

## BRINGING THE DROPOUT CHALLENGE INTO FOCUS

### ● The Dropout Crisis

**The statistics are striking: At least one in five students drop out of school and nearly 5 million 18- to 24-year-olds lack a high school diploma.<sup>1</sup> All states have “dropout factories,” schools that fail to promote at least 40 percent of 9<sup>th</sup> graders to 12<sup>th</sup> grade within three years.<sup>2</sup> This is a call to action, a call to change, a chance to step up and do our part.**

- The national graduation rate is **69 percent**, with nearly one-third of all public high school students failing to graduate. Globally, United States ranked 20<sup>th</sup> out of 28 in high school graduation rates and 14<sup>th</sup> in college graduation rates among developed nations.<sup>3</sup>
- The rate at which students drop out has remained the same for the last 30 years, even as spending on education has increased significantly.
- The overall graduation rate masks considerable variability among demographic groups.
  - Students from historically disadvantaged minority groups (Hispanic and Black) have little more than a fifty percent chance of finishing high school with a diploma. The graduation rate among students of color is as much as 25 percentage points below their White peers. By comparison, graduation rates for Whites and Asians are 75 and 77 percent nationally.<sup>4</sup>
  - Males graduate from high school at a rate 8 percent lower than female students. Rates of high school completion for males from historically disadvantaged minority groups consistently fall at or below the 50 percent mark.
  - Students from low-income families drop out at four times the rate of students from high-income families in grades 10 through 12. A student who comes from the lowest quartile of family income is about seven times more likely to drop out of high school than his/her counterpart who come from the highest quartile.<sup>5</sup>
  - No state has higher than an 88 percent graduation rate, and 10 states have rates below 66 percent. Graduation rates in the Northeast (73 percent) and Midwest (77 percent) are higher than the overall national figure, while graduation rates in the South (65 percent) and West (69 percent) are lower than the national figure.
- The consequences of dropping out of school are severe, both for individuals and states.
  - Dropouts are greatly overrepresented in U.S. prisons. The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that 68 percent of the nation's state prison inmates are dropouts. Dropouts constitute 62 percent of White inmates, 69 percent of Black inmates, and 78 percent of Hispanic inmates.<sup>6</sup>
  - The earnings of a high school dropout are only about 70 percent of those of high school graduates—an average difference of \$8,445. Over a lifetime, a high school dropout earns an average \$636,000 less than a college graduate and \$260,000 less than those of high school graduates.
  - U.S. taxpayers could save \$45 billion annually if the number of high school dropouts were cut in half.<sup>7</sup> Dropouts pay about 42 percent of what high school graduates pay in federal and state income taxes each year (\$1,600 and \$3,800, respectively). Over a lifetime, the difference in the discounted present value of federal and state income tax revenues is about \$60,000. Given a cohort of 600,000 eighteen-year-old dropouts, these estimates suggest a yearly loss of \$36 billion in state and federal income taxes.

<sup>1</sup> David Hurst, Dana Kelly, and Daniel Princiotta, *Educational Attainment of High School Dropouts 8 Years Later*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (2004).

<sup>2</sup> Everyone Graduates Center, The Johns Hopkins University, *State Summary Table: Promoting Power*, (2007).

<sup>3</sup> Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Editorial Projects in Education, *Diploma Count 2010: Graduating by the Number: Putting Data to Work for Student Success*, special issue (2010).

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Education, NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics 2009*.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Justice 2004, 2009.

