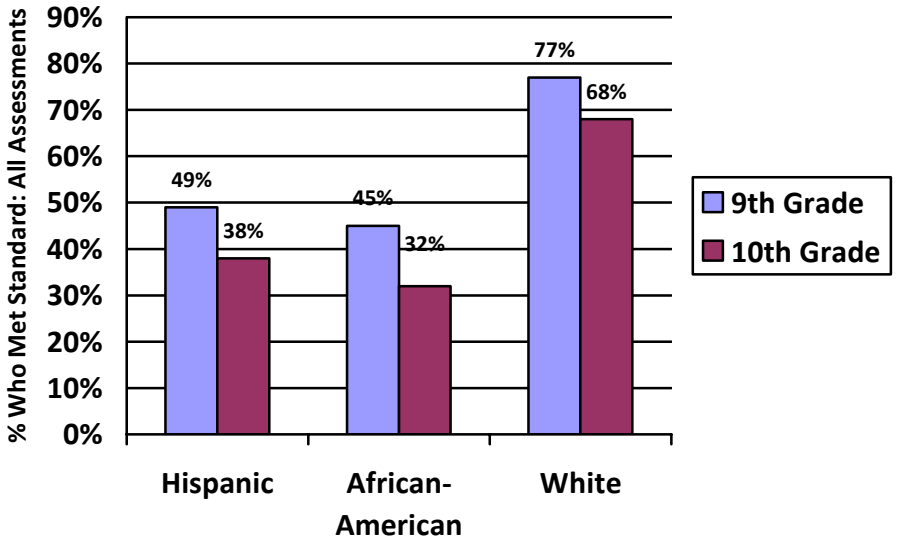
With academic success closely related to the ability of students to stay in school, Texas data also show that many students are behind grade level at critical points in their school careers. Data at critical junctures of high school, for example, show that Hispanic and African American students lag behind their white counterparts in key areas.[37]

[33] Texas Education Agency (2007). Academic Excellence Indicator System, 2006-07 State Performance Report. TEA Division of Performance Reporting. Accessed online at: http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/2007/state.html, November 24, 2008.
[34] Ibid.
[35] "At-risk" is defined by TEA as students who exhibit at least one of 13 risk factors. A complete listing of risk factors can be found at: http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/2007/glossary.html#atrisk.
[36] Texas Education Agency (2007). Academic Excellence Indicator System, 2006-07 State Performance Report. TEA Division of Performance Reporting. Accessed online at: http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/2007/state.html, November 24, 2008.
[37] Ibid.

TEA has reported that, in ninth grade, 77% of white students had met state standards in all four academic assessments (math, language arts, science, and social studies). However, as shown in Figure 2, fewer than half of Hispanic and African-American students had achieved similar levels of success in ninth grade.[38]

Figure 2: percentage of Texas Students Meeting Standards in All Academic Assessments, by Race/Ethnicity, 2007

(Math, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies)



Source: TEA, Division of Performance Reporting, Academic Excellence Indicator System 2006-07 State Performance Report

The gap was also pronounced at tenth grade, where white students were more than twice as likely as African-American students and almost twice as likely as Hispanics to meet standards on all four academic areas. Given the importance of the ninth and tenth grade years in promoting persistence in school, this achievement gap presents educators with another challenge as they try to prepare students for graduation.[39]

The size of Texas school districts also poses unique challenges. Despite its large school population, many students in Texas are enrolled in small school districts. Based on TEA information, the state has more than 1,200 individual school districts, including approximately 700 that contain only a single high school. In addition, 471 districts have student populations of 500 or fewer students. At the same time, the state has eight very large urban districts and seven other similar-size districts encompassing both urban and

[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.

suburban areas. Overall, 15 school districts in Texas serve 50,000 or more students, and these districts account for 27% of all students statewide.[40] Table 5 below illustrates this trend:

Table 5: School District Size in Texas

District Size	Number of Students	Number of Districts	% of All Texas Students
50,000 and Over	1,223,414	15	26.7%
25,000-49,999	996,271	28	21.8%
10,000-24,999	772,801	47	16.9%
5,000-9,999	538,447	76	11.8%
3,000-4,999	313,438	82	6.8%
1,600-2,999	272,830	125	6.0%
1,000-1,599	170,887	133	3.7%
500-999	175,769	245	3.8%
Under 500	113,076	471	2.5%
Total	**4,576,933**	**1,222**	**100.0%**

Source: Texas Education Agency. (2008). Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools, 2006-07: District supplement

In 2005-06 Texas spent $43.3 billion in state and local spending on K-12 education, according to an analysis by U.S. Census Bureau.[41] This figure translates into a total of $1,848 per student, ranking the state 11th in the nation in spending.

Legislative and Policy Trends

Both TEA and state lawmakers have taken a strong interest in dropouts for more than two decades. In 1984, the legislature approved House Bill 72[42], which included sweeping reforms such as increased graduation requirements, including an exit-level test for graduation. That legislation also required TEA to collect dropout data and reduce the statewide longitudinal dropout rate. Research supported through this legislation found that one-third of Texas students dropped out of school before graduation. African-American and Hispanic students had the highest dropout rates, and factors precipitating dropout included

[40] Texas Education Agency. (2008). Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools, 2006-07: District supplement (Document No. GE08 601 08). Austin, TX: Author. Accessed online at: http://www.tea.state.tx.us/research/pdfs/dropcomp_district_supp_2006-07.pdf, November 24, 2008.
[41] U.S. Census Bureau, Public Education Finances 2006, April 2008. Accessed online at http://ftp2.census.gov/govs/school/06f33pub.pdf (p. 13)
[42] HB 72, Texas House of Representatives (1984).

failing grades, high absence rates, pregnancy, and financial pressures. The research also found that few districts had dropout prevention programs.[43] Since that time, Texas policymakers have continued to show considerable interest in the subject:

- In 1987, House Bill 1010 increased state and local responsibility for collecting dropout information, monitoring dropout rates, and providing dropout prevention services.

- In 1994, the state began to include annual dropout rates in the determination of schools with exemplary or recognized ratings. The next year, such data became part of the process for determining whether a school was academically acceptable or unacceptable.

- In the 2005-06 school year, the state started using the National Center for Education Statistics' definition for a school dropout.[44] As a result, state calculations of dropout rates changed significantly, with new data showing higher dropout rates than in years past. For example, the annual dropout rate for Hispanic students in grades 9-12 moved from 2.0% in 2004-05[45] to 5.2% in 2005-06,[46] based on TEA data. However, as noted in the previous chapter, the two data sets are not directly comparable due to adoption of the new definition.

- In 2006, the Texas Legislature approved House Bill 1, which created the High School Allotment program providing each high school with per-student funding to promote school success, academic rigor, and graduation. The legislation also created new education research centers and a clearinghouse on best practices in education.[47]

- In 2007, the Texas Legislature approved House Bill 2237, which authorized a variety of new initiatives including: a study of best practices in dropout prevention; intensive summer pilot programs for at-risk students; and a collaborative local dropout prevention program.[48]

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[43] Grubb, W. N., et al. (1985). *The Initial Effects of House Bill 72 on Texas Public Schools: The Challenges of Equity and Effectiveness*. Policy Research Project Report Series #70. Austin, TX: LBJ School of Public Affairs.
[44] For more details on the NCES definition and its implications for Texas, see http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/account/2008/manual/app_i.pdf
[45] Texas Education Agency. (2006). Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools, 2004-05 (Document No. GE06 601 06). Austin, TX: Author.
[46] Texas Education Agency. (2007). Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools, 2005-06. (Document No. GE07 601 07). Austin, TX: Author.
[47] http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/BillLookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=793&Bill=HB1
[48] http://www.legis.state.tx.us/tlodocs/80R/billtext/html/HB02237F.htm

It is evident that the Texas Legislature has been consistent in its interest in dropout prevention – and this report offers another opportunity for the Legislature to continue pursuing this interest. Unlike other states, Texas has not engaged in "quick fix" solutions involving one piece of legislation regarding dropout prevention.

These and other findings have intensified interest in dropout prevention activities within state government and, particularly, within the state legislature.

Current Dropout Initiatives

State lawmakers and TEA currently support a variety of dropout prevention initiatives statewide. In addition to programs operating exclusively with state funds, TEA has also secured Federal grant support for some initiatives. In providing a general overview of current programs, this analysis recognizes that programs need not only serve high school students. In fact, dropout prevention initiatives in Texas focus on all grade levels, from those programs specifically targeting high school students, to programs that support pre-kindergarten and elementary school students, to middle school support programs that help keep students on track for graduation.

One major state initiative is High School Allotment, created through House Bill 1 in 2006. Through this program, high schools receive $275 per student for a variety of activities, including promotion of promising high school completion initiatives in grades 9 through 12. High schools in the state received $322 million in 2006-07 to support this new initiative.[49] Allowable activities include:

- Preparing at-risk students for post-secondary education;
- Encouraging students to pursue advanced academic options;
- Providing more opportunities for students to take rigorous academic courses; and
- Aligning secondary curriculum in grades 6-12 with post-secondary curricula and expectations.

Among individual schools, the state has collected many examples of new ideas supported by High School Allotment funds. At Friendswood High School, educators used Allotment funds to create a Student Success Program for any freshman needing help to pass English, math, science, or social studies. Instructional specialists deliver intensive instruction, and

[49] Texas Education Agency. (2008). Report on High School Allotment: Review of Uses of High School Allotment Funds during the 2006-07 School Year. Austin, TX: Author.

online computer assisted programs are available. Data so far show Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) gains among African-American and Hispanic students, particularly in math, at this school.[50] In San Antonio, the Northside Independent School District uses High School Allotment funds to place a "graduation coach" at every high school, who provides one-on-one services to 9th graders at-risk of failure.[51]

Another collaborative effort to increase graduation rates and college readiness rates among Texas high school students is the Texas High School Project (THSP), a public/private initiative involving TEA, the office of the Texas Governor, and other organizations such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, and the Communities Foundation of Texas. Some of the activities undertaken through THSP include:

- ***Early College High School***: Usually located on a college campus, these programs provide intensive services to at-risk students in a small-school environment. Students in these programs generally have an adult advisor, a college counselor, and a detailed graduation plan. Another goal is for each student to obtain at least 60 hours of college credit before high school graduation. According to one TEA official, "[participants] see they can be successful in the college environment."

- ***Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Academies (T-STEM)***: This program offers small schools for students in grades 6-12 or grades 9-12. Each academy has an intensive student advisory program similar to Early College High Schools and offers rigorous math and science instruction. Most are in their first or second years of operation, and a program evaluation is underway.

- ***Texas High School Redesign and Restructuring Grant Program***: This program targets underperforming high schools and charter schools, offering them funds for innovative school-wide improvement initiatives. Technical assistance partners provide advice and guidance during this redesign process.

Other state dropout prevention initiatives include:

- ***Texas High School Dropout Prevention and Reentry Program***: Supported by a $2.5 million Federal grant, Texas is using these funds to develop, implement, and evaluate a dropout prevention and reentry program through April 2009. The goal of this initiative is the development of comprehensive dropout prevention programs

[50] http://www.fisdk12.net/happening/pdf/hsallotment.pdf
[51] Texas Education Agency (2008). Districts and campuses recognized for exceptional use of High School Allotment funds. Press release accessed from: http://www.tea.state.tx.us/comm/page1.html, November 24, 2008.

through expansion of existing partnerships. Activities include development of personal graduation plans for at-risk students. An interim evaluation report is due in late 2008, with a comprehensive report available in summer 2009.

- ***Collaborative Dropout Prevention Pilot Program***: Authorized under House Bill 2237, this program offers grants to school districts, charter schools, and community-based organizations in areas where at least 75% of students have been economically disadvantaged for the three prior school years. The program serves students in grades 9-12, with at least half of students identified as at-risk of dropping out of school. Grantees collaborate with other local governments, colleges and universities, and businesses and other non-profits to provide research-driven interventions to promote high school graduation and college/workforce readiness. An evaluation of the initiative is underway, with a report due to TEA in August 2009.

- ***Communities In Schools (CIS)***: More than $41 million is available for CIS, a stay-in-school program utilizing a case management model to help students. Grantees may provide services to students directly or link students with other agencies and programs. Goals of CIS are to help students stay in school, post better attendance rates, reduce behavior problems, improve academically, and graduate or receive a GED.

- ***21st Century Community Learning Centers***: This federally funded program provided $86 million to TEA in fiscal year 2008 to support academic enrichment opportunities outside of the regular school day. Program activities must help students meet state and local standards in core content areas such as math, science, and reading.

- ***Best Practices Clearinghouse***: TEA received $300,000 in 2008-09 to compile the most effective practices of high-performing school districts and charter schools in dropout prevention plus other topics such as school finance and resource allocation. To date, most of these efforts have focused on the practices of "exemplary" and "recognized" districts and campuses that already are meeting key state criteria for school success. However, a recent policy change has allowed best practice submissions from certain academically acceptable districts and campuses.

Many school dropouts fail to succeed in the elementary and middle school years, however. To address these concerns, TEA has launched the Student Success Initiative, which targets students who fail state math and reading assessments in 3rd,[52] 5th, and 8th grades. Students must pass those assessments to move on to the next grade level. Students have three

[52] Note: Third graders are not required to pass the mathematics portion of TAKS for Student Success Initiative, only reading.

opportunities to pass the exams, and will receive extra instruction if they fail TAKS. The Student Success Initiative also includes $18 million for teacher reading academies in grades 6-8 and a master teacher grant program offering stipends to master teachers in math, science, and reading at high-need schools.

Texas also seeks to build a strong foundation for students through the state's Pre-Kindergarten program, which enrolls 193,000 youngsters, the most of any state Pre-K program nationwide, according to TEA in its *2010-11 Legislative Appropriations Request*.[53] Eligibility for the half-day program is open to homeless children, children of Armed Forces members, English Language Learners, those eligible for free- and reduced-price lunch subsidies, and children in foster care. In addition, districts may serve other children by investing their own funds or charging tuition to families. School districts can operate the program or contract with Head Start or child care providers, and public school Pre-K teachers must have a Bachelor's degree and state certification. In addition, the state funds a Pre-Kindergarten Expansion Grant to expand half-day Pre-K to a full day.

The Texas legislature has also approved plans making the recommended high school curriculum the default educational program for all high school students. Under the recommended curriculum, students take four years of math, science, language arts, and social studies. According to several TEA officials, this dedication to high academic standards is a key component of success in reducing the number of dropouts.[54]

Conclusion

With a 25-year history of examining school dropout issues and challenges, Texas policymakers have undertaken a variety of strategies to promote student success. This work has continued in recent years with the adoption of two significant pieces of legislation, House Bill 1 and House Bill 2237, which have brought new resources into local dropout prevention efforts. In addition, state- and locally-supported interventions seek to improve and maintain achievement from the early years of school onward. "We look at dropout as something that begins early," said one TEA official – seemingly as early as the preschool years, based on state educational policies and practices.

Nonetheless, many challenges remain due to Texas' large at-risk population. However, this commitment to the dropout issue has served the state well as it promotes accountability across all schools. In the following chapters, this analysis of best practices in dropout prevention will describe in detail successful efforts at both the national and local level, and make recommendations for additional policy changes that may enhance state efforts to reduce the number of dropouts in Texas.

[53] http://www.tea.state.tx.us/lar/2010-2011/2010-2011LAR.html
[54] Data gathered in the course of our interviews with TEA leaders and other stakeholders in dropout prevention.

III. Methodology

Numerous independent efforts have been undertaken to identify evidence-based research, such as the U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse, RAND's Promising Practices Network, and SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices. Typically, when evidence of a program's effectiveness is found, an intervention/program will get a "seal of approval" from these entities. In this research, we wanted to take one additional – and admittedly, ambitious – step: We wanted to not only determine what programs work, but also *why* they work, *how* they work, and *in what situations* they work.

When a consumer of research – such as a legislator, teacher, school board member, or superintendent – reviews the effectiveness of various programs, he or she is likely focused on a single question:

Will this program work in my state/district?

Many efforts currently underway do not go beyond assessing the quality of a study and its results, leaving the consumer to determine whether a program could be successfully replicated (and effective) in their district.[55] While the assessment of whether a study's results are generalizable is a qualitative judgment best left to staff on the "front lines", there is still a great need to present information in a manner to help stakeholders make these types of judgments. In this report, we strive to provide a sufficient level of detail so every decision-maker at the state and local level can decide upon their best course of action to address the dropout problem.

Figure 3 (pg. 21) presents a simplified framework for assessing evidence from both a researcher's and a consumer's point of view. The first step in the process is to assess the research evidence on a particular intervention and determine whether the study used scientific methods that could generate valid conclusions. Researchers call this "internal validity". From a consumer's perspective, the implication of internal validity is to determine whether the results of the study are believable in the first place.

[55] In 2007, the What Works Clearinghouse developed an "extent of evidence" rating to capture information on whether research has been tested in multiple settings (the first step in assessing external validity). A rating of "moderate to large" requires at least two studies and two schools across studies, and a total sample size across studies of at least 350 students, or 14 classrooms. Otherwise, the extent of evidence is rated as "small". This rating is not considered in the What Works Clearinghouse's evidence standards, however.

Next, both researchers and consumers have to determine whether the study produced effects that are meaningful. Many researchers use the concept of statistical significance to determine whether a particular study had an effect; however, this is not necessarily a good idea since statistical significance is heavily dependent upon sample size, and because the most rigorous research (e.g., randomized studies) is often too costly to implement on a large scale. In other words, with a study sample of 10,000 students, even small effects will be statistically significant while a sample of 50 students will rarely produce statistically significant results, even with relatively large effects. Ultimately, what matters most is not statistical significance, but rather, whether the size of an effect is *meaningful* in a practical sense. Researchers use the concept of effect size to determine this. (Please see the text box insert on effect sizes for more information.) In this report, we present evidence based on effect sizes, which tells us not only if results are meaningful, but also how results compare across studies (and on different outcomes).

Effect Sizes:

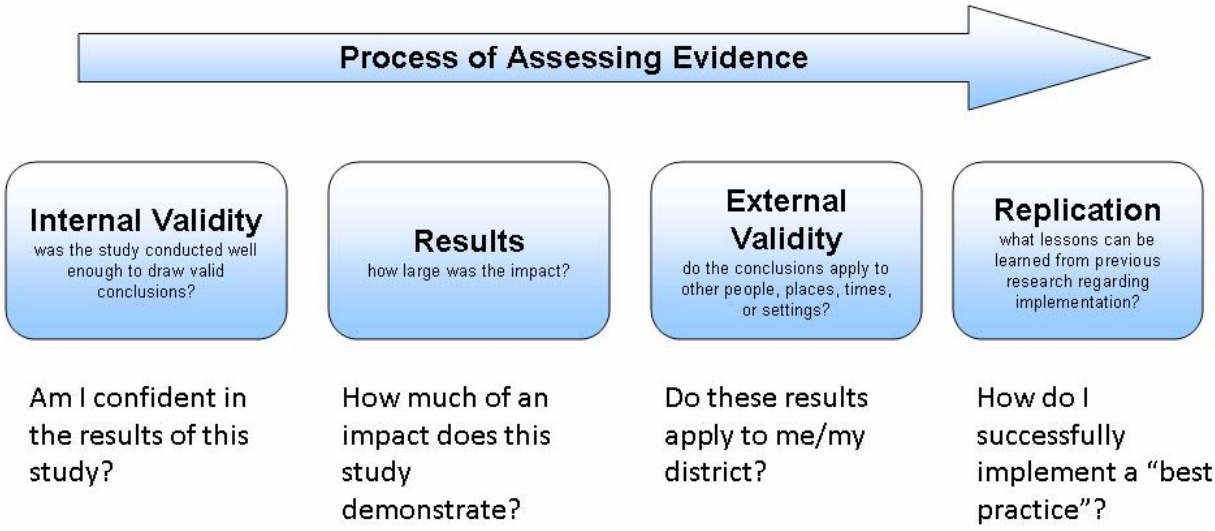
Effect size is a measure that describes the magnitude of the difference between two groups. Effect size is particularly valuable in best practices research because it represents a standard measure by which all outcomes can be assessed. For example, effect size allows us to compare the size of dropout, graduation, and academic outcomes on the same scale. Effect size is typically calculated by taking the difference in means between two groups and dividing that number by the pooled standard deviation.

If studies are conducted well and if results are meaningful, the next step is to determine whether the results are generalizable. Researchers call this “external validity” and it is an important factor to consider in the adoption of any program. Consumers of research will likely want to know whether findings can be applied to their districts, and it is important to present sufficient context for state and local decision-makers to make informed choices on which programs to adopt.

Finally, once a piece of research determines a program to be believable, to provide meaningful effects, and to be applicable to populations or settings of interest, thought must be given to replicating that program. Since states and local districts rarely take a cookie-cutter approach to dropout prevention, we can expect the implementation of these programs to differ from the original models, and it is important to understand which program components can be modified and which ones cannot.

In this report, we strive to provide stakeholders in Texas with “end to end” information that will help in the identification, assessment, and replication of best practices in dropout prevention.

Figure 3: Process for Assessing Research, and Key Questions from a Consumer Perspective



Study Questions

The study questions were developed by synthesizing the questions of interest indicated in House Bill 2237 and the Request for Proposals for this project. Table 6 lists the questions which were addressed in this study, as well as related activities and approaches to addressing each question.

Table 6: Activities and Approaches to Addressing Study Questions

Study Questions	Activity/Approach
1. What are the best practices for dropout prevention? What evidence exists for this designation? ❖ In Texas? ❖ Nationally?	a. Review standards of the U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Dropout Prevention Topical Review[56] b. Review standards from the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network's (NDPC/N) study of dropout risk factors and exemplary programs[57] c. Create and vet list of revised standards through TEA to become the TEA Standards for Identifying Best Practices in Dropout Prevention

[56] See the rating scheme, which provides a top-line overview of the standards: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/rating_scheme.pdf; specific details on the contents and parameters of the review can be found in the review protocol: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/Dropout_protocol.pdf.

[57] Hammond, C., Smink, J., Drew, S., & Linton, D. (May 2007). *Dropout risk factors and exemplary programs: A technical report*. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center.

Table 6: Activities and Approaches to Addressing Study Questions

Study Questions	Activity/Approach
2. What programs are on the WWC or NDPC/N lists of effective programs? Are there dropout prevention programs operating in Texas that do not appear on the WWC or NDPC/N lists of effective programs? If so, what evaluations, if any, have been conducted on these programs? Do any of those programs meet the TEA's requirement of having both qualitative and quantitative evidence of success?	a. Develop annotated list of programs from either study that pass the TEA Standards for Identifying Best Practices in Dropout Prevention b. Request nominations from Senior Advisors for Texas programs that should be included in this study and that meet the TEA standards for effectiveness c. Search WWC electronic databases to identify studies conducted in Texas
3. What are the factors that contribute to/detract from successful development and implementation of dropout prevention programs? ❖ At the school level? ❖ At the community level? ❖ At the state level?	a. Develop a list of factors that might affect development and implementation (from advice of Senior Advisors) b. Conduct keyword search through studies used by WWC and NDPC/N and any Texas programs deemed "evidence-based" c. Abstract the WWC practice guide on dropout prevention d. Prepare an annotated list of factors at each level identified in the literature and/or are based on the advice of Senior Advisors
4. What are the outcomes associated with effective programs? ❖ At the student level? ❖ At the school/community level? ❖ At the state level?	a. Identify outcomes of interest at all levels (including organizational change and indicators of collaboration) through consultation with Senior Advisors b. Conduct keyword search through studies reviewed by WWC and NDPC/N c. Prepare an annotated list of outcomes at each level
5. What are the costs of effective dropout prevention programs?	a. Develop a list of programs that have provided evidence of attainment of the desired student outcomes b. From the reviewed literature, identify program developers and, if any, implementers of those programs c. Conduct interviews with developers and with program implementers; develop template for conducting interviews that ensures consistency in key information sought, including types of costs and timeframe for implementation d. Prepare cost matrix e. Convert all costs to present dollars
6. What are the necessary programmatic features of effective dropout prevention initiatives?	a. Repeat steps 5a through 5c above b. Add probes about necessary programmatic features (e.g., teacher release time, summer training) to template (in 5d above)

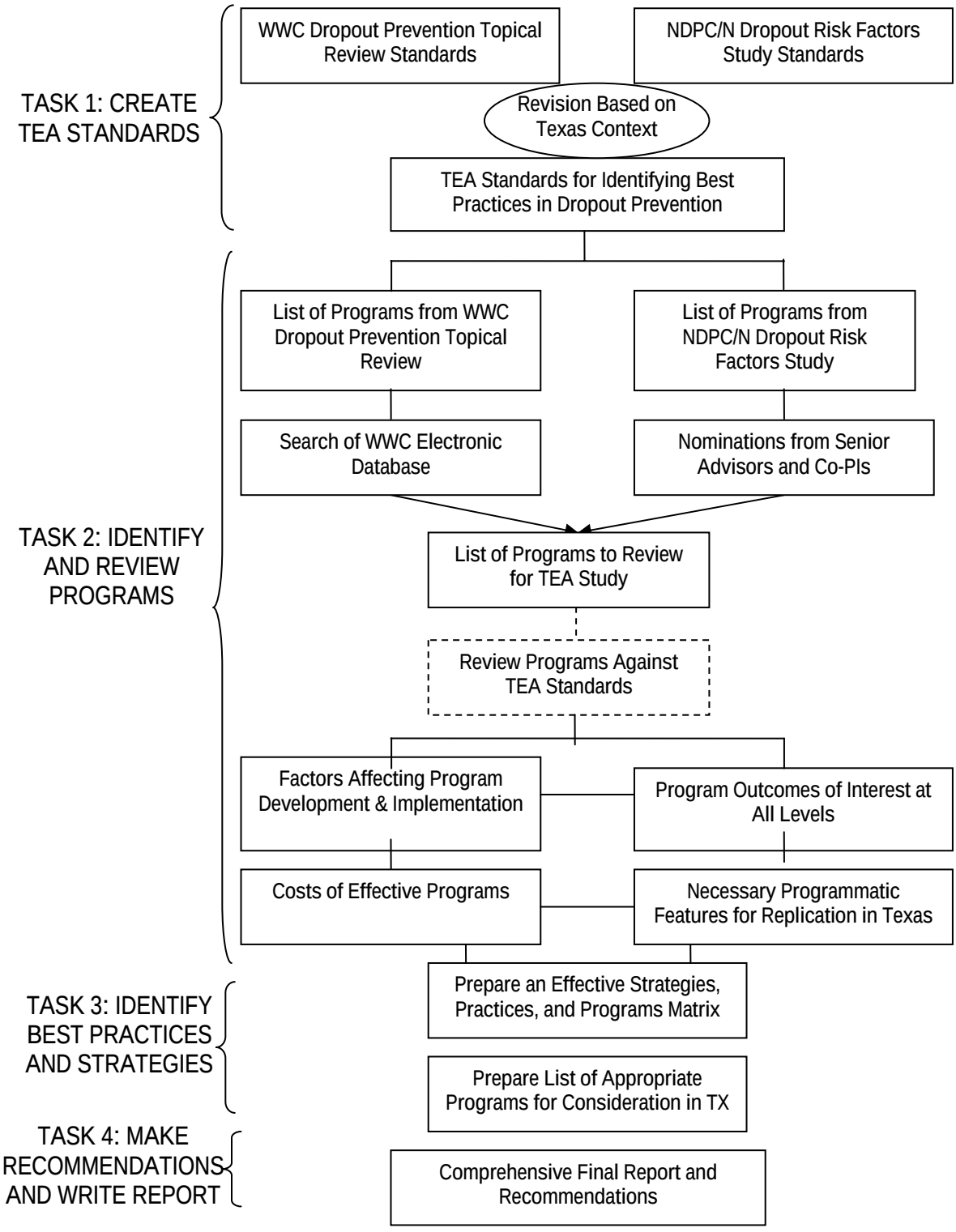
Table 6: Activities and Approaches to Addressing Study Questions	
Study Questions	**Activity/Approach**
7. What practices have been shown to be most effective in dropout prevention programs?	a. Prepare a list of strategies and practices that are connected with the programs identified as effective b. Develop a study review template to be applied to an electronic search of the studies used by WWC and NDPC/N to identify strategies/practices used in those programs c. Prepare an effective strategies matrix as a result of the review process mentioned above
8. What effective dropout prevention programs are most amenable to adoption in Texas?	a. Conduct interviews with TEA officials and select district officials to determine the conditions that must be satisfied for program adoption in Texas; consider cost, stakeholder involvement, organizational involvement and other factors b. Cross-reference the cost and programmatic features matrix as well as the effective strategies matrix to develop list of appropriate programs for consideration in Texas c. Develop a final report that contains recommendations about program adoption, practices, and conditions needed for replication of each program

Study Methodology

Our methodology for studying best practices in dropout prevention programs builds upon our team's experience in reviewing dropout prevention programs for the WWC Dropout Prevention Topical Review and the NDPC/N's study of dropout risk factors and exemplary programs.

Our mixed-methods approach to this study included both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies, which the ICF-NDPC/N team used to guide the completion of four major tasks described below. Figure 4 illustrates the overall framework of our study methodology and approach to the study.

Figure 4: Texas Dropout Prevention Best Practices Study Framework



Developing TEA Standards for Best Practices in Dropout Prevention

ICF and the NDPC/N collaborated to develop a unique set of standards for identifying best practices in dropout prevention for Texas. To do this, we first reviewed standards of the U.S. Department of Education's WWC Dropout Prevention Topical Review[58] and standards from the NDPC/N's study of dropout risk factors and exemplary programs.[59] Together, these standards helped us find the optimal mix of necessary elements to ensure that evidence is based on strong internal validity (as exemplified by the WWC) while ensuring that our standards cast a wide enough net to produce a meaningful set of results for Texas (as exemplified by the NDPC/N's Best Practices research).

The standards can be logically grouped into two categories: (1) criteria related to the screening process and (2) criteria related to determining the strength of the evidence. These two categories reflect that studies will be removed from consideration when they do not meet some criteria (i.e., screening criteria), and downgraded if they do not meet other criteria (i.e., evidence criteria). Highlights of our criteria appear below (Table 7):

[58] See the rating scheme, which provides a top-line overview of the standards: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/rating_scheme.pdf; specific details on the contents and parameters of the review can be found in the review protocol: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/Dropout_protocol.pdf.

[59] Hammond, C., Smink, J., Drew, S., & Linton, D. (May 2007). Dropout risk factors and exemplary programs: A technical report. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center.

Table 7: Highlights of TEA Evidence Standards for Dropout Prevention	
Screening Criteria	**Evidence Criteria (and Downgrade Criteria)**
▪ Studies must be published in 1995 or later.[60]	▪ Highest rated studies are randomized controlled trials and regression discontinuity studies; quasi-experimental and single subject designs receive one downgrade; pre-post tests receive two downgrades.
▪ Studies must be about school dropout prevention at the K-12 level.	▪ Randomized studies are downgraded if random assignment was not truly random.
▪ Studies must be conducted in the United States.	▪ Studies are downgraded if authors do not show evidence of post-attrition equivalence at baseline.
▪ Studies must be on interventions designed to prevent dropout, improve graduation, or address risk factors specifically to improve dropout/graduation rates.	▪ Studies are downgraded if there is any disruption or contamination that could have caused observed differences between the groups.
▪ Studies must involve at least 30 students.	
▪ Studies must take place over at least a 2-year period.	
▪ Studies must consist of an eligible research design (i.e., randomized controlled trial, quasi-experimental study, regression discontinuity design, single subject design, single group pre-post test).	
▪ Studies must address at least one relevant outcome.	
▪ Studies must measure outcomes with a data source of sufficient quality to produce credible results.	

These standards, which are presented in Appendix A, were vetted to TEA. By ensuring that our standards are tailored to the unique conditions in Texas, we hope to ensure that the Texas Legislature and TEA can get the most mileage possible out of the results presented in this report.

[60] The study team considered 1995 to be a fair cutoff, given that our priority was to present the Texas legislature and TEA with the most current evidence regarding best practices.

Once the standards were finalized, the research team developed a coding guide that could be used to review the literature. The coding guide, presented in Appendix B, contains three sections:

- The first section contains the screening criteria, outlined above (Table 7);
- The second section contains the evidence criteria (also included in Table 7), which rates studies on their internal validity (i.e., whether the studies had a strong enough design to conclude that the results were valid); and
- The third section contains a series of questions on the setting of the study, and was used to determine external validity (i.e., generalizability) of the study. In this section, we included many of the TEA criteria to determine whether a student was at-risk, and this information was ultimately used to determine which programs work in particular settings, with particular populations, and in addressing specific risk factors.

The coding guide also contains calculators so the study team could compute effect sizes and attrition rates. This coding guide was based in part on the What Works Clearinghouse coding guide, and was simplified to ensure that a large number of studies could be reviewed within the short timeframe of this project.

Identifying and Reviewing Dropout Prevention Programs

We developed a comprehensive list of dropout prevention programs through a four-step process. First, we identified programs that appear in either of the two repositories of evidence-based interventions developed by the ICF-NDPC/N team (i.e., the WWC and the NDPC/N's Risk Factors Study). Second, these programs were put through the new TEA Standards for Identifying Best Practices in Dropout Prevention. Third, we requested nominations from Senior Advisors at TEA for dropout prevention programs in Texas that should be included for consideration. Fourth, and finally, we searched electronic databases used during the WWC dropout prevention program topic review to identify studies conducted in Texas that are not already on the list for various reasons (e.g., they did not meet certain thresholds in order to be included in the WWC review). This repository of electronic search results contains 3,623 unduplicated records of studies that are related to dropout.[61] By drawing from comprehensive, well-established sources, we were able to kick-start this study and save valuable resources at the beginning of the project.

[61] Note: Since electronic search results can be unpredictable, some of these records may not be related to school dropout [e.g., dropout from exercise classes]; however, based on several years of experience with WWC, we can say with confidence that we have captured an enormous swath of the existing literature on dropout.

Interviews with TEA and Program Staff

To begin the process of both identifying programs and understanding the dropout prevention landscape in Texas, ICF staff conducted a series of interviews with TEA and program staff. The interviews covered a broad range of topics, including:

- TEA's vision and goals for reducing dropout;
- Risk factors contributing to dropout;
- Interventions that are most successful in addressing risk factors and reducing dropout, both in Texas and nationwide;
- Successful/promising practices to address dropout;
- Policies in Texas related to school dropout; and
- Input on the content of this report.

Altogether, we spoke to seven key TEA stakeholders in Texas:

- Lizzette Reynolds, Deputy Commissioner of TEA's Statewide Policy and Programs
- Barbara Knaggs, Associate Commissioner of the Department of State Initiatives
- Jan Lindsey, Senior Director of College and Career Readiness Initiatives
- Nellie Reyes, Senior Director of Programs for At-Risk Youth
- Dr. Jim Van Overschelde, Director of Educational Research and Policy group
- Ertha Patrick, Manager of the Best Practices Clearinghouse
- Chris Caesar, Program Manager, and leader of this project

Each of these stakeholders provided valuable information that is incorporated into this report. In this report, we will not present interview summaries, nor will we attribute any methodology or recommendations to a specific person. Suffice to say, this report has been greatly strengthened due to their input.

Literature Review

In an effort to identify all relevant research related to dropout prevention programs and practices, a comprehensive literature search was carried out using a multi-pronged approach. The search included dropout prevention programs and practices being carried out at the elementary, middle, and high school levels throughout the United States with specific efforts to identify and highlight programs within Texas. Programs were only included if they specifically targeted dropout prevention or one of the risk factors for dropout, identified by the Texas Education Agency. Programs that did not focus on dropout prevention but identified it as an ancillary benefit were not included in order to target programs whose primary focus was dropout prevention.

The initial literature scan employed the broad set of electronic databases housed within EBSCOhost. These databases include Academic Search Elite, PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, ERIC, PsycEXTRA, Education Research Complete, and SocINDEX with Full Text. Search terms and key words included, but were not limited to: dropout programs, dropout prevention, academic persistence, school completion, student attrition, graduation, retention, program effectiveness, educational assessment, benchmarking, resilience, intervention, demonstration programs, models, and school holding power. The searches were limited to high school and secondary education.

Following this, ICF staff drew upon the expertise of the WWC, a central source on dropout information established in 2002 by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. In September 2008, the WWC published a topic report on dropout prevention. The 89 independent reports reviewed in the topic report, including reports that passed as well as reports that failed the WWC standards, were obtained and included in the literature review for this study. It is important to note that some of the reports identified multiple programs, each of which was reviewed separately in an effort to extract information on specific programs and identify the effective elements of each of these programs.

ICF staff also drew upon the database of electronic search results from the WWC Review of Dropout Prevention Programs. This database, originally created in summer of 2004, contains 3,623 unduplicated references pertaining to dropout prevention. Staff extracted references specifically related to programs in Texas using SAS software to identify all records containing the word "Texas" within the title or abstract of the reference. Since this database was compiled in 2004, follow-up efforts were made, through electronic and hand searches, to gather references published since 2004. These efforts produced 156 results and represented our top priority of studies for the literature review.

The NDPC/N's May 2007 report entitled *Dropout Risk Factors and Exemplary Programs: A Technical Report* was also reviewed to identify additional studies.[62] From this report, 31 articles were identified as directly relating to dropout prevention programs and practices.

Finally, in an effort to ensure that all relevant research had been reviewed, a search of the websites of organizations that conduct research on education in general as well as dropout prevention was conducted. Each website was searched using the keywords described above and identified in Appendix D. A total of 31 reports related to dropout prevention and falling within the screening time period (1995-2008) were identified.

One of the challenges in identifying dropout prevention literature is that the research on this topic tends to be concentrated in reports prepared for the government sector. A thorough review of government publications was conducted. Without a full understanding of the research on dropout prevention and a methodical search of government publications, a significant portion of the dropout research could have potentially been overlooked.

Reviewing Programs

For this literature search, a total of 520 titles and abstracts were gathered and incorporated into a database for further review. Based on abstracts, an initial relevancy screening was conducted, in which 291 studies did not pass. The remaining 229 studies were coded using the standards for review, resulting in 38 reports passing all coding standards. As mentioned above, a number of these reports contained reviews of multiple sites and/or programs. Each site and program was coded separately resulting in 58 individual coding guides.

In addition to the studies reviewed, the NDPC/N developed a parallel list of "exemplary" dropout prevention programs that are not grounded in research, but are nonetheless worth consideration. It is important to note that, while it is comforting to work with the known quantity of evidence-based research, there are many programs without the resources to hire evaluators that appear to be making a big difference in students' lives. By identifying these programs, whose evidence base is built on more qualitative factors, we hope to provide TEA some options – or at least some alternative ideas – on what constitutes best practice.

Identifying Best Practices and Strategies

We identified best practices and strategies by first classifying effective programs, and then disaggregating those programs to identify effective strategies that are common to high-performing programs.

[62] Hammond, C., Smink, J., Drew, S., & Linton, D. (May 2007). *Dropout risk factors and exemplary programs: A technical report*. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center.

Outcomes. Identifying outcomes of interest may sound like an easy task for dropout prevention programs; however, it is quite easy to fall into a trap of casting too wide of a net. For example, we avoided the temptation to look at postsecondary education, since it would have expanded the scope of work by an order of magnitude and it would have prevented us from focusing on the most at-risk students. We also faced the challenge of identifying relevant outcomes for each school level. For example, elementary school students do not typically graduate or drop out of school; however, early dropout prevention programs are important to mitigate risk factors that eventually could lead to dropping out of school. Core outcomes at the earlier grade levels include attendance, reading achievement, math achievement, credit completion, and grade promotion. At the high school level, additional core outcomes included dropout rates, graduation rates, GED certification, and credit recovery.

Classifying Programs. The classification of programs was achieved using a three-tier system. The system takes into account the strength of the evidence (internal validity), the number of studies conducted on a program (external validity), the magnitude of the program's effects, and the types of outcomes measured. A summary of our classification rubric follows:

- **Tier 1 – Evidence-Based Programs**: Programs that have been tested at least two times with a research design that received up to one downgrade (see Table 7 for a complete list of downgrade criteria). A minimum of one research study resulted in an effect size of at least 0.20 on either dropout rates, GED certification, graduation rates, or recovery (high school level) or on dropout, attendance, reading, math, credit completion, or grade promotion (elementary and middle school level).

- **Tier 2 – Evidence-Based Programs**: Programs that have been tested at least once with a research design that received up to two downgrades. No effect size threshold is required for these programs.

- **Tier 3 – Promising Programs**: Programs that have a strong qualitative evidence base, and have been identified by the NDPC/N as appropriate for consideration in Texas. These programs have not been subject to empirical quantitative research, but that is not necessarily a reason in itself to drop these programs from consideration. The lack of a quantitative evidence base simply means that these programs should be prioritized for future research, especially if they are implementing core strategies that have been linked to effective programs.

Identifying Effective Practices. We have developed a matrix of each Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 program's use of the NDPC/N's 15 effective strategies, in order to determine the most common strategies employed by dropout prevention programs. The core purpose of this comparison is to identify key elements of program success among evidence-based programs, with the hope of applying these lessons learned to other promising programs that may not have been subject to an evaluation.

Program Development and Implementation. In order to address critical elements of program development and implementation, we drew upon our interviews with TEA stakeholders, the recently-released WWC Practice Guide on dropout prevention, and the NDPC/N's previous work in this area.

Administrative and Fiscal Management. To address cost issues, we prepared a cost matrix that categorizes costs per student for each intervention.

