II. Strategies for Locating and Reenrolling

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Reentry Programs for Out-of-School Youth With Disabilities

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Executive Summary

Dropping out of school is a problem that affects individuals, families, communities, school districts, states, and the nation. When students drop out of school, the repercussions are felt at every level of society; cities and states lose millions of dollars in state and local tax revenues due to high rates of unemployment among individuals without a high school diploma. Jobs that are available to those without a high school diploma rarely pay more than minimum wage. High school dropouts are also more likely to be incarcerated than individuals who graduate from high school.

In 2006, 1.2 million students failed to graduate. Most of these students were members of minority groups (EPE Research Center, 2006). African American and Hispanic/Latino youth are disproportionately represented among the nation's dropouts, as are students with disabilities, who are disproportionately represented by minorities. One quarter of youth classified with emotional disturbance are African American, despite their comprising only 16% of the general population (Wagner & Cameto, 2004). In the 2005-2006 school year, 45% of students with emotional disturbance dropped out of school (Planty et al., 2008, Table 22-2). In addition, 6% of 9th- through 12th-grade African American and Hispanic/Latino students dropped out, compared to 2.7% of White students (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2009, Table 107).

In addition, male students are consistently less likely than females to graduate from high school with a diploma (EPE Research Center, 2006). The Alliance for Excellent Education (2006) estimated that annual crime-related savings would be approximately $5 billion if the male graduation rate were increased by just 5%. Over a lifetime, an 18-year-old who does not complete high school earns about $260,000 less than an individual with a high school diploma and contributes about $60,000 less in federal and state income taxes. The combined income and tax losses aggregated over one cohort of 18-year-olds who did not complete high school was estimated to be about $192 billion; or 1.6% of the gross domestic product (Rouse, 2005).

High rates of incarceration among parents have also resulted in increasing numbers of children being placed into foster care, and being in the foster care system magnifies children's risk of dropping out of school. Low-paying jobs, underemployment, unemployment, and incarceration are situations that underlie high rates of poverty among high school dropouts. Living in poverty further impacts the next generation, as parents must struggle to provide adequate housing, nutrition, medical care, and educational materials for their children. In order to break the cycle that keeps multiple generations on the margins of society, it is imperative that youth who drop out are given opportunities to return to school so that they can gain credentials that pave the way to more successful futures.

Historically, very little has been done to help out-of-school youth return to the education system. However, the high rate of school dropout is now recognized for what it really is—a national crisis. As the country struggles to compete in the global economy, policymakers, community stakeholders, educational leaders, and researchers have helped bring this troubling issue to the forefront of public awareness and educational reform. A review of the reentry initiatives taking place around the country indicates that states, school districts, and nonprofit organizations are starting to recognize the importance of recovering out-of-school youth. While it is outside the scope of this report to describe every promising initiative, it is clear that efforts to recover dropouts are operating in school districts nationwide, and many reentry

programs have experienced high rates of reenrollment as a consequence (e.g., Houston Independent School District, 2010a; Gateway to College, 2010).

The approaches to contacting out-of-school youth are often quite similar; many reentry programs make initial contact with dropouts by calling them on the phone and then follow up with home visits. These methods incorporate a personal touch, which is often critical in helping students return to school. In addition to making direct contact with students, many initiatives focus on increasing public awareness; methods range from posting flyers in neighborhood establishments (e.g., youth centers and stores) to making public service announcements on television. Some school districts host ceremonies at which high profile figures are invited to speak to crowds of former students, community members, and elected officials about the importance of helping youth return to school. Oftentimes, information sharing is connected to a particular event, such as a reengagement fair at which counselors or representatives from various schools may be present. A central feature of all reentry initiatives is collaboration with community partners. Partnerships are often established with local youth-serving organizations, but may also involve assistance from law enforcement officials and local employers. The coordinated efforts of these various stakeholders are a critical first step in helping youth return to school. The next step is ensuring that they stay in school until the completion of their high school diploma.

Content and Purpose

State departments of education, school districts, and community-based organizations understand the importance of providing options for out-of-school youth to return to school to earn a high school diploma. However, after students drop out, their whereabouts are often unknown and contacting them to inform them of their options for reenrollment is therefore difficult. This report provides information on methods that have been used to locate and reenroll youth and is intended for use by state departments of education, school districts, and community-based

organizations interested in dropout recovery. Promising practices are highlighted in shaded boxes.

Many districts are using "common sense" approaches to contacting former students (e.g., calling students on the phone, recruiting outreach workers to contact students, contacting other school districts to see if students have reenrolled in other schools); however, many districts are also employing more creative methods, such as advertising reentry programs or reenrollment fairs on public systems of transportation, advertising on billboards, and making use of social networking sites and other online media such as YouTube. While there is no shortage of information on these recovery initiatives, there are currently no empirical studies assessing the effectiveness of the various initiatives. In light of this situation, this report is limited to descriptions of the methods used to locate and reenroll out-of-school youth. Whether these methods are effective in reaching the most vulnerable groups of youth is unknown. It is also not known what the long-term outcomes of reenrolled youth are in terms of their high school diploma completion.