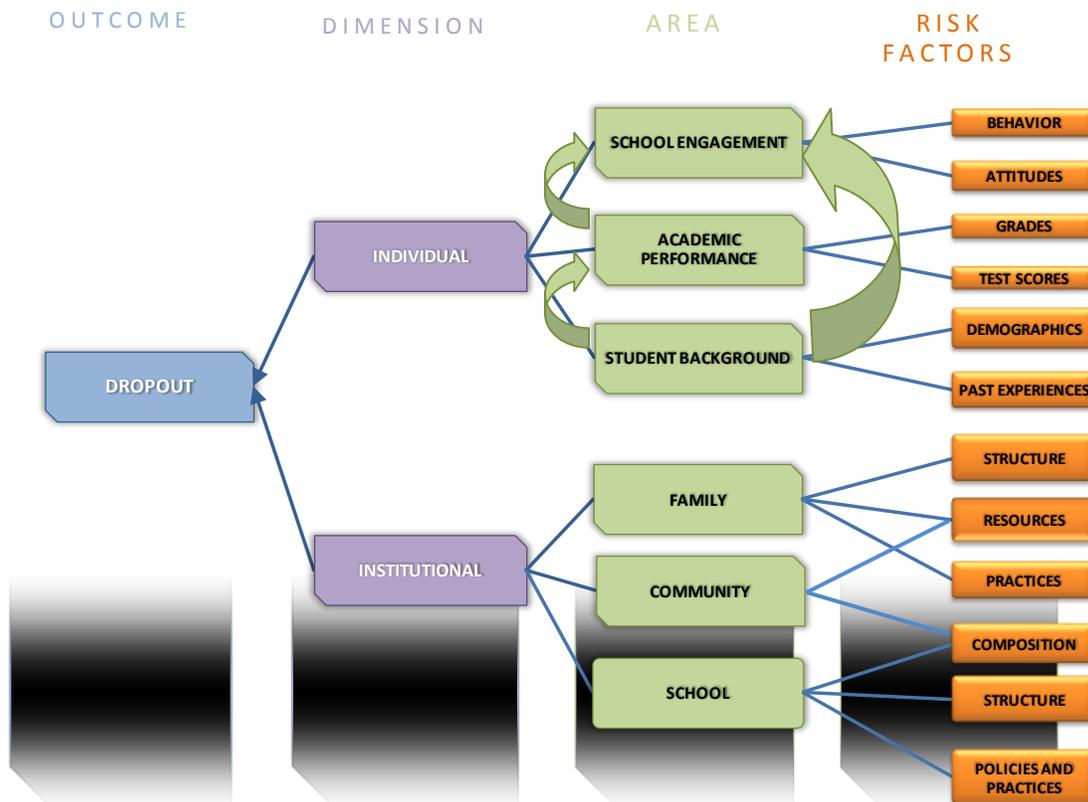
<sup>7</sup> Henry Levin, Clive Belfield, Peter Muennig, and Cecilia Rouse, *The Costs and Benefits of an Excellent Education for All of America's Children* (New York, N.Y.: Columbia University, Teachers College, (2007).

● Why Students Drop Out of School

Dropping out is more of a long-term process than an event—a process that, for some students, begins in early elementary school. Research has found that as early as elementary school, dropouts differ from students who graduate from high school<sup>8</sup>. If schools could identify students at risk of dropping out early in their school years, then early interventions could be developed to help such students.

Early school withdrawal reflects a complex interplay among student, family, school, and community variables, as well as risk and protective factors. A review of 25 years of research on dropouts identified two conceptual frameworks to explain why students drop out of school.<sup>9</sup>

- One framework is based on an *individual* perspective that focuses on individual risk factors associated with dropping out. Within this framework, student stability is viewed as both a cause and a consequence of engagement in school. There are reciprocal relationships among the individual risk factors that change over time: changes in engagement, stability, and achievement as students’ progress through school affect later attitudes, social relationships, and school experiences. Engagement and achievement are both influenced by students’ backgrounds prior to school.
- The other framework is based on an *institutional* perspective that focuses on the contextual factors. School and family policies and practices are critical.<sup>10</sup> Schools with the greatest holding power tend to have relatively small enrollment, fair discipline policies, caring teachers, high expectations, and opportunities for meaningful participation. Policies that support suspension and grade retention for students who are deemed not ready to advance have been linked to higher dropout rates. Family factors associated with reduced dropout rates include parental support, monitoring and supervision, high regard for education, and positive expectations regarding school performance.