Structure of This Report

This report is intended to provide practical guidance for the Texas Legislature, TEA, and the dropout prevention field in general that is grounded in the latest research. By distilling these findings into a practical, easy-to-use framework, we hope to break new ground in the dropout prevention field, and ultimately, help the State of Texas tackle the dropout epidemic. The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- We begin by identifying "best programs"; in other words, we identify the dropout prevention programs that have been subject to rigorous research and those which have been shown to be most effective.

- We then classify "best practices" that are used in evidence-based interventions, and identify strategies used across all programs to demonstrate common elements of success. Next, we identify key factors that would affect the implementation of dropout prevention programs. This section includes cost information so policymakers can determine not only the best program, but also the best program for the price.

- Next, we present contextual factors that may affect a stakeholder's decision to implement a dropout prevention program in a particular area. In this section, we provide extra coverage on programs that would be especially appropriate for adoption in Texas.

- Finally, we present conclusions and policy recommendations that will help the Texas Legislature in its work to combat the dropout problem in the state. Our

recommendations also include guidance on future directions in dropout prevention that are not yet supported by quantitative evidence, but nonetheless represent the "cutting edge" in dropout prevention work.

The methodology presented in this section was designed to ensure that TEA has high-quality information on best practices that is grounded in practice. We understand that the final products developed from this study will only be useful insofar as they can influence knowledge and practice. In that spirit, we were committed to making this a true research-to-practice endeavor.

IV. Identification of "Best Programs"

This section presents data on both the strength of the evidence surrounding specific programs, as well as the size of the effects that these interventions have been shown to produce. By identifying the programs with the strongest results, policymakers and practitioners can make an *initial* informed choice on which programs to adopt. As mentioned previously, however, the overall effects of the programs presented in this chapter should be considered in the context of where they were implemented, what strategies were employed, and how much they cost. The information presented in this section, therefore, represents only one of many considerations that policymakers and practitioners must take into account when identifying which programs to adopt and/or replicate.

Tiers of Evidence

The review team developed three tiers of evidence to identify the programs that (a) were the subject of the most rigorous research, (b) had demonstrated positive effects, and (c) had been subject to multiple examinations of effectiveness. Complete descriptions of each tier appear below, and a summary table of programs that met Evidence Tiers 1 and 2 are presented in Table 8.

Tier 1 – Evidence-Based Programs: Programs that have been tested at least two times with a research design that received up to one downgrade. At least one research study resulted in an effect size of at least 0.20 on either dropout rates, GED certification, graduation rates, or recovery (high school level) or on dropout, attendance, reading, math, credit completion, or grade promotion (elementary and middle school level).

Tier 2 – Evidence-Based Programs: Programs that have been tested at least once with a research design that received up to two downgrades. No effect size threshold is required for these programs.

Tier 3 – Promising Programs: Programs that have a qualitative evidence base, but have not been subject to quantitative, empiral research that met TEA standards. These programs have been identified by the NDPC/N for consideration in Texas.

Table 8: Programs that Met Evidence Tiers 1 and 2					
Tier	Intervention	School Levels Studied	Number of Studies	Number of Studies with 0 or 1 Downgrades	Texas Program
1	Accelerated Middle Schools	MS	3	3	
1	Alternative High Schools	HS	3	3	
1	Career Academies	HS	3	2	
1	Check and Connect	ES, HS	4	3	
1	Project COFFEE	HS	9	9	
1	Project GRAD	ES, MS, HS	3	3	✓
1	Talent Search	HS	2	2	✓
2	ALAS	HS	1	1	
2	Belief Academy	MS	1	0	
2	Cal-Learn	HS	1	1	
2	Communities In Schools	ES, MS, HS	1	1	✓
2	Effective Learning Program	HS	1	1	
2	Job Corps	HS	1	1	✓
2	LEAP	HS	1	1	
2	Middle College High School	HS	1	1	
2	New Century High School	HS	1	0	
2	New Chance	HS	1	1	
2	Quantum Opportunity Program	HS	1	1	✓
2	Solution Focused Alternative School	HS	1	1	✓
2	Talent Development High School	HS	2	1	
2	Twelve Together	MS	1	1	

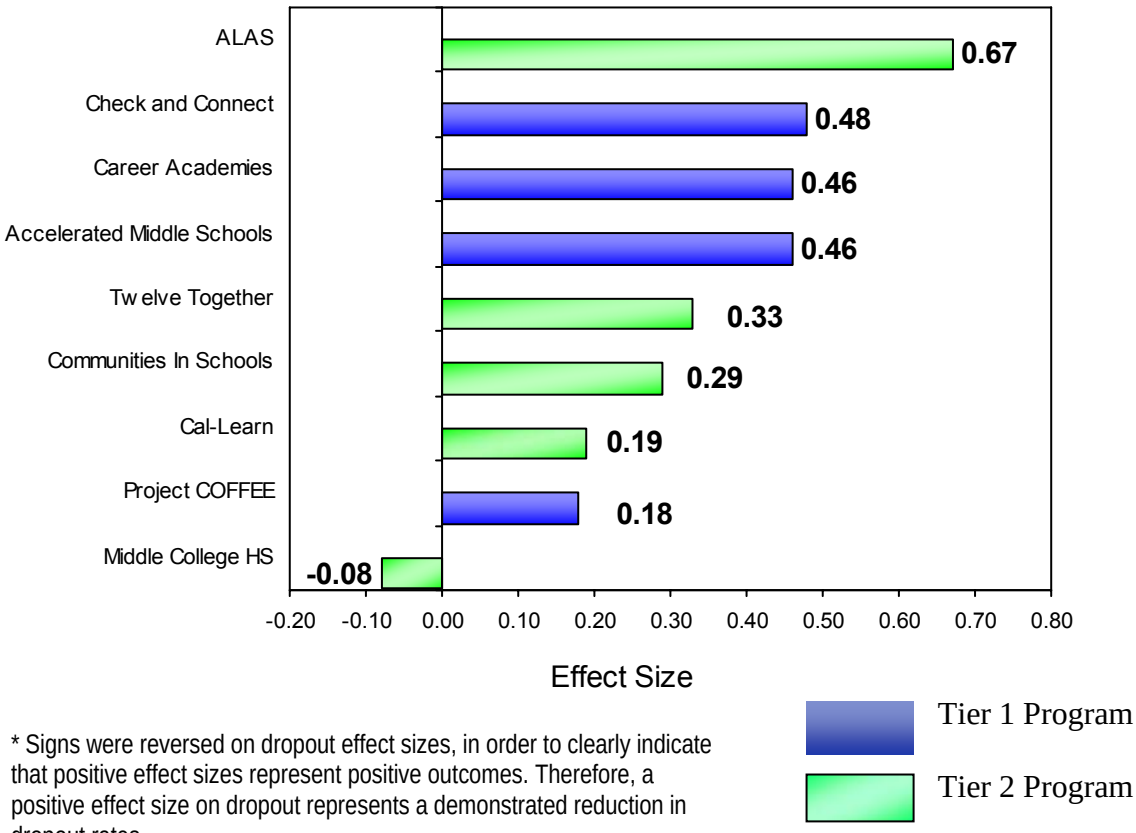
Completing School: Dropout, Graduation, and GED

The majority of the programs studied reported findings on graduation and dropout rates. Some of the programs also included results on other outcomes such as academics, attendance, and credits toward graduation. In this section, we present the overall average effect size for each intervention on given outcomes. This measure of overall average effect size can be misleading if there are multiple studies with contradictory findings. For example, if a study has some positive findings and some negative findings (e.g., Quantum Opportunity Program), findings can combine to produce average effect sizes of zero, while other programs (e.g., Talent Search) had findings that were consistently positive. This measure may also be misleading since some programs were subjected to examination on more outcomes than others. So, for example, Talent Search was studied on one relevant core outcome (graduation/GED certification), while other programs were subject to examination on a large number of outcomes. Still, we believe this is as fair of a measure as any since it captures outcomes across these typically multifaceted programs.

As shown in Figure 5, several programs reported reductions in dropout rates with an average effect size over 0.20 (i.e., our threshold for a "meaningful" effect size). In particular, four programs (Accelerated Middle Schools, Career Academies, Check and Connect, and ALAS) have associated studies which showed an average effect size over 0.40. Accelerated Middle Schools, Check and Connect, and Career Academies are all Tier 1 programs (i.e., these three programs were each studied using strong research designs on at least two independent occasions with different samples). The ALAS program reported the largest effect size in dropout rates (g=0.67)[63]; however, it was the subject of only one study and therefore was considered a Tier 2 program. Regardless, the ALAS model should be considered for adoption since it has proven effects with Latino students, who are not only a large population in Texas, but also have disproportionately high dropout rates.

[63] Unless otherwise noted, the research team used Hedges' G as our preferred effect size measure. The team used author-reported effect sizes when available, since these were typically calculated on results of multivariate models that had more statistical precision than unadjusted posttest means.

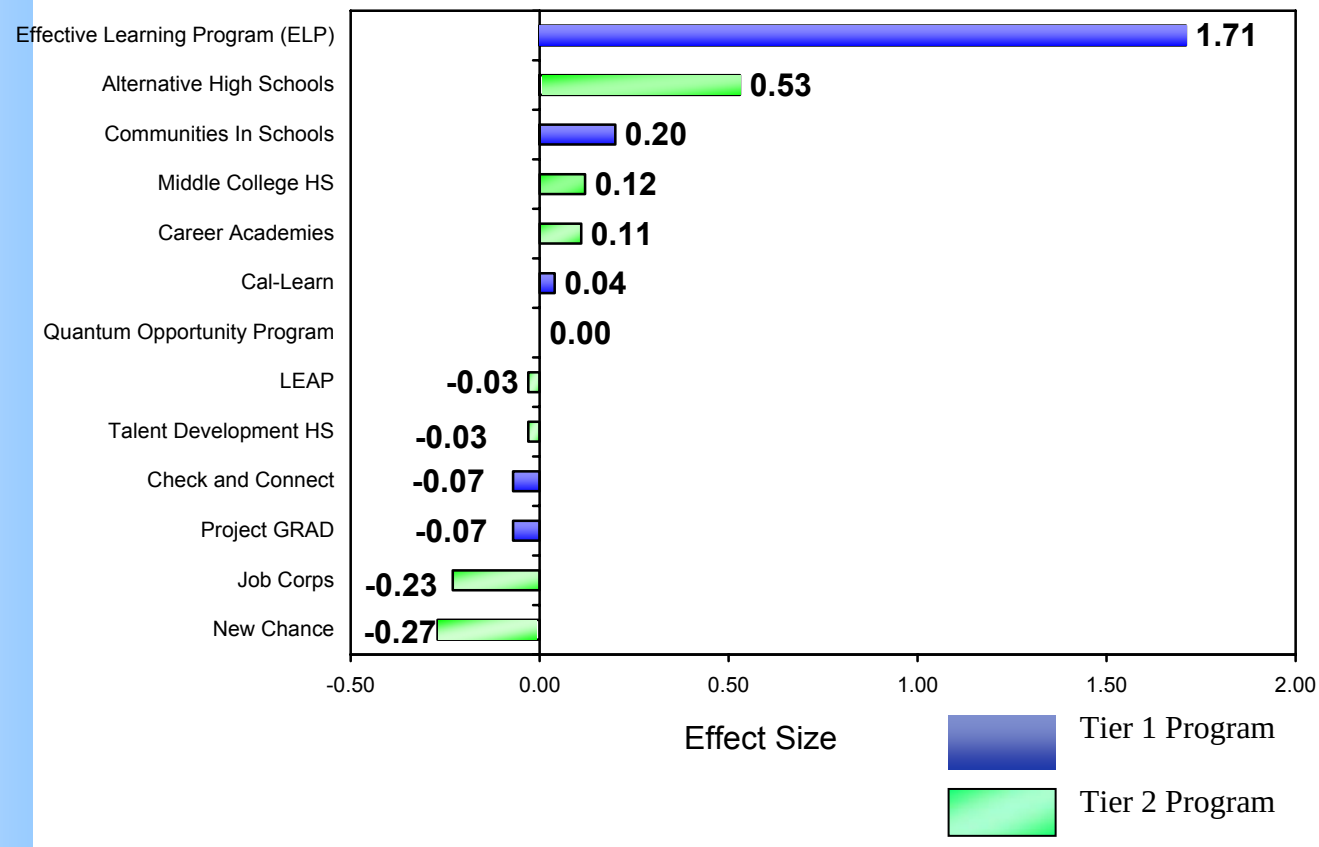
Figure 5: Dropout Effect Sizes*



* Signs were reversed on dropout effect sizes, in order to clearly indicate that positive effect sizes represent positive outcomes. Therefore, a positive effect size on dropout represents a demonstrated reduction in dropout rates.

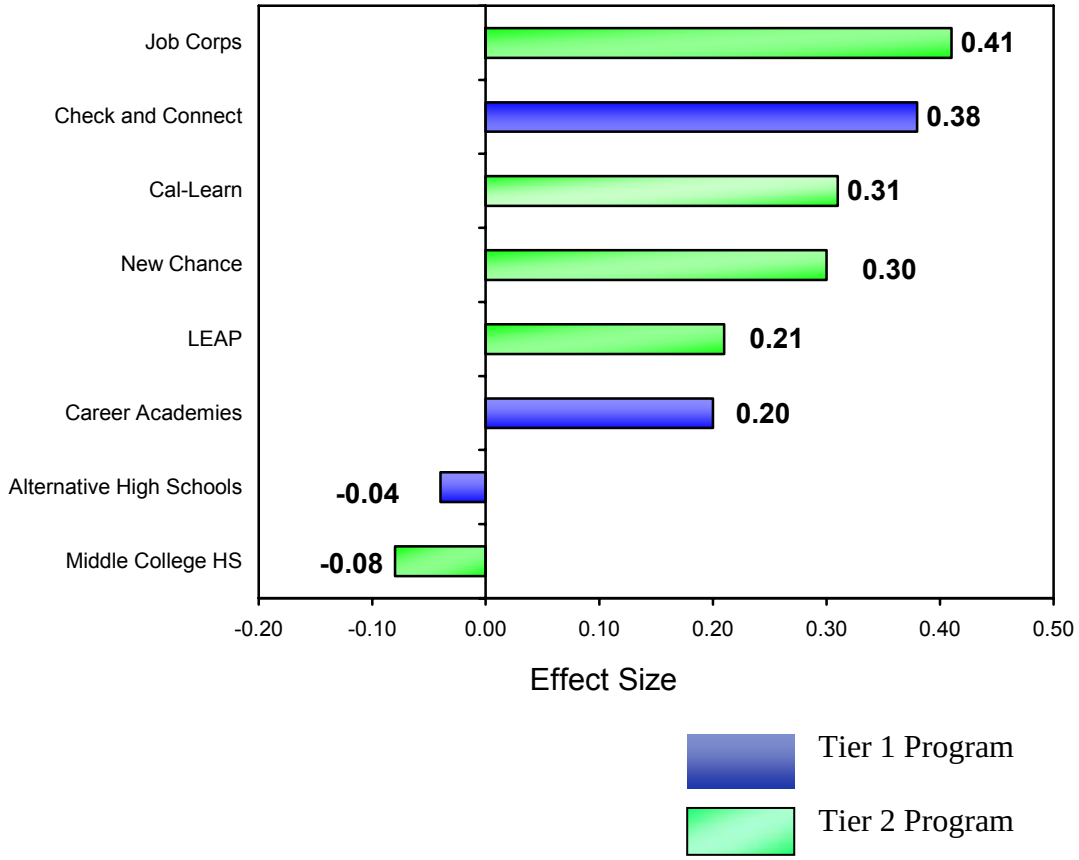
Most dropout prevention programs had a much more difficult time increasing graduation rates than reducing dropout rates (Figure 6). Only six programs reported positive effects (on average) on graduation across all studies: Cal-Learn, Effective Learning Program, Alternative High Schools, Middle College High School, Career Academies, and Communities In Schools. The Effective Learning Program (ELP) showed a large effect size on graduation (1.71), but this was a Tier 2 program since only one study was completed on this intervention. Alternative High Schools was the strongest Tier 1 intervention, with three studies conducted and an overall effect size on graduation of 0.53.

Figure 6: Graduation Effect Sizes



Although it was difficult for dropout prevention programs to prove their effectiveness on high school graduation, it was relatively easier to demonstrate effects on GED certification (Figure 7). Six programs demonstrated a positive effect on increasing GED certification with an effect size of 0.20 or above. Career Academies and Check and Connect were the only Tier 1 programs in this group. The other programs reporting an effect size over 0.20 were Tier 2 programs. It should be noted that the programs with negative effects on GED certification (e.g., Alternative High Schools, Middle College High School) had some of the strongest results on on-time graduation. Since GED certification and high school graduation are mutually exclusive outcomes (i.e., a student can achieve one or the other), a negative finding on GED certification may actually be considered a positive finding for high school graduation.

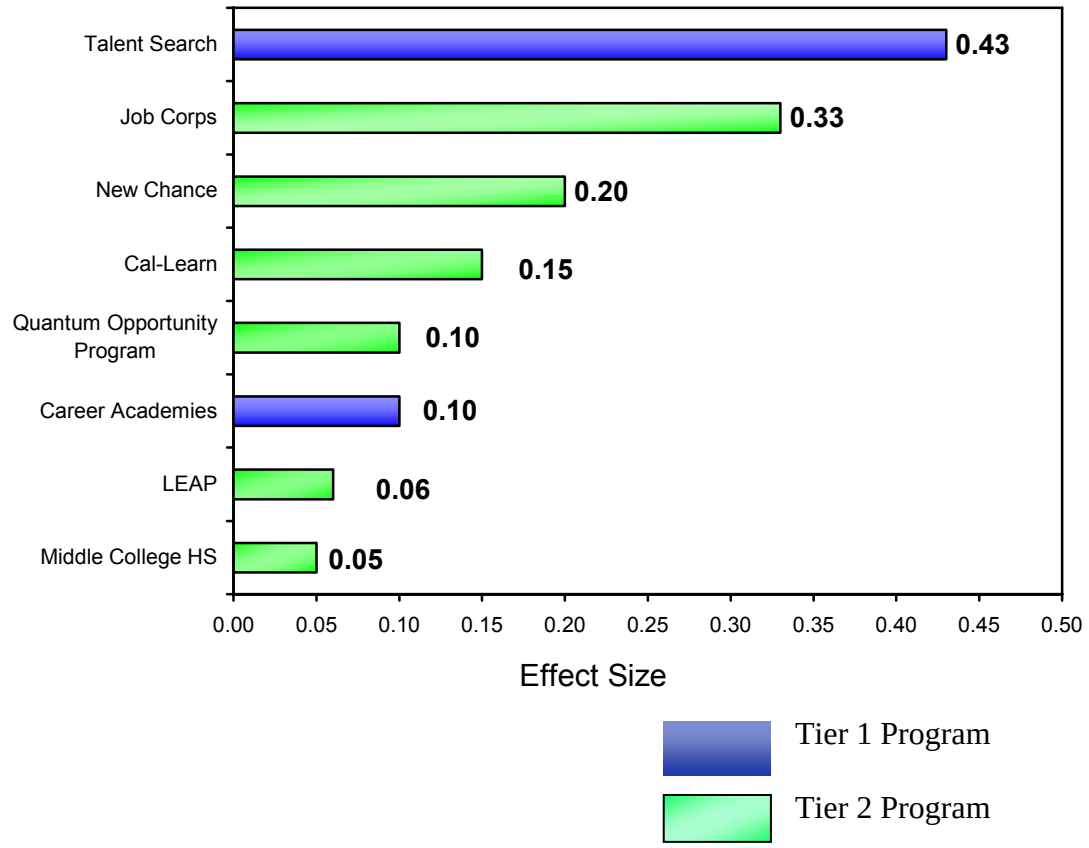
Figure 7: GED Effect Sizes



Some studies reported high school diploma and GED certification as a composite measure (i.e., a measure that combines two outcomes into a single metric). Since we could not break these results out separately in some cases, we included this composite result for completing school as well (Figure 8). Two studies were conducted on the Talent Search program and the studies had an overall average effect size of 0.43 on graduation/GED.[64] The Job Corps and New Chance programs were both Tier 2 programs, but they did report meaningful effect sizes on this measure (0.33 and 0.20, respectively).

[64] This study did not break down results by graduation and GED completion, so we cannot be certain whether Talent Search was more successful in helping students complete school with a high school diploma, or whether the program effectively opened an alternative pathway to completing school through the GED.

Figure 8: Diploma or GED Effect Sizes



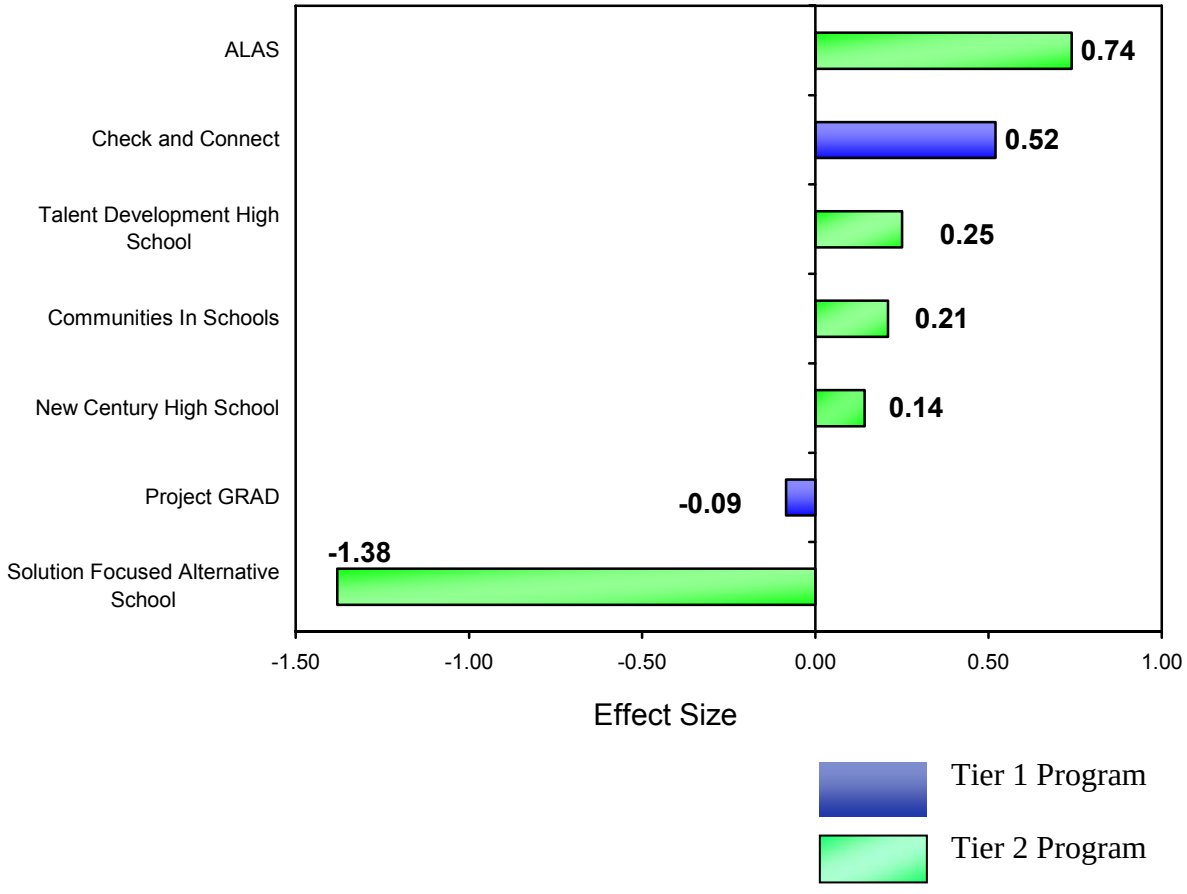
Considering that GED certification effect sizes were relatively higher than high school graduation effect sizes, we may be able to deduce that positive findings reported in Figure 8 are largely being driven by GED certification. For example, Job Corps and New Chance reported relatively strong effect sizes on GED certification, and negative findings on high school graduation. Their combined GED/graduation results remain quite positive, however, solely because effects on GED certification were so strong. This underscores the point that GED certification may not be the best measure of a dropout prevention program's effectiveness.

Some programs reported findings on the following six outcomes: attendance, reading proficiency, math proficiency, grade promotion, credits earned, and dropout recovery.

Attendance

Of the 21 interventions in evidence Tiers 1 and 2, only 7 reported data on attendance rates. Three programs – ALAS, Check and Connect, and Talent Development High School – show improvements on attendance with effect sizes over 0.20. Check and Connect was a Tier 1 program, while ALAS and Talent Development High School were both Tier 2 programs.

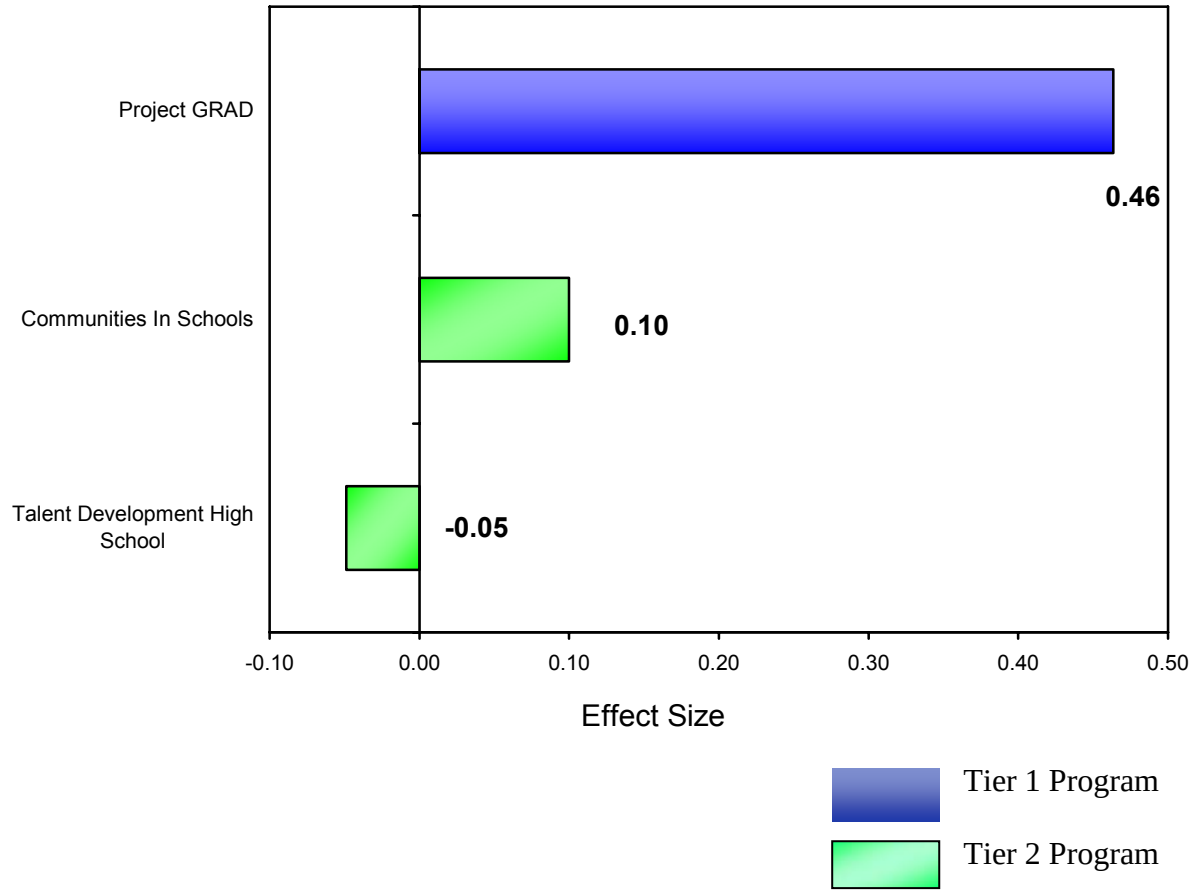
Figue 9: Attendance Effect Sizes



Academics: Reading and Math Proficiency

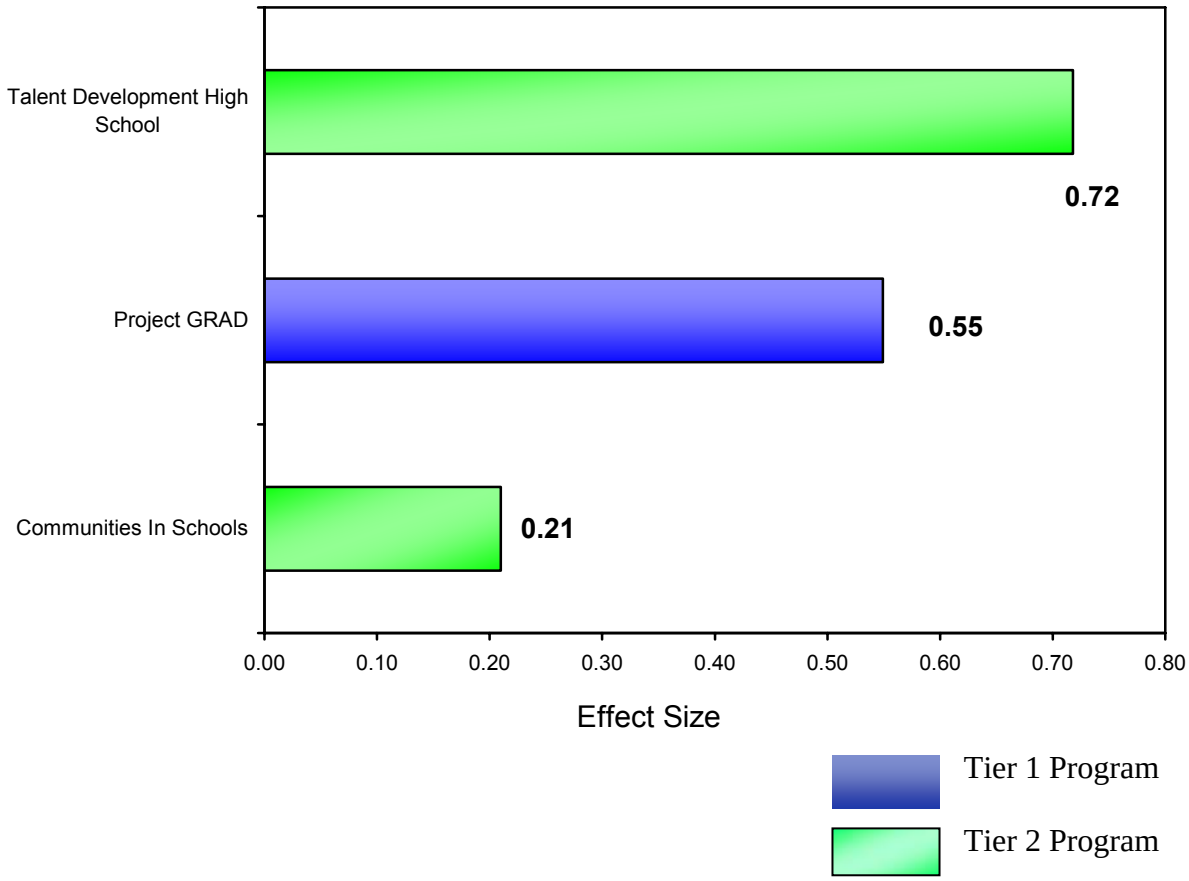
Only 3 of 21 interventions in Tiers 1 and 2 presented evidence of effectiveness in academics. Two programs – Project GRAD and Communities In Schools – demonstrated positive effect sizes in reading proficiency. Project GRAD, however, clearly has demonstrated stronger effects than Communities In Schools in reading proficiency, and was the only intervention to post a "meaningful" effect size on reading proficiency. Moreover, Project GRAD is a Tier 1 program while CIS is a Tier 2 program.

Figure 10: Reading Proficiency Effect Sizes



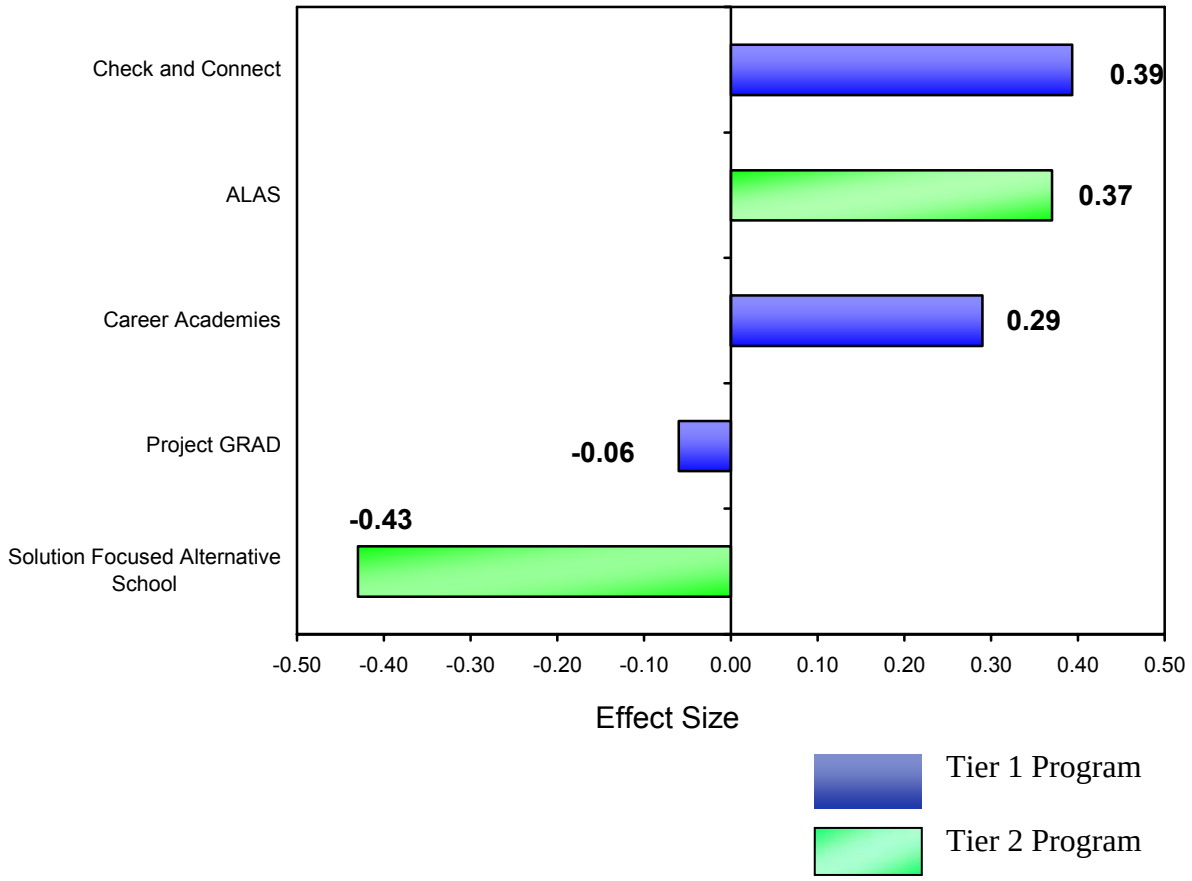
All three programs that produced data on math proficiency demonstrated meaningful effect sizes (Figure 11). Project GRAD and Talent Development High School are Tier 1 programs and posted the strongest effects. Communities In Schools is a Tier 2 program.

Figure 11: Math Proficiency Effect Sizes



Three programs – Check and Connect, ALAS, and Career Academies – demonstrated positive effect sizes over 0.20 on helping students earn more credits toward graduation (Figure 12). Both Check and Connect and Career Academies are Tier 1 programs with a strong evidence base. ALAS is rated as a Tier 2 program.

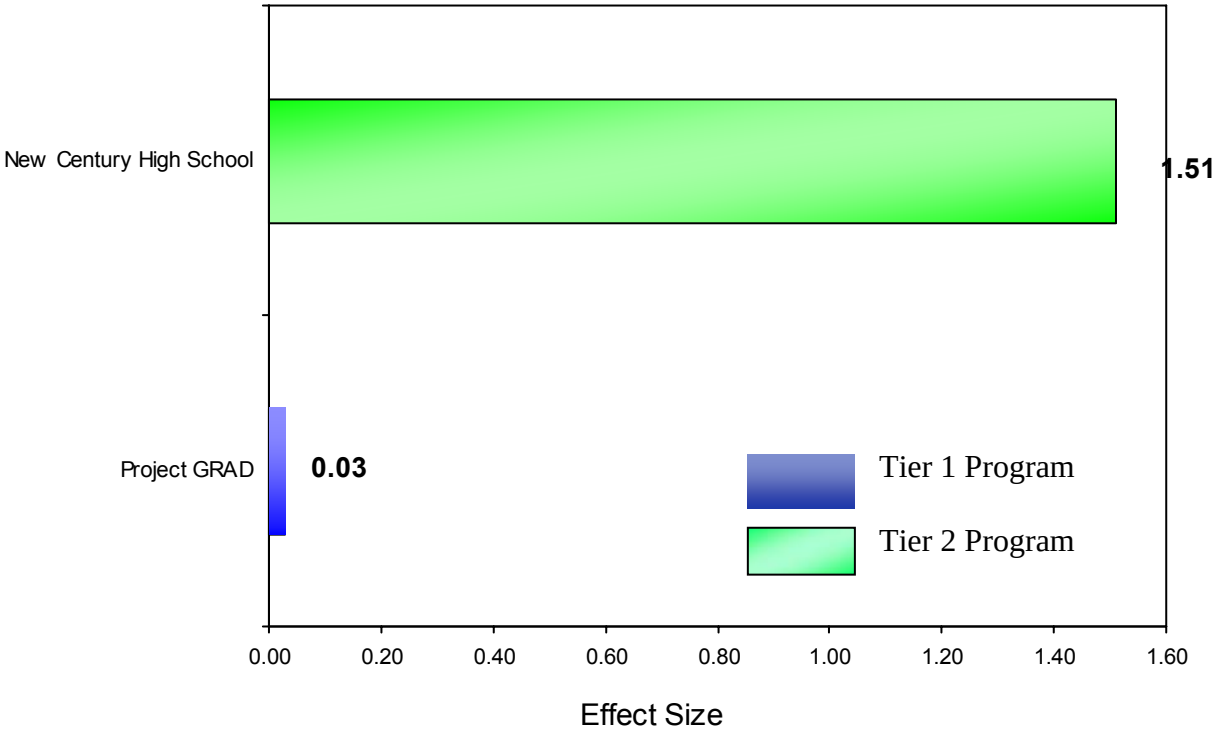
Figure 12: Credit Completion Effect Sizes



Grade Promotion

New Century High School, which is a Tier 2 program, showed a large effect size (1.51) in grade promotion (Figure 13). Project GRAD, which is a Tier 1 program, did not demonstrate substantial progress on grade promotion.

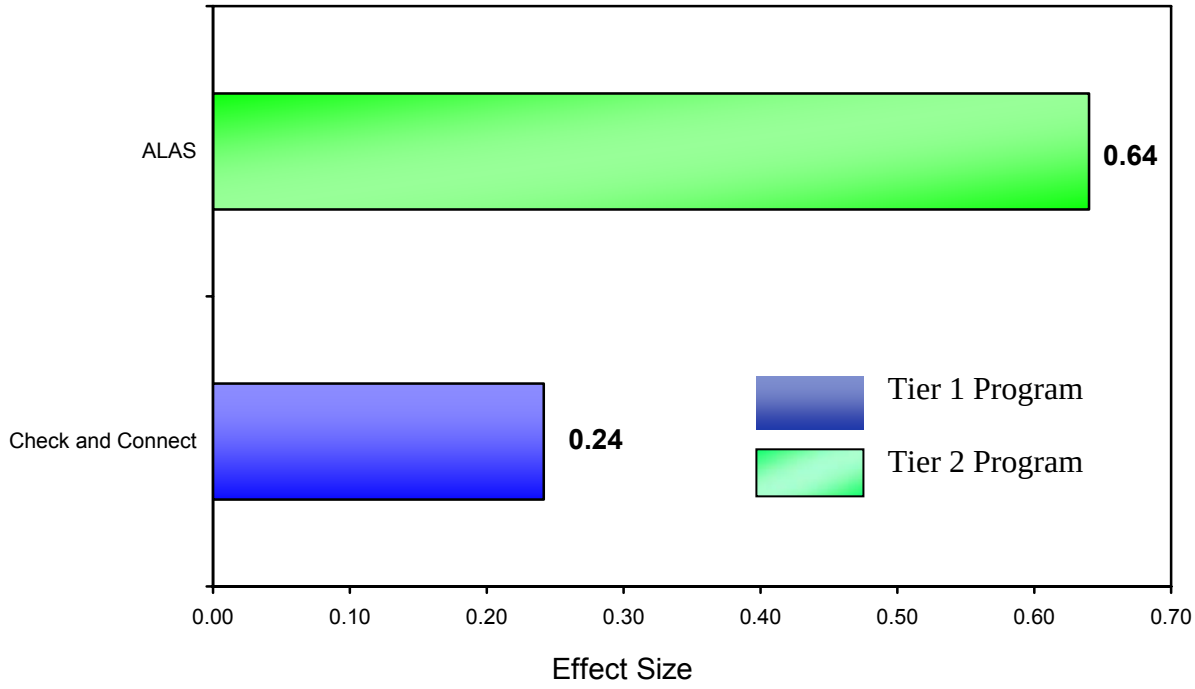
Figure 13: Promotion Effect Sizes



Dropout Recovery

Two programs, ALAS and Check and Connect, showed positive effect sizes in dropout recovery, defined as the percentage of dropouts who ultimately came back to school (Figure 14). As described before, Check and Connect is a Tier 1 program while ALAS is a Tier 2 program.