<sup>8</sup> Russell W. Rumberger, *Early Predictions of High School Graduation and Dropout* (2007).

<sup>9</sup> Russell Rumberger and Sun Ah Lim, *Why Students Drop Out of School: A Review of 25 Years of Research* (2008).

<sup>10</sup> Christenson, S.L., Sinclair, M.F., Lehr, C.A., & Godber, *Promoting successful school completion: Critical conceptual and methodological guidelines*. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 16, 468–484, (2001).

Research on why students drop out is robust, and the reasons that students drop out of school are complex. In the eyes of many educators, some of these factors are intractable.

A review on dropout research raises two important issues about studying the causes of dropout behavior.

- The factors often identified in such studies are not usually alterable by school personnel. Lists of factors such as ethnicity, family structure and mobility, and teen pregnancy discourage educators who feel that even their best efforts may be doomed by social and economic circumstances beyond their control.
- Self-report data on reasons for dropping out may be uninformed, unreliable, or self-serving.

The school control and early intervention over the predictors that are more versus less easy to influence provides a suggested course of action for educators. Finn (1989) made an important distinction when he contrasted background predictor variables such as socioeconomic status, which educators have little ability to change, and behavioral or alterable predictor variables such as out-of-school suspensions and course failures, which are more readily influenced by educators.<sup>11</sup>

Current research has identified three major groupings of variables that can be modified to improve school outcomes and enable school personnel to create early interventions that hold some promise of changing the trajectory of many students.<sup>12</sup>

1. **Academic Failure.** The results of poor basic skills become more obvious as students move through the school system, often culminating with failure on high-stakes tests or in key courses at the secondary level. It becomes an endless cycle of failure and boredom that leads to poor academic self-esteem and renewed efforts by failing students to escape from the school as soon as possible.
2. **Social and Economic Pressures.** Seen as the most harmful group, this ranges from lack of family support for education to family economics that depend on students' earnings or child care responsibilities, to other issues (e.g., divorce, mobility) that interfere with a student's ability to attend to school requirements. Unfortunately, they do not depend simply on the abilities and efforts of individual students. They are strongly influenced by the broader social context of schools, families, and communities.
3. **Lack of Adult Guidance and Mentoring.** Many students do not have access to either role models or good advice for school success. Often, these students are isolated by economics, social status, or geography from communities in which they might encounter non-family role models as well; many of the adults they encounter in impoverished communities are struggling with the economic and employment consequences of their own school failure and are poorly equipped to give effective guidance for school success.

**The risk factors commonly found by researchers to best predict dropout for high school students are high absenteeism, being over-age by two years, having low grades, and having a child. Using these factors should help identify a group of students with the highest probability of dropping out. Dynarski and Gleason (1998) found that these factors would, in fact, identify a group where one in three students would actually drop out.**

## ● When Can Schools Affect Dropout Behavior?

**While different students begin their disengagement from school for different reasons, two clear paths emerge: one rooted primarily in academic struggle and failure and another grounded more in behavioral reactions to the school environment (misbehavior in school or a demonstrated aversion to attending school).**

There is a difference between the exact moment when students leave school and the process of disengaging from school that often begins well before they arrive at the moment when they leave school. A lack of engagement with school is considered a precursor to dropout, and signs of disengagement perhaps provide the best window of opportunity to target resources for dropout prevention, particularly if students are not yet failing core coursework. For prevention to be effective, schools must engage all students in learning, and they must focus specifically on the problem of re-engaging students who have become disengaged from classroom learning.

<sup>11</sup> Finn, J.D., *Withdrawing from school*. Review of Educational Research, 59, 117–124, (1989).

<sup>12</sup> Dynarski, M., Clarke, L., Cobb, B., Finn, J., Rumberger, R., and Smink, J., *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, (2008).

- Some scholars suggest that *the cumulative process of school disengagement may begin as early as elementary grades*.<sup>13</sup> The first five years of development are a critical period for learning. When children enter school without a basic knowledge of the world around them, their place in it, and the vocabulary and spatial skills they need to take the next steps in learning, they are at a disadvantage that can persist throughout their school career. Interventions at an early age through school readiness initiatives were found to even the gaps that can lead to disengagement and dropping out.
- *Most future dropouts may be identified as early as sixth grade*. Following nearly 13,000 Philadelphia students, Balfanz and Herzog (2006) found that 48% of all sixth-grade students had four school-related risk factors – course failure in English and Math, unsatisfactory behavior, and poor attendance (80% of the time or less) – that were all associated with an increased risk of not completing high school.<sup>14</sup> Sixty percent of these students eventually left school. The findings suggest that schools should build data systems to early capture these indicators as the sign of disengagement and to develop mechanisms that trigger, and ensure there is follow-through, on the appropriate support for the students.
- The impact of a strong risk factor, *retention*, often varies depending upon when it occurs in the life course. Retention in any grade turns out to have a negative impact on a student’s odds of making it through the ninth grade, but retention in the middle grades is particularly problematic.<sup>15</sup> Once students get off track in ninth grade, bringing them to successful high school graduation is extremely difficult. If these students reach middle school already overage for their grade, when they experience a second grade retention in the middle grades, they begin to disengage from schooling altogether. And, in the middle grades and beyond, as schools fill up with overage and under-motivated students, the school culture itself becomes vulnerable to depressed expectations and mediocre practice. Such a situation does not bode well for learning that meets “higher standards”.
  - I. Teachers appear divided about the effect of retention on students’ self-concept and whether retention for the purpose of an extra year for growth and maturity is justified.<sup>16,17</sup>
  - II. In a survey of views on grade repetition, teachers and principals described common characteristics of retained children as under-motivated and developmentally immature, while at the same time, agreeing that emotional immaturity is an appropriate rationale for retention.<sup>18</sup>
  - III. Tomchin and Impara (1992) believe that it is critical for schools to implement staff development in which teachers (a) examine their own beliefs about retention, (b) are presented with research evidence about the short-term and long-term effects of retention, and (c) are trained in schoolwide classroom intervention strategies.

## ● How Can Schools Address the Dropout Problem: ‘The Big Five’ Elements?

An examination of the dropout-prevention interventions that show measurable results from different perspectives and levels shines some light on what it likely takes to reduce a student’s chance of dropping out. Successful programs have some or most of the ‘big five’ elements in common. Most of them are supported by the findings from a comprehensive study of dropouts, from the perspective of the students themselves, ‘The Silent epidemic’.

1. ***Close mentoring and monitoring of students.*** A competent, compassionate mentor and advisor who can help students successfully negotiate the schooling process and minimize the effects of social and economic conditions on their school performance. Teachers are encouraged to serve as mentors as well as instructors, and classes are kept small to foster high levels of individual attention.

**While 65 percent of dropouts said there was a staff member or teacher who cared about their success, only 56 percent said they could go to a staff person for school problems, and just 41 percent had someone in school to talk to about personal problems. More than three out of five (62 percent) said their school needed to do more to help students with problems outside of class. Seven in ten favored more parental involvement.**

<sup>13</sup> Entwisle, D. R., Alexander, K. L., & Olson, L. S. *Children, schools, and inequality*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. (1997).

<sup>14</sup> Robert Balfanz and Lisa Herzog, *Keeping middle grades students on track to graduation* (2006).

<sup>15</sup> Alexander, K. L., Entwisle, D. R., & Kabbani, N. S. , *The dropout process in life course perspective: Early risk factors at home and school*, Teachers College Record, 103, 760–822. (2001).