Figure 14: Dropout Recovery Effect Sizes



Tier 3 Programs

By definition, Tier 3 programs did not produce evidence of effectiveness that meets TEA standards. Additional information on these "promising" programs is presented in the following chapter.

Conclusion

Different programs demonstrated various levels of effectiveness on different outcomes. However, four programs – ALAS, Career Academies, Check and Connect, and Communities In Schools – have overall average effect sizes of at least 0.20 on a minimum of three separate outcomes. These four programs reported positive results across every outcome measured (with the exception of Check and Connect which reported a slightly negative effect on high school graduation).

Only one program (Communities In Schools) reported meaningful effects on both reducing dropout and increasing graduation. Keeping students in school and getting them through graduation therefore appears to be a formidable challenge for dropout prevention programs.

Two programs (Career Academies and Check and Connect) reported meaningful effect sizes on both reducing dropout and increasing GED certification.

In the area of academic improvement, Project GRAD performed exceptionally well in improving reading and math proficiency, as demonstrated by effect sizes of 0.46 and 0.55, respectively. In addition, Talent Development High School also showed strong effectiveness in improving math scores, as indicated by an effect size of 0.72 on this measure.

V. Identification and Implementation of "Best Practices"

This section presents data on specific strategies used by evidence-based programs. Understanding the composition of effective dropout prevention programs is critical to policy creation and successful replication of best practices. The NDPC/N, founded in 1986 to research and offer solutions on issues related to school dropout, has developed a list of 15 effective strategies for dropout prevention.[65] This list is based on NDPC/N's 20 years of experience conducting and analyzing dropout research, sponsoring dropout prevention workshops and collaborating with dropout experts in the field. In order to integrate these strategies into successful dropout prevention programs, an understanding of how to implement them is necessary. Previous research studies have produced evidence-based suggestions for implementing best practices, including potential barriers to success and ways to overcome them, as well as approximate costs of implementing programs.

Introduction to Principles and Strategies

The 15 strategies are derived from four general principles: school and community perspective, early intervention, basic core strategies, and making the most of instruction.

The first principle, *school and community perspective*, is rooted in the understanding that students are not only part of their school communities, but also part of multiple communities outside of school grounds. In addition, schools do not operate independently of their environment, but rather as part of a larger integrated community. Therefore, community and business support is a crucial component to improving attendance and reducing dropout rates. Three of the 15 dropout prevention strategies fall under the principle of *school and community perspective*: **systemic renewal**, **school-community collaboration**, and **safe learning environments**.

The second principle, *early intervention*, assists in identifying attitudes and behaviors indicative of later dropout during the early stages of education. Problems associated with attendance and truancy often begin in elementary school. Identifying these behaviors and attitudes at early grades is imperative to changing them before they are deeply entrenched and therefore much more difficult to alter. **Family engagement**, **early childhood education**, and **early literacy development** are all crucial components of *early intervention*. While these strategies are most effective when they are implemented at birth, if introduced early enough they can also be extremely successful in deterring later dropout.

[65] Smink, J., & Reimer, M. S. (2005, May). *Fifteen effective strategies for improving student attendance and truancy prevention.* Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center/Network.

The third principle, *basic core strategies*, targets elementary, middle, and high school students in at-risk situations. *Basic core strategies* are student-centered and can be implemented in alternative, traditional, and community settings. The goal of these strategies is to provide meaningful learning opportunities to ensure that students are engaged in their learning environment and continue on the path towards graduation. The four *basic core strategies* identified by NDPC/N are: **mentoring/tutoring, service-learning, alternative schooling**, and **after-school opportunities**.

Finally, the fourth principle, *making the most of instruction*, focuses on dynamics and teaching within the classroom. This strategy is based on addressing different learning styles, increasing the knowledge and skills of teachers, and utilizing technology to increase learning and attendance. School-based strategies are especially effective with students in at-risk situations. The remaining five strategies that fall under this principle are: **professional development, active learning, educational technology, individualized instruction,** and **career and technology education**.

Strategies Used by Evidence-Based Dropout Prevention Programs

These 15 strategies are the basis for the most successful dropout programs. While these strategies appear to be independent, dropout prevention programs are most effective when they incorporate most or all of these strategies. Table 9 illustrates which strategies are incorporated into the most effective dropout programs as identified by our study.

Table 9: Strategies Used by Evidence-Based Dropout Prevention Programs

		School-Community Perspective			Early Intervention			Core Strategies				Making the Most of Instruction				
	Texas Program	Systemic Renewal	School-Community Collaboration	Safe Learning Environments	Family Engagement	Early Childhood Education	Early Literacy Development	Mentoring/ Tutoring	Service Learning	Alternative Schooling	After-School	Professional Development	Active Learning	Educational Technology	Individualized Instruction	Career and Technology Education
Tier 1																
Accelerated Middle Schools					✓			✓		✓			✓			
Alternative High Schools (based on High School Redirection)				✓				✓		✓						
Career Academies			✓					✓		✓			✓			✓
Check & Connect		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓							✓	
Project COFFEE			✓	✓						✓					✓	✓
Project GRAD		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓				
Talent Search				✓	✓			✓								✓
Tier 2																
ALAS (Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success)			✓	✓	✓			✓								
Belief Academy					✓			✓		✓						
Cal-Learn			✓													
Communities In Schools			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Effective Learning Program (ELP)				✓						✓						
Job Corps				✓						✓			✓		✓	✓
Learning, Earning, and Parenting Program (LEAP)			✓													

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	Texas Program	Systemic Renewal	School-Community Collaboration	Safe Learning Environments	Family Engagement	Early Childhood Education	Early Literacy Development	Mentoring/ Tutoring	Service Learning	Alternative Schooling	After-School	Professional Development	Active Learning	Educational Technology	Individualized Instruction	Career and Technology Education
Middle College High School			✓		✓				✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
New Century High School		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	
New Chance										✓						✓
Quantum Opportunity Program	★			✓	✓			✓	✓				✓	✓		✓
Solution Focused Alternative Schools	★			✓					✓	✓			✓		✓	
Talent Development High Schools		✓	✓		✓					✓	✓	✓				✓
Twelve Together			✓					✓			✓					
Tier 3																
ACT Explore	★	✓													✓	✓
Academic Alternatives										✓	✓			✓	✓	
Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)	★				✓			✓			✓		✓		✓	
Big Brothers Big Sisters	★		✓					✓			✓					
Boys and Girls Club of America	★		✓		✓			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓
Career Education Options (CEO)			✓							✓			✓			✓
Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program	★		✓		✓		✓	✓			✓			✓		
Complete High School Maize								✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Computer-Based Instruction (example: Education Options,	★									✓				✓	✓	

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Novel/Stars)																
Computer-Based Instruction (example: Pearson Digital Learning/NovaNET)	★									✓			✓	✓	✓	
Computer-Based Instruction (example: PLATO, Learning Inc.)	★									✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Consistency Management & Cooperative Discipline (CMCD)	★		✓	✓	✓											
Creative Lasting Family Connections (CLFC)	★		✓	✓	✓											
Early College High School Initiatives	★		✓		✓					✓				✓		
Early College High School Initiatives (example: Gateway to College; Tri-Country Technical College)			✓	✓				✓		✓						✓
Early College High School Initiatives (example: Richland One Middle College (ROMC)			✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓				
Fast Forward Center			✓							✓				✓		✓
GEARUP	★		✓					✓			✓					
High Schools that Work	★		✓	✓	✓			✓					✓	✓		✓
Jefferson County Public Schools (Louisville, Kentucky)			✓							✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG)/Jobs for SC Graduates (JSCG)			✓					✓					✓		✓	✓
Keepin' it R.E.A.L. (Refuse, Explain, Avoid, Leave) – Ages 10-17				✓									✓	✓		
Leadership and Resiliency Program (LRP)			✓	✓					✓		✓		✓			

Table 9: Strategies Used by Evidence-Based Dropout Prevention Programs

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	Texas Program	Systemic Renewal	School-Community Collaboration	Safe Learning Environments	Family Engagement	Early Childhood Education	Early Literacy Development	Mentoring/ Tutoring	Service Learning	Alternative Schooling	After-School	Professional Development	Active Learning	Educational Technology	Individualized Instruction	Career and Technology Education
Moss Point High School Entrepreneurship			✓	✓						✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) and YES Carolina	★												✓			✓
Phoenix Academy		✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Pickens County Star Program										✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Positive Action	★		✓	✓	✓						✓					
Project Toward No Drug Abuse (Project TND)	★			✓									✓			
Project Respect			✓	✓	✓			✓								
Reconnecting Youth	★			✓	✓						✓					
School for Integrated Academies and Technologies (SIATech)			✓							✓			✓	✓		✓
School Transition Environment Program (STEP) (Now HiPlaces School Improvement Model)	★			✓	✓			✓								
South Carolina Advanced Technological Education (SC ATE)													✓	✓		✓
South Carolina Virtual School										✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Teen Outreach Program (TOP)	★		✓						✓		✓		✓			✓
Too Good for Drugs and Violence	★		✓	✓	✓						✓					
Truant Recovery Program		✓		✓												
Union Alternative School			✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓		✓	

Table 9: Strategies Used by Evidence-Based Dropout Prevention Programs

		School-Community Perspective			Early Intervention			Core Strategies				Making the Most of Instruction				
	Texas Program	Systemic Renewal	School-Community Collaboration	Safe Learning Environments	Family Engagement	Early Childhood Education	Early Literacy Development	Mentoring/ Tutoring	Service Learning	Alternative Schooling	After-School	Professional Development	Active Learning	Educational Technology	Individualized Instruction	Career and Technology Education
Upward Bound			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓					✓
WorkKeys/KeyTrain													✓			✓
Youth Build									✓	✓			✓			✓

Most Frequently Used Effective Strategies: Tier 1, 2, and 3 Programs

All programs use an average of four to five combined strategies, with only 10 of the 66 programs employing fewer than three strategies. The seven strategies discussed below are the most common among all interventions passing our standards in either Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3. These most common strategies are **family engagement, mentoring/tutoring**, **alternative schooling**, **school-community collaboration**, **career and technology education**, **safe learning environments**, and **active learning**.

Most Common Effective Strategies for Tier 1 Programs:

- Family Engagement
- Mentoring/Tutoring
- Alternative Schooling

Family engagement has a direct, positive effect on children's achievement and is the most accurate predictor of a student's success in school. It is associated with many benefits for students, including higher student achievement, better attendance, improved test scores, improved attitudes and behavior in school, and higher expectations of achievement from teachers.[66] Research has found that family engagement benefits all students, regardless of socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, educational background, or age.[67]

To successfully engage families in their children's schooling, educators must recognize that all parents want their children to do well in school, regardless of their personal or cultural characteristics.[68] Schools must provide professional development to staff to train them in working with families. Schools should support and guide families through the education process and work on developing trusting relationships. Finally, the goal of student learning must remain at the forefront of all efforts to engage the family with the school. Working with parents is a partnership and sharing power is in the best interests of the student. Other barriers to anticipate when building school-family collaboration may include characteristics of the parents such as literacy level, preferred language, other time commitments, and level of comfort with the school environment.

These programs include a Family Engagement component:

- Accelerated Middle Schools
- Check and Connect
- Communities In Schools
- Project GRAD
- Talent Search
- ALAS
- Belief Academy
- Middle College High School
- New Century High School
- Quantum Opportunity Program
- Talent Development High Schools

[66] National PTA. (1998). *National standards for parent/family involvement programs*. Chicago, IL: National PTA.

[67] Mapp, K. (2004). Family engagement. In F. P. Schargel & J. Smink (Eds), *Helping students graduate: A strategic approach to dropout prevention* (pp. 99-113). Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

[68] Henderson, A., & Mapp, K. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement.* Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

These programs include a Mentoring/Tutoring component:

- Accelerated Middle Schools
- Check and Connect
- Communities In Schools
- Talent Search
- ALAS
- Belief Academy
- New Century High School
- Quantum Opportunity Program
- Twelve Together

Mentoring is a caring, trusting, one-on-one relationship between an adult and a youth. The focus of mentoring is on teaching and/or providing guidance to students. Research shows that mentoring is an effective strategy for supporting at-risk youth who may not have positive role models or a consistent support system in their lives.

Many resources are available to assist program planners who wish to implement mentoring programs in their schools or communities. The National Mentoring Partnership created a checklist to help direct the implementation of mentoring programs.[69] The Partnership provides a comprehensive guide around all stages of a mentoring program, including program design and planning, management, operations, and evaluation. The NDPC/N proposes these four elements as the most crucial in any mentoring program: (1) a clear statement of program purpose and goals; (2) a recruitment and selection plan for mentors; (3) a support and training program for mentors; and (4) a monitoring and evaluation process for the program.[70] More information on step 3, the training of mentors, can be found in Smink's Training Guide for Mentors.[71] Implementing a mentoring program during the school day can create additional challenges, such as finding the time to meet and resistance from staff. The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) recommends that school administrators allocate ample time during the school day for students to meet with their adult advocates, whether it is time set aside specifically for mentoring or whether it is a consistent lunch or advisory period.[72] Only those staff who are committed to the role of mentor should participate, and all counseling staff must understand that they share the responsibility for supporting and guiding struggling youth. IES reiterates the importance of thorough training and adequate support for adult advocates as they mentor at-risk youth, who may have problems the adults are unaccustomed to dealing with.

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[69] National Mentoring Partnership (1991). *A nuts and bolts checklist for mentoring programs*. Alexandria, VA.

[70] Smink, J., & Reimer, M. S. (2005, May). *Fifteen effective strategies for improving student attendance and truancy prevention.* Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center/Network.

[71] Smink, J. (1999). *A training guide for mentors*. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center.

[72] Dynarski, M., Clarke, L., Cobb, B., Finn, J., Rumberger, R., and Smink, J. (2008). *Dropout Prevention: A Practice Guide* (NCEE 2008–4025). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

Tutoring, also a one-on-one activity, focuses on academics and is an effective practice when addressing specific needs such as reading, writing, or math competencies. It has been proven particularly effective for struggling readers.[73] In one such program, students participated in one-hour sessions, four days per week, for 10-12 weeks. Even when students missed a few sessions, each session was amply long to allow for their success. Volunteers were successfully recruited via presentations to the community, media advertisements, and word-of-mouth. This intervention assumed a "team" approach, whereby tutors would rotate between students and each student would benefit from the varied teaching styles of two different tutors per session; however, each student worked with only one tutor at a time. As tutors did not always work with the same students, they kept detailed session logs for the benefit of the next tutor which included the following information: date, tutor name, lesson number, completion status of the lesson, and any difficulties students had with the lesson. On average, students made approximately seven weeks of reading progress in the two to three months of tutoring session time.[74]

Alternative schooling provides potential dropouts a variety of options that can lead to graduation, with programs paying special attention to students' individual social needs and academic requirements for a high school diploma. The students who attend alternative schools have struggled in their traditional schools and are often underachieving, deficient in credits, and/or over-age for their grade, but they choose to remain in school or are ordered to by the courts.

These programs include an Alternative Schooling component:

- Accelerated Middle Schools
- Career Academies
- Communities In Schools
- Project COFFEE
- Belief Academy
- Job Corps
- LEAP
- New Century High School
- New Chance
- Solution Focused Alternative Schools
- Talent Development High Schools

A wide variety of alternative schools now exist, ranging from those in a separate room within traditional schools to those that focus on particular school subjects to those providing specialized non-academic skills. According to the NDPC/N, there is a consistent set of elements present in the most successful alternative schools.[75] As seen in several other strategies, staff at alternative schools must believe that all students can learn and maintain high expectations for students. Staff need regular professional development and must be committed to helping students achieve success. Successful alternative schools tend to house fewer than 250 students and maintain a maximum teacher to student ratio of

[73] Moss, M., Swartz, J., Obeidahhah, G.S., & Greene, D. (2001). *AmeriCorps tutoring outcomes study*. Washington, DC: Corporation for National Service.

[74] Corporation for National and Community Service. May 2, 2001. Resource Center: Tools and training for volunteer and service programs. Retrieved from http://nationalserviceresources.org/ December 11, 2008.

[75] Smink, J., & Reimer, M. S. (2005, May). *Fifteen effective strategies for improving student attendance and truancy prevention.* Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center/Network.

1:10. Alternative schools should also have a clear mission statement and disciplinary plan, a flexible schedule, a learning program that can accommodate individual students' learning styles, and the involvement and support of the community at large.

School-community collaboration occurs when all groups in a community provide collective support to the school in order to build a strong infrastructure and supportive environment where youth can thrive and achieve. It recognizes the value of local entities outside of school such as home, places of worship, the media, museums, libraries, community agencies, and businesses in the education of a community's students.[76] Collaboration between the school and community is important in order to raise a whole child.

Community collaboration with schools usually takes the form of volunteers or funding contributions. Successful collaboration with community organizations requires skilled community eadership and a shared vision between the school and the community member.[77] The community organizations chosen should be diverse, both culturally and in terms of their sector representation. Both the school and community entities must be committed to helping students succeed and engage as stakeholders in the collaborative. Both groups must be held accountable to each other. Finally, differing practice orientations and organizational philosophies may serve as roadblocks that inhibit effective collaboration.[78] Other challenges to community collaboration include preventing duplication of services and keeping all organizations focused on the same goal.

These programs include a School-Community Collaboration component:

- Career Academies
- Check and Connect
- Communities In Schools
- Project COFFEE
- ALAS
- Cal-Learn
- LEAP
- Middle College High School
- New Century High School
- Talent Development High Schools
- Twelve Together

[76] Drew, S. (2004). The power of school-community collaboration in dropout prevention. In F. P. Schargel & J. Smink (Eds), *Helping students graduate: A strategic approach to dropout prevention* (pp. 65-77). Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
[77] The National Assembly of National Voluntary Health and Social Welfare Organizations. (1991). *The community collaboration manual*. Washington, DC.

[78] The National Assembly. (2000). 21st Century Community Learning Centers collaborative survey. Washington, DC: National Assembly National Collaboration for Youth.

Career and technical education, according to the contemporary model, integrates academic and career-based skills, giving all students a solid academic foundation regardless of their plans after high school. The changing demands of the workplace require a broader base of thinking and decision-making skills.

These programs include a Career and Technical Education component:

- Communities In Schools
- Career Academies
- Project COFFEE
- Talent Search
- Job Corps
- Middle College High School
- New Chance
- Quantum Opportunity Program
- Talent Development High Schools.

Some of the many ways career and technical education can be implemented include tech prep, career academies, school-registered apprenticeships, student internships, and career-oriented high schools.[79] Techniques surrounding career and technical education that help keep students in school include career guidance, work-based learning, career pathways/academies, and tech prep.[80] Career guidance includes career interest inventories and job readiness training. Work-based learning connects students with resources outside the school via cooperative education, school-based enterprises, internships, apprenticeships, job shadowing, and mentoring opportunities.[81] Career pathways and academies are bundles of courses, including academic and vocational classes, which give students basic academic skills while encouraging them to remain in school with real-world education as well. Tech prep includes plans for enrollment in a community college and eases the transition from high school to postsecondary education. IES cites health, business, and the arts as possible career pathways within a school, and recommends that real-world information related to these careers be integrated into the core academic courses of math, science, English, and social studies.[82,83,84]

[79] Schargel, F. P., & Smink, J. (2001). Strategies to help solve our school dropout problem. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
[80] Stone, J. R. (2004). Career and technical education: Increasing school engagement. In J. Smink, J. & F. P., Schargel. (Eds.), Helping students graduate: A strategic approach to dropout prevention (pp. 195-203.). Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
[81] Bauer, R., & Michael, R. (1993). They're still in school: Results of an intervention program for at-risk high school students. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta.
[82] Kemple, J., & Snipes, J. (2000). Career Academies: impacts on students' engagement and performance in high school. New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.
[83] Kemple, J. (2004). Career academies: impacts on labor market outcomes and educational attainment. New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.
[84] Kemple, J., Herlihy, C., & Smith, T. (2005). Making progress toward graduation: evidence from the Talent Development High School model. New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

These programs include a Safe Learning Environments component:

- Communities In Schools
- Project GRAD
- Talent Search
- ALAS
- Effective Learning Program (ELP)
- New Century High School
- Quantum Opportunity Program
- Solution Focused Alternative Schools

Safe learning environments are a crucial element in encouraging students to remain in school. Safe learning environments involve a comprehensive violence prevention plan, including conflict resolution, which deals with potential violence as well as crisis management. Schools must foster a safe climate that does not allow bullying and intimidation; in 1996, nearly 160,000 students skipped school every day for fear of physical danger.[85]

Some of the acts that can make schools unsafe include physical attacks and fights with and without weapons, sexual harrassment and rape, thefts and robberies, and vandalism. Researchers recommend the following steps for creating a safe school plan to prevent these issues: (1) identify committee members; (2) assess school crime data; (3) identify strategies and programs for school safety to target the problems identified in step 2; (4) ensure that the identified procedures comply with laws; (5) present the plan at a public meeting; (6) make the plan available for public review; and (7) after implementing the plan, amend it annually.[86] When students confront conflict violently, an unsafe situation can result. Therefore, teaching conflict resolution and interpersonal skills is a possible strategy for school safety. IES recommends a whole-school life skills course for all ninth graders, or a small-group pull-out session for students identified as at-risk.[87] Skills emphasized in the course could include social competence, problem recognition and evaluation, goal setting, planning, expecting challenges, controlling anger, and expressing emotion.[88]

Active learning embraces teaching and learning strategies that engage and involve students in the learning process. Students find new and creative ways to solve problems, achieve success, and become lifelong learners when educators show them that there are different ways to learn. Active learning allows visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners the opportunity to understand material in a way that makes sense to them.

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[85] Educational Development Center, Inc. (1996, May). Schools and violence. National Network of Violence Prevention Practitioners Fact Sheet, Vol. 1, No. 3. Washington, DC: Author.
[86] Stephens, R. D. (2004). Creating safe learning environments. In F. P. Schargel & J. Smink (Eds), Helping students graduate: A strategic approach to dropout prevention. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
[87] Dynarski, M., Clarke, L., Cobb, B., Finn, J., Rumberger, R., and Smink, J. (2008). Dropout Prevention: A Practice Guide (NCEE 2008–4025). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.
[88] Snipes, J. C., Holton, G. I., Doolittle, F., & Sztejnberg, L. (2006). Striving for student success: the effect of Project GRAD on high school student outcomes in three urban school districts. New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

Active learning is a general term that encompasses a variety of teaching methods, including cooperative learning, multiple intelligences theory, and project-based learning. Cooperative learning allows students to learn from each other through working together to achieve a common goal.[89] Multiple intelligences theory, developed by Howard Gardner, recognizes eight intelligences, of which most people have one that emerges as the strongest.[90] Project-based learning allows students to develop leadership and decision-making skills as they create projects to address real-world problems. This approach gives more power to students, providing them with the opportunity to determine the best course of action for learning the necessary material and implementing the project. Active learning is particularly effective when teachers reward students for their individual strengths which may become apparent through this style of teaching.

These programs include an Active Learning component:

- Accelerated Middle Schools
- Job Corps
- Middle College High School
- Quantum Opportunity Program
- Solution Focused Alternative Schools

Family engagement and mentoring/tutoring are the most commonly paired strategies, with four of the eight Tier 1 programs utilizing both strategies. Other commonly paired strategies include: mentoring/tutoring and alternative schooling, alternative schooling and career and technology education, and school-community collaboration and individualized instruction.

Other Effective Strategies

While the remaining eight strategies were not most commonly employed by the programs that passed our standards, the strategies are not unimportant. Rather, more research on interventions using these strategies is necessary. These strategies include **early childhood education, early literacy development, systemic renewal, service learning, after-school opportunities, professional development, educational technology**, and **individualized instruction**.

Early childhood education and **early literacy development** were not components employed by any of the interventions researched in our study. This is due to the fact that one of our initial literature screens restricted interventions to those targeting kindergarten through the 12th grade. However, administrators and legislators involved with young children should note the importance of early childhood education and literacy development. Early childhood education has been shown to provide an effective buffer against dropout, particularly in the case of children at-risk due to socioeconomic conditions, disabilities, or other special circumstances. In fact, one study found that early education costs were

[89] Kagan, S. (1994). *Cooperative learning*. San Clemente, CA: Kagan Cooperative Learning.

[90] Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. New York: Basic Books.

returned sevenfold later in life in costs related to not only dropout but also teen pregnancy, truancy, and incarceration.[91] Results of early education have been studied at all ages from age 6 through age 19.

Early childhood education, focusing on children under six, demonstrates that providing a child additional enrichment can enhance brain development. The most effective way to reduce the number of children who will ultimately drop out is to provide the best possible classroom instruction from the beginning of their school experience through the primary grades. Quality early education should be interactive and exploratory, allowing children to learn in a stimulating, hands-on environment. Those programs with the most success have integrated preventive health, nutrition, and parent involvement into their schools. Other research suggests that full-day kindergarten, a high staff-to-student ratio, and tutorial programs lead to positive outcomes. Regardless of the educational activities and programs provided, early education must be Developmentally Appropriate Practice, or DAP. DAP applies to what is appropriate and accessible to children based on age, culture, and individual traits. Finally, education in early childhood must also be caring and nurturing, providing a consistent environment to educate a whole child.

Systemic renewal is a continuous process of evaluating goals and objectives related to school policies, practices, and organizational structures. Systemic renewal is typically implemented in schools in high-poverty areas using Title I funds and includes whole-school reform of teaching and learning in the classroom.[92]

These programs include a Systemic Renewal component:

- Check and Connect
- Project GRAD
- New Century High School
- Talent Development High Schools

The implementation of a successful systemic renewal requires that all members of the school community are open and willing to accept that change is possible. While this seems apparent, many school personnel have low expectations for students at-risk and do not believe that they can succeed in school.[93] School administrators must commit to reforms on a large scale by investing in professional development for staff, to both enhance staff skills and change prevailing attitudes that contribute to the school environment.[94] Several

[91] Stegelin, D. (2004). Early childhood education. In F. P. Schargel & J. Smink (Eds.) Helping students graduate: A strategic approach to dropout prevention (pp. 115-123.). Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
[92] Smink, J., & Reimer, M. S. (2005, May). Fifteen effective strategies for improving student attendance and truancy prevention. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center/Network.
[93] Goodbye, yellow brick road. (2000, Spring). Changing Schools in Louisville, 8(1), 2-15. Edna McConnell Clark Foundation.
[94] Dynarski, M., Clarke, L., Cobb, B., Finn, J., Rumberger, R., and Smink, J. (2008). Dropout Prevention: A Practice Guide (NCEE 2008–4025). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

components are recommended for successful school-wide reform.[95] Stable leadership with a broad range of experiences and the capacity to plan and implement the reform are necessary; there also must be consensus that change is needed at the school and district levels, as well as time and resources to follow the reform through as planned.

Service-learning connects meaningful community service experiences with academic learning. This teaching/learning method promotes personal and social growth, career development, and civic responsibility, and can be a powerful vehicle for effective school reform at all grade levels. Service learning also addresses student complaints about boredom and irrelevance of school by providing an active, real-world connection.[96]

There are several key elements of service learning that make it effective.[97] First, students must choose and lead the projects, which promotes engagement and teaches leadership skills. When students help their communities, a mutually beneficial relationship results: community members benefit while students learn from and about their communities. Additionally, students must have the opportunity to reflect on their experiences in order to make the most of them.[98,99] This reflection can take the form of discussions or journal entries and should be linked back to academic learning in the classroom. Also, a variety of instructional methods and materials and alternative assessments must be employed. Best results are achieved when students have the opportunity to develop their own personal interests and skills by applying them to a need in the community. Service learning projects are more effective when they take place over a longer period of time, such as a semester or a year. Finally, service learning should be fun for students.

These programs include a Service Learning component:

- Communities In Schools
- Middle College High School
- Quantum Opportunity Program

After-school opportunities and summer enhancement programs eliminate information loss and inspire interest in a variety of areas. They provide students with a safe, enriching, supervised environment as an alternative to the uncertainties that await them in the

[95] Schargel, F. P., & Smink, J. (2001). Strategies to help solve our school dropout problem. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
[96] Smink, J., & Reimer, M. S. (2005, May). Fifteen effective strategies for improving student attendance and truancy prevention. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center/Network.
[97] Shumer, R. & Duckenfield, M. (2004). Service-learning: Engaging students in community-based learning. In F. P. Schargel & J. Smink (Eds), Helping students graduate: A strategic approach to dropout prevention (pp. 155-163). Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
[98] Pearson, S. (2002). Finding common ground: Service-learning and educational reform. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum.
[99] Shumer, R. (1997). Learning from qualitative research. In A. Waterman (Ed.), Service-learning: Applications from the research. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates, Inc.

These programs include an **After-School Opportunities** component:

- Communities In Schools
- Talent Development High Schools
- Twelve Together

afternoon "gap time". After-school opportunities are particularly important for youth in urban areas, who may turn to gangs and drug trafficking for emotional and financial support, and for rural youth, who often live in isolation from other people and community resources.[100]

Four components of successful after-school programs have been identified: academics, including tutoring, homework help, and extra time on subjects such as writing and math; enrichment and accelerated learning, such as music, dance, art, foreign language, technology, critical thinking, and field trips; recreational activities such as organized sports; and community service.[101] IES found moderate levels of evidence suggesting that after-school programs are an effective forum for intensive academic support and enrichment.[102] These programs can be small-group or individualized interactions providing extra help in test taking or study skills. They can also be focused on a particular school subject, such as writing or math. Research suggests that these targeted programs should last about 10-12 weeks and can occur after school but also during free periods throughout the school day as well.[103,104] After-school sessions can provide students with the opportunity to recover credits or participate in enrichment activities that foster school engagement; these sessions should also include close interaction between a teacher and a student or a teacher and a small group of students.[105,106]

Professional development provides needed support to teachers who work with youth at high risk of academic failure and offers them an avenue by which they can continue to

These programs include a **Professional Development** component:

- New Century High School
- Talent Development High Schools

[100] Green, B.L., and Schneider, M. J. (1990). Threats to funding for rural schools. Journal of Education Finance, 15, 302-318.
[101] Peterson, T. K. and Fox, B. (2004). After-school program experiences: A time and tool to reduce dropouts. In J. Smink & F. P. Schargel (Eds.), *Helping students graduate: A strategic approach to dropout prevention* (pp. 177-184). Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
[102] Dynarski, M., Clarke, L., Cobb, B., Finn, J., Rumberger, R., and Smink, J. (2008). Dropout Prevention: A Practice Guide (NCEE 2008–4025). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.
[103] Kemple, J., Herlihy, C., & Smith, T. (2005). Making progress toward graduation: evidence from the Talent Development High School model. New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.
[104] Kemple, J., & Herlihy, C. (2004). The Talent Development High School model: context, components, and initial impacts on ninth-grade students' engagement and performance. New York; Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.
[105] Roderick, M., & Engel, M. (2001). The grasshopper and the ant: motivational responses of low-achieveing students to high-stakes testing. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 23(3), 197-227.
[106] Kemple, J., Herlihy, C., & Smith, T. (2005). Making progress toward graduation: evidence from the Talent Development High School model. New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

develop skills and techniques and learn about innovative strategies. Professional development is implemented in most schools but not always correctly, often not even focusing on the curriculum. Because research shows that the quality of teachers has a major impact on student learning, it is important that proper professional development be available to all teachers.

While the in-depth study of a specific field is the most effective type of professional development, only about 30% of teachers have this kind of experience.[107] The Council for School Performance determined that professional development requires continuous administrative support for its success.[108] Programs should be long-term and offered regularly throughout the school year. Teachers benefit most from active learning involving demonstration of effective teaching, the opportunity to practice it, and immediate feedback. Other than curriculum-based professional development, teachers and students can also benefit from teacher training in working with different student populations, higher-order thinking skills, and scientific laboratory skills.[109] Researchers recommend that teachers meet monthly or during the summer to work on curricular material and instructional practices.[110] Leaders of such workshops can be internal to the school or external consultants. In addition to structured workshops, teachers should also have the opportunity to periodically work collaboratively to share classroom strategies and develop the curriculum.[111]

Educational technology, which in recent years has come to mean computers and the internet, offers some of the best opportunities for delivering instruction to engage students in authentic learning, addressing multiple intelligences, and adapting to students' learning styles. Unfortunately, educational technology is not equally accessible to all students. In fact, white

These programs include an **Educational Technology** component:

- Communities In Schools
- New Century High School
- Quantum Opportunity Program

[107] Hirsch, E., Koppich, J.E. & Knapp M. (1998). What States Are Doing to Improve the Quality of Teaching: A Brief Review of Current Patterns and Trends. Seattle, WA: Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy at the University of Washington.
[108] Harkreader, S., & Weathersby, J. (1998). Staff development and student achievement: Making the connection in Georgia schools. Atlanta, GA: Council for School Performance, Applied Research Center.
[109] Wenglinsky, H. (2000). How teaching matters: Bringing the classroom back into discussions of teacher quality. Retrieved December 2, 2008, from: www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PICTEAMAT.pdf.
[110] Quint, J., Bloom, H. S., Black, A. R., & Stephens, L. (2005). Scaling up First Things First: the challege of scaling up educational reform. New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.
[111] Dynarski, M., Clarke, L., Cobb, B., Finn, J., Rumberger, R., and Smink, J. (2008). Dropout Prevention: A Practice Guide (NCEE 2008–4025). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

students are more likely to have internet access in their homes than are African American and Latino students from any location.[112] Schools struggle to provide computer and internet access to all students to bridge this divide.

Integrating educational technology into teaching requires that teachers are comfortable using computers. Effective use of technology in the classroom addresses the learning objectives of the lesson at hand. Computer software can allow students to work at their own pace while taking non-judgmental assessments, which can help struggling students build the confidence to keep trying.[113] Computers can also teach different students through different methods in a way that one teacher cannot, by addressing individual learning styles/intelligences, or by targeting a specific student's skills and interests. Finally, because the modern workplace is increasingly centered on technology, computers afford students the opportunity to build skills for work after graduation.

Individualized instruction acknowledges that not all children are the same, and while all students can learn, the methods must sometimes be adjusted. The NDPC/N recommends the use of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) such as those used in special education, to understand individualized instruction.[114]

These programs include an **Individualized Instruction** component:

- Check and Connect
- Communities In Schools
- Project Coffee
- Job Corps
- Middle College High School
- New Century High School
- Solution Focused Alternative Schools

Some schools have already begun to use IEPs with at-risk students.[115] This allows teachers to monitor what students already know, using pre-testing, questioning, and observation. Some instructional strategies teachers can use to improve student learning are problem-based learning, reciprocal teaching, peer tutoring, cooperative learning, active learning strategies such as hands-on and project-based learning, journaling, role play and simulation, and inquiry. Addressing student motivation is also an important concept in individualizing instruction for at-risk students. Students must understand the connection between their behavior and the consequences, and must believe that they can succeed in the school environment. IES proposes personalizing the learning environment by implementing small learning communities, where students are led by an interdisciplinary group of teachers or

[112] Irving, L. (1999, November). *Falling through the net: A report on the telecommunications and information technology gap in America*. The U.S. Department of Commerce National Telecommunication and Information Administration.

[113] Bennett, F. (1999). *Computers as tutors: Solving the crisis in education*. Sarasota, FL: Faben, Inc.

[114] Similar to IEPs, Texas uses IGPs (Individualized Graduation Plans) that are mandatory for all at-risk students, and PGPs (Personalized Graduation Plans) that are recommended for all, but not required.

[115] Schargel, F. P., & Smink, J. (2001). *Strategies to help solve our school dropout problem*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

schools-within-schools. Team teaching, or the pairing of teachers within a classroom, has also been shown to be effective.[116,117] While this type of school reform may meet resistance from staff, strong leadership, proper professional development, and adequate time to plan for the changes can help ease the transition.[118]

Rules and Themes for Successful Program Implementation

Several rules and themes for successful program implementation emerged from the review of research. A general rule associated with successful program implementation is related to the comprehensiveness of the program. Many students who drop out of school do so for several reasons; programs addressing all of these risk factors are more likely to keep students in school. Programs that use several different strategies have also been shown to be effective.[119] By implementing several of the strategies presented here at once and targeting various risk factors, schools are likely to have more success at keeping students in school.

Another important rule to keep in mind is that programs must be implemented exactly as intended in order to achieve the desired results.[120] Evidence-based programs have been carefully evaluated on specific components, and to alter any of these components may lead to ineffectual – or worse, adverse – program implementation. As mentioned earlier, effective strategies often interact to produce specific results; when a particular strategy is missing, the results may change.

Finally, when conducting a review of the implementation techniques across all fifteen strategies, several themes emerge. The implementation of any reform requires that all participants believe change is possible; administrators, teachers, and counselors must be willing to work together to implement the reform and hold high expectations that students can improve their achievement. Teachers and mentors must have the proper training and

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[116] Kemple, J., & Snipes, J. (2000). *Career Academies: impacts on students' engagement and performance in high school.* New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

[117] Kemple, J. (2004). *Career academies: impacts on labor market outcomes and educational attainment.* New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

[118] Dynarski, M., Clarke, L., Cobb, B., Finn, J., Rumberger, R., and Smink, J. (2008). *Dropout Prevention: A Practice Guide* (NCEE 2008–4025). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

[119] Hammond, C., Linton, D., Smink, J., & Drew, S. (2007). *Dropout Risk Factors and Exemplary Programs.* Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center, Communities In Schools, Inc.

[120] National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA). (2004, February). *Lessons from prevention research. NIDA InfoFacts*. Washington, DC: National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Accessed online at http://www.drugabuse.gov/pdf/Infofacts/prevention04.pdf, December 2, 2008.

support to be able to carry out any kind of reform program, as staff who are misinformed or do not feel supported will rarely be able to implement successful change. Often, students need help connecting school with the real world; this can be accomplished through family engagement, community involvement and service learning, use of the internet in the curriculum, and school to work programs. In order to learn, at-risk students need specialized attention from caring adults who recognize their individual background knowledge, learning styles, strengths and weaknesses, and career goals. Integrating these overarching themes into the school culture can help change staff and student attitudes toward teaching and learning, thereby creating an environment conducive to reform and keeping students in school until graduation.

Costs of Implementation

Table 10 (pg. 70), which is split into two sections by evidence tier, is sorted by the overall effect size of each intervention. Programs with an overall effect size of greater than 0.20 (indicated by bold text) are recognized as having at least a small effect on measured outcomes. Based on the available cost information and data from this report, some conclusions can be drawn about cost-effectiveness for implementing these interventions.

For example, Talent Search appears to provide solid results, based on top-tier evidence, at a relatively low cost ($417 per student). However, only one outcome was reported for Talent Search (diploma or GED), which causes an innacurate comparison with other interventions whose studies report several outcomes. In other words, when assessing the best programs for the price, we have to not only consider what a program costs, but what one *gets* for that cost. If diploma or GED is the primary metric of interest, then Talent Search appears to be a very cost effective program; however, if the desire is to have a program improve academics in addition to completing school, then another program may be more cost effective.

Of the programs that demonstrated consistent, positive, and meaningful effects across more than one outcome:

- **ALAS** (Tier 2 Evidence): Produced an overall average effect size of 0.61 at a cost of $1,314 per student. Meaningful effects were found on dropout, attendance, credits, and dropout recovery.
- **Career Academies** (Tier 1 Evidence): Produced an overall average effect size of 0.23 at a cost of $688 per student. Meaningful effects were found on GED certification, credits, and dropout.

- **Check and Connect** (Tier 1 Evidence): Produced an overall average effect size of 0.32 at a cost of $1,685 per student. Meaningful effects were found on GED certification, dropout, attendance, credits, and dropout recovery.
- **Communities In Schools** (Tier 2 Evidence): Produced an overall average effect size of 0.20 at a cost of $190 per student. Meaningful effects were found on high school graduation, dropout, attendance, and math achievement.
- **Project GRAD** (Tier 1 Evidence): Produced an overall average effect size of 0.14 at a cost of $550 per student. Meaningful effects were found on reading and math achievement.
- **Talent Development High School** (Tier 2 Evidence): Produced an overall average effect size of 0.22 at a cost of $350 per student. Meaningful effects were found on attendance and math achievement.

Since Project GRAD and Talent Development High School did not demonstrate meaningful effects on dropout, GED certification, or high school graduation, we can conclude that the four best *dropout prevention* programs for the price are ALAS, Career Academies, Check and Connect, and Communities In Schools.

Each one of these four programs has distinct advantages and disadvantages. For example, ALAS and Check and Connect produced the highest average effect sizes, but they were also the most expensive programs (and neither of them were implemented in Texas). Communities In Schools was the only program in this group to produce meaningful effects on high school graduation – and it was the least expensive – but it is a Tier 2 program and it had the lowest overall average effect size of the four programs. Career Academies is implemented in Texas, and is a Tier 1 program; however, the intervention only produced meaningful effects on GED certification, and not on high school graduation.

The ultimate decision of which program is the best for the price boils down to the priorities of the person or entity implementing a dropout prevention program. All four programs, however, appear to be cost effective and consistently beneficial to students.

Table 10: Costs of Implementing Programs[121]			
Tier	**Intervention**	**Overall Effect Size**	**Cost Per Student Per Year**
1	Accelerated Middle Schools	0.46*	$1,741
	Talent Search	0.43*	$417
	Check & Connect	0.32	$1,685
	Project COFFEE	0.28*	n.a.
	Alternative High Schools	0.25	n.a.
	Career Academies	0.23	$688
	Project GRAD	0.14	$550**
2	Effective Learning Program (ELP)	1.71*	$1,170 (est)[122]
	New Century High School	0.83	$231[123]
	ALAS (Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success)	0.61	$1,314
	Twelve Together	0.33*	$3,298
	Talent Development High Schools	0.22	$350**
	Communities In Schools	0.20	$190
	Cal-Learn	0.17	n.a.
	Job Corps	0.17	$20,368
	LEAP	0.08	$2,502
	New Chance	0.08	$12,221
	Quantum Opportunity Program	0.05	$6,416
	Middle College High School	0.00	$3,395
	Belief Academy	-0.15*	n.a.
	Solution-focused Alternative Schools	-0.91	n.a.

*Studies regarding this intervention report only one outcome variable; effect sizes for such interventions may not be comparable to those of other interventions testing more than one outcome.
**No information on year is available for this program cost.

[121] Unless otherwise noted, incremental costs are presented (that is, costs are above and beyond the per-pupil expenditure for a traditional high or middle school). When year information is available, costs are converted to 2008 dollars using the Consumer Price Index. If the source presents costs as a range, the average is presented here. Source: WWC Dropout Intervention Reports, retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/topic.aspx?tid=06, unless otherwise noted.
[122] This figure represents the cost of Federal payments to Oldham County, KY in 2001-2002 to fund their ELP Program, based on the Ballard High School estimate of 90 students served per school year: http://www.lrc.ky.gov/statcomm/contracts/mars/moarout/010300.doc.
[123] This value reflects grant funds which are only allocated to schools for the first four years of operation. As per-pupil funding in New York City is based on individual student needs, the value presented in the chart is based on grant funds only.

Conclusions

An assessment of the most effective dropout prevention programs supports the need for a multi-strategic approach to preventing dropout. Dropout prevention programs are, by necessity, multidimensional in nature in order to address a number of risk factors, presenting problems, and reasons for dropping out. While targeted community-based dropout prevention programs are important, it is imperative to remember that the basic elements of effective dropout prevention programs span across all demographic categories.

When broken down by NDPC/N's 15 effective strategies, it is apparent that most evidence-based programs apply a number of strategies to dropout prevention efforts; however, several core strategies are used more often than others.[124] The most common strategies used are:

- family engagement,
- mentoring/tutoring,
- alternative schooling,
- school-community collaboration,
- career and technology education,
- safe learning environments, and
- active learning.

It is evident from this list that engagement of a large number of stakeholders is needed to run a successful dropout prevention program. Engagement of family members, mentors, tutors, community organizations, school administrators, teachers, and students is common, and the logistics involved in operating these programs can be quite formidable. It appears to take nothing short of engaging the student's entire social network in order to effect change on important life decisions, including whether to stay in school.

[124] When implemented according to evidence-based guidelines, NDPC/N's 15 effective strategies have been proven successful at all school levels from K-12 and in rural, suburban, and urban communities.

VI. Contextual Factors Influencing Our Findings

Social science research is not, of course, conducted in a perfectly controlled laboratory setting. Because of this, we need to pay special attention to the context in which the research was conducted. For example, a dropout prevention program may have completely different results in a rural setting versus an urban one.

This chapter presents a snapshot of the state of dropout prevention research. The findings presented in this chapter serve two primary purposes:

1. Policymakers and practitioners need to know in which contexts certain programs work, and to identify programs that are particularly appropriate for given settings. While we do not purport to show definitive evidence of a program's effectiveness in a given setting, we nonetheless provide general information that can clarify the research findings presented in the previous chapters.

2. Researchers need to know which contexts have a smaller evidence base than others. This will provide guidance on future directions in research.

The coding guide used to assess research for this project includes a section on context, and includes a range of questions to help identify the exact setting where each study took place. Coders were asked to identify key contextual factors of the study, which include:

- Urbanicity of the study setting (urban, rural, suburban),
- Racial/ethnic background of the study sample,
- Percentage of study sample who were economically disadvantaged,
- Percentage of study sample with special needs, and
- Percentage of students who were pregnant or parenting.

We identified particular studies where 50% or more of the study sample fell into these categories, and present overall study findings in this context. While this effort turned up a number of studies that were conducted with settings/populations of interest, we did face a large amount of missing information. Many study authors either did not report the sample characteristics listed above, or more often, studies were conducted on diverse populations that cannot be grouped into a single category (e.g., nationwide or statewide studies like those conducted for CIS).

Findings by School Level

Table 11 presents overall average effect sizes across all interventions that were studied at each school level. This table includes interventions conducted at multiple school levels – including Check and Connect, Project GRAD, and CIS. The overall average effect size of CIS and Project GRAD was factored into all three school levels, while Check and Connect was included at both the elementary and high school levels.

This summary of the current evidence on dropout prevention programs at the elementary and middle school levels indicates that dropout prevention programs are having an effect on academics and attendance. At the high school level, dropout prevention programs had relatively more success in helping students receive their GED than in helping them earn a high school diploma. The largest average effect sizes were reported in math achievement, promotion, and credit recovery; however, these three outcomes were only studied in a few programs. Most programs did not conduct research that looked at these outcomes.

Table 11: Overall Average Effect Sizes, by School Level

Level	HS Diploma	GED	Dropout Rate	Attendance	Reading	Math	Credits	Promotion	Recovery
Elementary (n=3)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.21	0.28	0.38	0.17	0.03	n.a.
Middle (n=6)	n.a.	n.a.	0.44	0.29	0.28	0.38	0.15	0.03	0.64
High (n=17)	0.14	0.21	0.25	-0.06	0.17	0.49	0.05	0.77	0.26

Table 12 lists the three most effective programs on each outcome, by grade level. Since there were only three interventions that were studied at the elementary school level, our results for elementary schools represent our entire set of findings. Overall, Check and Connect appears to be the most effective program for encouraging students to attend school and to progress in school (as measured by credits earned). Project GRAD, on the other hand, appears to be most effective in improving academics.

At the middle school level, ALAS (which is no longer in operation) produced the most positive findings on dropout, attendance, credits earned, and dropout recovery. Accelerated Middle Schools (i.e., schools designed to help behind grade level students catch up to their age peers) produced the second most positive findings on dropout prevention, followed by Twelve Together. Project GRAD had the most positive findings on academic measures. As is evident from Table 12, not many middle school dropout prevention programs have been researched (six programs produced research in Tiers 1 and 2). It is therefore imperative that more attention be given to dropout prevention efforts in middle schools. This is a particularly critical time in a child's development, as it is the last best chance to impact behavioral

changes and is a time when a base is being built for future academic achievement in high school.

At the high school level, Check and Connect produced the strongest, most positive findings on dropout, attendance, credits, and dropout recovery. Cal-Learn and Job Corps demonstrated the strongest effects on GED certification.

High school graduation remained the most challenging outcome for dropout prevention programs. Of the 13 programs that had evidence on high school completion, only 5 had (on average) positive effects: Effective Learning Program, Alternative High Schools, Middle College High School, Career Academies, and CIS. Dropout prevention programs were much more successful in getting students to stay in school or to complete their GED, but the high school diploma remains a much higher bar for many of these programs.

Table 12: Top 3 Effect Sizes on Each Outcome, by Intervention

Level	HS Diploma	GED	Dropout Rate	Attendance	Reading	Math	Credits	Promotion	Recovery
Elementary	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	Check and Connect (.52)	Project GRAD (.46)	Project GRAD (.55)	Check and Connect (.39)	Project GRAD (.03)	n.a.
	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	Communities In Schools (.21)	Communities In Schools (.10)	Communities In Schools (.21)	Project GRAD (-.06)	n.a.	n.a.
	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	Project GRAD (-.09)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Middle	n.a.	n.a.	ALAS (.67)	ALAS (.74)	Project GRAD (.46)	Project GRAD (.55)	ALAS (.37)	Project GRAD (.03)	ALAS (.64)
	n.a.	n.a.	Accelerated Middle Schools (.46)	Communities In Schools (.21)	Communities In Schools (.10)	Communities In Schools (.21)	Project GRAD (-.06)	n.a.	n.a.
	n.a.	n.a.	Twelve Together (.33)	Project GRAD (-.09)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
High	Effective Learning Program (1.71)	Job Corps (.41)	Check and Connect (.47)	Check and Connect (.52)	Project GRAD (.46)	Talent Development High School (.72)	Check and Connect (.39)	New Century High Schools (1.51)	Check and Connect (.24)
	Alternative High Schools (.53)	Check and Connect (.38)	Career Academies (.46)	Talent Development High School (.25)	Communities In Schools (.10)	Project GRAD (.55)	Career Academies (.29)	Project GRAD (.03)	n.a.
	Communities In Schools (.20)	Cal-Learn (.31)	Communities In Schools (.29)	Communities In Schools (.21)	Talent Development High School (-.05)	Communities In Schools (.21)	Project GRAD (-.06)	n.a.	n.a.

Urbanicity

Table 13 presents overall average effect sizes by urbanicity. While 17 studies that passed TEA standards focused on urban areas, only 1 study was conducted in a rural setting. There is clearly a need for more dropout prevention research in rural areas.

Only two studies conducted in urban areas produced positive findings on high school graduation (these studies covered Career Academies and Middle College High School). However, a number of studies demonstrated positive findings on GED certification and dropout rates. Of the three studies that focused on academic achievement in urban areas, two covered Project GRAD, both of which demonstrated strong positive outcomes. Two programs (ALAS and Check and Connect) demonstrated positive outcomes on dropout recovery.

Table 13: Average Effect Size, by Urbanicity

	Urban Programs (n=17)	Rural Programs (n=1)
High School Diploma	0.03	n.a.
GED	0.26	n.a.
Dropout Rate	0.39	n.a.
Attendance	-0.02	0.52
Reading	0.29	n.a.
Math	0.61	n.a.
Credits	0.16	n.a.
Promotion	0.77	n.a.
Recovery	0.44	n.a.
Top 3 Programs (measured by overall average effect size in a given study)	ALAS (0.61)	Check and Connect (0.52)
	Career Academies (0.44)	n.a.
	Project GRAD (0.40)	n.a.

Race/Ethnicity

We also reviewed the predominant race/ethnicity of the participants in each research study. If more than 50% of the study population was African American, for example, that study was considered in the analysis. As shown in Table 14, it was very difficult for programs to demonstrate effects on high school graduation, especially in African American and Hispanic/Latino populations. Studies that focused predominantly on these populations showed, on average, negative effects on high school completion.

Some of the loss in high school completion might be attributable to higher GED certification rates; therefore, it cannot be determined whether these are truly negative findings. Rather,

many dropout prevention programs may be successful in leading students at high risk of dropping out into alternative pathways to completing school.

Studies on both African American and Hispanic/Latino students demonstrated, on average, positive effects in reducing dropout rates, improving attendance, increasing credit completion, improving promotion rates, and increasing the recovery of dropouts. None of these studies focused on academic achievement.

Table 14: Average Effect Size, by Race/Ethnicity		
	African American (n=16)	**Hispanic/Latino (n=5)**
High School Diploma	-0.01	-0.08
GED	0.20	0.10
Dropout Rate	0.46	0.45
Attendance	0.04	0.44
Reading	n.a.	n.a.
Math	n.a.	n.a.
Credits	0.23	0.33
Promotion	0.02	1.51
Recovery	0.12	0.64
Top 3 Programs (measured by overall average effect size in a given study)	Accelerated Middle Schools (0.95)	New Century High Schools (0.83)
	Check and Connect (0.86)	ALAS (0.81)
	Project COFFEE (0.82)	Twelve Together (0.33)

Other Contextual Factors

Consistent with previous findings, improving high school graduation was the most difficult outcome to achieve for most programs. Among studies with at least 50% of participants who were economically disadvantaged, special needs, or pregnant/parenting, programs had a net negative effect on high school graduation (Table 15). The positive effects across all three groups on GED certification and dropout rates, however, indicate that the absence of an improvement on high school graduation may be a tradeoff for other positive outcomes.

The relatively strong findings across economically disadvantaged and special needs populations indicate that in some circumstances, improving the prospects of these high-risk groups is quite possible. Among pregnant or parenting students, the evidence base is much weaker, with only three studies. However, dropout prevention programs do appear to be making a difference.

Table 15: Average Effect Size, by Other Contextual Factors			
	Economically Disadvantaged (n=15)	**Special Needs (n=5)**	**Pregnant/Parenting (n=3)**
High School Diploma	-0.02	-0.07	-0.10
GED	0.35	0.38	0.34
Dropout Rate	0.52	0.52	0.19
Attendance	0.33	0.74	n.a.
Reading	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Math	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Credits	0.38	0.39	n.a.
Promotion	0.77	n.a.	n.a.
Recovery	0.64	0.44	n.a.
Top 3 Programs (measured by overall average effect size in a given study)	Accelerated Middle Schools (0.95)	Check and Connect (0.86)	Cal-Learn (0.17)
	Check and Connect (0.86)	ALAS (0.61)	LEAP (0.08)
	New Century High Schools (0.83)	n.a.	New Chance (0.08)

Although this snapshot of contextual factors is based upon spotty evidence, it nonetheless demonstrates that achieving positive outcomes is possible on a range of outcomes, even among the highest risk populations. By studying what makes these programs “tick”, we hope to uncover clues to improve policy and practice in Texas and for the dropout prevention field in general.

VII. Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

In this report, we presented "end-to-end" information to help policymakers and practitioners:

- Identify dropout prevention programs that work;
- Classify best practices that are common to effective dropout prevention programs;
- Understand in what contexts these programs work; and
- Pinpoint key factors in successful implementation and replication of best practices.

In this section, we present conclusions, as well as identify future directions that can guide Texas policy on dropout prevention.

The information presented in this report can be distilled down to one salient point: Dropout prevention is a complicated endeavor and must involve a wide range of strategies to tackle a wide range of problems. There are multiple pathways to dropping out of school, and therefore, any dropout prevention program should have a multi-faceted strategy to address a wide range of students who are at-risk of dropping out.

House Bill 2237 from the Texas State Legislature required this study to (1) identify high-performing and highly efficient dropout prevention programs, (2) identify the programs with the most potential for success in Texas, and (3) identify key legislation and actions necessary to implement the identified programs. A summary of our findings on each study component follows.

What are the high-performing and highly efficient dropout prevention programs?

In order to identify dropout prevention programs that are both high-performing and highly efficient, one must look at all levels of evidence surrounding an intervention. Following the structure of this report, we identify the best programs, best practices, context for successful replication, and considerations in the implementation of these programs.

Best Programs: Nationwide, the dropout prevention programs having the most effect on the widest range of outcomes associated with and including dropout are:

- *ALAS*: The Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success (ALAS) intervention targets Latino students at-risk due to low academic achievement and behavioral issues. Each student is assigned a counselor, who monitors truancy and attendance, provides students and their families access to services, and updates parents on their child's progress. The program also includes a 10-week course on problem solving skills. The program, which is no longer in operation, had meaningful effects on dropout rates, attendance, credit completion, and dropout recovery.

- *Career Academies*: Career Academies operate as alternative schools within a larger high school and focus on making students career-ready. The program combines regular academic coursework with career-centered curricula. Students focus on one career track such as health care, finance, technology, communications, or public service. Students are also given the opportunity to intern with local businesses. Employers from these companies serve as student mentors, provide information and resources, attend program events, and are members of the Career Academy advisory boards. The program had meaningful effects on GED certification, dropout rates, and credit completion.

- *Check and Connect*: A central component of the Check and Connect model is the monitor, who is responsible for assessing levels of student engagement and for implementing basic and intensive interventions. "Checking" involves following student engagement indicators, particularly attendance, daily or weekly. "Connecting" includes two levels of student-focused interventions: (1) a basic intervention for all students that includes information about monitoring, feedback on their progress, and training in cognitive-behavioral problem solving; and (2) intensive interventions, which may include tutoring, home-school meetings, making connections with community resources, or behavioral contracts or interventions. Relationships with families are established and family ties to school strengthened by the monitor through phone calls, meetings, and home visits. The program had meaningful effects[125] on GED certification, dropout rates, attendance rates, credit completion, and dropout recovery.

- *Communities In Schools*: CIS aims to prevent student dropout by encouraging collaboration between schools and their surrounding communities. Adults, parents, social workers, and volunteers from the community provide needed resources and support to staff, students, and their families. Students are paired with an adult advocate who monitors student progress through a case management system. The program had meaningful effects on high school graduation, dropout, attendance, and math achievement.

While these four programs had meaningful effect sizes on the widest range of outcomes, we cannot conclude that these are necessarily the only programs that are truly effective. Since many of the studies reviewed measured a limited number of outcomes, it may be more accurate to say that these four programs had the strongest – and most complete – evidence of effectiveness.

It should be noted that only one of these four programs (i.e., CIS) produced meaningful effects on high school graduation. In fact, of the 13 programs that had available evaluation results on graduation, only 6 reported positive effects on graduation (Cal-Learn, Alternative

[125] In this report, "meaningful" effects are defined as having an effect size of at least 0.2, which corresponds to Cohen's (1988) definition of a "small effect". For more information, see Cohen, J. (1988). Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.

High Schools, Career Academies, CIS, Effective Learning Program, and Middle College High School). Moreover, only three programs reported meaningful effects on graduation: Alternative High Schools, CIS, and Effective Learning Program.

Only two programs reported evaluation results on dropout recovery – ALAS and Check and Connect. Both of these programs reported meaningful effects on dropout recovery; however, it should be noted that Check and Connect did not report positive effects on high school graduation. Recovery may therefore be focused on GED certification. ALAS was a middle school program and therefore had no reported effects on high school graduation.

Best Practices:

Our review suggests that the following 7 strategies were most widely used among all programs and were common strategies used by the programs with the strongest results:

- *School-community collaboration*: School-community collaboration recognizes the value of such local entities outside of school as home, places of worship, the media, museums, libraries, community agencies, and businesses in the education of a community's students.[126] Collaboration between the school and community is important in order to raise a well-rounded child.

- *Safe learning environments:* Safe learning environments involve a comprehensive violence prevention plan, including conflict resolution. Tactics emphasized in violence prevention courses can include: social competence, problem recognition and evaluation, goal setting, planning, expecting challenges, controlling anger, and expressing emotion.[127]

- *Family engagement*: Family engagement is associated with many benefits for students, including higher student achievement, better attendance and test scores, improved attitudes and behavior in school, and higher expectations of achievement from teachers.[128] Research has found that family engagement benefits all students, regardless of socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, educational background, or age.[129]

- *Mentoring/Tutoring*: Mentoring is a caring, trusting, one-on-one relationship between an adult and a youth. Tutoring, also a one-on-one activity, focuses on academics. Research shows that mentoring/tutoring is an effective strategy for supporting at-risk

[126] Drew, S. (2004). The power of school-community collaboration in dropout prevention. In F. P. Schargel & J. Smink (Eds), *Helping students graduate: A strategic approach to dropout prevention* (pp. 65-77). Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
[127] Snipes, J. C., Holton, G. I., Doolittle, F., & Sztejnberg, L. (2006). *Striving for student success: the effect of Project GRAD on high school student outcomes in three urban school districts.* New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.
[128] National PTA. (1998). *National standards for parent/family involvement programs*. Chicago, IL: National PTA.
[129] Mapp, K. (2004). Family engagement. In F. P. Schargel & J. Smink (Eds), *Helping students graduate: A strategic approach to dropout prevention* (pp. 99-113). Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

youth who may not have positive role models or a consistent support system in their lives.

- *Alternative schooling*: Alternative schooling provides all students with the opportunity to achieve success based on their own personal goals and achievements. The students who attend alternative schools tend to have struggled in their traditional schools and are often underachieving, deficient in credits, and/or overage for grade.

- *Active learning:* Active learning employs teaching and learning strategies that engage and involve students in the learning process. Active learning is a general term that encompasses a variety of teaching methods, including cooperative learning, multiple intelligence theory, and project-based learning.

- *Career and technology education*: Career and technology education, according to the contemporary model, integrates academic and career-based skills, giving all students a solid academic foundation regardless of their plans after high school. The changing demands of the workplace require a broader base of thinking and decision-making skills.

By cross-referencing these strategies with the main evaluation findings, we were able to observe some interesting patterns. For example, 5 of the 6 programs that reported positive effects on graduation rates incorporated alternative schooling into their programs. In some programs, not all students received alternative schooling, but the option was still present. Three of the most effective programs in improving graduation incorporated safe learning environments (e.g., by implementing bullying prevention or anger management classes). All programs that were found to have a positive effect on graduation used multi-pronged strategies with between 2-9 components.

Among the 4 Tier 1 programs that had the strongest effects on reducing dropout rates, all were multi-faceted programs employing at least 4 strategies. The following strategies were employed by at least 2 of these 4 programs: school-community collaboration, safe learning environments, family engagement, mentoring/tutoring, alternative schooling, active learning (e.g., interactive exercises), individualized instruction, and career and technology education.

Context for Successful Replication:

Across all settings and populations, dropout prevention programs had relatively more difficulty “moving the needle” on high school graduation rates compared to dropout rates. Generally speaking, programs demonstrated progress on GED certification and dropout rate reduction, but the high school diploma remains a high bar for most programs.

At the elementary and middle school levels, dropout prevention programs reported some success in reducing dropout rates and improving academics and attendance. At the high

school level, the evidence base is quite small for academics, but moderate size gains were reported for GED certification, dropout reduction, attendance, and credit completion.

The most effective programs that were studied in urban settings were ALAS, Career Academies, and Project GRAD. Only one program – Check and Connect – was studied in a rural setting, which begs the need for additional research on dropout prevention in this area.

Among predominantly Hispanic/Latino populations, the most effective programs were New Century High Schools, ALAS, and Twelve Together. The most effective programs for predominantly African-American student populations were Accelerated Middle Schools, Check and Connect, and Project COFFEE. Compared across student populations, it is evident that dropout prevention programs that serve predominantly Hispanic/Latino populations have a more difficult time helping students achieve a high school credential (either diploma or GED) than programs serving predominantly African-American students. Among both student populations, however, there has been similar progress reported in reducing dropout rates.

Among economically disadvantaged, special needs, and pregnant/parenting populations, results were similar. Dropout prevention programs in general were able to keep students from all of these groups in school; however, all three populations had on average marginally negative results on high school graduation. Students who were pregnant or parenting showed the least positive results; however, this conclusion should be interpreted with caution since only three interventions served this population.

Overall, our results indicate that dropout prevention programs are reporting successes in various settings and with different populations. The evidence demonstrates that it is possible to achieve positive results with a set of core strategies, even among the highest risk populations. Still, the lack of reported success on high school graduation outcomes remains troubling.

Key Considerations in Implementation:

Programs that use several different strategies have been shown to be effective.[130] By implementing several of the strategies presented in this report, schools are likely to have more success at keeping students in school. We must keep in mind that dropouts are not one monolithic group: there are different types of dropouts, from pregnant/parenting girls, to students who are bored with school, to students who are having difficulty in academic achievement, to students who must quit school to help support their families, to homeless

[130] Hammond, C., Smink, J., Drew, S., & Linton, D. (May 2007). *Dropout risk factors and exemplary programs: A technical report*. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center.

students. Each of these "types" of dropouts brings to the table different presenting problems and risk factors, as well as different pathways to dropping out. An effective dropout prevention strategy must be appropriate for many "types" of dropouts, and by definition, this requires a multi-pronged approach.

Another important rule to keep in mind is that programs must be implemented exactly as intended in order to achieve the desired results.[131] The evidence we present in this report is based on programs that implemented with reasonable fidelity to the model. Effective strategies often interact to produce positive results; when a particular strategy is missing, the results may change.

Finally, when conducting a review of the implementation techniques across all fifteen strategies, several themes emerge. First, there are many intangibles that go into a dropout prevention program. For example, effective programs must build trust with students, parents, and school administrators. Moreover, effective programs must instill in students a belief that change is possible, and provide strong leadership both within and outside the school. Second, there are some tangible elements of success, such as proper staff training and support; family engagement; community involvement and service learning; and school to work programs. In order to learn, at-risk students need specialized attention from caring adults who recognize their individual backgrounds, learning styles, strengths and weaknesses, and career goals – and these adults can also operate as monitors to ensure that students are staying on track. Integrating these overarching themes into the school culture can help change staff and student attitudes toward teaching and learning, thereby creating an environment conducive to reform and keeping students in school until graduation.

What dropout prevention programs have the most potential for success in Texas?

The following three *Texas* programs demonstrated consistent, positive, and meaningful effects across more than one outcome:

- **Career Academies** (Tier 1 Evidence): Produced an overall average effect size of 0.23 at a cost of $688 per student. Meaningful effects were found on GED certification, credits, and dropout.

[131] National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA). (2004, February). *Lessons from prevention research. NIDA InfoFacts*. Washington, DC: National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Accessed online at http://www.drugabuse.gov/pdf/Infofacts/prevention04.pdf, December 2, 2008.

- **Communities In Schools** (Tier 2 Evidence): Produced an overall average effect size of 0.20 at a cost of $190 per student. Meaningful effects were found on high school graduation, dropout, attendance, and math achievement.
- **Project GRAD** (Tier 1 Evidence): Produced an overall average effect size of 0.14 at a cost of $550 per student. Meaningful effects were found on reading and math achievement.

Since Project GRAD did not demonstrate meaningful effects on dropout, GED certification, or high school graduation, it may not be the most appropriate for adoption; however, it did demonstrate relatively strong effects on academics and therefore may be especially worth consideration at the elementary and middle school levels.

Three additional programs not currently implemented in Texas should also be considered:

- **ALAS** (Tier 2 Evidence): Produced an overall average effect size of 0.61 at a cost of $1,314 per student. Meaningful effects were found on dropout, attendance, credits, and dropout recovery.
- **Check and Connect** (Tier 1 Evidence): Produced an overall average effect size of 0.32 at a cost of $1,685 per student. Meaningful effects were found on GED certification, dropout, attendance, credits, and dropout recovery.
- **Talent Development High School** (Tier 2 Evidence): Produced an overall average effect size of 0.22 at a cost of $350 per student. Meaningful effects were found on attendance and math achievement.

All 6 of these programs employ multiple strategies (at least 4 strategies per program). It is important to note that when assessing evidence, stakeholders should not look for programs that are going to “hit it out of the park” in terms of effect sizes. There is a natural temptation to adopt programs that show the largest effects; however, it is more important to adopt programs that have a solid basis of evidence (i.e., record of success in multiple studies), and can therefore be adopted with greater certainty that the results can be replicated. The programs listed above can be adopted at minimal risk, especially the Tier 1 programs.

Considering that it is difficult to demonstrate positive effects on high school graduation, this should be an area of focus for any dropout prevention program in the state. Many dropout prevention programs are “successful” in getting students to complete their GED, but the high school diploma is a much higher bar to cross. If the Texas Legislature intends to move students through the pipeline to a high school graduation credential, they should focus on a few programs, as there are only a handful of programs with demonstrated effects on this measure. On the other hand, if the Texas Legislature considers dropout prevention by itself

to be its primary focus, then a number of other programs identified by this study merit continued support and attention.

What legislation or other actions are necessary to implement a dropout prevention program?

The Texas Education Agency and state lawmakers have taken a proactive approach to dropout prevention during the past five years. Legislation such as House Bill 1 and House Bill 2237 has provided not only funding for new statewide programs but also a sense of urgency to local dropout prevention efforts. With that in mind, we recommend further policy refinements that Texas should consider based on this review of best practices in dropout prevention.

Recommendation #1: Texas should prioritize programs that employ as many of the NDPC/N's 15 effective strategies as possible. Programs need to address an array of risk factors and reasons for students dropping out of school.

It is certain that there is no "magic bullet" when it comes to dropout prevention. It is apparent from this research that multiple strategies are needed to serve students who are at risk of dropping out of school. Nineteen of the 21 evidence-based dropout prevention programs that were found to be effective achieved success with multiple strategies (the two interventions that employed one strategy were both state policies). On average, each program used four to five combined strategies to address an array of risk factors.

There are many strategies from which to choose in developing dropout prevention programs. When cross-referencing the Tier 1 programs with the 15 strategies derived by NDPC/N that have been linked to program success, the three most common strategies were:

- **Family engagement** has a direct, positive effect on children's achievement and is the most accurate predictor of a student's success in school. Schools should provide professional development to staff to train them in working with families, supporting and guiding families through the education process, and working on developing trusting relationships. The goal of student learning must remain at the forefront of all efforts to engage the family with the school.

- Research shows that **mentoring** is an effective strategy for supporting at-risk youth who may not have positive role models or a consistent support system in their lives, and **tutoring** has been proven particularly effective for struggling readers.

- The students who attend **alternative schooling** have struggled in their traditional schools and are often underachieving, deficient in credits, and/or over-age for their grade.

Tier 1 programs implemented in Texas that used these strategies include Accelerated Middle Schools, Career Academies, Project GRAD, and Talent Search.

Many students who drop out of school do so for several reasons. Therefore, programs need to address as many risk factors as possible in order to keep students in school. It may not always be desirable or feasible to implement all 15 strategies. Rather, one must take local context into account, including settings, populations, risk factors, and even political will to implement specific strategies. Context is often a more important consideration than even the program model itself. By implementing several of the strategies presented here at once and targeting various risk factors, schools are likely to have more success at keeping students in school.

Recommendation #2: Texas should provide multiple years of funding to districts/charter schools to develop, implement, and evaluate programs.

Changing students' lives for the better is an arduous process, and it takes a long time for programs to have an effect. Some experts contend that it takes a *minimum* of two to three years for programs to effect significant change.[132] Other experts contend that educational reforms take at least 3 to 5 years for implementation, evaluation, and institutionalization.[133] In fact, Drs. Jay Smink and Terry Cash from the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network, encourage funding for research and demonstration projects that are 5-7 years in length.[134] Considering that it often takes a year or more to get necessary components of a grant in place before interventions are implemented at the local level, "fix it fast" thinking will not work with dropout prevention programs.

We found that programs that serve students across school levels (i.e., in elementary, middle, and high school) tend to be most effective. Evidence-based programs that serve students in multiple school levels, including Check and Connect, Communities In Schools, and Project GRAD, demonstrated higher overall effect sizes than most other programs.

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[132] Fullan, M. (2001). *The new meaning of educational change (3rd ed.)*. New York: Teachers College Press.
[133] Quint, J. (2006). *Meeting five critical challenges of high school reform: Lessons from research on three reform models*. New York: Manpower Development Research Corporation. Accessed online at: http://www.mdrc.org/publications/428/full.pdf, December 16, 2008.
[134] Smink, J. & Cash, T. (2008). Improving high school graduation rates and postsecondary success in Alaska and nationwide – What can the Federal Government do? Testimony given in a field hearing to the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, Anchorage, AK, November 15.

Large studies are needed to measure numerous aspects of each program across school levels. Based on our review, we found that many programs took multiple years to show effects, and in fact, we did not study programs that were researched for less than two years. Programs with multiple years of funding can implement longitudinal evaluations that involve a larger number of students and, therefore, have more statistical precision. By focusing on the long run in dropout prevention efforts, Texas can both understand the problem better and be in a better position to prevent dropout in the first place.

Recommendation #3: Texas should create a Texas Dropout Prevention Technical Assistance (TA) Center to provide training, resources, and support to districts and charter schools. This Center, which could be tied to existing infrastructures such as the Texas Turnaround Centers, would help programs implement effective long-term strategies to improve dropout prevention and high school graduation rates.

Functions of the TA Center could include conducting a statewide needs assessment, carrying out an ongoing environmental scan of factors affecting individual regions and districts, providing direct technical assistance, coordinating peer-to-peer technical assistance, providing training and technical assistance on conducting rigorous evaluations, developing and providing training opportunities, planning conferences, writing publications, reviewing district dropout prevention plans, and developing toolkits. The TA Center should coordinate and/or be tied into the existing infrastructures of the 20 Regional Education Service Centers, the TEA Best Practices Clearinghouse, and the Texas Turnaround Center (TTC). This will ensure that the sharing of best practices is institutionalized and coordinated in the most effective manner possible.

Encouraging the sharing of best practices in dropout prevention between districts throughout the state will improve districts' understanding of how to select strategies and develop programs. TEA representatives indicated that school districts and charter schools are implementing innovative dropout prevention programs at the local level. However, there is a lack of research evidence regarding these local programs, not only in Texas, but nationwide as well. Since a lot of innovation is happening at the local level – which was not captured in our review of evidence – the TA Center will be a way for information to be communicated to other school district leaders and state policymakers across Texas.

Providing technical assistance will aid districts in determining which strategies to use when developing new programs to address dropout prevention and high school graduation. TA Center content experts can ensure that districts are guided in understanding local contextual factors that influence their decision about which strategies to choose, educated about available resources, and supported throughout the design and implementation of their programs.

Providing technical assistance will also ensure that programs are replicated as they are intended in order to achieve the desired results. The way dropout prevent programs are implemented is important, and fidelity to the model is an important consideration that has been well documented in the literature that was reviewed. Evidence-based programs have been carefully evaluated on specific components, and to alter any of these components may lead to ineffectual – or worse, adverse results. Effective strategies often interact to produce positive results; when one particular strategy is missing, the results may change.

Recommendation #4: Texas should support programs that implement the 15 strategies at the Pre-K, elementary, and middle school levels. This support will ensure that students stay on grade level and on-track to enter high school prepared to graduate college and career ready.

Dropout prevention is something that needs to be thought of as a K-12 (or even P-16) process. However, most research we reviewed focuses on high school programs. Only three of the programs we reviewed were implemented at the elementary school level and six were implemented at the middle school level. Moreover, only a few programs at the middle school level reported on core outcomes related to dropout such as academics, credits, or promotion.

There is wide consensus in the dropout prevention field that early interventions are important. It is imperative that more attention be given to dropout prevention efforts in middle schools. This is a particularly critical time in a child's development, as it is the last best chance to impact behavioral changes and is a time when a base is being built for future academic achievement in high school.

Despite the fact that they are two of the NDPC/N's 15 effective strategies, early childhood education and early literacy development were each only implemented by one program in our review. Administrators and legislators involved with young children should note the importance of early childhood education and literacy development. Early childhood education has been shown to provide an effective buffer against dropout, particularly in the case of children at-risk due to socioeconomic conditions, disabilities, or other special circumstances. Long-term studies need to be done to understand whether early interventions are affecting dropout rates.

Recommendation #5: Texas should continue to focus programs on ensuring that students in Texas graduate and are college and career ready.

Many dropout prevention programs we reviewed were able to keep students in school in the short-term, but very few reported success in getting them through to graduation. Effect sizes for high school graduation are generally small – and most programs have a negative effect on graduation (probably due to the fact that students in these programs are moving toward a GED credential). High school graduation remains the most challenging outcome for dropout prevention programs. Of the 13 programs that had evidence on high school completion, only 6 had (on average) positive effects: Cal-Learn, Effective Learning Program, Alternative High Schools, Middle College High School, Career Academies, and CIS.

While it may seem confusing that students can stay in school and not graduate, the point here is that students can exit school in one of three ways – they can graduate with a high school diploma, they can drop out, or they can obtain a GED. Current evidence indicates that many dropout prevention programs had success in keeping students in school (i.e., at least in the short run) or helping them earn a GED credential, but there is much less evidence on success on high school graduation.

Recommendation #6: Texas should identify and remove policies at the local and state levels that create disincentives for recovering students who have previously dropped out of school.

The Texas Legislature should consider evaluating policies that may serve to discourage dropouts from re-engaging in the education system or penalize schools that attempt to recover them. Policies that return dropouts to the same environment with the same services and programs that failed to keep them from dropping out of school in the first place – or accountability policies that penalize schools for recovering dropouts – reduce the likelihood that dropouts will re-enter the education system. In addition, a lack of re-entry options, such as alternative education programs, for such students impact the state's ability to recover its dropouts.

Success in recovering dropouts is possible. The two programs that measured dropout recovery – ALAS and Check & Connect – both had meaningful, positive effects on this measure.

VIII. Additional Policy Considerations

While this study was able to identify a number of promising and evidence-based dropout prevention programs, much work still remains. There are significant gaps in the research on dropout prevention, especially on programs operating in rural areas and in middle schools. Moreover, more research should be done on the context in which these programs operate, and significant thought should be given to measuring intermediate outcomes that may point to future success. For example, if dropout prevention programs are getting students to improve behavior, read more, trust their teachers, and foster school engagement, these should be considered as steps in the right direction that may lead to a reduction in dropout rates and improvements in graduation rates. However, since most researchers focus on long-term outcomes such as academic improvement, dropout, and graduation, an important linkage is missing in our understanding of how these programs work.

Practitioners and policymakers should keep in mind that dropout is not a single event; rather, it is a process of school disengagement starting as early as pre-school. Early interventions are critical, as are interventions that focus on transition points in a child's academic career (especially the transition from middle school to high school).

Practitioners and policymakers should also keep in mind that the absence of research on a given program or strategy should not limit their consideration. Quantitative research simply provides one piece of evidence to help stakeholders determine which programs or strategies to adopt. Other considerations include qualitative evidence (i.e., success stories), cost of implementation, feasibility, training requirements, and politics. The following future directions do not have a quantitative evidence base at this time, and are therefore not supported by our research; however, they do represent the "cutting edge" in the dropout prevention field:

- **Promote the use of Individual Graduation Plans (IGPs) for all students beginning in the sixth grade.**

  The lack of an IGP is akin to a business not having a strategic plan. IGPs are currently required for at-risk students in grades 6-12, and could be expanded statewide. Although this would require some additional paperwork, the benefits to students would likely be substantial if these plans are well designed. Some dropout prevention programs found to be effective in helping students complete school, such as Talent Search, focus on providing students with information about college. Helping students understand the linkage between high school completion and their future success appears to be an effective strategy, and IGPs can fulfill the same purpose.

- **Develop and utilize an early warning system.**

  Early warning systems identify high-risk students, recognize student trends and patterns, and predict potential dropouts. These systems can be used to identify individual students, student clusters, and grade levels/schools most in need of dropout prevention support.

  The National Dropout Prevention Center/Network, Olympic Behavior Labs, Microsoft, Sypherlink, and Choice Solutions have developed a working prototype of a web-based dropout early warning system (DEWS). This system automatically facilitates real-time identification of potential dropout for students in grades K-12. This system has four phases: (1) *predictive analytic models*, which identifies struggling students, (2) *program assessment and review*, which captures information on school environment and commitment to increasing graduation rates, (3) *intervention plans*, which are used to address needs at both the student and school level, and (4) *monitoring and evaluation*.

- **Pilot a graduation coaches program.**

  In our assessment of dropout prevention strategies, we found that a strong monitoring component seems to be helpful, or at least a component that places a caring adult in a child's life. Many dropout programs provide an adult role model who can serve as both mentor and monitor. The designation of a "graduation coach" in each high school would ensure that such an adult role model is present in every school.

  Georgia recently started a graduation coaches program at every high school in the state, and has posted increases in graduation rates in just three years. This model has been implemented in Texas as well: Northside Independent School District near San Antonio has a graduation coach program. In accordance with national studies showing the importance of the 9th grade year, the program specifically targets students at risk of failing English, math, science or social studies courses. A partnership with San Antonio College also targets students who are close to dropping out. This cooperative program works with individual students to identify specific educational and service needs so they can complete high school and earn college credits.

- **Conduct more research on typologies of dropouts and reasons why students drop out.**

  As we found in our research, dropout prevention programs need to be multi-faceted in order to address multiple types of dropouts with multiple motivations for leaving school (e.g., to support family, to have a child, etc.). A greater understanding of why students are dropping out – and who they are – would help policymakers develop new initiatives that can ensure that some students are not falling through the cracks.

- **Strengthen the linkages between K-12 and postsecondary education.**

  Many successful dropout prevention programs (e.g., Talent Search, Middle College High School, CIS) have strong components to encourage postsecondary education. By encouraging students to focus on their career aspirations, these programs also help students realize the importance of completing high school. Some of the more innovative developments in dropout prevention in recent years have been centered at the postsecondary level, and the evidence on these programs is certainly leaning in a positive direction.

- **Focus new initiatives on attendance.**

  Attendance shows up in nearly every study as a major risk factor and indicator of school failure at all grade levels. New dropout initiatives should have some mechanism in place to encourage attendance, such as adult monitors or graduation coaches.

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We can say for certain that there is no “magic bullet” when it comes to dropout prevention. Changing students’ lives for the better is an arduous process, and it takes a long time for programs to have an effect.

This research has demonstrated that dropout prevention is a complicated, multi-faceted process. In presenting “end-to-end” information on the subject, we hope this will move the field forward and ultimately, help policymakers, practitioners, and researchers in their work to ensure that students are provided the support and given the opportunity to live up to their potential.