<sup>16</sup> Tanner, C.K., & Combs, F.E., *Student retention policy: The gap between research and practice.*, Journal of Research in Childhood Education, 8, 69–77, (1993).

<sup>17</sup> Tomchin, E.M., & Impara, J.C., *Unraveling teachers’ beliefs about grade retention*. American Educational Research Journal, 29, 199–223, (1992).

<sup>18</sup> Byrnes, D., & Yamamoto, K.Y., *Academic grade retention of elementary pupils: An inside look*. Education, 106, 208–214, (1985).

2. **High quality instruction** provided by teachers who believe in the potential of every student to succeed and who help students develop a positive vision for their own educational future and encourage them to see the relevance of school and learning in their personal lives and future goals.

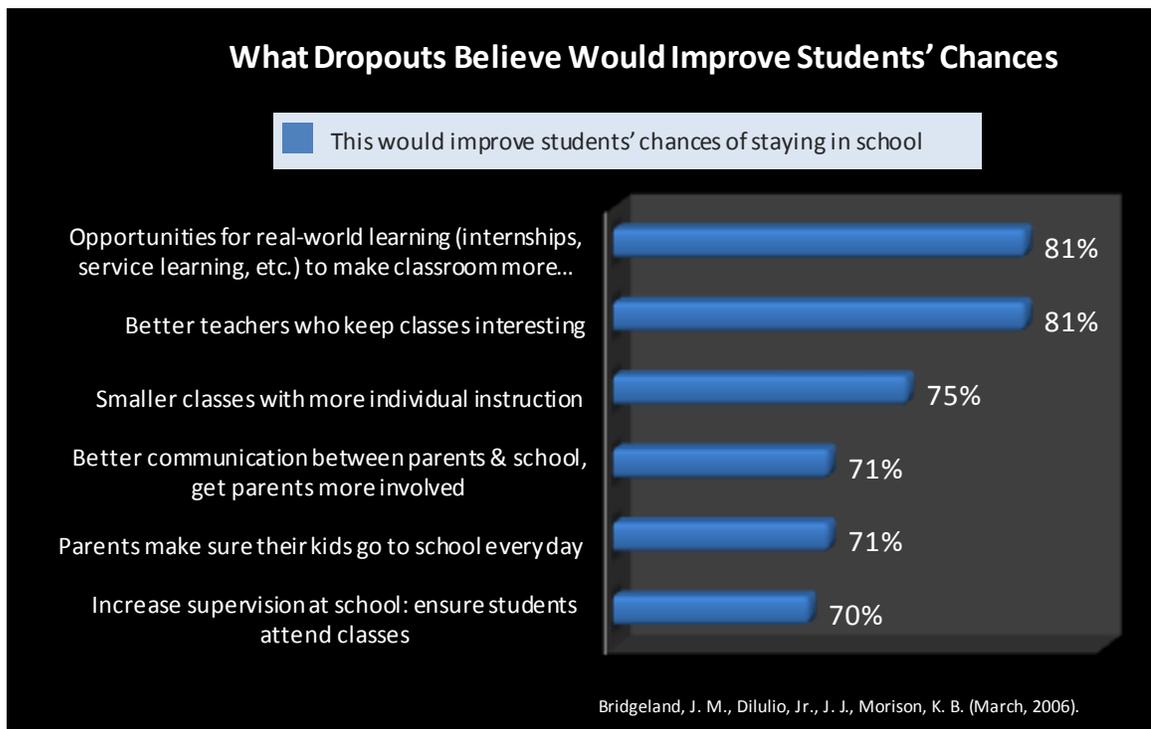
Four out of five dropouts (81 percent) wanted better teachers, and three-fourths wanted smaller classes with more individualized instruction. More than half (55 percent) felt that more needed to be done to help students who had problems learning, and 70 percent believed more tutoring, summer school and extra time with teachers would have improved their chances of graduating.