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Almendarez, A. (1992). Profile of a school dropout in the Odem-Edroy Independent School District. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9315017)	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Alvarez-McHatton, P. (2004). Educating Latino students: The more we know, the less things change. *Journal of Latino-Latin American Studies (JOLLAS), 1*, 1-28.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Anderson, K. V. (2004). *Educating America's Latino youth: A critical review of dropout-prevention literature.* ProQuest Information & Learning, US.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Antoine, T. W. (1997). Critical factors in successful Texas middle schools: 1993-1995. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9801360)	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Archer, E. L., & Dresden, J. H. (1986, April 20). *A new kind of dropout: The effect of minimum competency testing on high school graduation in Texas.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Aron, L. Y. (2006, March). *An overview of alternative education.* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Aron, L. Y., & Zweig, J. M. (2003, November). *Educational alternatives for vulnerable youth: Student needs, program types, and research directions.* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Ash, K. (2008). Oklahoma. *Education Week, 27*(23), 22-22.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Ashburn, E. (2007). Study finds dual enrollment leads to college success. *Chronicle of Higher Education, 54*(10), 38-38.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Association for Career and Technical Education. (2007). *Career and technical education's role in dropout prevention and recovery* (ACTE Issue Brief: Dropout Prevention and Recovery). Alexandria, VA: Author.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Auspos, P., Cave, G., Doolittle, F., & Hoerz, G. (1989). *Implementing JOBSTART: A demonstration for school dropouts in the JTPA system.* New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Azzam, A. M. (2007). Why students drop out. *Educational Leadership, 64*(7), 91-93.	The study failed initial relevance screening
B., M.C. (2007, November). Dropout prevention. *Education Week, 27*(12), 5-5.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Baenen, N. R. (1990, August). *Pregnancy, Education, and Parenting pilot (PEP): Evaluation 1989-90.* Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Baker, A. M. (1992). Using a theory of dropout prevention to determine the effectiveness of the High School Redirection replication program. *Dissertation Abstracts International 52(08), 2761A.*	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Balfanz, R. (2007). *What your community can do to end its dropout crisis: Learnings from research and practice.* Baltimore, MD: Center for Social Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Baptiste, H. P., Jr., & Walker, D. (2005). The teen parent academy. *Science Teacher, 72*(3), 40-43.	The study design was not eligible for review
Barton, P. E. (2005, February). *One-third of a nation: Rising dropout rates and declining opportunities* (Policy Information Report). Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Bauman, K. (2003, August). *High school dropout and the GED: Is U.S. high school graduation in decline?* Paper presented at the Conference Papers -- American Sociological Association annual meeting, Atlanta, GA.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Belshaw, S. H., & Kritsonis, W. A. (2007, Spring*). National implications in juvenile justice: The influence of juvenile mentoring programs on at-risk youth.* Beaumont, Texas: Lamar University Electronic Journal of Student Research.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Bemak, F., Chi-Ying, R., & Siroskey-Sabdo, L. A. (2005). Empowerment Groups for Academic Success: An Innovative Approach to Prevent High School Failure for At-Risk, Urban African. *Professional School Counseling, 8*, 377-389.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Berkins, C. L., & Kritsonis, W. A. (2007, Fall). *Curriculum leadership: Curriculum for the at-risk students.* Beaumont, Texas: The Lamar University Electronic Journal of Student Research.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Berliner, B., Barrat, V. X., Fong, A. B., & Shirk, P. B. (2008, July). *Reenrollment of high school dropouts in a large, urban school district* (Issues & Answers, REL 2008 - No. 056). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Berliner, B., Barrat, V. X., Fong, A. B., & Shirk, P. B. (2008). *Reenrollment of high school dropouts in a large, urban school district* (Issues & Answers, REL 2008 - No. 056) Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Black, S. (1996, April). Size matters. *Executive Educator, 18*(4), 31-33..	The study failed initial relevance screening
Bleier, J. K. (2007). *The impact of career counseling plus discover (internet version) on the academic achievement of high school sophomores at-risk for dropping out of school.* Ann Arbor: MI: ProQuest Information & Learning.	The study was not implemented for the minimum duration set for the review
Bloom, D., Kopp, H., Long, D., & Polit, D. (1991). *LEAP: Implementing a welfare initiative to improve school attendance among teenage parents*. New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Blue, D., & Cook, J. E. (2004, May). High school dropouts: Can we reverse the stagnation in school graduation? *Study of High School Restructuring Issue Brief, 1*(2), 1-11.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Bobek, J. R. (2007, August). *Public secondary school dropouts in Pennsylvania 2005-06: Report to the General Assembly*. Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Data Services.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Boling, C. J., & Evans, W. H. (2008). Reading success in the secondary classroom. *Preventing School Failure, 52*, 59-66.	The study design was not eligible for review
Bowman, V. A. (2007). *The role of self-efficacy, social support, and a school-based parenting program in preventing adolescent mothers from dropping out of high school.* Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest Information & Learning.	The study did not report on at least one outcome relevant to the review
Bracey, G. W. (1998, February). Attrition from a school of choice. *Phi Delta Kappan, 79*(6), 473-474.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Brattin, T. H. (1993). The impact of mandatory placement and remediation on persistence and academic achievement: A study of the Texas Academic Skills Program at a state technical college. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9320295)	The study failed initial relevance screening
Brewer, E. W., & Landers, J. M. (2005, Spring). A longitudinal study of the Talent Search program. *Journal of Career Development, 31*(3), 195–208.	The study design was not eligible for review
Bridgeland, J. M., DiIulio, J. J., Jr., & Morison, K. B. (2006, March). *The silent epidemic: Perspectives of high school dropouts.* Washington, DC: Civic Enterprises.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Brodie, J. M. (2008a). Dual enrollment provides path to college for at-risk students. *Education Daily, 41*(106), 3-3.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Brodie, J. M. (2008b). Experiment with grad coaches pays off for Georgia schools. *Education Daily, 41*(103), 1-4.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Burghardt, J., McConnel, S., Meckstroth, A., Schrochet, P. Z., Johnson, T., & Homrighausen, J. (1999, April). National Job Corps Study: Report on study implementation. Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.	The study did not reliably quantify the outcome relevant to the review
Canales, J., &; Bush, M. J. (1992, April). *An identification profile chart for use in targeting intervention services for at-risk students.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Cantelon, S., & LeBoeuf, D. (1997, June). *Keeping young people in school: Community programs that work* (Juvenile Justice Bulletin). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.	The study design was not eligible for review
Cardenas, J. A., Montecel, M. R., Supik, J. D., & Harris, R. J. (1992). The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program: Dropout prevention strategies for at-risk students. *Texas Researcher, 3, 111–130.*	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Carpenter, D. M., II, & Ramirez, A. (2007). More than One Gap: Dropout Rate Gaps between and among Black, Hispanic, and White Students. *Journal of Advanced Academics, 19*(1), 32-64.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Carpenter, P. et al. (1971, December). *Case studies in educational performance contracting. Part 3. Texarkana, Arkansas; Liberty-Eylau, Texas.* Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Casey, A. C., & McSwain, J. A. (1989, September). *Cooperative alternative program: A plan for dropout prevention.*	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Casey, E. (1990). *Attendance +Plus.*	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Cassel, R. N. (2003) Use of personal development test to identify high school & college dropout students. *Education, 123*.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Cassel, R. N. (2003). A high school drop-out prevention program for the at-risk sophomore students. *Education, 123*(4), 649.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Catalano, R., & Hawkins, J. D. (1995). Communities that care: Risk-focused prevention using the social development strategy. Seattle, WA: Developmental Research and Programs, Inc.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Catalano, R., Berglund, M., Ryan, J., Lonczak, H., & Hawkins, D. (1999). Positive youth development in the U.S.: Research findings on evaluations of the positive youth development programs. New York: Carnegie Corporation.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Cavalluzzo, L., Jordan, W., & Corallo, C. (2002, December). *Case studies of high schools on college campuses: An alternative to the traditional high school program.* Chaleston, WV: AEL.	The study design was not eligible for review
Cavazos, J. M. (1996). The Political Resources Model of Representation: A local approach. M.P.A. dissertation, The University of Texas - Pan American, United States -- Texas. Retrieved November 18, 2008, from Dissertations & Theses: A&I database. (Publication No. AAT 1381296).	The study failed initial relevance screening
Cave, G., & Doolittle, F. (1991). Assessing JOBSTART: *Interim impacts of a program for school dropouts.* New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Cave, G., Bos, H., Doolittle, F., & Toussaint, C. (1993). *JOBSTART: Final report on a program for school dropouts.* New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Cech, S. J. (2005). The outsiders. After 28 years of educating students who slip through the cracks, Donna Hohnson is looking forward to one thing in retirement: Doing it all over again, online. *Teacher Magazine, 17*(2), 34-37.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Chaplin, D. (1999, November 26). *GED for teenagers: Are there unintended consequences?* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.	The study design was not eligible for review

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Chapter 2 discretionary, 1984-85 final technical report (Publication No. 84.63). (1985, June 30). Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Chapter 2 Formula: 1988-89 Final technical report. (1989, June 30). Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Chavez, J. J. (2002). School size and academic performance of Texas secondary public school students. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 3049697)	The study failed initial relevance screening
Chmelynski, C. (2004). Ninth-grade academies: keep kids in school. *Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review, 69*(5), 48-50.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Christle, C. A., Jolivette, K., & Nelson, C. M. (2007). School characteristics related to high school dropout rates. *Remedial and Special Education, 28*, 325-339.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Clancy, J. (2004). Putting the pieces together. *Times Educational Supplement* (4603), 2-2.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Clark, A. A., & Dorris, A. (2007). Partnering with Latino parents. *Education Digest, 72*(7), 44-50.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Classroom practices in teaching English--1965-66: A third report of the NCTE Committee to Report Promising Practices in the Teaching of English. (1965). Champaign, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Cook, G. (2008). The viral nature of technology. *American School Board Journal, 195*(3), 6-7.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Coppock, M. L. (1994, August). *Educational and life style aspirations of secondary students in border colonies of Laredo, Texas.* Additional information about the document that does not fit in any of the other fields; not used after 2004. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Rural Sociological Society, Portland, OR.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Coppock, M. L. (1995). Mentoring at-risk Hispanic students in self-esteem, academic growth, and citizenship awareness. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 28*(1), 36-43.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Cortez, J. D. (n.d.). Big Ideas: Dropout prevention strategies. Clemson, SC: Clemson University and Intercultural Development Research Association.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Country stars: Promising practices for rural at-risk students. (1993). Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Cranston-Gingras, A. (2003). Reconnecting Youth from Migrant Farmworker Families. *Reclaiming Children & Youth, 11*, 242.	The study did not meet the minimum number of participants set for the review
Creech, J. D. (2000). *Reducing dropout rates.* Atlanta, GA: Southern Regional Education Board.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Croninger. R. G., & Lee, V. E. (2001, August). Social capital and dropping out of high school: Benefits to at-risk students of teachers' support and guidance. Teachers College Record, 103(4), 548-581.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Crystal City Independent School District. (1973, July). *Opportunities for youth in education: Final report, 1971-1973.* Crystal City, TX: Author.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Cullen, C. L. (1991). *Middle College High School: Its organization and effectiveness. (Doctoral dissertation, Columbia University). Dissertation Abstracts International, 52,* 358.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Curiel, H., Rosenthal, J. A., Richek, H. G. (1986). Impacts of bilingual education on secondary school grades, attendance, retentions and drop-out. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 8*(4), 357-367.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Curry, J., & Zyskowski, G. (2000, October). *Summer opportunity to accelerate reading (S.O.A.R.) evaluation, 2000. Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District TX; Elementary Secondary Education Act Title I.*	The study was not implemented for the minimum duration set for the review

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Curry, J., Griffith, J., & Washington, W. (1996, October). *Title I/Title I migrant evaluation report, 1995-96* (Publication Number 95.02). Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Department of Accountability, Student Services, and Research	The study was not implemented for the minimum duration set for the review
Curtis, J., MacDonald, J., Doss, D., & Davis, W. (1983, April). *Dropout prevention.* Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study failed initial relevance screening
D.C. to design pre-K-to-college data tracking (2007). *Education Daily, 40*(185), 4-4.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Daily Briefing. (2008). *Education Daily, 41*(104), 4-5.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Davis, E. D. (1990). *A study of Hispanic dropouts.*	The study failed initial relevance screening
Davis, K. S., & Dupper, D. R. (2004). Student-teacher relationships: An overlooked factor in school dropout. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 9*(1), 179-193.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Day, T. (Ed.). (1964). *Texas small school association yearbook 1963-1964.* Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency and Texas Small Schools Association.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Dayton, C. (1988). *"Jobs for the Disadvantaged" graduate follow-up survey* (Policy Paper No. PP88-5-6). Berkley, CA: Policy Analysis for California Education.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Dayton, C., & Weisberg, A. (1987). *School-to-work and academy demonstration programs: 1986-87 evaluation report (Policy Paper No. PC87-11-12-EMCF).* Berkeley, CA: Policy Analysis for California Education.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Dayton, C., Reller, D., & Evans, J. (1987). *Peninsula Academies replication: 1985-86 evaluation report* (Report No. PC87-1-1-WFHF). Berkeley, CA: Policy Analysis for California Education.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Dayton, C., Weisberg, A., & Stern, D. (1989). *California Partnership Academies: 1987–88 evaluation report* (Policy Paper No. PP89-9-1). Berkeley, CA: Policy Analysis for California Education.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Dayton, C., Weisberg, A., Stern, D., & Evans, J. (1988). *Peninsula Academies replication: 1986-87 evaluation report* (Policy Paper No. PP88-4-3). Berkeley, CA: Policy Analysis for California Education.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
De La Rosa, D. A. (1998, April/May). Why alternative education works. *High School Journal, 81*(4), 268-272.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Dedmond, R. M. (2008). Launching students into their decade of transition. *Techniques: Connecting Education and Careers, 83*(4), 14-19.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Denham, A. (Ed.). (1987, March). Prevention and retention: Facing dropout problems, finding solutions. *Proceedings of the Texas Symposium on Hispanic Educational Issues Lubbock, Texas.*	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
DeSocio, J., VanCura, M., Nelson, L. A., Hewitt, G., Kitzman, H., & Cole, R. (2007). Engaging truant adolescents: Results from a multifaceted intervention pilot. *Preventing School Failure, 51*(3), 3-9.	The study was not implemented for the minimum duration set for the review
Developing basic skills proficiencies for limited English proficient (LEP) and English as a second language (ESL) students in vocational education. Final evaluation report. (1984). Houston, TX: Education Service Center Region 4.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Di Cecco, R., & Di Cecco, L. E. (2007). Integrating support networks for students at-risk of not completing high school. *ERS Spectrum, 25*(1), 31-40.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Difficulties of the Neighborhood Youth Corps In-School Program and Its Management Problems. Report to the Congress. (1973, February 20). Washington, DC: Comptroller General of the U.S.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Dorman-Hickson, N. et al. (1989, September). Country schools at the crossroads: A five-part series about ideas and programs that are being used to improve rural education. *Progressive Farmer.*	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Doss, D. A. & Holley, F. M. (1985, Winter). A study of dropouts in the Austin independent school district. *Spectrum, 3*(1), 23-31.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Dounay, J. (2007, July). Research sheds light on the students most at-risk of dropping out - and how to keep students on the "graduation track." *The Progress of Education Reform, 8*(1).	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Driscoll, D. P. (2006). Twenty-first century learning in states: The case of the Massachusetts educational system. *New Directions for Youth Development, 2006*(110), 127-131.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Dropout prevention tips (2008). *What Works in Teaching & Learning, 5*(2), 6-6.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Dropout prevention. (1986, Autumn). *Urban Principals Network News.*	The study failed initial relevance screening
Dropout Prevention. (2007). *School Library Journal, 53*(11), 19-19.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Dropout report for 1988-89: Part 2. (1990, March 1). Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Drop-outs in Small Schools.(1965, January). Austin, TX: Texas Small Schools Project.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Duncan, G. J. (2008). What to make of "unexpected" pathways? *Journal of Social Issues, 64*(1), 213-218.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Duttweiler, P. C. & Madden, M. (2001, Winter). *The district that does what's best for kids: Frenship ISD* (Special Report on Standards, Assessment, Accountability, and Interventions, Report #5). Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center.	The study was not implemented for the minimum duration set for the review
Dynarski, M., & Gleason, P. (1998, June 30). *How can we help? What we have learned from evaluations of federal dropout prevention programs.* Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (Accelerated Middle Schools Study)	The study design was not eligible for review

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Dynarski, M., & Gleason, P. (1998, June 30). *How can we help? What we have learned from evaluations of federal dropout prevention programs.* Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (Twelve Together Study)	The study design was not eligible for review
Dynarski, M., & Gleason, P. (1998, June 30). *How can we help? What we have learned from evaluations of federal dropout-prevention programs.* Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (Middle College High School Study)	The study design was not eligible for review
Earle, J., & Roach, V. (1989). *Female dropouts: A new perspective.* Newton, MA: Women's Educational Equity Act Program Publishing Center, Education Development Center, Inc.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Early identification, mentoring help at-risk students graduate (2008). *What Works in Teaching & Learning, 5*(2), 6-6.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Edgar, E., & Johnson, E. (1995, December). *Relationship building & affiliation activities in school-based dropout prevention programs: Rationale & recommendations for action.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota.	The study design was not eligible for review
Education group puts spotlight on dropout prevention programs (2004). *Black Issues in Higher Education, 21*(7), 15-15.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Educators comb indicators for early signs of dropout (2008). *What Works in Teaching & Learning, 4*(8), 11-11.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Ellis, M. W., Grant, M., & Haniford, L. (2007). Reframing problems in secondary education: Alternative perspectives, new insights, and possibilities for action. *High School Journal, 91*(1), 1-5.	The study failed initial relevance screening
English, K., & Edwards, M. (1989, August 31). *T.A.P.S. To Allow Pupils to Succeed. A model program for at-risk students linking vocational education and alternatives to social promotion. Final evaluation report.* Kaufman, TX: Kaufman Independent School District.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Englund, M. M., Egeland, B., & Collins, W. A. (2008). Exceptions to high school dropout predictions in a low-income sample: Do adults make a difference? *Journal of Social Issues, 64*, 77-94.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Ensminger, M. E., & Slusarcick, A. L. (1992). Paths to high school graduation or dropout: A longitudinal study of a first grade cohort. Sociology of Education, 65, 95-113.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Ensminger, M. E., Lamkin, R. P., & Jacobson, N. (1996). School leaving: A longitudinal perspective including neighborhood effects. Child Development, 67, 2400-2416.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Entwisle, D. R., Alexander, K. L., & Olson, L. S. (2005). Urban teenagers: Work and dropout. *Youth & Society, 37*, 3-32.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Estes, N. (1971, February 21). *Education performance contracting: The Dallas project.* Paper presented at American Association of School Administrators Annual Convention, Atlantic City, NJ.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Facing the facts. Hispanic dropouts in ten urban communities. (1989). Washington, DC: ASPIRA National Office Publications.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Fashola, O. S. (October 1998). Review of extended-day and after-school programs and their effectiveness, Report No. 24. Baltimore, MD: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At-risk, Johns Hopkins University.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1997, February). *Effective dropout prevention and college attendance programs for Latino students.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1998). Effective dropout prevention and college attendance programs for students placed at-risk. Journal of Education for Students Placed at-risk, 3(2),159-183.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Feinstein, L., & Peck, S. C. (2008). Unexpected pathways through education: Why do some students not succeed in school and what helps others beat the odds? *Journal of Social Issues, 64*, 1-20.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Finn, J. D. (1989, Summer). Withdrawing from school. Review of Educational Research, 59(2), 117-142.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Finn, J. D. (1993, August). School engagement and students at-risk. (NCES 93-470). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Fisher, D., & Ivey, G. (2006). Evaluating the interventions for struggling adolescent readers. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 50*(3), 180-189.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Fitzpatrick, C., & Ruberry, J. (2003). Overcoming high school English deficiencies as a dropout prevention tool: Results of a three-year natural experiment. *Journal of At-Risk Issues, 9*(1), 23-31.	The study did not report on at least one outcome relevant to the review
Fleschler, M.A., Tortolero, S.R., Baumler, E.R., Vernon, S.W., Weller, N.F. (2002). Lifetime inhalant use among alternative high school students in Texas: Prevalence and characteristics of users. *American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse, 28*(3), 477-95.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Foley, E. M., Klinge, A., & Reisner, R. (2007, October). *Evaluation of New Century High Schools: Profile of an initiative to create and sustain small, successful high schools.* Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associate, Inc.	The study design was not eligible for review
Foley, E., & Crull, P. (1984). *Educating the at-risk adolescent: More lessons from alternative high schools. A report.* New York: Public Education Association.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Frank, J. R. (1987). Income, family stressors, and parent education as correlates of school dropout. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 8806326)	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Frazer, L. (1992, August). *At-risk report, 1991-92. What does the future hold?* Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Frazer, L. (1992, Fall). Students at-risk of dropping out: Developing accurate criteria to identify them. *ERS Spectrum, 10*(4), 3-9.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Frazer, L. H. (1987, July). *Launching toward success: The school-community guidance center and the transitional academic program. Evaluation, 1986-87.* Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Frazer, L. H., & Baenen, N. R. (1983, March). *High-risk students--Can you keep them in school?* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Frazer, L., & Ligon, G. (1991, April). *Comparing actual and predicted dropout rates to evaluate program effectiveness* (Publication No. 90.19). Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Frazier, M. A. (1996). An evaluation of an educational partnership: The Special Friends Scholarship Program*. Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9701438)	The study did not focus on school dropout prevention at the K-12 level
Freed, C. D., & Samson, M. (2004). Native Alaskan dropouts in western Alaska: Systemic failure in Native Alaskan schools. *Journal of American Indian Education, 43*, 33-45.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Freudenberg, N., & Ruglis, J. (2007). Reframing school dropout as a public health issue. *Preventing Chronic Disease: Public Health Research, Practice, and Policy, 4*(4).	The study failed initial relevance screening
Froese, S. W. (1983). The development, implementation, and evaluation of an advisor/advisee program at Sherman High School in Sherman, Texas. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 8403311)	The study failed initial relevance screening
Frysinger, V. F. (1998). Improving undergraduate retention at Texas A&M University: Impact of participation in selected study skills courses. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9830905)	The study failed initial relevance screening
Furstenberg, F. F., Jr., & Neumark, D. (2007, June). Encouraging education in an urban school district: Evidence from the Philadelphia educational longitudinal study. *Education*	The study design was not eligible for review

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Economics, 15(2), 135-157.	
FY 2008 education budget cuts education funding & programs (2007). *Curriculum Review, 46*(8), 3-3.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Galiatsos, S. (2007). *Reforming high schools: Lessons from the New Century High Schools Initiative 2001-2006.* New York, NY: New Visions for Public Schools.	The study design was not eligible for review
Gambone, M. A., Klem, A. M., Summers, J. A., Akey, T. A., & Sipe, C. L. (2004). *Turning the tide: The achievements of the First Things First education reform in the Kansas City, Kansas Public School District.* Philadelphia, PA: Youth Development Strategies, Inc.	The study design was not eligible for review
Gándara, P., Larson, K., Rumberger, R., & Mehan, H. (1998, May). *Capturing Latino students in the academic pipeline.* Berkeley, CA: Chicano/Latino Policy Project.	The study design was not eligible for review
Garcia, F. E., Gasch, J. L., Wenger, J. W., & Ray, B. D. (2001, November). *Evaluation of the pilot program for home school and ChalleNGe program recruits.* Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analysis Corporation.	The study did not focus on school dropout prevention at the K-12 level
Garcia, R. (1989). Implementation of the Alternatives to Social Promotion Program in Texas. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9017561)	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Gaustad, J. (1991). Identifying potential dropouts. ERIC Digest. Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. (ERIC Identifier ED339092)	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Gertler, P., Patrinos, H., & Rubio-Codina, M. (2006). *Empowering parents to improve education: Evidence from rural Mexico* (World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3935). Washington, DC: World Bank Publications.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Gewertz, C. (2005). Keeping overage students in high school proves tough. *Education Week, 24*(40).	The study failed initial relevance screening
Gewertz, C. (2006). H.S. dropouts say lack of motivation top reason to quit. *Education Week, 25*(26), 1-14.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Gewertz, C. (2007a). Pathways to a diploma. *Education Week, 26*(32), 29-30.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Gewertz, C. (2007b). Pittsburgh building 'nation' of 9th graders. *Education Week, 27*(1), 1-15.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Gideon, B. H. (2004). Creating a safety net. *Principal Leadership: High School Edition, 4*(7), 65-66.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Gloria, C., & Karr-Kidwell, P. J. (1993). *A study of the effect of alternative programs on the potential dropout.* Unpublished master's thesis, Texas Women's University, Texas.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Glynn, J. G., Sauer, P. L., & Miller, T. E. (2003). Signaling student retention with prematriculation data. *NASPA Journal, 41*, 41-67.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Goldschmidt, P., & Wang, J. (1999). When can schools affect dropout behavior? A longitudinal multilevel analysis. American Educational Research Journal, 36(4), 715-738.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Gonzales, N. A., Dumka, L. E., Deardorff, J., Carter, S. J., & McCray, A. (2004). Preventing poor mental health and school dropout of Mexican American adolescents following the transition to junior high school. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 19*, 113-131.	The study did not meet the minimum number of participants set for the review
Grabill, D. (2007). NH transition community of practice supports state efforts to increase high school graduation rates. *New Hampshire Educational Links, 3*(1), 6-7.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Griffith, J. E. (1994, August). *Chapter 2 formula final report, 1993-94.* Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Guardiola, G. (1983, July). *Alternatives in education.* Paper presented at the Annual National Council of La Raza Conference, Chicago, IL.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Guryan, J. Desegregation and black dropout rates. *American Economic Review, 94*(4), 919-943.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Guthrie, S. S. (1992). Identifying priority variables of potential dropouts. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
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Gutner, H. (1990, January). Building bridges. *Instructor, 99*(5), 46-49.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Hahn, A., Leavitt, T., & Aaron, P. (1994). *Evaluation of the Quantum Opportunities Program (QOP): Did the program work? A report on the post secondary outcomes and cost effectiveness of the QOP program (1989–1993).* Waltham, MA: Brandeis University, Center for Human Resources.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Hambrick, J. G. (2001). Principals' perceptions of the influence of extracurricular activities on selected student performance factors: The impact of the No Pass/No Play rule. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 3020889)	The study failed initial relevance screening
Hamby, J. V. (1989, May). National dropout rates: Sources, problems, and efforts toward solutions. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center, Clemson University.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Hammond, C., & Reimer, M. (2006). Essential elements of quality after school programs. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center/Network, College of Health, Education, and Human Development, Clemson University.	The study did not reliably quantify the outcome relevant to the review
Hammond, C., Linton, D., Smink, J., & Drew, S. (2007, May). *Dropout risk factors and exemplary programs: A technical report*. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (NDPC/N), & Alexandria, VA: Communities in Schools, Inc.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Hanser, L., & Stasz, C. (1999). *The effects of enrollment in the Transportation Career Academy program on student outcomes.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND.	The study was not implemented for the minimum duration set for the review
Harrison, M. M. (2007, Fall). Does this child have a friend? *Teaching Tolerance, 32,* 26-31.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Havsy, L. H. (2004). *Effects of school climate, student belonging, student coping and home support for learning on student attendance.* Ann Arbor: MI: ProQuest Information & Learning.	The study did not report on at least one outcome relevant to the review
Hawkins, J. D., & Catalano, R. F. (2003). Investing in your community's youth: An introduction to the Communities That Care system. South Deerfield, MA: Communities That Care, Channing Bete Company, Inc.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Hayward, B. J., & Tallmedge, G. K. (1995). *Strategies for keeping kids in school: Evaluation of dropout prevention and reentry projects in vocational education. Final report.* Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research, Research Triangle Institute, and Arlington, VA: RMC Research Corporation. (Ann Arrundel Study)	The study did not reliably quantify the outcome relevant to the review
Hayward, B. J., & Tallmedge, G. K. (1995). *Strategies for keeping kids in school: Evaluation of dropout prevention and reentry projects in vocational education. Final report.* Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research, Research Triangle Institute, and Arlington, VA: RMC Research Corporation. (Boward Study)	The study did not meet the minimum number of participants set for the review
Hayward, B. J., & Tallmedge, G. K. (1995). *Strategies for keeping kids in school: Evaluation of dropout prevention and reentry projects in vocational education. Final report.* Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research, Research Triangle Institute, and Arlington, VA: RMC Research Corporation. (Fort Berthold Study)	The study did not meet the minimum number of participants set for the review
Hayward, B. J., & Tallmedge, G. K. (1995). *Strategies for keeping kids in school: Evaluation of dropout prevention and reentry projects in vocational education. Final report.* Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research, Research Triangle Institute, and Arlington, VA: RMC Research Corporation. (Turtle Mountain Study)	The study did not meet the minimum number of participants set for the review

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Heard, F. B. (1988). *An assessment of the Tennessee Statewide School-College Collaborative for Educational Excellence: The Middle College High School. (Doctoral dissertation, Nova University).*	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Heath, D. (2005). *Small learning communities: 2000-2003. Evaluation brief.* Albuquerque, NM: Albuquerque Public Schools, NM. Research, Development, and Accountability.	The study design was not eligible for review
Heck, R. H., & Mahoe, R. (2006). Student transition to high school and persistence: Highlighting the influences of social divisions and school contingencies. *American Journal of Education, 112*(3), 418-446.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Heger, H. K. (1992, October). *Retaining Hispanic youth in school: An evaluation of a counseling-based alternative school program.* El Paso, TX: University of Texas at El Paso, College of Education.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Help for "at-risk" children: School-community guidance centers. (1984, January). Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Herlihy, C. (2007, May). *State and district-level support for successful transitions into high school* (Policy Brief). Washington, DC: National High School Center.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Hershey, A., Adelman, N., & Murray, S. (1995). *Helping kids succeed: Implementation of the School Dropout Demonstration Assistance Program.* Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (Middle College High School Study)	The study design was not eligible for review
Hershey, A., Adelman, N., & Murray, S. (1995). *Helping kids succeed: Implementation of the School Dropout Demonstration Assistance Program.* Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (Accelerated Middle Schools Study)	The study design was not eligible for review
Hershey, A., Adelman, N., & Murray, S. (1995). *Helping kids succeed: Implementation of the School Dropout Demonstration Assistance Program.* Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (Twelve Together Study(	The study design was not eligible for review

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Herzog, S. (2005, December). Measuring determinants of student return vs. dropout/stopout vs. transfer: A first-to-second year analysis of new freshmen. *Research in Higher Education, 46*(8), 883-928.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Hess, R. S., & Copeland, E. (2001). Students' stress, coping strategies, and school completion: A longitudinal perspective. School Psychology Quarterly, 16(4), 389-405.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Higginbotham, J. S. (1997). Building entrepreneurs. *School Planning and Management, 36*(3), 36-38.	The study failed initial relevance screening
High school RTI requires systemic effort (2008). *What Works in Teaching & Learning, 4*(7), 7-7.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Hoff, D. J. (2007a). Economists tout value of reducing dropouts. *Education Week, 26*(23), 5-15.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Hoff, D. J. (2007b). Senate measure targets high schools with serious dropout problems. *Education Week, 26*(35), 21-21.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Hollar, D., & Moore, D. (2004). Relationship of substance use by students with disabilities to long-term educational, employment, and social outcomes. *Substance Use & Misuse, 39*(6), 931-962.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Holley, P. C. (2004, August 4). *Religiosity and the high school dropout.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference Papers -- American Sociological Association, San Francisco.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Holt, L. J. (2008). *Enhancing school engagement in urban minority youth at-risk for adolescent problems.* Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest Information & Learning.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Houstoun, F. O. (2007). What cities can do to turn the dropout crisis around. *Nation's Cities Weekly, 30*(13), 6-12	The study failed initial relevance screening
Hoyle, J. R., & Collier, V. (2006). Urban CEO superintendents' alternative strategies in reducing school dropouts. *Education and Urban Society, 39*(1), 69-90.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Hruska, R. A. (2004). *Public secondary school dropouts in Pennsylvania, 2002-03. Report to the General Assembly*. Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania State Department of Education, Division of Data Services.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Hruska, R. A. (2005). *Public secondary school dropouts in Pennsylvania 2003-04. Report to the General Assembly*. Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Data Services.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Hruska, R. A. (2006). *Public secondary school dropouts in Pennsylvania, 2004-05. Report to the General Assembly*. Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Data Services.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Huebner, T. A. (2005). *Rethinking high school: An introduction to New York City's experience.* San Francisco, CA: WestEd.	The study was not implemented for the minimum duration set for the review
Huebner, T. A., Corbett, G. C., & Phillippo, K. (2006). *Rethinking high school: Inaugural graduations at New York City's new high schools.* San Francisco, CA: WestEd.	The study design was not eligible for review
Identifying at-risk students. The best of ERIC on educational management, Number 85. (1986). Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management.	The study failed initial relevance screening
IDRA Focus: Sropout prevention and attrition rates. (1994, October). *IDRA Newsletter, 21*(9).	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
IDRA focus: Staying in school. (1996, October). IDRA Newsletter, 23(9).	The study failed initial relevance screening
IDRA Focus: Youth leadership. (1995, October). *IDRA Newsletter, 22*(9).	The study failed initial relevance screening
IMAGES: Information Manual of Alternatives Guiding Educational Success. (1988). Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Instruction first line of defense against high dropout rates (2007). *What Works in Teaching & Learning, 39*(6), 5-5.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Jacobson, L. (2006). Graduation coaches pursue one goal. *Education Week, 26*(12), 28-30.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Jacobson, L. (2007). Georgia's graduation-coach team to grow. *Education Week, 27*(8),	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
16-16.	
James, D. W. (Ed.). MORE things that DO make a difference for youth: A compendium of evaluations of youth programs and practices, Volume II. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum.	The study failed initial relevance screening
James, D. W. (Ed.). (1997). Some things DO make a difference for youth: A compendium of evaluations of youth programs and practices. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum. Available online at http://www.aypf.org.	The study failed initial relevance screening
James, D. W., & Partee, G. (2003). No more islands: Family involvement in 27 school and youth programs. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Janosz, M., Archambault, I., Morizot, J., & Pagani, L. S. (2008). School engagement trajectories and their differential predictive relations to dropout. *Journal of Social Issues, 64*, 21-40.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Jerald, C. D. (2006). *Dropping out is hard to do* (Issue Brief). Washington, DC: Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Jerald, C. D. (2006). *Identifying potential dropouts: Key lessons for building an early warning data system. A dual agenda of high standards and high graduation rates.* Washington, DC: Achieve, Inc.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Johnson, F. C. (1985, May). *Junior high migrant student services: A compendium.* Oneonta, NY: State University of New York College at Oneonta.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Johnson, J. L. (2007). *Evaluation of student attrition in an alternative school setting.* Applied doctoral dissertation submitted to the Fischler School of Education and Human Services, Nova Southeastern University.	The study design was not eligible for review
Johnson, J. L., Sparks, E., Lewis, R. G., Niedrich, K., Hall, M., & Johnson, J. (2006). Effective counseling strategies for supporting long-term suspended students. *Professional*	The study design was not eligible for review

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
School Counseling, 9(3), 261-264.	
Johnson, R. (1993, October). Attrition in Texas public high schools. *IDRA Newsletter, 20*(9), 6-10.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Johnson, R. (1999, October). Attrition rates in Texas public high schools still high. *IDRA Newsletter, 26*(9).	The study failed initial relevance screening
Johnson, R. (2008, May). *High school attrition rates across Texas Education Service Center regions.* San Antonio, TX: Intercultural Development Research Association.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Jones, J. B. (2006). The numbers are astounding: The role of the media specialist in dropout prevention. *Library Media Connection, 25*(2), 10-13.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Jozefowics-Simbeni, D. M. H. (2008). An ecological and developmental perspective on dropout risk factors in early adolescence: Role of school social workers in dropout prevention efforts. *Children & Schools, 30*, 49-62.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Juarez, T. (1996, February). Where homeboys feel at home in school. *Educational Leadership, 53*(5), 30-32.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Kallus, R. (Ed.). (2001). Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools, 1998-99. Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Kallus, R. (Ed.). (2001). *Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools, 1999-00.* Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Karlin, A. R. et al. (1992, Fall-Winter). T.I.P.S. for being at-risk and loving it. Teacher Education and Practice, 8(2), 43-50.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Kazis, R., Conklin, K. D., & Pennington, H. (2004). Shoring up the academic pipeline. *Education Week, 23*(28), 56-56.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Keller, B. (2006). NEA: Earn a diploma or stay in school until age 21. *Education Week, 26*(7), 5-14.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Kemp, S. E. (2006). Dropout policies and trends for students with and without disabilities. *Adolescence, 41*, 235-250.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Kemple, J. J. (2004, March). *Career Academies: Impacts on labor market outcomes and educational attainment.* New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.	The study design was not eligible for review
Kemple, J. J., & Rock, J. L. (1996). *Career Academies: Early implementation lessons from a 10-site evaluation.* New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.	The study did not reliably quantify the outcome relevant to the review
Kennedy, T. A. (1997). Project Starfish: A church and community based public school mentoring program. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9735127)	The study failed initial relevance screening
Kitto, K. (2006). Dropout prevention starts with strong commitment. *Education Daily, 39*(201), 6-6.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Kitto, K. (2007). Dropout program could be revived in new law. *Education Daily, 40*(161), 3-3.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Knesting, K., & Waldron, N. (2006). Willing to play the game: How at-risk students persist in school. *Psychology in the Schools, 43*(5), 599-611.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Knox, J. J. (1983, January 3). *A study to conduct an analysis of fall out among low-income head of household women seeking employment. Final report.* San Antonio, TX: San Antonio College	The study failed initial relevance screening
Knudson, C. H. (1964, February). *A study of dropouts in Texas and Minnesota.* Austin, TX: Texas Study of Secondary Education.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Koeller, S. et al. (1989, January-February). School/Community interaction. *Social Studies, 80*(1), 28-29.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Kohler, L. T. (1992). The Migrant Dropout Prevention Project: A study of data collection. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9225636)	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Kolstad, R & Ritter, D. L. (2000, Spring). Use of Air Force JROTC high school cadets as role models for developing Democratic maturity in pre-education teachers. *Education, 120*(3), 416-422.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Kortering, L., & Braziel, P. (2008). Engaging youth in school and learning: The emerging key to school success and completion. *Psychology in the Schools, 45*(5), 461-465.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Labbe, J. R. (2007). Why rotary commits to service learning. *School Administrator, 64*(6), 46-46.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Lambert, M. (2008). Devil in the detail: using a pupil questionnaire survey in an evaluation of out-of-school classes for gifted and talented children. *Education 3-13, 36*, 69-78.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Larsen, D. E., & Akmal, T. T. (2007). Making decisions in the dark: Disconnects between retention research and middle-level practice. *NASSP Bulletin, 91*, 33-56.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Larson, K. A. (1989). Task-related and interpersonal problem solving training for increasing school success in high-risk young adolescents. *Remedial and Special Education*, *10*(5), 32–42.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Larson, K. A., & Rumberger, R. W. (1995). Doubling school success in highest-risk Latino youth: Results from a middle school intervention study. In R. F. Macías and R. G. García Ramos (Eds.), *Changing Schools for Changing Students*. Santa Barbara: University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute.	The study did not report on at least one outcome relevant to the review
Lashaway-Bokina, N. (1996). Gifted but gone: High-ability, Mexican-American, female dropouts. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9707839)	The study failed initial relevance screening
LeCompte, M. D., & Dworkin, A. G. (1991). Giving up on school: Student dropouts and teacher burnouts. Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press Inc.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Lehr, C. A. (2004, August). Increasing school completion: Learning from research-based practices that work (Research to Practice Brief). *Improving Secondary Education and Transition Services Through Research, National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, 3*(3), 1-4.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Lehr, C. A., Clapper, A. T., & Thurlow, M. L. (2005). *Graduation for all: A practical guide to decreasing school dropout*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Lehr, C. A., Johnson, D. R., Bremer, C. D., Cosio, A., & Thompson, M. (2004). *Essential tools: Increasing rates of school completion: Moving from policy and research to practice: A manual for policymakers, administrators, and educators.* Minneapolis, MN: National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET), University of Minnesota.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Lehr, C. A., Johnson, D. R., Bremer, C. D., Cosio, A., & Thompson, M. (2004, May). *Essential tools: Increasing rates of school completion: Moving from policy and research to practice.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration Publications Office.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Lehr, C. A., Johnson, D. R., Bremer, C. D., Cosio, S., & Thompson, M. (2004, May). Essential tools. Increasing rates of school completion: Moving from policy and research to practice. Minneapolis, MN: National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Leuchovius, D. (2006). *The role of parents in dropout prevention: Strategies that promote graduation and school achievement* (Parent Brief). Minneapolis, MN: National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET), University of Minnesota.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Leveque, A. H. (2008). *Rigor and caring in a small learning community: Can tracking be effective for at-risk high school students?* Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest Information & Learning.	The study did not report on at least one outcome relevant to the review

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Lever, N., Sander, M. A., Lombardo, S., Randall, C., Axelrod, J., Rubenstein, M., et al. A drop-out prevention program for high-risk inner-city youth. *Behavior Modification, 28*(4), 513-527.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Levin, H. M., Belfield, C., Muennig, P., & Rouse, C. (2007). The public returns to public educational investments in African-American males. *Economics of Education Review, 26*(6), 699-708.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Lewis, A. C. (2004, September). Direct from Washington. *Tech Directions, 64*(2), 4-5.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Lewis, A. C. (2007). Graduation promise act. *Tech Directions, 66*(6), 6-6.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Lieberman, J. E. (1986). *Middle College: A ten year study. .*	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Ligon, G., Olson, G. H., Frazer, L., Garcia, S., & Cole, J. (1990, January). *Diplomas or dropout statistics: Alternatives for at-risk students.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association, Austin, TX.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Lillemon-Hennig, C. M. (1995). Common elements of successful dropout prevention programs in selected Texas public school districts. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9539250)	The study failed initial relevance screening
Linton, D., Moser, L., Holden, C., & Siegel, S. (2006). Communities In Schools: 2004-2005 results from the CIS network. Alexandria, VA: Communities in Schools.	The study design was not eligible for review
Looking at Chapter 2: 1985-86. (1986). Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Lunenburg, F. C. (2000). *High school dropouts: Issues and solutions.*	The study failed initial relevance screening
Madabhushi, S. (2007). *Counseling model for adolescents at-risk for school drop out*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Mann, D. (1986). Can we help dropouts: Thinking about the undoable. Teachers College Record, 87(3), 307-323.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Manzo, K. K. (2007a). N.C. governor seeking expanded college plan. *Education Week, 26*(25), 19-19.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Manzo, K. K. (2007b). School programs win big increases in N.C. *Education Week, 26*(45), 21-21.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Marrs, H., Hemmert, E., & Jansen, J. (2007). Trouble in a small school: Perceptions of at-risk students in a rural high school. *Journal of At-Risk Issues, 13*, 33-39.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Martin, N., & Halperin, S. (2006). *Whatever it takes: How twelve communities are reconnecting out-of-school youth*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum Inc.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Martin, N., & Halperin, S. (2006). *Whatever it takes: How twelve communities are reconnecting out-of-school youth.* Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Martinez, T. P., & Martinez, A. P. (2002, October). Texas tragedy: No Hispanic child left behind? *The Education Digest, 68*(2), 35-40.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Mathews, J. (2008, February 11). Online courses aim to prevent dropouts. *The Washington Post, 130*(433).	The study failed initial relevance screening
Maxfield, M., Castner, L., Maralani, V., & Vencill, M. (2003, August). *The Quantum Opportunity Program demonstration: Implementation findings.* Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.	The study design was not eligible for review
Maxwell, L. A. (2007). Los Angeles tries luring back dropouts via social networks. *Education Week, 27*(8), 1-11.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Maxwell, L. A. (2008). Dropout campaigns envisioned for states, 50 key city districts. *Education Week, 27*(32), 10-10.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Maxwell, N. (2001, December). Step to college: Moving from the high school career academy through the 4-Year university. *Evaluation Review, 25*(6), 619–654.	The study did not focus on school dropout prevention at the K-12 level

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Maxwell, N. L., & Rubin, V. (1997). *The relative impact of a career academy on post-secondary work and education skills in urban, public high schools* (Discussion Paper No. 97-2). Hayward, CA: California State University, Human Investment Research and Education Center.	The study design was not eligible for review
McCluskey, K. W., Baker, P. A., & McCluskey, A. L. A. (2005, Fall). Creative problem solving with marginalized populations: Reclaiming lost prizes through in-the-trenches interventions. *Gifted Child Quarterly, 49*(4).	The study failed initial relevance screening
McConnell, S., & Glazerman, S. (June 2001). *National Job Corps Study: The benefits and costs of Job Corps.* Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.	The study did not focus on school dropout prevention at the K-12 level
McCray, E. D. (2006). It's 10 a.m.: Do you know where your children are? *Intervention in School & Clinic, 42*, 30-33.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Medrano, M., Borgrink, H., & Gage, T. (2005). *New Mexico dropout report, 2004-2005*: Santa Fe, NM: New Mexico Public Education Department.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Miller, M. (2006). Where they are. *Educational Leadership, 63*(5), 50-54.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Mishel, L. (2006). The exaggerated dropout crisis. *Education Week, 25*(26), 40-40.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Mitchell, M. V., Jenkins, D., Nguyen, D., Lerman, A., & DeBerry, M. (2003, August). *Evaluation of the youthbuild program.* Chicago, IL: Applied Real Estate Analysis, Inc.	The study design was not eligible for review
Montecel, M. R., Supik, J. D., & Montemayor, A. (1994). Valued youth program: Dropout prevention strategies for at-risk youth. In Malave, L. M. (Ed.), *National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE). Annual Conf*erence Journal, NABE '92-'93.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Morley, E., & Rossman, S. B. (1998, December). *Helping at-risk youth: Lessons from community-based initiatives.* Washington, DC: Urban Institute.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
"Mother got tired of taking care of my baby." A study of dropouts (Publication Number: 82.44). (1982). Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation	The study failed initial relevance screening
Myint-U, A., O'Donnell, L., Osher, D., Petrosino, A., & Stueve, A. (2008, March). *Piloting a searchable database of dropout prevention programs in low-income urban school districts in the Northeast and Islands Region* (Issues & Answers, REL 2008 - No. 046). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Nathan, J. (2008). How Cincinnati turned its schools around. *Education Week, 27*(17), 24-25.	The study failed initial relevance screening
National center releases dropout prevention guidance (2007). *Career & Technical Education Advisor, 38*(7), 2-2.	The study failed initial relevance screening
National Science Foundation Office of Inspector General. (2004, May 14). *Audit of NSF's math and science partnership program* (OIG 04-2-003). Arlington, VA: Author.	The study did not focus on school dropout prevention at the K-12 level
National Women's Law Center. (2007). *When girls don't graduate we all fail: A call to improve high school graduation rates for girls.* Washington, DC: Author.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
National Youth Employment Coalition. (2008). *Expanding Options: State Financing of Education Pathways for Struggling Students and Out-of-School Youth.* Author.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Nealy, C. D. (1994). A study of the perception of at-risk coordinators in regard to evaluation of Alternatives to Social Promotion. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9431025)	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
New Hampshire's Multi-Tiered Approach to Dropout Prevention. Snapshot: New Hampshire (2007). Washington, DC: National High School Center.	The study failed initial relevance screening
New laws take aim at dropout problem (2004). *Dropout Prevention Clearinghouse Newsletter, 2*(1), 1-4.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
O'Donoghue, F., & Lupart, J. (2003). The Northwest Territories and Nunavut. *Exceptionality Education Canada, 13*, 29-46.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Olatunji, A. N. Dropping out of high school among Mexican-origin youths: Is early work experience a factor? *Harvard Educational Review, 75*(3), 286-305.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Opuni, K. A. (1990). *The strive project: A special "pull-out" instructional program for at-risk ninth grade students.* Washington, DC: Environmental Protection Agency.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Opuni, K. A., Finer-Collins, M., & Revis, G. (1991, July). *Dropout prevention at the grassroots: Houston ISD's elementary at-risk program (1990-91).*	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Opuni, K. A., Tullis, R., & Sanchez, K. S. (1990). *Beating the odds summer school: A dropout prevention program for at-risk students (1990).* Houston, TX: Houston Independent School District, Department of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Ord, L. M., Myles-Worsley, M., Blailes, F., & Ngiralmau, H. (2004). Screening for prodromal adolescents in an isolated high-risk population. *Schizophrenia Research, 71*(2), 507-508.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Orr, M. T. (1987). *Keeping students in school. A guide to effective dropout prevention services.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Orr, M. T. (1990). *What to do about youth dropouts? A summary of solutions.* Washington, DC: Hispanic Policy Development.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Osher, D., Morrison, G., & Bailey, W. Exploring the relationship between student mobility and dropout among students with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Journal of Negro Education, 72*(1), 79.	The study failed initial relevance screening
PACER Center. (2006). *Drop-out prevention: Parents play a key role. PACER Center ACTion information sheets. PHP-c114*. Bloomington, MN: Author.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Pagani, L. S., Vitaro, F., Tremblay, R. E., McDuff, P., Japel, C., & Larose, S. (2008). When predictions fail: The case of unexpected pathways toward high school dropout. *Journal of Social Issues, 64*, 175-194.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Parker, J. E. F. (1990). Characteristics for identifying at-risk high school students in the Waco Independent School District. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9118164)	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Pascopella, A. (2007). The dropout crisis. *District Administration, 43*(1), 30-38.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Patterson, A. (1993). Comparison of personality types of high school dropouts and achievers using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator in the North East Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9410847)	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Patterson, N. C., Beltyukova, S. A., Berman, K., & Francis, A. (2007). The making of sophomores. *Urban Education, 42*, 124-144.	The study was not implemented for the minimum duration set for the review
Peace, B., & Land, L. (1984, November-December). Turning young lives around. *VocEd, 59*(8), 45-46.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Peredes, V., & Sanchez, M. (1993, September). *Dropout report, 1991-92* (Publication Number 92.17). Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Pickeral, T., & Piscatelli, J. (2007, September). Educational engagement: A successful strategy for academic and civic achievement and success. *The Progress of Education Reform, 8*(3).	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Pinkus, L. (2008, August). *Using early warning data to improve graduation rates: Closing cracks in the education system* (Policy Brief). Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Plank, S., DeLuca, S., & Estacion, A. (2005, October). Dropping out of high school and the place of career and technical education: A survival analysis of surviving high school. St. Paul, MN: National Research Center for Career and Technical Education, University of Minnesota and distributed by the National Dissemination Center for Career and Technical Education, The Ohio State University. Available online from http://www.nccte.com.	The study did not reliably quantify the outcome relevant to the review
Pollard, J. S., & Rood, M. M. (1990, November). *School-linked services for at-risk youth and their families: Trends in state agencies.* Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Poorly prepared high school graduates cost billions (2006). *What Works in Teaching & Learning, 38*(10), 12-12.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Preston, V. J., Rambo, S., & Williams, M. L. (1973, June). *Evaluation of coordinated vocational-academic education in Texas*. Paris, TX: Paris Junior College.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Purcell, J. (2000). *Dropout prevention strategies for Hispanic students.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Resources in Education.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Quint, J. C., & Byndloos, D. C. (2003, December). *Scaling up First Things First: Findings from the first implementation year.* New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.	The study was not implemented for the minimum duration set for the review
Quint, J. C., Fink, B. L., & Rowser, S. L. (1991). *New Chance: Implementing a comprehensive program for disadvantaged young mothers and their children.* New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Quint, J. C., Miller, C., Pastor, J. J., & Cytron, R. E. (1999, April). *Project transition: Testing an intervention to help high school freshmen succeed.* New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.	The study was not implemented for the minimum duration set for the review

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Quint, J., Bloom, H. S., Black, A. R., & Stephens, L. (2005, July). *The challenge of scaling up educational reform: Findings and lessons from First Things First.* New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation. (Houston Study)	The study did not report on at least one outcome relevant to the review
Quint, J., Bloom, H. S., Black, A. R., & Stephens,. L. (2005, July). *The challenge of scaling up educational reform: Findings and lessons from First Things First. Final report.* New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation. (Kansas City Study)	The study design was not eligible for review
Quint, J., Bloom, H. S., Black, A. R., & Stephens, L. (2005, July). *The challenge of scaling up educational reform: Findings and lessons from First Things First. Final report* New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation. (Riverview Gardens Study)	The study design was not eligible for review
Quint, J., Bloom, H. S., Black, A. R., & Stephens,. L. (2005, July). *The challenge of scaling up educational reform: Findings and lessons from First Things First.* New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation. (Shaw and Greenville Study)	The study design was not eligible for review
Quint, J., Bos, J. M., & Polit, D. F. (1997, October). *New Chance: Final report on a comprehensive program for young mothers in poverty and their children.* New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.	The study did not report on at least one outcome relevant to the review
Quint, J., Polit, D., Bos, H., & Cave, G. (1994). *New Chance: Interim findings on a comprehensive program for disadvantaged young mothers and their children .* New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Randel, B., Moore, L., & Blair, P. (2008, July). *High school dropout and graduation rates in the Central Region* (Issues & Answers, REL 2008 - No. 040). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Randolph, K. A., Fraser, M. W., & Orthner, D. K. (2006). A strategy for assessing the impact of time-varying family risk factors on high school dropout. *Journal of Family Issues, 27*, 933-950.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Randolph, K. A., Rose, R. A., Fraser, M. W., & Orthner, D. K. (2004). Promoting school success among at-risk youth. *Journal of Poverty, 8*, 1-22.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Reaching out to youth: A report of the Commission on the Mental Health of Adolescents and Young Adults. (1990). Austin, TX: Hogg Foundation for Mental Health.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Reenrollment success for dropouts lags (2008). *What Works in Teaching & Learning, 5*(2), 11-11.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Reinhard, B. (1997, February 12). Texas proposal ties teacher performance to school scores. *Education Week, 16*(20), 19.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Reinhard, B. (1997, March). *Texas weighs rating teachers on schoolwide scores. Teacher Magazine, 8*(6), 11.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Reller, D. J. (1984). *The Peninsula Academies: Final technical evaluation report.* Palo Alto, CA: American Institutes for Research.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Report links dropout rate to public safety (2008). *Inside School Safety (LRP Publications), 12*(12), 9-9.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Report: High school graduates often unprepared for college (2008). *Education Daily, 41*(74), 5-5.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Research center launches anti-dropout campaign (2006). *Education Daily, 39*(194), 4-4.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Reyes, P., & Capper, C. (1990, May). *Urban principals: A critical perspective on the context of minority student outcomes.*	The study failed initial relevance screening
Reynolds, D. F. (1984). *The Peninsula Academies: Third yearly interim report.* Palo Alto, CA: American Institutes for Research.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Reynolds, D. F., & Reeves, J. K. (1983). *The Peninsula Academies: Second yearly interim report.* Palo Alto, CA: American Institutes for	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Research.	
Richard, A. (2004). High school policy gets spotlight in report to Southern Governors. *Education Week, 24*(3), 24-24.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Rios, O., Rivera, M., Jr., & Solis, M. (Eds.). (1997). *GEMS: Graduation Enhancement for Migrant Students.* Austin, TX: Intercultural Development Research Association.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Ritzler, T. T. (2006). *Understanding school dropout for teenage mothers with learning disabilities.* Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest Information & Learning.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Robbers, M. L. P. (2008). The caring equation: An intervention program for teenage mothers and their male partners. *Children & Schools, 30*(1), 37-47.	The study did not focus on school dropout prevention at the K-12 level
Robertson-Courtney, P. M. (1989). Disadvantaged Hispanic students' perceptions of factors contributing to their academic success. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9005656)	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Robledo, M. D. R. (1990, September). *Partners for valued youth: Dropout prevention strategies for at-risk language minority students. Final technical report.* San Antonio, TC: Intercultural Development Research Association and Arlington, VA: Development Associates, Inc.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Robledo, M. D. R. (Ed.). (1986, October 31). *Texas school dropout survey project: A summary of findings.* San Antonio, TX: Intercultural Development Research Association.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Rodriguez, L. F. (2008). Latino school dropout and popular culture: Envisioning solutions to a pervasive problem. *Journal of Latinos & Education, 7*, 258-264.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Rodriguez, M. R. (1989). The utilization of intuitive thinking as a decision-making strategy for elementary, middle, and high school principals in the San Antonio independent school district. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I*	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
database. (Publication No. AAT 8921794)	
Rodriguez, N. M. (2004). *Evaluation of a 4-year dropout prevention program: Comparison of high school Hispanic and African American students.* Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest Information & Learning.	The study did not report on at least one outcome relevant to the review
Rodriguez, R. (1995). Latino educators devise sure-fire K— 12 dropout prevention programs. *Black Issues of Higher Education, 12*, 35-37.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Ronda, M. A., & Valencia, R. R. (1994, November). "At-Risk" Chicano Students: The Institutional and Communicative Life of a Category. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 16*(4), 363-395.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Rosenberg, L. & Hershey, A. M. (1995, September). *The cost of dropout prevention programs.* Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (Twelve Together)	The study did not meet the minimum number of participants set for the review
Rosenberg, L., & Hershey, A. M. (1995, September). *The cost of dropout prevention programs.* Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (Accelerated Middle Schools)	The study did not meet the minimum number of participants set for the review
Rosenberg, L., & Hershey, A. M. (1995, September). *The cost of dropout prevention programs.* Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (Middle College High School Study)	The study did not meet the minimum number of participants set for the review
Rubenstein, M. (1995). *Giving students a second chance: The evolution of the Alternative Schools Demonstration Program.* Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates.	The study design was not eligible for review
Rumberger, R. W., & Larson, K. A. (1994). Keeping high-risk Chicano students in school: Lessons from a Los Angeles junior high school dropout prevention intervention. In R. J. Rossi (Ed.), *Educational Reforms for At-Risk Students* (pp. 141–162). New York: Teachers College Press.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Rumberger, R. W., & Palardy, G. J. Test scores, dropout rates, and transfer rates as alternative indicators of high school performance. *American Educational Research Journal, 42*(1), 3-42.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Rumberger, R.W. (1995). Dropping out of middle school: A multilevel analysis of students and schools. American Educational Research Journal, 32(3), 583-625.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Sack, J. L. (2004). Tenn. board hopes to help more students earn diplomas. *Education Week, 23*(24), 21-21.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Saenz, R. (2006). *Correlates of the Mexican American school dropout rate: An aggregate-level analysis.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference Papers -- American Sociological Association, Montreal, Canada.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Samuels, C. A. (2007). Lack of research, data hurts dropout efforts, experts say. *Education Week, 26*(36), 8-8.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Sawchuk, S. (2006). NEA releases new graduation plan. *Education Daily, 39*(184), 4-4.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Scarpa, S. (2008). Texas district battles its dropout problem. *District Administration, 44*(3), 74-74.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Schmidt, P. (2007). Ways & means. *Chronicle of Higher Education, 53*(21), A18-A18.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Schmidt, R. (2003). 122 JROTC students from 30 different high schools out-do 766 typical high school students on personal development. *Education, 123*(4), 665.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Schoenlein, J. (2004). Working on that old dropout rate. *Principal Leadership: High School Edition, 4*(7), 14-18.	The study failed initial relevance screening
School-linked human services: A comprehensive strategy for aiding students at-risk of school failure. Report to the Chairman, Committee on Labor and Human Resources, U.S. Senate. (1993, December). Gaithersberg, MD: U.S. General Accounting Office.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Seaman, D. F. & Yoo, C. Y. (2001, Fall). The potential for Even Start family literacy programs to reduce school dropouts. *Preventing School Failure, 46*(1), 42-6.	The study did not focus on school dropout prevention at the K-12 level

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Secondary credit accrual manual: Updating MSRTS records. (1992, August). Texas: Texas Education Agency and Texas Migrant Interstate Program.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Shannon, G. S., & Bylsma, P. (2005, December). *Promising programs and practices for dropout prevention report to the legislature*. Olympia, WA: Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.	The study did not meet the minimum number of participants set for the review
Shannon, G. S., & Bylsma, P. (2006, May). *Helping students finish school: Why students drop out and how to help them graduate*. Olympia, WA: Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Sherman, J. D., Celebuski, C. A., Fink, L. N., Levine, A. B., & St. John, E. P. (1987, December). *Dropping out of school. Volume III: Program profiles.* Washington, DC: Pelavin Associates, Inc.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Sinclair, M. F., Christenson, S. L., Evelo, D. L., & Hurley, C. M. (1998). Dropout prevention for youth with disabilities: Efficacy of a sustained school engagement procedure. *Exceptional Children, 65*(1), 7–21.	The study design was not eligible for review
Sinclair, M.F., Christenson, S. L., Lehr, C. A., & Anderson, A. R. (2003). Facilitating student engagement: Lessons learned from Check & Connect longitudinal studies. *The California School Psychologist, 8*(1), 29-42.	The study design was not eligible for review
Slavin, R. E. & Fashola, O. S. (1998). Show me the evidence! Proven and promising programs for America's schools. Baltimore, MD: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At-risk. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 421488).	The study failed initial relevance screening
Smink, J., & Reimer, M. S. (2005). *Fifteen effective strategies for improving student attendance and truancy prevention*. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (NDPC/N).	The study failed initial relevance screening
Smith, G. R. (2000). The effectiveness of open enrollment charter schools on student achievement in selected Southeast Texas schools. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I*	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
database. (Publication No. AAT 9994342)	
Snyder, G. (2006). Federal Commission to report in September. *Academe, 92*(4), 8-8.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Somers, C. L., & Piliawsky, M. (2004). Drop-out prevention among urban, African American adolescents: Program evaluation and practical implications. *Preventing School Failure, 48*(3), 17-22.	The study was not implemented for the minimum duration set for the review
South, S. J., Baumer, E. P., & Lutz, A. (2003). Interpreting community effects on youth educational attainment. *Youth & Society, 35*, 3-36.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Spano, S. G. (1991, August). *AISD on AISD: Reflections on the state of the district--1990-91 districtwide survey.* Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Sparks, S. (2006). Education Department examines charter high schools. *Education Daily, 39*(225), 6-6.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Sparks, S. D. (2008a). Louisiana pilots education 'early warning system'. *Education Daily, 41*(147), 1-6.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Sparks, S. D. (2008b). OIG audit finds grant discrepancies in Project GRAD. *Education Daily, 41*(138), 6-6.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Sparks, S. D. (2008c). Spellings to enforce uniform graduation rates. *Education Daily, 41*(63), 1-2.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Spellings Speaks on High School Dropout Crisis (2007). *The Achiever, 6*(6), 3.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Spotlight on the middle: A source book of Notable Texas Middle School Programs developed for the Texas Task Force on Middle School Education. (1991). Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Springstead, E. et al. (1981). *Migrant drop-out study, 1980-1981. Final evaluation.* Corpus Christi, TX: Education Service Center Region 2.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Stanley, K. R., & Plucker, J. A. (2008, Summer). *Improving high school graduation rates* (Education Policy Brief Vol. 6 No. 7). Bloomington, IN: Center for Evaluation & Education Policy.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Stearns, E., Moller, S., & Blau, J. R. (2004, August 14) *Retention and school dropout: Examining connectivity between children and schools.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference Papers -- American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Stearns, E., Moller, S., Potochnick, S., & Blau, J. (2007). Staying back and dropping out: The relationship between grade retention and school dropout. *Sociology of Education, 80*, 210-240.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Steinberg, A., & Almeida, C. A. (2004, June). *The dropout crisis: Promising approaches in prevention and recovery.* Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Sterling, C. L. (1993). An empirical investigation of the degree of perceived influence of selected academic, social and personal factors in the decision of African American males to drop out of public schools in an urban area. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9433153)	The study failed initial relevance screening
Stern, D., Dayton, C., Paik, I., & Weisberg, A. (1989). Benefits and costs of dropout prevention in a high school program combining academic and vocational education: Third-year results from replications of the California Peninsula Academies. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 11*(4), 405–416.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Stern, D., Dayton, C., Paik, I., Weisberg, A., & Evans, J. (1988, Summer). Combining academic and vocational courses in an integrated program to reduce high school dropout rates: Second-year results from replications of the California Peninsula Academies. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 10*(2), 161–170.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Stern, G. M. (2004). Hispanic students ambushed again. *Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review, 69*(6), 47-51.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Stevens, C. J., Tullis, R. J., Sanchez, K. S., & Gonzalez, J. (1991). *An evaluation of the alternative schools 1990-91.* Houston, TX: Houston Independent School District, Department of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Stevens, C. J., Tullis, R. J., Sanchez, K. S., & Gonzalez, J. (1991). *An evaluation of the STRIVE program.* Houston, TX: Houston Independent School District, Department of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Stevenson, L., & Burger, M. (1989, April). *Characteristics of at-risk youth. Practitioner's guide series number one: Texas Dropout Information Clearinghouse.* Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Stone, J. R., III, & Alfeld, C. (2004). Keeping kids in school: The power of CTE. *Techniques: Connecting Education and Careers, 79*(4), 28-30.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Stout, B. et al. (1990). *Youth exchanging with seniors: Service + education + commitment. Preventing rural school dropouts. Paper presented at the rural education symposium of the American Council on Rural Education and the National Rural and Small Schools Consortium, Tucson, AZ.*	The study failed initial relevance screening
Stover, D. (2005). New ways, more reasons to fight truancy. *Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review, 70*(5), 48-51.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Strom, R. E., & Boster, F. J. (2007). Dropping out of high school: A meta-analysis assessing the effect of messages in the home and in school. *Communication Education, 56*(4), 433-452.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Study: Texas dropout rate higher than reported by state. (2002, November 11). *Education USA, 44*(23), 4.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Suh, S., & Suh, J. (2007). Risk factors and levels of risk for high school dropouts. *Professional School Counseling, 10*, 297-306.	The study did not focus on school dropout prevention at the K-12 level
Sutter, L. A. (2008). *The effect of extracurricular activities on the high school dropout rate of St. Louis County special education students.* Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest Information & Learning.	The study design was not eligible for review
Swanson, C. B. (2004, August 14). *The real truth about low graduation rates: An evidence-based commentary.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference Papers -- American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Swanson, L. A. & Baenen, N. (1989, July). *The school-community guidance center: Alternative education for high-risk students 1988-89.* Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Sweeten, G. (2006). Who will graduate? Disruption of high school education by arrest and court involvement. *JQ: Justice Quarterly, 23*, 462-480.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Teachers' union plan targets reduction in high school dropouts (2006). *Education USA (LRP Publications), 3*(4), 9-9.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Teachman, J. D., Paasch, K., & Carver, K. (1996, August). Social capital and dropping out of school early. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 58, 773-783.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Tees, S. et al. (1984, March 14). *Coordinated vocational academic education, 1980-1983.* Fort Worth, TX: Fort Worth Independent School District.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Terry, M. (2008). The effects that family members and peers have on students' decisions to drop out of school. *Educational Research Quarterly, 31*, 25-38.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Texas accountability system detrimental, report finds (2008). *Education Daily, 41*(33), 5-5.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Texas Education Agency. (1993, May). *State plan to reduce the dropout rate, 1993-95: A report from the State Board of Education submitted to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker, and the Seventy-Third Texas Legislature.* Austin, TX: Author.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Texas Education Agency. (1998). A guide for funding at-risk youth programs with Carl Perkins and Job Training Partnership Act Funds. TEA Division of Program Planning: Dropout prevention and recovery. (1987). Austin, TX: Author.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Texas school dropout survey project. Volume 5: Benefit-cost impact of the dropout problem. (1986, October 31). San Antonio, TX: Intercultural Development Research Association.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Texas school dropout survey project. Volume 7: Study methods and procedures. (1986). San Antonio, TX: Intercultural Development Research Association.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Texas school dropout survey: A report to the 69th legislature, state of Texas. (1986). Austin, TX: Texas State Department of Community Affairs.	The study failed initial relevance screening
The answer: Valuing youth in schools and families. A report on Hispanic dropouts in the Dallas independent school district. (1989). San Antonio, TX: Intercultural Development Research Association.	The study failed initial relevance screening
The Central Iowa Employment and Training Consortium and Des Moines Area Community College. (2003, August). *The cost of dropping out of school: Community audit study.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
The debate over dropouts: How many are there? Measuring up: The state of Texas education. (1999). Center for Public Policy Priorities: Austin, TX.	The study failed initial relevance screening
The dropout dilemma: Searching for formulas that work. (1988, June). Austin, TX: Texas State Council on Vocational Education.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
The state plan to reduce the dropout rate. From the State Board of Education, submitted to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and the Seventy-Second Texas Legislature. 1990-1991. (1991, March). Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Think big to increase graduation (2008). *Career & Technical Education Advisor, 39*(8), 10-10.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Thompson, S., & Rudy, M. (2007). *Group counseling with adolescents to foster purposefulness*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Thornburgh, N. (2006). Dropout nation. *Time, 167,* 30-40.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Thousands sign up for study allowances (2007). *Times Educational Supplement*(4719), 5-5.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Tillman, W. H. (1999). The impact of Senate Bill 1 (seventy-fourth session, Texas legislature) on academic variables related to no pass no play as perceived by principals, teachers, and athletic directors in school districts within Education Service Center Region XIII. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9943579)	The study failed initial relevance screening
Timpane, M. et al. (1987). *Reducing dropouts.* Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Tremblay, L., Garg, R., & Levin, E. (2007). The double cohort retention and academic success comparison: Are students in the new Ontario secondary school program disadvantaged? *Social Psychology of Education, 10*, 193-212.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Turner, J. (1993, October). *Austin youth river watch program: 1992-93 Final report* (Publication Number 92.33). Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Ungerleider, S. (Ed.). (1999). The prevention researcher, 1999. *The Prevention Researcher, 6*(1-3).	The study design was not eligible for review

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
United States General Accounting Office. (1995, September). Welfare to work: Approaches that help teenage mothers complete high school (Report to Congressional Requesters). Washington, DC: Author.	The study design was not eligible for review
United States Government Accountability Office. (2005, September). *No Child Left Behind Act: Education could do more to help states better define graduation rates and improve knowledge about intervention strategies* (Report to Congressional Requesters. GAO-05-879). Washington, DC: Author.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Use a form that makes students think twice about dropping out (2004). *Curriculum Review, 43*(9), 8-8.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Use personalized instruction to reconnect at-risk youth (2007). *What Works in Teaching & Learning, 39*(6), 4-4.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Vacca, J. S. (2007). No child left behind -- except the foster child. *Relational Child & Youth Care Practice, 20*, 67-72.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Valued youth anthology: Articles on dropout prevention. (1989). San Antonio, TX: Intercultural Development Research Association.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Valued youth partnerships: Programs in caring. Cross-age tutoring dropout prevention strategies. (1986). San Antonio, TX: Intercultural Development Research Association.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Vasquez, S. (1998). Effective instructional techniques for at-risk mathematics students. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database*. (Publication No. AAT 9838149)	The study was not implemented for the minimum duration set for the review
Viadero, D. (2008). U.S. review finds no proof that reform model works. *Education Week, 27*(22), 6-6.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Virtually successful: Defeating the dropout problem through online school programs (2006). *Phi Delta Kappan, 88*(1), 31-36.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Walker, D. M. (1990). At-risk factors influencing the freshman dropout rate at Thomas A. Edison High School in the San Antonio Independent School District. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9118167)	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Walker, H.M., & Sprague, I. R. (1999). The path to school failure, delinquency, and violence: Causal factors and some potential solutions. Intervention in School and Clinic, 35, 67-73.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Warren, J. R. (2003, August 16). *Annual state-level high school dropout and GED completion rates.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference Papers -- American Sociological Association, Atlanta, GA.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Warren, J. R., & Jenkins, K. N. (2005). High school exit examinations and high school dropout in Texas and Florida, 1971-2000. *Sociology of Education, 78*, 122-143.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Warren, J., & Cataldi, E. (2006). A historical perspective on high school students' paid employment and its association with high school dropout. *Sociological Forum, 21*, 113-143.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Weatherbee, S. (2007). *Preventing high school dropout: Implications of a screening inventory for school reform policy and practice.* Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest Information & Learning.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Weinbaum, A. T., & Baker, A. M. (1991). *Final implementation report: High School Redirection replication project.* New York: Academy for Educational Development.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Weller, N. F., Tortolero, S. R., Kelder, S. H., Grunbaum, J. A., Carvajal, S. C., & Gingiss, P. M. (1999, January). Health risk behaviors of Texas students attending dropout prevention/recovery schools in 1997. *Journal of School Health, 69*(1), 22-28.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Wells, R. (2005). School dropout prevention in New Hampshire: Achievements in excellence. *New Hampshire Educational Links, 1*(2), 8.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Wells, R. (2006). New Hampshire awarded dropout prevention grant. *New Hampshire Educational Links, 2*(2), 2.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Wendt-Keswick, K., & Paredes, T. (1998, September). *Delta program third year implementation* (FEEDBACK, Publication No. 97.14). Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, TX. Office of Program Evaluation.	The study design was not eligible for review
Wilkins, C. (2008, February). *A review of avoidable losses: High stakes accountability and the dropout crisis.* (REL Technical Brief, REL 2008 - No. 001). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Wilkinson, D. & Griffith, J. (1994, September). *Overage ninth-grade dropout prevention programs, 1993-94.* Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Wilkinson, D. & Mangino, E. (1994, September). *Program effectiveness in AISD 1992-93.* Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Wilkinson, D. (1994, September). *To GED or not to GED: AISD dropout recovery programs, 1993-94.* Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Wilkinson, D., Frazer, L., Stewart, B., & Ligon, G., (1989, October). *New initiatives in dropout prevention: Project GRAD final report 1988-89.* Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Wilkinson, D., Mangino, E., & Ligon, G. (1993, May). *What works, and can we afford it? Program effectiveness in AISD, 1991-92* (Publication Number 91.43). Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Wilkinson, L. D., & Frazer, L. H. (1990, April). *Fine-tuning dropout prediction through discriminant analysis: The ethnic factor.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association,	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Boston, MA.	
Wohlgemuth, D., Whalen, D., Sullivan, J., Nading, C., Shelley, M., & Wang, Y. (2007). Financial, Academic, and Environmental Influences on the Retention and Graduation of Students. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice, 8*, 457-475.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Wolman, C., Bruininks, R. H., & Thurlow, M. L. (1989). Dropouts and dropout programs: Implications for special education. Remedial and Special Education, 10(5), 6-20.	The study was not conducted within the time period set for the review (i.e., 1995-2008)
Wolpin, K. I. Education data in the NLSY79: a premiere research tool. *Monthly Labor Review, 128*(2), 15-20.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Yamauchi, L. A. (2003). Making school relevant for at-risk students: The Wai'anae High School Hawaiian Studies Program. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at-risk (JESPAR), 8*(4), 379-390.	The study did not meet the minimum number of participants set for the review
Young, B. A. (2004). Public high school dropouts and completers from the common core of data: School year 2000-01. *Education Statistics Quarterly, 5*(4), 11-11.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Young, D. H. (2008). Improving Alabama's graduation rates. *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin, 74*, 34-36.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Yzaguirre, L. A. H. (1998). Program characteristics of successful alternative dropout prevention in middle schools in public school districts in Texas. *Dissertations & Theses: A&I database.* (Publication No. AAT 9914951)	The study failed initial relevance screening
Zehr, M. A. (2005). Dropping in. *Education Week, 25*(6), 28-31.	The study failed initial relevance screening
Zehr, M. A. (2007). High school graduation requirements focus of Arizona governor's address. *Education Week, 26*(19), 18-18.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Studies that Failed Coding Assessment	Reason for Failure
Zvoch, K. (2006). Freshman year dropouts: Interactions between student and school characteristics and student dropout status. *Journal of Education for Students Placed At-risk, 11*(1), 97-117.	The study did not examine an intervention relevant for the review
Zvoch, K. Freshman year dropouts: Interactions between student and school characteristics and student dropout status. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at-risk, 11*(1), 97-117.	The study failed initial relevance screening

Appendix A: Standards for the Review of Best Practices Research

CROSSWALK OF NDPC AND WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE (WWC) STANDARDS AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEA STANDARDS FOR BEST PRACTICES IN DROPOUT PREVENTION			
STANDARD CATEGORY	**NDPC STANDARDS FOR PROGRAM SELECTION**	**WWC STANDARDS**	**RECOMMENDED TEA STANDARDS**
Screening Parameters	1. Programs that addressed one or more of identified risk factors for dropout. 2. Began with programs reviewed/selected for prevention program matrix by the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, University of Colorado/Boulder.	1. Studies must be published after 1987. 2. Studies must be conducted in the United States. 3. Studies must examine the effect of an intervention. 4. Studies must focus on grades 6-12.	1. Studies must be published in 1995 or later. 2. Particular attention will be paid to studies conducted in Texas, but studies conducted elsewhere in the U.S will also be considered. 3. Studies must examine the effect of an intervention, be it a branded (named) or an unbranded (unnamed) intervention. 4. Studies must focus on interventions that are designed to prevent dropout, improve graduation, or address risk factors specifically to improve dropout/ graduation rates. 5. Studies must focus on students in grades K-12. Given that our main outcomes of interest are dropout and graduation, early interventions for dropout will be the main focus of our report. 6. Studies must involve at least 30 students (in each condition [i.e., treatment and comparison groups]). 7. Studies must take place over at least a two-year period.
Direct Analysis of Data Source	Matrix and other sources ranking programs in top tier based on results from original research/studies on program outcomes conducted by program developers and/or outside evaluators. NDPC did not review original research unless there was	Original studies are identified whenever possible. Secondary analyses are generally excluded from review, but can be used as secondary sources of evidence.	All studies reviewed should consist of the original published source. Secondary reports (e.g., follow-up studies, re-analyses) will be linked to the original study to provide additional information; however, the "best practices" rating given to each study or intervention will be based solely on the

CROSSWALK OF NDPC AND WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE (WWC) STANDARDS AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEA STANDARDS FOR BEST PRACTICES IN DROPOUT PREVENTION			
STANDARD CATEGORY	**NDPC STANDARDS FOR PROGRAM SELECTION**	**WWC STANDARDS**	**RECOMMENDED TEA STANDARDS**
	contradictory evidence from different sources.		quality of the original study. Meta-analyses, if available, will be reviewed both to identify studies that would be relevant for our synthesis and to review the conclusions of the meta-analysis. Conclusions of all meta-analyses will be reviewed to allow us to determine whether our findings are consistent with similar studies, and if not, to determine whether the unique nature of dropout in Texas may be contributing to these differences.
Relevance of Outcomes	Only those showing a significant and direct link between the program and one or more of the risk factors for dropout were selected. Some programs also demonstrated a direct link to dropout	The WWC Dropout Prevention review includes outcomes from three domains: 1. ***Staying in School*** (e.g., dropout rates, percentage of students remaining in school) 2. ***Progressing in School*** (e.g., credits earned) 3. ***Completing School*** (e.g., graduation, GED completion)	For TEA's purposes, the ultimate question about best practices in dropout prevention boils down to whether a student dropped out or graduated. GED completion will be included as a separate category, on the understanding that sometimes increased rates of GED completion comes at the expense of high school graduation. A study must include dropout or graduation as one of its outcome variables. At least one relevant outcome must be measured with a data source of sufficient quality to produce credible results. A study with an outcome variable that correlates with dropout or graduation (e.g., academic performance, grade retention) will not be considered in the evidence rating; however, studies that demonstrate a proven link to dropout and/or graduation will also be investigated for impacts on other intermediate outcomes, such

CROSSWALK OF NDPC AND WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE (WWC) STANDARDS AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEA STANDARDS FOR BEST PRACTICES IN DROPOUT PREVENTION			
STANDARD CATEGORY	**NDPC STANDARDS FOR PROGRAM SELECTION**	**WWC STANDARDS**	**RECOMMENDED TEA STANDARDS**
			as grades, attendance, and behavior.
Outcome Characteristics	Defined by the sources reviewed and varied across sources.	Key considerations include: 1. ***Validity***: The measure is clearly and logically defined and a sufficient description of the measure is provided. 2. ***Statistical Measures***: Note that for binary outcomes, standard deviations can be imputed from the means. The PI judges whether there is sufficient information to compute an effect size. If there is, the review continues. If there is not, the team asks the study author for additional information, using the uniform WWC template for author questions. If no reply is submitted, the study is not included. 3. ***Blindness***: The measure is defined and the data are collected in ways that are neutral and equivalent across treatment and comparison groups. RCTs without blind (or obviously fair) data collection efforts will be downgraded in the review; QEDs with this problem will not be included.	Outcomes must have a sufficient degree of validity – in this study, all outcomes that are not completely under the control of the intervention developer or program staff will be considered. Moreover, study authors should report sufficient information to calculate an effect size (typically, means and standard deviations, or in the case of binary outcomes, means only will suffice). Typically, not many problems have been encountered in other reviews (e.g., WWC and NDPC) with the face validity of outcome measures in dropout studies; however, particular attention should be paid to the conditions by which a student is considered a dropout. As a rule, students should not be counted as a dropout if they move out of the district, or if they are deceased or incarcerated. In these cases, such "dropouts" will be taken out of the denominator.
Study Design/Type (Internal Validity)	Most required at least a quasi-experimental design and included: ❖ Randomized controlled trials ❖ Quasi-experimental comparison group designs ❖ Single case designs ❖ Regression discontinuity designs ❖ Single-group pre-post designs with baseline controls	Studies that do not employ random assignment must demonstrate the initial equivalence of the comparison groups on factors highly correlated with dropping out (socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, prior achievement, prior attendance, special education classification, teenage parent status). If comparison groups are not equivalent at baseline, sufficient statistical	Eligible study designs include: ❖ Randomized controlled trials ❖ Quasi-experimental designs with matched comparison group (or a comparison group that is equated using statistical controls) ❖ Single case designs ❖ Regression discontinuity designs

CROSSWALK OF NDPC AND WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE (WWC) STANDARDS AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEA STANDARDS FOR BEST PRACTICES IN DROPOUT PREVENTION			
STANDARD CATEGORY	**NDPC STANDARDS FOR PROGRAM SELECTION**	**WWC STANDARDS**	**RECOMMENDED TEA STANDARDS**
		controls must be used to equate the groups at analysis. Ineligible designs include other QED (multivariate correlational, one group pre-post with no variation in amount of intervention, or single correlation), non-eligible manuscript with references (literature review, research synthesis, or meta-analysis), or non-eligible manuscript for review (case study or qualitative study).	❖ Single-group pre-post designs with baseline controls Studies must take place over at least a 2-year period. Studies with long-term, sustainable effects (i.e., over a 5-year period) will be given a higher rating. The 1st-tier standard will apply to studies with comparison group designs (RCTs, QED, and RD designs). A "2nd-tier standard" will be used for studies with single group designs.
Replication of Results (External Validity)	Depended on the source: some programs required replication of results, while others did not. In addition, some required that the program was replicated and studied in differing populations.	WWC uses an "Extent of Evidence" rating: A rating of "moderate to large" requires at least two studies and two schools across studies in one domain and a total sample size across studies of at least 350 students or 14 classrooms. Otherwise, the rating is "small." At least two studies must have positive effects in order to get WWC's highest rating.	If two or more studies demonstrate evidence of effectiveness of a particular intervention, that intervention will be given a higher rating. Whenever an intervention has contradictory findings (e.g., two studies positive, one negative), our ratings will be based on whether there are more studies with positive findings than negative findings, or vice versa. Studies must have at least 30 students to be included in the review. Interventions that were subject to large studies with more than 350 students (across treatment and control/ comparison) will be given a higher evidence rating. Since internal and external validity can be thought of as a process (i.e., internal validity is first needed, then external validity can be assessed), the first priority in an

CROSSWALK OF NDPC AND WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE (WWC) STANDARDS AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEA STANDARDS FOR BEST PRACTICES IN DROPOUT PREVENTION			
STANDARD CATEGORY	**NDPC STANDARDS FOR PROGRAM SELECTION**	**WWC STANDARDS**	**RECOMMENDED TEA STANDARDS**
			intervention's rating will be to address factors related to internal validity. However, in the distilling of results for this study, we will highlight interventions that have proven replicability (either by race/ethnicity, economics, or urbanicity).
Breadth of Outcome Analyses	Sources handled intervening variables in different ways.	No standards exist for the breadth or depth of research.	Since this review is focused on the identification of best practices, we will need to examine factors that may mediate or moderate an intervention's effects. Although the use of covariates will not be an explicit requirement of this study, we will use this evidence in the identification of best practices.
Sample size	No set standard – varied by source.	No standards related to sample size.	A sample size of at least 30 students is needed for a study to be included in the review. A higher evidence rating will be given to interventions that have at least 350 students across all studies.
Attrition	Different sources had different requirements.	Standards for attrition are 30% overall and 5% differential. If authors are able to present rigorous evidence of post-attrition group equivalence on a key set of baseline characteristics that are highly predictive of dropping out, the downgrading of a study due to attrition problems can be reconsidered at PI discretion.	Studies will be subject to further scrutiny if they have more than 30% overall attrition and more than 10% differential attrition. Specifically, if attrition is over these thresholds, study authors will need to demonstrate baseline equivalence between groups (i.e., treatment and comparison groups). Equivalence can be demonstrated by showing that the groups are substantively equivalent on characteristics related to dropping out (e.g., grades, attendance, behavior). Given that attrition often disqualifies many

CROSSWALK OF NDPC AND WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE (WWC) STANDARDS AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEA STANDARDS FOR BEST PRACTICES IN DROPOUT PREVENTION			
STANDARD CATEGORY	**NDPC STANDARDS FOR PROGRAM SELECTION**	**WWC STANDARDS**	**RECOMMENDED TEA STANDARDS**
			high-quality quasi-experimental studies from the What Works Clearinghouse, this standard will need to be relaxed in order to ensure that the review is thorough and that it produces a meaningful body of evidence concerning best practices in dropout prevention. Students should not be counted for attrition if they move out of the district, or if they are deceased or incarcerated. In these cases, such attrition will be taken out of the denominator.