3. **A rigorous, engaging curriculum** that is connected to students' lives and futures and is designed to keep the students on grade level and progressing toward graduation.

Four out of five (81 percent) said there should be more opportunities for real-world learning, and some in the focus groups called for more experiential learning. They said students need to see the connection between school and getting a good job.

4. **Targeted academic and social interventions** that are planned on the basis of accurate diagnostic and accountability data. Schools are encouraged to include opportunities for struggling students to receive additional support.
5. **Communication links between parents and schools** to effectively monitor and regulate student activities, talk with them about their problems, encourage individual decision making, exchange information about school performance, and ensure that such problems are addressed early and quickly.

Seventy-one percent of dropouts surveyed felt that one of the keys to keeping students in school was to have better communication between the parents and school and also increasing parental involvement in their child's education. Less than half said their school contacted their parents or themselves when they were absent (47 percent) or when they dropped out (48 percent).



While there are no simple solutions to the dropout crisis, there are clearly "supports" that could be provided to improve students' chances of staying in school. While most dropouts blame themselves for failing to graduate, there are things they say schools can do to help them finish.

## ● From Theory to Practice: What Works...And How Well?

Recently, there has been a shift toward investigating alterable variables—behaviors and attitudes that reflect students' connection to school as well as family and school practices that support children's learning—because they have greater utility for interventions.

### ➤ Target Youth at Risk of Dropping Out

- Action 1:** *Identify Students Likely to Drop Out with Early Warning Data Systems* – For example, Louisiana has pioneered the development of a state early warning data system. The state's system flags students as at risk of dropping out if they are absent 10 percent of the days they have been enrolled, their discipline count is 7 percent of days or greater, their current grade point average is 1.00 or less, their grade point average has dropped by at least 0.50, or they are overage for grade.<sup>19</sup>
- Action 2:** *Target Investments to Promising Dropout Prevention Strategies* – For example, reducing class sizes for a cohort of students from 25 to 15 in kindergarten through grade 3 means an increase in graduation rates of 11 percentage points.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, improving teacher quality and early reading skills have been linked to decreased dropout rates in the long run.<sup>21</sup> In addition, developing the early childhood initiative, Perry Preschool program, for every 100 children participating in the program, an additional 19 children eventually graduated high school. Furthermore, at-risk 9th-grade students who participated in an expanded learning opportunity called the Quantum Opportunities Program graduated high school at a rate about 20 percentage points higher than their peers who did not participate.<sup>22</sup>
- Action 3:** *Connect Students to Supports* – For example, since Georgia launched its graduation coaches initiative, the percentage of dropouts per year fell from 4.7 percent to 3.7 percent. After a year of work with graduation coaches, 40 percent of the students at risk no longer demonstrated attendance problems.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, Alabama has established a pilot program that will provide \$1.7 million in funding to 25 pilot schools to hire dropout prevention advisors.<sup>24</sup>

### ➤ Reengage Youth Who Have Dropped Out of School

- Action 1:** *Create Incentives for Dropout Recovery* - For example, school districts in Oregon receive full funding for each dropout they recover and place in an alternative education program, but they only pay 80 percent of the funding to external alternative education programs.<sup>25</sup> Several states have annual recognition programs, such as Teacher of the Year, that highlight the good work of an individual or a school.
- Action 2:** *Employ Outreach Strategies to Reengage Out-of-School Youth* - For example, in Texas, volunteers, including district superintendents, visit the homes of students who do not return to school in the fall through the Reach Out to Dropouts program. The program has recovered more than 5,500 students in Houston since 2004.<sup>26</sup>

### ➤ Provide Options for Earning a High School Diploma

- Action:** *Create Pathways for all students to graduate high school.* Clear connections to postsecondary and workforce interests, including dual enrollment, internships, and apprenticeships, keep students engaged in school with a focus on their future goals. For example, Former Governor Tim Kaine of Virginia has spurred the development of nine Governor's Career and Technical Academies that enable high school students to earn college credit in programs such as automotive technology, engineering, digital media, health sciences, and information technology.

<sup>19</sup> Patricia Merrick, *Louisiana Dropout Early Warning Systems (DEWS)* (2009).

<sup>20</sup> Henry Levin, Clive Belfield, Peter Muennig, and Cecilia Rouse, *The Costs and Benefits of an Excellent Education for All of America's Children*, New York, N.Y.: Columbia University, Teachers College, (2007).

<sup>21</sup> Dolores A. Stegelin, *Early Literacy Education: First Steps Toward Dropout Prevention: Effective Strategies for School Improvement and Dropout Prevention*, Clemson, S.C.: National Dropout Prevention Center, (2002).

<sup>22</sup> Anne Bowles and Betsy Brand, *Learning Around the Clock: Benefits of Expanded Learning Opportunities for Older Youth*, Washington, D.C.: American Youth Policy Forum, (2008).

<sup>23</sup> Georgia Department of Education, *Georgia Graduation Coach Initiative: 2007-2008 Report*, (2009).

<sup>24</sup> Alabama Department of Education, *Statewide Pilot Programs Aimed to Boost Graduation Rates*, news release (2007).

<sup>25</sup> Nancy Martin and Samuel Halperin, *Whatever It Takes: How Twelve Communities Are Reconnecting Out-of-School Youth*, (Washington, D.C.: American Youth Policy Forum, (2006).

<sup>26</sup> Gary Fields, *The High School Dropout's Economic Ripple Effect: Mayors Go Door to Door, Personally Encouraging Students to Stay in the Game for Their Own Good—and for the Sake of the City*, Wall Street Journal, 21 (2008).

• **Small steps in every school....Meaningful Change!**

In *Gaining Traction, Gaining Ground* (2005), the Education Trust reported on actions the principal can take at the school level to make substantial improvements for struggling students and produce results well above state averages for achievement, graduation, and college attendance. Certainly, some of these actions are easier than others, and some require an abundance of leadership, but, according to this research, all are linked to improving success and educational opportunities for the most challenged high school students. The table below shows how high impact high schools differ from average impact schools on ten key leadership domains.

	High Impact School Practice	Average Impact School Practice
Teacher Placement	Principals are more likely to consider student achievement data to determine which classes teachers will be assigned. They review and analyze achievement data, observe teachers' strengths and weakness to ensure struggling students get the teachers who can best accelerate learning.	Principals are more likely to assign teachers to classes based on teacher preference and seniority. For example, department heads often teach only honors and AP classes, while struggling students are taught by less experienced teachers.
Support for New Teachers	Support for new teachers is structured and focuses on curriculum and instruction. New teachers are given model lesson plans, are paired with veteran teachers who teach the same class, and given opportunities to observe master teachers.	Support for new teachers tends to focus on personal support. For example, new teachers meet with administrators to chat about how things are going. The focus is on teacher motivation, rather than helping teachers to develop skills to better serve their students.
Hiring Practices	Principals work within their district system, but aggressively and proactively identify and recruit highly qualified teachers. They may conduct informal interviews and urge good candidates to apply through the district. They may even raid other school faculties, looking for good teachers who will support the school's culture.	Principals tend to feel constrained by district procedures and do not feel empowered to work creatively with it. They tend to take the list of candidates provided by the district and choose the "best of the bunch" from among them, seldom recruiting teachers that they think might be a good fit.
Support for Students	Student support programs tend to be mandatory and are triggered by assessments that signal the student is struggling – participation in the programs is not an option.	Student support programs tend to be voluntary – students and parents are notified of availability of help, but the decision to participate is generally left up to them.
Early Warning Systems	Schools have "early warning" systems to catch students before they fail. Counselors analyze seventh and eighth grade student test scores for entering ninth-graders to identify students who are struggling. Identified students are assigned to a variety of supports, including mandatory summer school, freshman academy classes, or after-school tutoring.	Schools tend to offer support after students have failed a course – e.g., getting an "F" in a course may result in participation in a computerized skill-acquisition course.
Grade Level Support	If possible, academic support programs for students are not remedial, but support concurrent grade-level courses, which allows students sufficient time over four years to complete the college preparatory sequence of courses.	Academic support services for students tend to be remedial in nature. Struggling ninth-graders are placed in remedial courses, delaying access to grade-level work, thus limiting the time available to students to take the necessary sequence of college-preparatory courses.
Use of Data	Principals tend to be hands-on when it comes to analyzing data. They use data to actively supervise and oversee teacher and student performance. Principals institute formal methods of analyzing data with teachers to determine course content, strengths and weaknesses. Principals may review each student's transcripts to ensure correct placement or to recognize students who have improved performance.	Principals tend to rely on teachers and departments to use data to monitor student performance and are not as involved in the analysis. At one school, for instance, the principal copied data for teachers and asked them to analyze it, but did not work directly with departments to sort out the reasons behind student achievement or how to improve results.