Appendix B: Coding Guide for Identifying Best Practices and Programs

Best Practices in Dropout Prevention Coding Guide **Coder:** **Study (short citation):**

Supporting Studies:

	Stage 1: Preliminary Screening: Stop coding, if any of the Pass/Fail criteria are not met and highlight the fail reason in the Descriptive Answers column.	**Criteria Met?**	**Descriptive Answers, Notes, Concerns, or Questions**		**Page Numbers**
	Citation in APA Format		Full Citation:		
1	**Decision 1:** Was the study published in 1995 or later?	**Pass/Fail**			
2	**Decision 2:** Is the study about school dropout prevention at the k-12 level?	**Pass/Fail**			
3	**Decision 3:** Is the study conducted in the United States?	**Pass/Fail**			
4	Is the study conducted in Texas?	**Yes/No**			
5	Name the intervention addressed by the study.	**Yes/No**			
6	**Decision 4:** Was the intervention designed to prevent dropout, improve graduation, or address risk factors specifically to improve dropout/graduation rates?	**Pass/Fail**			
7	**Decision 5:** Does the study involve at least 30 students (in each condition [i.e., treatment and comparison groups])?	**Pass/Fail**			
8	**Decision 6:** Did the study take place over at least a 2-year period?	**Pass/Fail**			
9	**Decision 7:** Is the study an **eligible design:** RCT; regression discontinuity; QED with statistical controls and/or a matched comparison group; single subject design study; or pre-post?	**Pass/Fail**			
10	**Decision 8:** Does the study address at least one relevant student outcome?	**Pass/Fail**			
10a	Dropout (retention and reentering)	**Yes/No**			
10b	Graduation (HS diploma or GED)	**Yes/No**			
11	**Decision 9:** Is at least one relevant outcome measured with a data source of sufficient quality to produce credible results?	**Pass/Fail**			

Stage 2: Quality of Evidence (Internal Validity)		Answer	Descriptive Answers, Notes, Concerns, or Questions	Page Numbers
12	**Decision 10:** Study Design (choose either RCT; regression discontinuity; QED with statistical controls and/or a matched comparison group; single subject design study; or pre-post)	**Downgrade - QED, single subject, or pre-post; No Downgrade - RCT or RD**		
13	**Decision 11:** If the study was an RCT, was the assignment truly random?	**Downgrade - No; No Downgrade - Yes or Not applicable**		
14	If authors controlled for any variables in a multivariate analysis, please list them here.			
Complete Table 1: Attrition				
15	How many study participants are there?			
16a	Is there more than 30% attrition from the original sample for the analysis?	Yes/No		
16b	Is the difference between program and comparison group attrition more than or equal to 10%?	Yes/No		
17	**Decision 12:** If there is significant overall attrition, did the authors present sufficient evidence of post-attrition equivalence?	**Downgrade - No; No Downgrade - Yes or Not Applicable**		
18	Describe any disruptions of the intervention or control condition, any contamination of the intervention group, or any contamination of the comparison group.			
19	Is the study free of obvious disruption or contamination that could have caused observed differences between the groups?	**Downgrade - No; No Downgrade - Yes**		
Complete Table 2: Results -- including subgroup impacts				
20	**Decision 13:** Assign a Study Quality Rating: Enter study design and number of downgrades	**Design, # of downgrades**		

	Stage 3: Study and Intervention Details (External Validity)	Value	Descriptive Answers, Notes, Concerns, or Questions	Page Numbers
21	**What state(s) was this study conducted in?**	**Answer**		
22	**Was the study implemented as intended? (if no, describe)**	**Yes/No**		
22a	Intended duration of intervention			
22b	Teacher training			
23	**Was the intervention focused on dropout prevention, dropout recovery, or both?**	**Answer**		
24	**Urbanicity:**			
24a	Urban area/school	**Yes/No**		
24b	Suburban area/school	**Yes/No**		
24c	Rural area/school	**Yes/No**		
25	**School Type:**			
25a	High school	**Yes/No**		
25b	Middle school	**Yes/No**		
25c	Elementary school	**Yes/No**		
26	**Race/Ethnicity of Sample (preferably post-attrition):**			
26a	% African-American	**Enter %**		
26b	% Hispanic/Latino	**Enter %**		
26c	% White	**Enter %**		
26d	% Other	**Enter %**		
27	**Percentage Economically Disadvantaged**	**Enter %**		
28	**Percentage English Language Learners**	**Enter %**		
29	**Percentage Special Needs**	**Enter %**		
30	**TEA At-Risk Criteria**			
30a	**% not advance from one grade level to next**	**Enter %**		
30b	**% did not maintain an average 70% in two or more foundation subjects**	**Enter %**		
30c	**% unsatisfactory performance on academic assessment**	**Enter %**		
30d	**% pregnant/parenting**	**Enter %**		
30e	**% placed in alternative education program**	**Enter %**		
30f	**% expelled (preceding or current school year)**	**Enter %**		
30g	**% previous dropouts**	**Enter %**		
31	**Other Important Subgroup Characteristics (e.g., prior academic achievement, attendance/truancy)**			

Table 1: Sample Sizes and Attrition Rates

As a rule, students should not be counted as a dropout if they move out of the district, or if they are deceased or incarcerated. In these cases, such "dropouts" will be taken out of the denominator.

Outcome: Dropout

	Intervention Group	Comparison Group	Total
Total initial sample size			0
Total Attrited Sample	0	0	0
Analysis sample			0
Overall attrition rate	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Differential attrition rate			#DIV/0!

Explanations:

Outcome: Graduation

	Intervention Group	Comparison Group	Total
Total initial sample size			0
Total Attrited Sample	0	0	0
Analysis sample			0
Overall attrition rate	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Differential attrition rate			#DIV/0!

Explanations:

Table 2: Estimates of Intervention Effects
Include outcomes for key subgroups.

			Sample Size			Mean Outcomes				Standard Deviations			Effect Size		
Outcome Measure	Period covered by measure or timing of measurement	Binary Outcome Variable? (Y/N)	Intervention Group	Comparison Group	Total	Intervention Group	Comparison Group	Difference	Significance Level	Intervention Group	Control Group	Pooled sd	Standardized Effect Size (Cohen's D)	Cox Index (For Binary Outcomes)	Bias-Corrected Effect Size (g)

Appendix C: Interview Protocol for TEA Staff

DROPOUT PREVENTION IN TEXAS

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR TEA STAFF

Introduction

Hello, my name is _____ from ICF International. We are working with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) on a study of best practices in dropout prevention. As you may already know, this study was part of House Bill 2237, passed by the 80th Texas Legislature in 2007. This bill required that the commissioner of the Texas Education Agency to: (1) study the best practices of campuses and school districts in Texas and other states regarding dropout prevention programs; (2) prepare a report regarding the findings of the study; and, (3) recommend legislation or other actions necessary to implement a dropout prevention program.

In addition to other TEA leaders, we would like to take this opportunity to speak with you to obtain more information about the dropout prevention landscape in Texas. This interview should take no more than 30 minutes, and we ask for your permission to record the conversation for accuracy in reporting. Your answers will be kept confidential, as we will only be reporting information in the aggregate with no individual identifying information revealed. Is it okay to record the interview?

To tell you a little more about the study, we are addressing the following questions:

1. What are the best practices for dropout prevention in Texas and nationally? What evidence exists for this designation?
2. What programs are on the What Works Clearinghouse or National Dropout Prevention Center/Network lists of effective programs? Are there dropout prevention programs operating in Texas that do not appear on these lists of effective programs? If so, what evaluations, if any, have been conducted on these programs? Do any of those programs meet the TEA's requirement of having both qualitative and quantitative evidence of success?
3. What are the factors that contribute to or detract from successful development and implementation of dropout prevention programs?
4. What are the outcomes associated with effective programs?
5. What are the costs of effective dropout prevention programs?
6. What are the necessary programmatic features of effective dropout prevention initiatives?
7. What practices have been shown to be most effective in dropout prevention programs?

8. What effective dropout prevention programs are most amenable to adoption in Texas?

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Region(s):

Date:

Time:

A. Background and Experience

First, I'd like to learn a little bit about your background.

1. What is your job title?

2. In what ways have you been involved in dropout prevention policies or programs?

3. Are you responsible for implementing any specific dropout prevention programs in Texas? If so, which ones?

B. Dropout Prevention in Texas

I'd like to ask you about dropout prevention programs sponsored by TEA.

Programs

4. From your perspective, what are TEA's vision and goals for reducing dropouts across the state?

5. What-risk factors do you feel contribute the most to students dropping out in Texas?

6. What types of interventions do you think might be most effective in reducing dropout rates in Texas public schools?

   (These are not mutually exclusive categories)

- Academic support
- Mentoring
- Monitoring
- After school/enrichment programs
- Career/vocational training
- Service learning
- Counseling
- Family strengthening
- Teen parent support
- Social supports (e.g., connecting kids to health care)
- Providing information on or focusing on college attendance

7. Are some of these strategies strengthened when they are combined or linked together in a comprehensive program? In what ways are programs strengthened through the combination of strategies?

8. In your opinion, what dropout prevention programs are the most successful in Texas?

- What are the names of these successful programs/policies?

- What features of these programs contribute to their success?

- What features of these programs may present barriers to success?

9. Are there other Texas programs that you know of that should be included in this study?

- Do you know of any research conducted on these programs?

10. While effective programs and strategies exist both within the state of Texas and across the nation, school districts often struggle with identifying and implementing effective dropout prevention programs. Why do you think this is the case for some school districts?

C. Dropout Prevention Nationally

Next, I'd like to ask you about dropout prevention nationally.

11. What are some of the most successful practices and strategies employed by schools across the nation that you know of?

D. Dropout Prevention Policy

Next, I'd like to ask you about dropout prevention policy.

12. What specific policies in Texas **contribute** to the success of dropout prevention programs sponsored by TEA?

13. What policies **present barriers** to the success of dropout prevention programs sponsored by TEA?

14. Policymakers require the most current information and research on effective programs to assist in the development of policy initiatives and legislation designed to reduce the dropout rate. What would you want Texas policymakers to know most about effective dropout prevention programs?

E. Best Practices in Dropout Study

15. What would you like to see in our final report? What types of information would be most useful to both practitioners and policymakers?

16. Who else should we talk to? Who are the "best and brightest" in dropout prevention in Texas?

Thank you very much for your time! Have a nice day!

Appendix D: Detailed Program Descriptions

Program Descriptions: Tier 1

Accelerated Middle Schools

Accelerated Middle Schools is a program designed for middle school students who are one to years behind their peers in grade level. It aims to set these students back on track and "catch up" to students their own age by the start of high school. The Accelerated Middle Schools program allows students to cover a supplementary year of learning material by taking additional coursework instead of electives during their one to two years in the program. The program can take place as a separate school, or as a school within a previously-established middle school. The program aids in student advancement through small class size, hands on learning, by providing additional academic support, tutoring, counseling, and encouraging family involvement.

Targeted Groups:
Middle school students 1 to 2 years behind grade level.

Contact:
No contact information is available.

Alternative High Schools

http://metromidtown.usd259.org/

Alternative Middle Schools are modeled after high school redirection, a Brooklyn-based alternative high school. The goal of Alternative Middle Schools is to serve students who have had trouble succeeding in the regular public school system. The school emphasizes basic skill development and encourages growth and personal development. The student-teacher relationship is a key component of this program. Teachers serve as mentors, advisors, and instructors. In addition, informal as well as structured counseling services are offered. Upon completion of the program, students receive standard high school diplomas.

Targeted Groups:
High school inner-city youth with poor basic skills.

Contact:
Metro-Midtown Alternative High School
640 North Emporia
Wichita, KS 67214
Phone: 316-973-6350
Fax: 316-973-6355

Career Academies

http://www.ncacinc.com/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=37

Career Academies operate as alternative schooling within a larger high school and focus on making students career-ready. The program combines regular academic coursework with career-centered curricula. Students focus on one career track such as health care, finance, technology, communications, and public service. Students are given the opportunity to intern with local businesses. Employers from these companies also serve as student mentors, provide information and resources, attend program events, and are members of the Career Academy advisory boards. Career Academies target a variety of students, including those planning to attend post-secondary education as well as students at risk of dropping out.

Targeted Groups:
Youth in low-income, urban, medium and large high school districts.

Contact:
Career Academy Support Network
Graduate School of Education
University of California at Berkeley
Berkeley, CA 94720-1670
Phone: 510-643-5748
Fax: 510-642-2124
E-mail: ask_casn@berkeley.edu

Check and Connect

http://ici.umn.edu/checkandconnect/

Check and Connect centers around increasing student-school engagement for relationship building, monitoring of disengagement warning signs, interventions individualized to student needs, development of problem-solving skills, and the encouragement of participation in extra-curricular activities. A key factor in the Check and Connect model is the monitor, who is responsible for assessing levels of student engagement and for implementing basic and intensive interventions. “Checking” involves following student engagement indicators, particularly attendance, daily or weekly. “Connecting” includes two levels of student-focused interventions: (1) a basic intervention for all students that includes information about monitoring, feedback on their progress, and training in cognitive-behavioral problem solving; and (2) intensive interventions, which may include tutoring, home-school meetings, making connections with community resources, or behavioral contracts or interventions. Relationships with families are established and family ties to school are strengthened by the monitor through phone calls, meetings, and home visits.

Targeted Groups:
The program has served K-12 students in urban and suburban settings and has been proven effective for students with or without disabilities, including students with learning, emotional, and behavioral disabilities. Students are referred to the program based on

specific warning signs, such as attendance problems, poor performance, or emotional or behavioral problems.

Contact:
Dr. Sandra L. Christenson
University of Minnesota
Department of Educational Psychology
350 Elliot Hall, 75 East River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55455
Phone: 612-624-0037
Fax: 612-624-0879
E-mail: chris002@tc.umn.edu

Project Co-Operative Federation Educational Experience (COFFEE)

Project COFFEE is an alternative school that is a model based on integrating vocational and academic instruction for students. The goal of this is to increase the likelihood of participants to complete school and be ready to enter the working world with an entry-level job. The model's key features include: small classes, a structured and nurturing environment, supportive counseling on both a personal and a career awareness level, internships in entrepreneurial businesses that provide an income, a physical education course that focuses on recreational and leisure activities rather than competitive sports, and continuous monitoring and evaluation of students' progress. Teachers have designated time to work one-on-one with students and to plan the educational program for the participants.

Targeted Groups:
This model is intended for use with high school students (grades 9 to 12) who have been identified as at-risk. The initial program included students from 21 different school districts within a 30-mile radius in central Massachusetts; it has since been replicated in rural, urban, and suburban areas. Project COFFEE was originally created to serve students with severe emotional/behavioral disabilities.

Contact:
Ed Sikonski, Director
The Oxford High School Annex
Main St.
Oxford, MA 01540
Phone: 508-987-6090
Fax: 508-987-6097

Project GRAD (Project Graduation Really Achieves Dreams)

www.projectgrad.org

Project GRAD works with high schools and their feeder schools to prevent dropout and college attendance by implementing multiple reforms. The program's intervention plans focus on classroom management, student performance, parent involvement, graduation

rates, and college acceptance rates. Scholarships are provided yearly to those students who complete a required number of math courses/credits, graduate on time, maintain the minimum grade point average, and attend at least two program-sponsored summer institutes.

Targeted Groups:
Project GRAD works with the feeder elementary and middle schools that send students to Project GRAD high schools to address early problems that can affect high school completion.

Contact:
Project GRAD USA
1100 Louisiana, Suite 450
Houston, TX 77002
Phone: 713-986-0499

Talent Search

http://www.ed.gov/programs/triotalent/index.html

Talent Search is one of several Federal TRIO Programs. It is a program that focuses on academic support, exposure to college campuses, and assistance with understanding and accessing financial aid aimed to promote high school graduation and college enrollment. The program is designed to serve both middle and high school students. Talent Search primarily serves students whose parents did not complete four years of college and who are low income. Services within the program include career exploration and aptitude assessment, tutorial services, information on postsecondary education, exposure to college campuses, counseling, academic advising, information on financial aid, help with completing college applications and financial aid applications, assistance in preparing for college entrance exams, mentoring programs, and workshops for participants' families.

Targeted Groups:
Talent Search identifies and assists individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education. Talent Search also serves high school dropouts by encouraging them to reenter the education system and complete their education. It targets children in grades 6 to 12.

Contact:
Loretta Brown
U.S. Department of Education, OPE
Office of Higher Education Programs
1990 K St. N.W., Rm. 7025
Washington, DC 20006-8510
Phone: 202-502-7359
Fax: 202-502-7857
E-mail: Loretta.Brown@ed.gov

Program Descriptions: Tier 2

ALAS (Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success)

The ALAS (Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success) intervention targets Latino students at-risk due to low academic achievement and behavioral issues, as determined by their sixth grade teachers. The program aims to prevent dropout by focusing on six core strategies:

1. Provide students and families with access to community services, such as mental health services and substance abuse counseling.
2. Encourage parental involvement by teaching parent-child problem solving skills.
3. Monitor truancy and attendance. Parents are notified regarding absenteeism.
4. Update parents and students weekly with feedback about behavior, assignments, and achievement.
5. Involve parents and students in social and award-based events, where students bond and parents have the opportunity to speak with staff about their child's progress.
6. Offer students the opportunity to improve problem solving skills through a ten-week intensive program and follow-up counseling for the next two years.

Targeted Groups:
ALAS serves students identified as at-risk of dropping out because of low academic performance and behavior problems. Students were identified to be at-risk if their sixth-grade teacher rated them below the classroom average on a six-item rating scale provided by the ALAS developer

Contact:
Katherine Larson
8238 Quincy St.
Ventura , CA 93004
Phone: 805-672-2811
Email: larson@education.ucsb.edu

Belief Academy

Belief Academy has consistent supportive adult staff over time which helps maintain the relationships among families and staff. The model is based on warmth and caring shown by staff towards students in a classroom. The teachers take the opportunity to point out examples of hard work and achievement of every student, regardless of academic level, when demonstrated in the classroom. Teachers also have strong individual relationships with every student. Students play an active role in creating the classroom environment by developing and enforcing rules. Because the students were the creators of the rules, they tend to accept the rules as a way of life. The self-contained nature of the program emphasizes fairness which is seen through the assistance from the students. Students also brainstormed a wide variety of activities for their families to be involved in.

Targeted Groups:
Seventh and eighth grade students.

Contact:
No contact information is available.

Cal-Learn
http://www.ladpss.org/dpss/calworks/callearn.cfm - Los Angeles office

Cal-Learn is a statewide program for pregnant and parenting teens receiving CalWORKs cash aid (i.e., Temporary Assistance for Needy Families). The Cal-Learn Program addresses the unique educational, vocational, training, health, and other social service needs of dependent pregnant teens and teenage parents to help them achieve self-sufficiency. The Cal-Learn Program focuses on breaking the cycle of long-term welfare dependency through helping participanting teens maximize their educational potential. Supportive services and intensive case management are key components of the program and are available to help support school attendance and employment. Bonuses and sanctions encourage school attendance and good grades: up to four $100 bonuses/sanctions per year may be earned/applied based on school progress and a one-time $500 bonus is offered for graduation or its equivalent (GED or CHSPE). In general, all pregnant and parenting teens, under the age of 19, who live in the same household as their child, do not have a high school diploma or equivalent, and receive CalWORKs cash aid are mandated to participate in the Cal-Learn Program.

Targeted Groups:
Pregnant/parenting teens who are receiving CalWORKs and living with their minor child(ren).

Contact:
County of Los Angeles Cal-Learn Toll Free Number: 1-800-511-2070

Communities In Schools
http://www.cisnet.org/

Communities In Schools aims to prevent student dropout by encouraging collaboration between schools and their surrounding communities. Adults, parents, social workers, and volunteers from the community provide needed resources and support to staff, students, and their families. Students are paired with an adult advocate who monitors student progress through a case management system. Communities In Schools is founded on five basic principles to assist students with reaching graduation:

1. Providing students with a caring adult to mentor, tutor, and/or assist them. Additionally, families are encouraged to participate in Parental Involvement Programs.
2. Offering students a safe environment after school with extended-hours programs.

3. Supplying students with physical and mental health care, such as substance abuse education and counseling for teen parents.
4. Teaching students valuable career skills, such as technology education, and career counseling, in addition to college preparatory courses.
5. Presenting community service opportunities, to provide students with a chance to give back to their communities.

Targeted Groups:
Elementary, middle, and high school students in rural, urban, and suburban communities at risk for dropping out of school.

Contact:
Communities In Schools National Office
277 South Washington Street, Suite 210
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: 800-CIS-4KIDS

Effective Learning Program (ELP)

The Effective Learning Program (ELP) targets students at risk of dropping out. The intervention focuses on improving a student's internal motivation by shifting external control expectations to an internal locus of control. To change students' perceptions, the intervention encourages relationship building with both peers and adults. The Effective Learning Program (ELP) strives to show students that their futures are not predetermined and that they have the ability to control their own fate.

Targeted Groups:
At-risk juniors and seniors in high school. In general, these students have less than a 2.0 GPA at the end of their sophomore year and have missed more than 15 days of school by the end of their sophomore year.

Contact:
Ballard High School
6000 Brownsboro Road
Lousiville, KY 40222
Phone: 502-485-8206

Job Corps

http://jobcorps.dol.gov/

Job Corps targets disadvantaged youth between the ages of 16 and 24 who have not graduated from high school. Participation in Job Corps, through which services include career training, housing, and academic instruction, is voluntary. Job Corps is a flexible program with individualized and self-paced instruction where students can enter or exit as they please. Initially, students are assessed to ensure that they are on track for a career that fits their interests and skills. Coursework is split between academic and vocational learning. To alleviate literacy and math issues, Job Corps participants can

take remedial reading and math courses. Youth gain skills for employment and prepare for the GED through prep classes, if necessary. After completing Job Corps training and coursework, participants are offered assistance in career placement. In addition to education and career preparation, Job Corps provides students with a place to live, counseling, health care, a living stipend, recreational activities, and social awareness training.

Targeted Groups:
Youth ages 16 to 24 who have limited financial resources and are in need of further training, education, or support service in order to successfully obtain a job.

Contact:
Phone: (800) 733-JOBS or (800) 733-5627

Learning, Earning, and Parenting (LEAP) program

Many teen parents do not have the financial resources and available time to balance full-time parenthood and the demands of high school. To alleviate this predicament Ohio's Learning, Earning, and Parenting (LEAP) program works with state welfare agencies to provide financial support to teen parents who remain in the education system. Financial incentives, case management, child care, transportation, and food stamps are also available through LEAP.

Targeted Groups:
Teen mothers (under 20) on welfare without a GED or high school diploma.

Contact:
Individual Ohio County Job and Family Services Agencies' contact information is available at http://jfs.ohio.gov/county/cntydir.stm

Middle College High School

Middle College High Schools are alternative schooling systems that serve as a collaborative effort between school districts and local colleges. The schools are situated on college campuses where students can access the college's facilities and educational resources as well as enroll in college classes. The program is career-oriented and focuses on transferring what is learned in the classroom to real-world situations. To promote community-school relations, students are required to complete community service requirement before graduation. Teachers integrate course material across subject areas and use team-taught classes to encourage collaborative learning. Schools are small with low student-to-staff ratios allowing for more individualized instruction.

Targeted Groups:
Middle and high school students at risk for dropping out.

Contact:
No contact information is available.

New Century High School
http://www.newvisions.org/schools/nchs/index.asp

New Century High School began in New York City in 2002. A total of New Century High Schools are currently operating on small community-based campuses. New Century High Schools are based on 10 principles: rigorous instructional program, personalized relationships between students and teachers, a clear focus on teaching and learning, instructional leadership, school-based teacher-driven professional development and collaboration, meaningful continuous assessment, community partnerships, family/caregiver partnership involvement, youth participation and development, and effective uses of technology and other resources.

Targeted Groups:
High school students in Brooklyn, the Bronx, Manhattan and Queens.

Contact:
Ron Chaluisan
VP for Programs
New Visions for Public Schools
320 W 13th Street
6th Floor
New York, NY 10014
Phone: 212-645-5110 Ext. 8156
Fax: 212-645-7409
Email: rchaluisan@newvisions.org

New Chance

New Chance, a program that supports young welfare mothers in education, parenting, life skills, and employment prospects, is divided into two supportive phases. The first phase is focused on education and life skills training for mothers. The education aspect encourages participants to attend basic adult education, GED preparation, and pre-employment skills trainings. The life skills training includes health education, family planning, parenting education, and pediatric health services. Participants are required to attend classes for six hours a day, five times a week. The second phase occurs when the participants have attended classes for five months or beforehand if they have already received a GED certificate. The second phase focuses on occupational skills training, internship participation, job placement assistance, and other services provided by in outside agency. In order to support young mothers, the program offers free child care and provides mothers with case managers who monitor and assist their progress. New Chance serves no more than 40 participants at any time in order to create a positive, personal environment. The program is voluntary and offers services to participants for no more than 18 months.

Targeted Groups:
To be considered eligible for the program young mothers must be between the ages of 16 to 22, have first given birth as a young teenager, be economically disadvantaged,

have not received a high school diploma or GED certificate, and must not be pregnant upon entry to the program. In some instances, programs are allowed to serve a small number of young mothers who have a high school diploma if they have poor reading skills and would benefit from the basic educational courses that the program offers.

Contact:
No contact information is available.

Quantum Opportunity Program

http://www.oicofamerica.org/onlprog.html
http://www.eisenhowerfoundation.org/qop.php

The Quantum Opportunity Program (QOP) is a four-year program designed to help at-risk youth make a "quantum leap" up the ladder of opportunity through academic, developmental, and community service activities, coupled with a sustained relationship with a peer group and a caring adult. The QOP is designed to compensate for some of the deficits found in poverty areas by: (1) compensating for both the perceived and real lack of opportunities characteristic of disadvantaged neighborhoods; (2) providing interactions and involvement with persons who hold pro-social values and beliefs; (3) enhancing participants' academic and functional skills to equip them for success; and (4) reinforcing positive achievements and actions.

Targeted Groups:
The QOP program targets academically and economically at-risk high school youth ages 14 to 18.

Contact:
Johnnie Gage
The Eisenhower Foundation
1875 Connecticut Avenue
Suite 410
Washington, DC 20009
Phone: 202-234-8104
Fax: 202-234-8484
E-mail: johnniegage1@aol.com

C. Benjamin Lattimore
Program Developer
Opportunities Industrialization
N.W. Centers of America, Inc.
1415 Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19122
Phone: 215-236-4500 x 251
Fax: 215-236-7480
E-mail: info@oicofamerica.org
E-mail: cbel2@aol.com

Solution-Focused Alternative Schools

Solution-Focused Alternative Schools are aimed to reduce drop out rates for at-risk adolescents and enable them to earn high school credits and graduate from high school over time. The focus of the schools is on enriched academics and educational choice that address needs of students that typically cannot be met in a traditional school. Solution-Focused Alternative Schools focus on education rather than discipline. The program resembles college preparatory courses rather than act as a correctional facility. The schools are student-centered and emphasize positive aspects and strength of each student and strive for interpersonal relationships. The program includes smaller classes and low teacher-student ratios in comparison to traditional schools. This allows teachers to have individual work time with each student, increasing the students' willingness and desire to graduate.

Targeted Groups:
High school students at-risk for dropping out.

Contact:
Austin Independent School District
1111 W. 6th Street
Austin, TX 78703
Phone: 512-414-1700

Talent Development High Schools

http://web.jhu.edu/CSOS/tdhs/index.html

Talent Development High Schools is a reform model for schools to help restructure large high schools that have been dealing with problems with attendance, discipline, student achievement, and dropping out. In helping prepare students for post-secondary education and employment, the model focuses on structural and curriculum reforms. The program reorganizes the high schools into smaller learning communities with different goals. There is a community that includes a ninth grade academy, career academies for the upper grades, and an after-hours school for students with serious behavioral problems. The ninth grade academy is taught by a team of four to five teachers and only supports first-year students. Career academies, for the upper grades, are organized around multiple career themes for about 300 students. They have their own teaching staff and management. The after hours program, the 'Twilight School,' is for extensive supportive services to those students who have discipline problems and attendance problems. The program offers smaller classes in order to meet the needs of the students. All of these communities are self-contained and are a school-within-a-school.

In order to address low student expectations and poor academic preparation, there are curriculum reforms that affect the structural changes that are viewed as the main reasons for dropping out. Talent Development High Schools provide a college preparatory course that is available to all students to increase student achievement. For the ninth grade academy, the first semester of the program is designed to focus on courses in remedial English or math; the second semester focuses on the district

mandated course that is covered in 90-minute sessions. In addition, first-year students are required to complete a seminar course that teaches the strategies for meeting the increased academic demands of high school in one semester.

Talent Development High Schools provide additional support to their staff with ongoing technical assistance and professional development. Curriculum coaches are assigned to each school and they are trained by the Center for Social Organization of Schools (CSOS) to work with the staff to implement the model. CSOS also sponsors annual conferences for the Talent Development High School staff.

Targeted Groups:
Large high schools facing serious problems with student attendance, discipline, achievement scores, and dropout rates.

Contact:
Talent Development High Schools
Johns Hopkins University
3003 North Charles Street, Suite 200
Baltimore, MD 21218-2696
Phone: 410-516-8800
Fax: 410-516-8890

Twelve Together
http://www.foundation.sdsu.edu/jbi/.

Twelve Together is a mentoring program and a peer support group for middle and high school students. It is a year-long volunteer program that offers after school discussion groups weekly. These groups consist of 12 students who are at high risk of academic failure and others that are at a lower risk of academic failure. These groups have two leaders who are trained volunteer adult facilitators who mediate discussions. Each discussion group is focused on topics that are of student interest. They address personal, family and social issues. In order to be in the program, participants agree to study regularly, not miss class, and work hard to improve their grades. College students are available to provide homework assistance. The program begins with an icebreaker, and a weekend camping outing in order to develop teamwork skills and create group cohesion.

Targeted Groups:
Middle and high school at-risk students in public schools.

Contact:
June Burnett Institute
6310 Alvarado Court
San Diego, CA 92120
Phone: 619-594-4756

Program Descriptions: **Tier 3**

ACT's EXPLORE

www.act.org/explore/

ACT's EXPLORE program is designed to help eighth and ninth grade students examine a broad range of options for their future. EXPLORE prepares students for their high school course work and post-high school choices. It provides baseline information on the academic abilities of the students that can be used to help plan high school course work and is a reliable predictor of performance on the PLAN assessment, which provides a midpoint review of tenth-grade students' progress toward their education and career goals. The assessment is a curriculum-based, achievement test designed for measuring achievement in these core areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science. It shares the same score scale with PLAN and the ACT, enabling educators to seamlessly document student progress from grades eight through twelve.

Targeted Groups:
Eighth and ninth grade students are targeted.

Contact:
Suzette S. Lee
Director, Office of High School Redesign
1429 Senate Street, Room 1112-A
Columbia, South Carolina 29201
Phone: 803-734-6103
Fax: 803-734-3592
E-mail: slee@ed.sc.gov

Academic Alternatives

http://www.putnamschools.org

Academic Alternatives is multifaceted and provides students who are three or more credits behind an opportunity to exceed the normal six credits earned per academic year. The Foundations Program allows students who are 16 years old and in seventh, eighth, or ninth grades to enter a pre-GED exit program. After-School Opportunity Grade Forgiveness is offered at each high school by the Adult Education Department. The Unified Youth Services program is offered at each high school for 25 students who have two or more barriers to graduating from high school. Four special diplomas are offered by the district for students with disabilities.

Targeted Groups:
Targeted groups include students who are 16 years of age and in seventh, eighth, or ninth grades and high school students who have two or more barriers to graduating.

Contact:
Grace Smith, Director
Career, Technical, Adult Education
Management Information Systems and Media

Putnam County District Schools
200 South 7th Street
Palatka, FL 32977
Phone: 386-329-0536
Fax: 386-329-9535
E-mail: smith_g@firn.edu

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)

http://www.avidcenter.org

AVID is an in-school academic support program for middle and high schools that places underachieving high-risk students in a college preparatory program to prepare them to go to and succeed in college. AVID courses teach students inquiry, writing, and critical thinking skills, as well as study skills, library research skills, and college entrance exam preparation. Students take advanced level college preparatory classes and are provided assistance and tutoring during AVID courses to help them succeed in these courses. Students are also involved in AVID activities during lunch, elective periods, and after school and participate in a number of related extracurricular activities. AVID emphasizes family involvement and includes a family training curriculum to assist parents or other family members with the college-going process.

Targeted Groups:
The program focuses on low-income underachieving students with a C grade point average, who have the potential to succeed in collage preparatory course work and are first in their families to have a chance to go to college.

Contact:
Mary Catherine Swanson, Founder
AVID Center
5120 Shoreham Place
Suite 120
San Diego, CA 92122
Phone: 858-623-2843
Fax: 858-623-2822
E-mail: avidinfo@avidcenter.org

Big Brothers Big Sisters

http://www.bbbsa.org/site/pp.asp?c=iuJ3JgO2F&b=14576

Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) is a federation of more than 500 agencies that serve children and adolescents with a program designed not to ameliorate specific problems, but to provide support in all aspects of young people's lives through a professionally supported one-to-one relationship with a caring adult. During their time together, the mentor and youth engage in developmentally appropriate activities, such as walking; visiting a library; washing the car; playing catch; or attending a play, school activity, or sporting event. Individual programs are customized to local needs while a national

infrastructure oversees recruitment, screening, matching, and supervision to ensure that quality mentors are selected, that good mentor-mentee matches are made, and that these relationships receive adequate staff supervision and support.

Targeted Groups:
Targeted groups include youth ages 10 to 19 in low socioeconomic status families, with no more than one parent/guardian actively involved in their lives.

Contact:
Thomas M. McKenna
Big Brothers Big Sisters of America
230 North 13th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
Phone: 215-567-7000
Fax: 215-567-0394
E-mail: national@bbbsa.org

Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA)
http://www.bgca.org

Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) provides fun, safe places for youth during out-of-school hours where they can be involved in caring relationships with adults and peers and feel a sense of membership and connectedness. BGCA provides varied and diverse programming supported by caring staff and has a lineup of tested and proven, nationally recognized programs that address today's most pressing youth issues and teach young people the skills they need to succeed in life.

Targeted Groups:
Children ages 6 through 18 who are at home with no adult care or supervision.

Contact:
Boys & Girls Club of America
National Headquarters
1275 Peachtree Street NE
Atlanta, GA 30309
Phone: 404-487-5700
Fax: 404-487-5789
E-mail: info@bgca.org

Career Education Options (CEO) Program
www.shoreline.edu/ceo01.htm

Career Education Options (CEO) Program helps students achieve self-sufficiency through education, job training, and life skills development. The program helps out-of-school youth to pursue their GEDs and/or professional technical associate degrees at local community colleges. Components include job training and effective job search strategies.

Targeted Groups:
Youth who are 16 to 21 years old and not currently enrolled in high school are eligible to enroll in CEO. An individual can enter CEO program whether or not he or she has earned a GED, but NOT if he or she has earned a high school diploma.

Contact:
Mariko K. Kakiuchi
Director
Shoreline Community College
Career Education Options Program
16101 Greenwood Avenue North
Shoreline, WA 98133
Phone: 206-546-7848
Fax: 206-546-5826
E-mail: mkakiuch@shore.ctc.edu

Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program
http://www.idra.org/Coca-Cola_Valued_Youth_Program.htm/

The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program (VYP) is an international cross-age tutoring program in which secondary at-risk students work with at-risk elementary students. The program philosophy revolves around seven key tenets that emphasize the valuing of students; for example, that all students can learn, that the school values all students, and that all students can actively contribute to their own education and to the education of others. Based on this philosophy, the program strives to improve the self-esteem and academic skills of at-risk students to help reduce their dropout rates. This is accomplished through the tutoring experience along with the provision of assistance on basic academic skills; the elimination of other factors that may influence them to drop out, such as misbehavior or truancy; and the formation of home-school ties.

Targeted Groups:
Students recruited as tutors are at-risk middle and high school students who may also be from low socioeconomic-level families and/or have been retained at some point. The program has been successfully implemented with limited English proficient students.

Contact:
Linda Cantu
Division of Professional Development
5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350
San Antonio, TX 78228
Phone: 210-444-1710
Fax: 210-444-1714
E-mail: Linda.cantu@idra.org

Complete High School Maize (CHSM)
http://maize.usd266.com/education/school/school.php?sectionid=8

Complete High School Maize (CHSM) is an experiential learning center for students who have either previously dropped out of school or are unsuccessful at their traditional high schools. CHSM utilizes a four-day school schedule with Friday morning dedicated to providing one-on-one help to those students who need it. A work experience program is available for those students with jobs. Students experience field trips, weekly career speakers, community service, tutoring, custodial duties, special luncheons, and more.

Targeted Groups:
Targeted groups include students who are at least 16 years of age and are in grades 9 through 12, who have previously dropped out of school or are unsuccessful at their traditional high school, and who live or have lived in USD 266 Maize School District.

Contact:
Deb Elliot and Chris Botts
Associate Principals
Complete High School Maize
11411 W. 49th Street North
Maize, KS 67101
Phone: 316-722-4790
Fax: 316-729-6621
E-mail: delliott@usd266.com

Computer-Based Instruction
Example: **Educational Options, Inc. NOVEL/STARS™**
www.edoptions.com

Educational Options, Inc., is a for-profit educational technology firm that understands the need for innovative learning strategies for today's youth. It provides an Internet-delivered school curriculum of 31 high school and middle school courses. The NOVEL/STARS curriculum has been integrated with a unique and efficient online, Internet-based delivery system that can support an infinite number of students at a remarkably low per-student cost. It provides automated assessment, prescription, reporting, and the ability for clients to modify the existing curriculum or to construct new curriculum content to meet their own special academic requirements.

Targeted Groups:
Students in transitional classrooms and/or students at risk of not graduating who need credit recovery, state exam preparation, or summer school are targeted.

Contact:
Michael J. Duffy, Sales Director
Educational Options, Inc.
3440 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite D
Arlington, VA 22201
Phone: 866-243-7460
Fax: 703-248-0704
E-mail: mduffy@edoptions.com

Computer-Based Instruction

Example: **Pearson Digital Learning/NovaNET**
www.pearsondigital.com

NovaNET is a comprehensive online courseware system that meets countless needs. From delivering thousands of hours of research and standards-based, interactive curriculum, to integrated assessment and student management, NovaNET is an all-inclusive system that delivers a return on investment quickly. Hundreds of thousands of learners and educators already harness the power of NovaNET in over 2,000 schools and educational programs. With NovaNET, you can:

- reach struggling students and recover lost credits,
- increase graduation rates and reduce dropout rates,
- challenge advanced students who want to move ahead,
- prepare students for state and standardized tests, and
- provide individualized learning at a distance.

Targeted Groups:
Students in grades 6 through 12 are the targeted groups for NovaNET.

Contact:
Julia McCombs
Pearson Digital Learning
6710 East Camelback Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85251
Phone: 888-977-7900
E-mail: pklinfo@pearson.com

Computer-Based Instruction

Example: **PLATO Learning, Inc.**
www.plato.com

PLATO Learning, Inc., is a provider of computer-based and e-learning instruction, offering curricula in reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, and life and job skills. A PLATO semester-long online course provides schools a way to deliver rigorous credit recovery, alternatives for students not succeeding in the traditional environment, and credit-granting distance learning programs.

Targeted Groups:
Targeted groups include kindergartners through adults.

Contact:
Dr. Paul Vivian
Account Manager
3400 Ebenezer Chase Drive
Florence, SC 29501
Phone: 843-229-1579
E-mail: pvivian@plato.com

Consistency Management & Cooperative Discipline® (CMCD®)

http://www.dsgonline.com/mpg2.5//TitleV_MPG_Table_Ind_Rec.asp?id=316

CMCD® is a research-based classroom and school reform model that emphasizes shared responsibility for learning and classroom organization between teachers and students. The model seeks to address the needs of students, teachers, and administrative staff through five themes: prevention through classroom management, a caring environment, cooperation, classroom organization, and parental and community involvement activities.

Targeted Groups:
Inner city youth ages pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade are targeted.

Contact:
H. Jerome Freiberg, Project Director
Consistency Management & Cooperative Discipline
4800 Calhoun Farish Hall, Room 442
University of Houston
Houston, TX 77204
Phone: 713-743-8663
Fax: 713-743-8586
E-mail: Freiberg@mail.uh.edu
E-mail: cmcd@Uh.edu

Creating Lasting Family Connections (CLFC)

http://www.copes.org/include/index.htm

CLFC is a structured curriculum for youth and their parents, guardians, and other family members to improve their ability to provide a nurturing environment for each other in a very effective and meaningful way. Participants are encouraged to improve personal growth through increasing self-awareness, expression of feelings, interpersonal communication, and self-disclosure. Participants are taught social skills, refusal skills, and appropriate alcohol and drug knowledge and healthy beliefs, which provide a strong defense against environmental risk factors that can lead to negative outcomes for youth. The CLFC program also provides parents and other caring adults with family management, family enhancement, communications training, and opportunities to practice these skills in a safe peer-group setting.

Targeted Groups:
CLEC is for youth ages 9 through 17 and their parents, guardians, and other family members.

Contact:
Ted. N. Strader
COPES, Inc.
845 Barret Avenue
Louisville, KY 40204
Phone: 502-583-6820
Fax: 502-583-6832
E-mail: tstrader@sprynet.com

Early College High School Initiatives

http://www.earlycolleges.org
www.gatewaytocollege.org

Early College High Schools (ECHS) are small, autonomous schools where students earn both a high school diploma and two years of college credit toward a bachelor's degree. They are created through a formalized agreement between secondary and post-secondary schools and are designed to help students progress toward the education and experience they need to succeed in life and family-supporting careers. ECHS have the potential to improve the graduation rates by changing the structure of the high school years, compressing the number of years to a college degree, and removing financial and other barriers to college.

Targeted Groups:
High school students are the targeted group with middle grades included to promote academic preparation and awareness of the early college program.

Contact:
Laurel Dukehart
Manager of Gateway to College Replication
Portland Community College
Extended Learning Campus

Mt. Scott Hall, Room 106e
2305 S.E. 82nd Avenue
Portland, OR 97216
Phone: 503-788-6226
Fax: 503-788-6144
E-mail: lduke@pcc.edu

Early College High School Initiatives
Example: **Gateway to College, Tri-County Technical College**
www.tctc.edu

The Gateway to College Program at Tri-County Technical College in Pendleton, South Carolina, serves students who have dropped out of school and gives them the opportunity to earn high school diplomas while achieving college success. Students simultaneously accumulate high school and college credits, earning their high school diplomas while progressing toward certificates, diplomas, or associate degrees. Students learn how to succeed in an educational setting, under the guidance of a caring team of instructors and resource specialists with experience and interest in at-risk youth.

Targeted Groups:
17 to 20 year-olds who have dropped out of school are targeted.

Contact:
Nita Colman
Director
Gateway to College
Tri-County Technical College
P.O. Box 587, 7900 Hwy. 76
Pendleton, SC 29670
Phone: 864-646-1541
E-mail: jcolman@tctc.edu

Early College High School Initiatives
Example: **Richland One Middle College**

Richland One Middle College (ROMC) at Midlands Technical College (MTC) is a public charter school for eleventh and twelfth grade students. This school is a unique educational model for South Carolina charter schools as well as other public schools because it is the first example of a district and a community college in South Carolina cooperatively forming a planning committee and jointly committing their support to create and to work collaboratively to foster the growth of a middle college. The school utilizes

best practices that have developed around the middle college concept to meet the needs of high school students who are capable but not yet performing to their potential. ROMC's aspiration to improve student achievement necessitates increased quality of parental involvement, increased professional development opportunities to address research-based best practices, and increased school-community interactions.

Targeted Groups:
Eleventh and twelfth graders are targeted.

Contact:
Dr. Robert L. Kirton
Executive Director
Richland One Middle College
316 S. Beltline Blvd, Richland Hall 131
Columbia, SC 29205
Phone: 803-735-3333
Fax: 803-738-7117
E-mail: rkirton@richlandone.org

Audrey L. Breland
Dean
Phone: 803-738-7109
E-mail: abreland@richlandone.org

Fast Forward Center
http://www.sinclair.edu/organizations/ffc/

The Fast Forward Center (FFC) develops and maintains a comprehensive network of alternative schools and programs that serve out-of-school youth. The mission of FFC is to create and contract alternative programs appealing to out-of-school youth, and as a result, reduce the high school dropout rate. The goals of FFC are to return the youth to high school; help them achieve proficiency and earn a high school diploma; have a positive placement upon graduation (employment, military, or postsecondary education); evaluate and select alternative learning programs submitted by local organizations wishing to become educational partners; create new programs and provide technical guidance and support in development and implementation; and recruit out-of-school youth to return to these schools and programs, achieve proficiency, and earn their high school diplomas or GEDs.

Targeted Groups:
FFC primarily serves youth, ages 15 to 21, who have previously dropped out of, or are not regularly attending, high school.

Contact:
Michael Carter
Director Sinclair Community College
1133 South Edwin C. Moses Blvd., Suite 170
Dayton, OH 45408
Phone: 937-512-3278
Fax: 937-586-9987
E-mail: Michael.carter.@sinclair.edu

GEAR UP

www.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html
www.scgearup.org

GEAR UP is a Federal TRIO program providing grants to support early college preparation and awareness activities for rural and low-income students. Participating students take rigorous college-prep courses in order to meet college admission requirements. South Carolina's GEAR UP program will provide direct services to 22 schools in the I-95 region of the state. The program will address gaps in students' academic performance and increase the number of students prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education.

Targeted Groups:
Rural, low-income high school students comprise the target group.

Contact:
Dr. Rae McPherson
SC GEAR UP
South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (SCCHE)
1333 Main Street, Suite 200
Columbia, SC 29201
Phone: 888-200-0256
Phone: 803-737-2706
Fax: 803-734-2279
E-mail: rmcpherson@che.sc.gov

High Schools That Work (HSTW)

www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/hstwindex.asp

High Schools That Work is an effort-based school improvement initiative founded on the conviction that students can master rigorous academic and career/technical studies if school leaders and teachers create an environment that motivates students to make the effort to succeed. It is the nation's first large-scale effort to engage state, district, and school leaders in partnerships with teachers, students, parents, and the community to raise student achievement in high schools and middle schools. It is based on the belief that students become smarter through effort and hard work and that school leaders and teachers can motivate students to achieve at high levels through relevant curriculum,

supportive relationships between students and adults, effective advising, and effective leadership that provides faculty support and professional development.

Targeted Groups:
HSTW targets high school and middle school students.

Contact:
Dr. H. MiUndrae Prince
SC Department of Education
Office of Career and Technology Education
1429 Senate Street, Room 901-A
Columbia, SC 29201
Phone: 803-734-8399
E-mail: mprince@ed.sc.gov

Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS)
http://www.jeferson.k12.ky.us/Schools/High/jchs.html

Students are still able to earn a diploma by attending the Jefferson County High School. JCPS has developed a curriculum that is individualized, self-paced, and teacher-designed. Qualified students may begin at any time, work at their own pace, and earn credits needed for graduation. The program operates on a flexible schedule at multiple sites, which allows students to schedule classes around work and other commitments.

Targeted Groups:
The target population is 16 to 20 year olds who wish to transfer from their present high school, young adults 16 to 20 years of age who have dropped out of school, and adults 21 years of age or older.

Contact:
Buell Snyder
Director/Principal
900 Floyd Street
Louisville, KY 40203
Phone: 502-485-3173
Fax: 502-485-3671
E-mail: bsnyder2@jefferson.k12.ky.us

Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) and Jobs for South Carolina Graduates (JSCG)
www.jag.org
www.sccommerce.com

Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) is a national nonprofit corporation established in 1980 for the purpose of assisting state affiliates in building a statewide organization to test one or more of the three program applications of the JAG model: School-to-Career Program (seniors only), Dropout Prevention Program (grades 9 through 12), and

Dropout Recovery Program (out-of-school students only). JAG serves young people with barriers to success. The more barriers to success that a young person might have, the more he or she is considered at-risk of graduating from high school or having a successful transition from school to an entry-level job that leads to a career. Jobs for South Carolina Graduates (JSCG), the South Carolina JAG affiliate, is a dropout prevention and workplace preparation program supported by school and business partnerships. The program's goal is to help students secure good jobs after graduating from high school or after additional postsecondary education.

Targeted Groups:
High-risk students in grades 9 through 12 are targeted.

Contact:
Melinda Peterson Eagle, SCCED
State Director
Jobs for South Carolina Graduates
SC Department of Commerce
1201 Main Street, Suite 1600
Columbia, SC 29201
Phone: 803-737-2583
E-mail: myra@cissc.org

keepin' it R.E.A.L. (Refuse, Explain, Avoid, Leave)

The keepin' it R.E.A.L. (Refuse, Explain, Avoid, Leave) program is a video-enhanced intervention that uses a culturally-grounded resiliency model that incorporates traditional ethnic values and practices that protect youth against drug use. A school-based prevention program for elementary, middle, and early high school students, keepin' it R.E.A.L. is based on previous work that demonstrates that teaching communication and life skills can combat negative peer and other influences. Keepin' it R.E.A.L. extends resistance and life-skills models by using a culturally based narrative and performance framework to: (1) enhance anti-drug norms and attitudes; and (2) facilitate the development of risk assessment, decision making, and resistance skills. Distinct Mexican American, African American, and multicultural versions of keepin' it R.E.A.L. are available.

Targeted Groups:
The keepin' it R.E.A.L. program targets urban youth ranging in age from 10 to 17.

Contact:
Dr. Patricia Dustman
Southwest Interdisciplinary Research Center
Culturally-Grounded Prevention and Services
Arizona State University Downtown
411 North Central Avenue, Suite 720
Phoenix, AZ 85004
Phone: 602-496-0700
Fax: 602-496-0958
E-mail: patricia.dustman@asu.edu

Leadership and Resiliency Program (LRP)
http://www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov/print.cfm?pkProgramid=35

The Leadership and Resiliency Program (LRP) is a school- and community-based program that works to enhance youths' internal strengths and resiliency, while preventing involvement in substance abuse and violence. LRP addresses extreme risk factors using clinical prevention strategies derived from recent science-based prevention research. These strategies identify and enhance internal strengths identified through resiliency research as most predictive of future success and adaptation in life.

Targeted Groups:
Targeted groups include youth ages 14 to 17 who are currently enrolled in mainstream or alternative high school settings and who have a combination of behavioral issues manifested in absenteeism, high levels of disciplinary actions, low grades, substance abuse, and/or violence.

Contact:
Laura Yager
Director of Prevention Services
Alcohol and Drug Services
Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board
3900 Jermantown Road, Suite 200
Fairfax, VA 22030
Phone: 703-934-5476
Fax: 703-934-8742
E-mail: Laura.Yager@fairfaxcounty.gov

Moss Point High School Entrepreneurship Program
http://www.mp.k12.ms.us/schools/default.asp

The Moss Point High School Entrepreneurship Program, Moss Point School District, Moss Point, Mississippi, was implemented in 2001–2002. The Moss Point High School Entrepreneurship Program focuses on academics, social/interpersonal relationships, cooperative learning, job training, independent living, and employability skills through entrepreneurship classes. The primary purpose of the program is to promote academics and attendance, prevent students from dropping out of school, and prepare students for the world of work and independent living. While learning academics and experiencing job skills, students provide a service that is utilized by the community.

Targeted Groups:
Students with disabilities in grades 9 through 12 are targeted.

Contact:
Deborah Thompson
Director
Moss Point High School Entrepreneurship Program
4924 Church Street
Moss Point, MS 39563
Phone: 228-475-0946
Fax: 228-474-4968
E-mail: dathompson@mp.k12.ms.us

National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) and Youth Entrepreneurship South Carolina (YEScarolina)
www.NFTE.com
www.yescarolina.com

Youth Entrepreneurship South Carolina (YEScarolina), a Program Partner of the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE), is a nonprofit organization created to offer South Carolina educators the opportunity to utilize curriculum in their classrooms that teaches entrepreneurship to young South Carolinians of all socioeconomic backgrounds in order to enhance their economic productivity by improving their business, academic, and life skills.

Targeted Groups:
Students at all grade levels, elementary to post-secondary, are targeted.

Contact:
Jimmy Bailey
Executive Director
NFTE
One Carriage Lane, Building G
Charleston, SC 29407
Phone: 843-566-1909
Fax: 843-566-3994
E-mail: Seat110@aol.com

Phoenix Academy
http://www.rock-hill.k12.sc.us/schools/high/phoenix/index.htm

The Phoenix Academy offers a nontraditional, flexible learning environment that is computer-based with teacher interaction. Students may attend the program full-time or in combination with their home high schools and/or the applied technology centers. The motto of Phoenix Academy is “We educate individuals, not the masses.”

Targeted Groups:
High school students targeted include those who need to regain lost credits, who desire to graduate early, are teen mothers/fathers, need to work to help support their families,

learn in nontraditional ways, are moving into the school district in the middle of the semester, prefer nontraditional hours, or have special medical issues.

Contact:
Dr. Walter Wolff
Director
The Phoenix Academy
Rock Hill School District 3
1234 Flint Street Ext.
Rock Hill, SC 29730
Phone: 803-981-1975
E-mail: Wwolff@rock-hill.k12.sc.us

Pickens County Star Academy
www.pickens.k12.sc.us/Gettys.ms/index.htm

The Pickens County Star Academy, also known as the Pickens County Acceleration Program, is designed to meet learning needs by providing students with Carnegie units, study skills, character strengths, and career-related direction for a successful pathway to high school graduation. The Star Academy is a technology delivered and managed program of studies designed to enable older middle school students to recover academically and be empowered to pursue career and technical education beginning in the tenth grade. The Acceleration Program aims to demonstrate best practices by increasing the academic and personal performance of students whose needs are best met in an alternative learning environment.

Targeted Groups:
Targeted groups include seventh and eighth grade students who have been retained in one or more grades, who are between 14 and 17 years old, who are experiencing academic difficulty, who are disengaged from the learning process or who have stopped learning, and who may possess other factors that put them at risk of dropping out of high school.

Contact:
Shelley Fones
The Star Academy
Pickens County Acceleration Program
Richard H. Gettys Middle School
105 Stewart Drive
Easley, SC 29640
Phone: 864-855-8170
E-mail: fonessw@pickens.k12.sc.us

Dr. Douglas Limbaugh
E-mail: drdoug@aol.com

Positive Action

www.positiveaction.net

Positive Action (PA) is an integrated, comprehensive, and coherent program that has been shown to improve academic achievement and behaviors across multiple domains. PA is based on the intuitive philosophy that "you feel good about yourself when you do positive things." The program aligns schools, parents, and communities in promoting specific positive actions for youth that affect them physically, intellectually, socially, and emotionally. It is intensive, with lessons at each grade level (K–12) reinforced all day, at school, at home, and in the community. For students, PA improves self-concept; academic achievement and learning skills; decision-making, problem-solving, and social/interpersonal skills; physical and mental health; and behavior, character, and responsibility. PA improves school climate, attendance, achievement scores, disciplinary behaviors, parent and community involvement, and the efficiency and effectiveness of services for special-needs and high-risk students. PA helps families by improving parent-child relations and overall family attitudes toward and involvement in school and the community.

Targeted Groups:
Children and adolescents (5 to 18 years old) are targeted.

Contact:
Brad Allred
Positive Action, Inc.
264 4th Avenue South
Twin Falls, ID 83301
Phone: 800-345-2974
Phone: 208-733-2066
Fax: 208-733-5828
E-mail: brad@positiveaction.net

Carolyn Pirtle, Consultant
Positive Action, Inc.
264 4th Avenue South
Twin Falls, ID 83301
Phone: 800-345-2974 ext 111
Phone: 208-733-1328
Fax: 208-733-1590
E-mail: Carolyn@positiveaction.net

Project Toward No Drug Abuse (Project TND)

http://tnd.use.edu

Project TND is an effective, interactive classroom-based substance abuse prevention program that is based on more than two decades of successful research at the University of Southern California. Project TND focuses on three factors that predict

tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use, violence-related behaviors, and other problem behaviors among youth, including: motivation factors (i.e., students' attitudes, beliefs, expectations, and desires regarding drug use); skills (social, self-control, and coping skills); and decision-making (i.e., how to make decisions that lead to health-promoting behaviors). Project TND targets high school youth, ages 14 to 19. The program has proven successful when implemented in regular as well as alternative (continuation) high schools, with students from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Targeted Groups:
Project TND targets high school youth, ages 14 to 19. The program has proven successful when implemented in regular as well as alternative (continuation) high schools, with students from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Contact:
Jim Miyano
USC Institute for Prevention Research
1000 S. Fremont Avenue, Unit #8
Alhambra, CA 91803
Phone: 800-400-8461
Fax: 626-457-5856
E-mail: miyano@use.edu

Project Respect
http://www.schoolengagement.org/truancypreventionregistry/index
http://www.pueblo60k12.co.us/DISweb.nsf/ProjectRespect?OpenForm

Project Respect is a school-community collaboration between Pueblo 60 schools and the communities of Pueblo, Colorado. Community advocates meet students daily at school and at home with the family, and the advocates do what is necessary to keep the students in school and involved in pro-social activities.

Targeted Groups:
The program targets K-12 students who are overage for their grade, who are truant, who have been expelled or suspended, or who are at risk of school disengagement as evidenced by chronic behavior problems.

Contact:
Terri Martinez-McGraw
Assistant Principal
Keating Education Center
215 East Orman Avenue
Pueblo, CO 81004
Phone: 719-549-7380
E-mail: tmartine@pueblo60.k12.co.us

Reconnecting Youth (RY)

http://www.solution-tree.com/

Reconnecting Youth (RY) uses a partnership model involving peers, school personnel, and parents to deliver interventions that address three central program goals: decreased drug involvement, increased school performance, and decreased emotional stress. Students work toward these goals by participating in a semester-long high school class that involves skills training in the context of a positive peer culture. RY students learn, practice, and apply self-esteem enhancement strategies, decision-making skills, personal control strategies, and interpersonal communication techniques.

Targeted Groups:
RY is a school-based prevention program for youth in grades 9 through 12 (14 to 18 years old) who are at risk of dropping out of school. These youth may also exhibit multiple behavior problems such as substance abuse, aggression, depression, or suicidal tendencies.

Contact:
Beth McNamara, MSW
Information and Training Coordinator
Reconnecting Youth
Phone: 425-861-1177
Fax: 206-726-6049
E-mail: ry.info@verizon.net

Curriculum Solution Tree
(formerly NES)
304 Kirkwood Avenue
Suite 2
Bloomington, IN 47404
Phone: 800-733-6786
Fax: 812-336-7790
E-mail: info@solution-tree.com

School for Integrated Academies and Technologies (SIATech)

http://www.siatech.org

The School for Integrated Academics and Technologies (SIATech), an accredited public charter high school with campuses nationwide, reengages disconnected students through an innovative curriculum that integrates technology with academics and provides the opportunity to earn a high school diploma in a motivating, challenging, and technology-rich environment. SIATech campuses are currently located in 15 Job Corps centers and serve over 3,200 students.

Targeted Groups:
Most of the students enrolled at SIA Tech schools have dropped out of the traditional public school system without earning their high school diplomas. SIA Tech is committed

to helping these "at-promise" students experience success and regain their academic confidence.

Contact:
Mike Hadjiaghai
Director
Administrative Services
School for Integrated Academies and Technologies
217 Escondido Avenue, Suite 7
Vista, CA 92084
Phone: 760-631-3400
Fax: 760-945-1683
E-mail: hadjiaghaimi@siatech.org

School Transitional Environment Program (STEP)—(now HiPlaces School Improvement Model)
http://www.ncpe.uri.edu
http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/promising/programs/BPP16.html

The School Transitional Environmental Program (STEP) is based on the Transitional Life Events model, which theorizes that stressful life events, such as making transitions between schools, places children at risk for maladaptive behavior. Research has shown that, for many students, changing schools can lead to a host of academic, behavioral, and social problems and may lead to dropping out of school. STEP redesigns the high school environment to make school transitions less threatening for students and aims to increase peer and teacher support, decrease student anonymity, increase student accountability, and enhance students' abilities to learn school rules.

Targeted Groups:
STEP best benefits those students at greatest risk for behavioral problems who attend large, urban junior or senior high schools with multiple feeders and which serve predominantly non-white, lower-income students.

Contact:
Dr. Robert D. Felner
Dean, College of Education and Human Development
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292
Phone: 502-852-3235
E-mail: r_felner@louisville.edu

South Carolina Advanced Technological Education (SC ATE) Technology Gateway
www.scate.org

Technology Gateway is an integrated, project-based high school program that promotes technical careers and workplace skills. Students learn to work in high performance teams and apply academic skills to solve real industry-based problems. Algebra,

physical science, and applied technology are tools students use in a learning environment that promotes workplace readiness and prepares students for additional study in technical fields.

Targeted Groups:
Technology Gateway is best suited for eleventh or twelfth grade students interested in hands-on, active approaches to learning. As a career elective, the program helps students gain technical and academic skills and competencies required in today's workplace and provides students with exciting opportunities to learn these skills.

Contact:
Elaine Craft
Director
SC ATE Center of Excellence
Florence-Darlington Technical College
PO Box 100548
Florence, SC 29501
Phone: 843-676-8548
E-mail: Elaine.Craft@fdtc.edu

South Carolina Virtual School
http://blackboard.myscschools.com/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp

The South Carolina Department of Education has developed offerings for core academic courses, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, technical and career courses, and electives for online learning for six South Carolina school districts that currently offer online learning. The goal was to offer online learning statewide by June 1, 2007. Courses will engage students in real-life projects, requiring the use of critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and the ability to apply the knowledge acquired. At any hour of the day, students can open their eLearning Web site, log in to their class, work on assignments and projects, and submit work to be graded by state-certified instructors. Parents will have access to their students' grades online.

Targeted Groups:
At-risk students in grades 7 through 12 are targeted.

Contact:
Dee Appleby
Office of Technology
SC Department of Education
1429 Senate Street, Suite 401
Columbia, SC 29201
Phone: 803-734-7169
Fax: 803-734-3389
E-mail: dappleby@ed.sc.gov

Teen Outreach Program (TOP)

http://www.wymancenter.org/teenoutreach.htm

Teen Outreach Program (TOP) is a school-based program involving young people ages 12 to 17 in volunteer service in their communities. The program connects the volunteer work to classroom-based, curriculum-guided group discussions on various issues important to young people. Designed to increase academic success and decrease teen pregnancy, TOP helps youth develop a positive self-image, learn valuable life skills, and establish future goals.

TOP includes: (1) student selected service activity; (2) TOP curriculum manual and materials with age-appropriate exercises and discussions and an evaluation manual; (3) student assessment through student journals and portfolios; (4) technical assistance on curriculum, recruitment of students, and identification of funding sources; and (5) a nine-month program period for a class of 18 to 25 students.

Targeted Groups:
TOP is designed for male and female students, ages 12 to 17 years, who have been designated as at-risk for school dropout or teen parenthood. Participants are more likely to come from single-parent homes and have fathers with less education in comparison to students who did not participate in an intervention program.

Contact:
Technical Assistance/ Program Implementation
Sharon Lovick Edwards
Cornerstone Consulting Group
One Green Plaza, Suite 550
Houston, TX 77042
Phone: 713-627-2322
E-mail: sedwards@cornerstone.to

Claire Wyneken, Chief Programs Officer
Wyman Center
600 Kiwanis Drive
Eureka, MO 63025
Phone: 636-938-5245 x 236
Fax: 636-938-5289
E-mail: clairew@wymancenter.org

Too Good for Drugs and Violence (TGFD)

http://www.mendezfoundation.org/educationcenter/tgfd/tgfdclassroom/hs.htm
http://www.mendezfoundation.org/educationcenter/tgfd/index.htm

Too Good for Drugs and Violence-High School is a comprehensive prevention education program designed to equip students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to remain safe and drug free. Too Good for Drugs and Violence-High School promotes

bonding; develops positive life skills; establishes positive, violence- and drug-free norms; and completes a consistent, comprehensive K–12 prevention plan.

Targeted Groups:
Students in grades 9 through 12 are targeted.

Contact:
Mendez Foundation
601 South Magnolia Avenue
Tampa, FL 33606
Phone: 800-750-0986
Fax: 813-251-3237
E-mail: sales@mendezfoundation.org

Truant Recovery Program
http://guide.helpingamericasyouth.gov/programdetail.cfm?id=50

The Truant Recovery Program is a preventive, rather than punitive, collaborative effort between the school district and all community police jurisdictions within its boundaries. Its primary task is to return truant students to school as soon as possible. The program operates under the authority of the Student Welfare and Attendance (SWAT) Office and authorizes the local police jurisdictions to make contact with students on the streets during school hours. A student without a valid excuse slip is taken into temporary custody and transported to the SWAT office for processing. SWAT personnel attempt to contact the youth's parents for an in-person meeting during which both student and parent can be counseled, and the parent can return the child to school. If a parent cannot be reached, the school site is contacted, and SWAT personnel return the youth to school. Both the school and SWAT office closely monitor the student's attendance in the future.

Targeted Groups:
Students ages 11 through 18 are targeted for the program.

Contact:
Alan Del Simone
Student Welfare and Attendance Office
West Contra Costa Unified School District
5000 Patterson Circle
Richmond, CA 94805
Phone: 510-232-6379
Fax: 510-232-6395
E-mail: adelsimone@wccusd.k12.ca.us

Union Alternative School
http://www.unionps.org/secondary/secondary_curriculum_alternativeedu.htm

The Union Alternative Education Program was created to better meet the needs of Union students who have been unsuccessful in the regular education program. This is NOT a punishment program. Instead, it is intended to lead students toward success in the mainstream of education through the use of innovative teaching techniques, greater access to counseling services, more individualized course study, flexible scheduling, lower student/teacher ratios (15:1 or less), and a more supportive classroom atmosphere. The goals of the program include: (1) a reduced dropout rate, (2) an increase in the number of academic credits earned, (3) a decrease in the number of classes failed, (4) a reduction in absences, (5) an increase in grade point averages, (6) an improvement in criterion-referenced test scores, (7) a reduction in behavioral problems, and (8) the approval of the program by patrons.

Targeted Groups:
Returning dropouts, at-risk youth, and students with drug/alcohol issues, juvenile justice backgrounds, social/emotional problems, academic deficiencies, and oppositional personalities in grades 9 through 12 are the participant population of the Union Alternative School.

Contact:
Richard Storm
Principal
Union Alternative School
5656 South 129th East Avenue
Tulsa, OK 74134
Phone: 918-459-6566
Fax: 918-459-6566
E-mail: stormr@unionps.org

Upward Bound

www.ed.gov/print/programs/trioupbound/index.html

Upward Bound is a Federal TRIO Program that provides fundamental support to participants in their preparation for college entrance. It provides opportunities for students to succeed in pre-college performance and ultimately in higher education pursuits. The goal of Upward Bound is to increase the rates at which participants enroll in and graduate from institutions of post-secondary education.

Targeted Groups:
High School students from low-income families, high school students from families in which neither parent holds a bachelor's degree, and low-income, first-generation military veterans who are preparing to enter post-secondary education are targeted.

Contact:
Larry Oxendine
Director
Federal TRIO Programs, USDOE
1990 K Street, NW, 7th Floor
Washington, DC 20006

Dr. Paul Beasley
Director
University of SC TRIO Programs
1400 Wheat Street
Columbia, SC 29208
E-mail: pbeasley@gwm.sc.edu

WorkKeys®/KeyTrain®

www.workkeys.com
www.keytrain.com

ACT's WorkKeys® Employment System is a comprehensive system for measuring, communicating, and improving common skills required for success in the workplace. It allows the skills to be quantitatively assessed both in individuals and in actual jobs. It identifies individuals who have the basic skills required to be successful in given positions or careers. Benefits to educators using the WorkKeys® Assessment and follow-up instruction such as KeyTrain® include helping schools identify the gaps between student skills and employment needs and aligning curricula to meet job skills employers require, enabling students to see a reason to take course work seriously, and increasing the chances that graduates will be successful in the workplace.

Targeted Groups:

Targeted groups include high school students, prospective employees, and individuals in need of literacy development.

Contact:
Sheila Boyington
President
Thinking Media – KeyTrain
340 Frazier Avenue
Chattanooga, TN 37405
Phone: 877-842-6205
E-mail: info@keytrain.com

ACT WorkKeys
Phone: 800-WORKKEY or (800-967-5539)
E-mail: workkey@act.org

YouthBuild

http://www.youthbuild.org

YouthBuild programs are small, supportive communities usually operated by a nonprofit, independent community-based or faith-based organization. Youth work toward completion of a GED or high school diploma while learning work and social skills by building affordable housing for homeless and low-income

Targeted Groups:
In YouthBuild, the target group is unemployed and undereducated young people ages 16 to 24.

Contact:
Dorothy Stoneman
President
YouthBuild USA
58 Day Street
Somerville, MA 02144
Phone: 617-623-9900
E-mail: ybinfo@youthbuild.org

Appendix E: Literature Search Strategy

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY:

BEST PRACTICES IN DROPOUT PREVENTION

LITERATURE SEARCH

STRATEGY

AUGUST 2008

ICF INTERNATIONAL

GOALS OF THE TEA BEST PRACTICES IN DROPOUT PREVENTION LITERATURE SEARCH

The goals of the Best Practices in Dropout Prevention literature search are to:

- Provide a comprehensive and unbiased literature search to study dropout prevention programs in Texas and the rest of the United States.
- Limit the search results to studies specifically about K-12 school dropout, not dropouts from other programs (college, exercise class, etc.).

Our approach is to first do a wide scan of the literature on key terms and then to narrow this focus to literature that fits within the parameters of the Dropout Prevention Screening Guide. In order to be both all-inclusive and organized, we will utilize specific search strategies, described in this document, to search for the literature, and then track our search process. This efficient process will allow the literature review to be defensible to peer reviewers who will critique the overall review.

In preparation to search the literature for studies to potentially include in the review, we have outlined the following:

Search Terms/Keywords

From Eric Thesaurus:

- Academic persistence
- Benchmarking
- C*ontinuation* students
- Demonstration programs
- Dropout attitudes
- Dropout behavior, prediction of
- Dropout characteristics
- Dropout prevention
- Dropout programs
- Dropout rate
- Dropout research
- Dropouts
- Educational assessment
- Evaluation
- High school
- High school dropouts
- High school equivalency programs
- Intervention
- Junior high school
- Middle school
- Models
- Persistence
- Potential dropouts
- Program effectiveness
- Resilience
- Retention
- School completion
- School dropouts
- School holding power
- Student attrition
- Student wastage
- Withdrawal

Sample search strategy:

dropout* AND school* AND prevent* AND evaluation*

Appropriate Time Frame of Literature

- Studies must be published after 1995. Articles from 1995-2003 were culled from the WWC database of studies pertaining to dropout prevention, and an additional electronic search will be conducted to include studies that have taken place since 2003.

Relevance of Literature

Our initial search of the literature will continue to be broad. The titles and abstracts of each search will be added to a database. Later, this database will be screened to include only studies that fit within the criteria laid out by the Best Practices in Dropout Prevention Screening Guide.

Hand Searches of Literature

Although hand searches have been shown to capture a wider swath of literature than electronic searches alone, there is not enough time left in this contract to scan tables of contents from journals and other sources. The What Works Clearinghouse included a hand search, and the ICF/NDPC team has access to these results.

Collection of Articles

Since the ultimate purpose of the Best Practices in Dropout Prevention study is to identify programs and practices that have been proven to result in lower dropout rates, there will be a need to disaggregate results and identify specific components of program implementation. Therefore, full text articles should be collected whenever possible.

Electronic Database Search Guidelines[135]

Core List of Electronic Databases

This is the core list of electronic databases that are considered and are to be searched across topics. See comments under each of the databases.

1. Academic Search Elite

   Description:

   Academic institutions worldwide depend on this database as their core resource of scholarly information. *Academic Search Elite* contains full text for more than 2,000 journals, including more than 1,550 peer-reviewed titles. This multi-disciplinary database covers virtually every area of academic study. More than 140 journals have PDF images back to 1985. This database is updated on a daily basis via EBSCO*host.*

2. PsycINFO

   Description:

   PsycINFO , from the American Psychological Association (APA), contains nearly 2.4 million citations and summaries of scholarly journal articles, book chapters, books, and dissertations, all in psychology and related disciplines, dating as far back as the 1800s. 98% of the covered material is peer-reviewed. Journal coverage, which spans 1887 to present, includes international material selected from more than 2,200 periodicals in more than 27 languages.

3. PsycARTICLES

   Description:

   PsycARTICLES, from the American Psychological Association (APA), is a definitive source of full-text, peer-reviewed scholarly and scientific articles in psychology. The database contains more than 134,000 articles from 63 journals - 50 published by the APA and its imprint, the Educational Publishing Foundation (EPF) - and 13 from allied organizations. It includes all journal articles, book reviews, letters to the editor, and errata from each journal. Coverage spans 1894 to present; nearly all APA journals go back to Volume 1, Issue 1.

[135] Databases and descriptions from the EBSCOhost database search

4. ERIC

Description:

ERIC, the Educational Resource Information Center, contains more than 1,194,000 records and links to more than 100,000 full-text documents from *ERIC*.

5. PsycEXTRA

Description:

PsycEXTRA, produced by the American Psychological Association (APA), is a bibliographic and full-text companion to the scholarly *PsycINFO* database. The document types included in *PsycEXTRA* consist of technical, annual and government reports, conference papers, newsletters, magazines, newspapers, consumer brochures and more. It contains more than 100,000 records with nearly a quarter million full-text pages.

6. GalleryWatch CRS Reports

Description:

GalleryWatch CRS Reports contains the largest and most up-to-date collection of CRS (Congressional Research Service) reports available online. These reports are initially generated for Members of Congress and include nonpartisan, objective analysis and research on all legislative issues. Content spans 1993-present and covers a host of subject areas, including economics, environment, foreign affairs, immigration, medicine, civil rights, national security, terrorism and more.

7. Education Research Complete
Description:

Education Research Complete is the definitive online resource for education research. Topics covered include all levels of education from early childhood to higher education, and all educational specialties, such as multilingual education, health education, and testing. *Education Research Complete* provides indexing and abstracts for more than 1,840 journals, as well as full text for more than 950 journals, and includes full text for more than 81 books and monographs, and for

numerous education-related conference papers.

8. SocINDEX with Full Text
Description:

SocINDEX™ with Full Text is the world's most comprehensive and highest quality sociology research database. Its extensive scope and content provide users with a wealth of extremely useful information encompassing the broad spectrum of sociological study. The database features more than 1,986,000 records with subject headings from a 19,600+ term sociological thesaurus designed by subject experts and expert lexicographers. *SocINDEX with Full Text* offers comprehensive coverage of sociology, encompassing all sub-disciplines and closely related areas of study. These include abortion, criminology & criminal justice, demography, ethnic & racial studies, gender studies, marriage & family, political sociology, religion, rural & urban sociology, social development, social psychology, social structure, social work, socio-cultural anthropology, sociological history, sociological research, sociological theory, substance abuse & other addictions, violence and many others. In addition,

List of Research Organizations to Search for Evaluation Reports or Other Studies

Relevant Research and Policy Organizations

Organizations that conduct research relevant to education in general as well as the specific topic are excellent sources of articles. Topic-specific clearinghouses are also good sources of research. By conducting literature searches on organization websites, we will be able to capture a wide swath of the "grey literature" which is necessary to avoid publication bias.

Determining Sites to Search

Core Research and Policy Organizations:

For all educational topics, the following websites should be searched:

American Institutes for Research	www.air.org	Urban Institute	www.urban.org/
Consortium for Policy Research in Education	www.cpre.org/	National Science Foundation	www.nsf.gov
RAND	www.rand.org	American Federation of Teachers	www.aft.org
Mathematica Policy Research	www.mathematica-mpr.com/	National Education Association	www.nea.org
ED-funded National Research and Development Centers	http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/oieresearch/edresources_6.html	American Youth Policy Forum	www.aypf.org
SRI International	http://www.sri.com/	Education Commission of the States (ECS)	http://ecs.org/
Society for Prevention Research	http://www.preventionresearch.org/	Abt Associates	http://www.abtassoc.com/
Manpower Development Research Corporation (MDRC)	http://www.mdrc.org/	National Institute of Child Health and Development (NICHD)	http://www.nichd.nih.gov/
ED site that covers announcements of new competitions (mostly for prospective registry)	http://www.ed.gov/fund/data/award/edpicks.jhtml?src=ln	Clinical Trials	http://clinicaltrials.gov
Academy for Educational Development (Center for Youth Development and Policy Research)	http://cydpr.aed.org/	National Dropout Prevention Center/Network	http://www.dropoutprevention.org/
The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement	http://www.csrclearinghouse.org/	Gates Foundation	http://www.gatesfoundation.org/
Texas Education Agency Dropout Prevention Site	http://www.tea.state.tx.us/dpchse/	University of Texas	http://www.utexas.edu/research/
U.S. Department of Labor	http://www.dol.gov/dol/library.htm	REL: Regional Educational Laboratory Program	http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/
SEDL: *Southwest Educational Development Laboratory*	www.sedl.org	NCJRS: National Criminal Justice Reference Service	http://www.ncjrs.gov/
HUD: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	❖ http://www.hud.gov/	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information	http://ncadi.samhsa.gov/research/

Scan each organization's site for relevant publications.

- Enter main keywords (from electronic searches) in website search engines
- In Google (www.google.com): type the following in the search field: "keyword" site: site.org, where *keyword* is the keyword you want to search for and *site.org* is the website address
- General scanning using the website menus (e.g., publications page)

Appendix F: Summary of Effects, by Program

Average Effect Sizes by Program
(effect size range per variable)

Intervention	School Level	Tier (1 or 2)	HS Diploma	GED	Dropout Rate	Attendance	Reading	Math	Credits	Promotion	Recovery	Overall Average Effect Size
Accelerated Middle Schools	MS	1			0.46 (-0.12, 1.0)							**0.46**
ALAS	HS	2				0.74					0.64	**0.61**
Alternative High Schools	HS	1	0.53 (0.06, 0.9)	-0.04 (-0.2, 0.1)								**0.25**
Belief Academy	MS	2										**0.00**
Cal-Learn	HS	2	0.04	0.31	0.19			0.37				**0.17**
Career Academies	HS	1	0.11 (-0.08, 0.6)	0.20	0.46 (0.3, 0.6)				0.29			**0.21**
Check and Connect	ES, HS	1	-0.07	0.38	0.47 (0.08, 0.9)	0.52			0.39 (-0.04, 0.8)	0.24		**0.32**
Communities in Schools	ES, MS, HS	2	0.20	0.29		0.21	0.10	0.21				**0.20**
Effective Learning Program	HS	2	1.71									**1.71**
Job Corps	HS	2	-0.23 (-0.3, 0.1)	0.41 (-0.08, 0.3)								**0.06**
LEAP	HS	2	-0.03	0.21								**0.06**
Middle College High School	HS	2	0.12	-0.08	-0.08							**-0.01**
New Century High School	HS	2				0.14				1.51		**0.83**
New Chance	HS	2	-0.27	0.30								**0.01**
Project COFFEE	HS	1			0.18 (-0.5, 2.0)							**0.18**
Project GRAD	ES, MS, HS	1	-0.07			-0.09	0.46 (0.3, 0.6)	0.55 (0.5, 0.6)	-0.06	0.03		**0.14**
Quantum Opportunity Program	HS	2	0.00 (-0.1, 0.15)									**0.00**
Solution Focused Alternative School	HS	2				-1.38			-0.43			**-0.91**
Talent Development High School	HS	2	-0.03			0.25 (-0.01, 0.3)	-0.05	0.72 (0.2, 0.95)				**0.22**
Talent Search	HS	1										**0.00**
Twelve Together	MS	2			0.33							**0.33**
Overall Avg Effect Size			**0.15**	**0.24**	**0.33**	**0.06**	**0.17**	**0.49**	**0.11**	**0.77**	**0.44**	