Class Sizes	Administrators tend to make class sizes smaller for struggling students, even if this means larger class sizes for honors and AP classes.	Class sizes are relatively uniform, with no proficiency level having smaller classes than another.
Consistency	Teachers collaborate to ensure that course content is consistent no matter who is teaching.	Teachers work individually to determine class content.
Use of Time	Students who arrive behind in ninth grade spend more time in courses with substantial reading than do students who are proficient. Administrators also act vigorously to protect time by limiting announcements over the PA system to emergencies, prohibiting students from being pulled from class except for emergencies, and requiring instruction to be “bell to bell”.	Administrators tend to consent to intrusions into academic time, such as announcements calling students to the office and early release for athletes.
<i>Source: Robinson, et. al., November, 2006</i>		

- **Effective dropout prevention models**

As Mark Dynarski and Philip Gleason write in a report on dropout prevention programs, “Dropping out is as hard to prevent as it is easy to do.” Based on the evidence, one might add that it is equally hard to identify confidently the programs that have had many of the previously cited strategies to impact dropout rates. Out of ten programs evaluated, only three of them showed positive effects in reducing dropout rates:

1. *Check & Connect model*, a relatively intensive program for (mostly) high school students, assigns a “monitor” to each student in the program to be the student’s mentor and case worker. The program carries a minimum two-year commitment to students and families, including the promise and ability to follow highly mobile students from school to school so that students do not lose services when they move from their original program site. The cost of implementing the model was about \$1,400 per student during the 2001–02 school year.
2. *Talent Development High School model* has goals related to increasing students’ school engagement and academic achievement. Common components of many reform models include: reorganizing schools into smaller “learning communities”; focusing instruction and curricula on careers or on intensive or high level English and math instruction, or both; increasing family involvement; and sometimes focusing on a college preparatory curriculum for everyone. The added cost is about \$350 per student per year.
3. *Career Academies model* has three key features. First, it is organized as a school-within-a-school: students in a smaller and more personal learning atmosphere stay with the same teachers over the three or four years of high school. Second, it includes both academic and vocational coursework, with the two integrated in the curriculum and in pedagogy. And, third, it uses partnerships between the academy and local employers to build links between school and work and to provide students with career and work-based learning opportunities. The best cost estimates are that in 2004, the per-pupil cost of educating a student in a career academy was \$600 more than the average per-pupil cost of non-academy students.

- **Where do we go from here?**

To date, there is no single fix for the dropout problem. Develop a deliberate and systematic commitment to addressing this natural dilemma: understand the extent of the problem, develop strategies that will be supported by schools, provide the human and the financial support for these strategies, monitor what works and what doesn’t, make necessary adjustments, and celebrate progress!