In addition, because of the difficulties involved in differentiating between youth with and without disabilities when locating and reenrolling them, this report describes initiatives targeted towards all students regardless of disability status. Successful strategies and additional tips for locating and reenrolling youth are listed in the Appendices, along with contact details for programs that have successfully used the methods listed. Potential barriers that may be encountered when reenrolling out-of-school youth, as well as solutions from the field, are also provided. It should be noted that this report describes initiatives undertaken by just a small number of school districts and educational entities so as to provide illustrative examples.

A more complete listing of methods used to locate out-of-school students, as well as the major components of reentry programs, can be accessed through the Model Programs database on the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities' Web site at http://www.ndpc-sd.org/.

Search Methods

EBSCOhost was used to access the following electronic databases: ERIC, PsycInfo, Medline, and Academic Search Premier to find articles on locating out-of-school youth. This search resulted in articles that described dropout reentry programs, but not information on specific methods for locating dropouts. An Internet search was then conducted on reentry programs identified in the articles. The LexisNexis database was also searched for news stories about dropout recovery efforts. The search was limited to the previous five years so as to provide current information about reentry programs. A general Internet search and a search of Google News were also conducted. After obtaining information from news stories and reports, the Web sites of school districts with dropout recovery programs were consulted. Where information was not available online, a contact person at the reentry program was e-mailed to obtain information about their student outreach and recruitment efforts. Phone calls were made to obtain specific information on students with disabilities served by the programs. Directors of programs were also contacted to obtain information on barriers that they have faced, and tips that other districts and programs should consider when locating and reenrolling youth.

Search Terms

The search words and terms used in the electronic database and Internet search included: locating dropouts, out-of-school youth, reenrolling dropouts, dropout recovery, school reentry, reenrollment, dropout reengagement, dropping back in, and second chance programs. After names of specific reentry programs and initiatives were identified, these were also used as search terms. The search resulted in numerous articles about dropout recovery initiatives. In fact, newspaper articles about such initiatives are published every week from communities around the nation.

Definition of Terms

Dropout Recovery refers to activities that involve identifying dropouts and reenrolling them in school. Dropout recovery is typically initiated by school districts and community-based organizations.

Reentry refers to a dropout's return to school in order to earn a high school diploma.

Introduction

Poverty rates are highest among those without a high school diploma. This situation results from high rates of unemployment among high school dropouts (15% in 2009, compared to 10% for those with a high school diploma; United States Department of Labor, 2009, Table 7), as well as the low wages of high school dropouts who are employed. In 2006, the median family income difference between those with a four-year college degree and those who dropped out of high school was $50,000 (Haskins, Holzer, & Lerman, 2009). Even a community college degree increases annual earnings by an average of $7,900—a 29% increase over those with only a high school diploma (Furchtgott-Roth, Jacobson, & Mokher, 2009).

Students with disabilities drop out of high school at twice the rate of their nondisabled peers and students from certain disability categories have particularly high rates of dropout. In the 2003-2004 school year, students with emotional disturbance were less likely to graduate with a regular high school diploma than students in any other disability group. In fact, since the mid-1990s, students with emotional disturbance have consistently had the highest dropout rate of students in all disability groups (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). In the 2005-2006 school year, 45% of students with emotional disturbance and 25% of those with specific learning disabilities dropped out. Students with other health impairments also had high rates of dropout (23%), as did students with intellectual disabilities (22%) and multiple disabilities (19%; Planty et al., 2008, Table 22-2).

As with nondisabled students, outcomes for students with disabilities who drop out of high school are not good. Findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2) revealed that only 63% of students with disabilities were employed at some point in the four years after they dropped out, compared to 75% of students with disabilities who had completed high school. Fifty-six percent of those

who were employed had held their jobs for fewer than six months, and youth with emotional disturbance, learning disabilities, and multiple disabilities had held more jobs, on average, than youth in other disability categories (Newman, Wagner, Cameto, & Knokey, 2009).

A recent report from the Alliance for Excellent Education (2010) noted that more than 7,000 students drop out of school every day, which amounts to almost 1.3 million students per year. It was estimated that if the number of dropouts from the Class of 2008 were reduced by 50%, the combined average annual earnings would be $4.1 billion, which would allow for additional average yearly spendings of $2.8 billion and investments of $1.1 billion. These additional spendings and investments would likely be able to support 30,000 new jobs, which in turn would result in an additional $536 million in state and local tax revenues during the average year. Using different calculations, Sum, Khatiwada, McLaughlin, and Palmer (2009) estimated that the average high school dropout would have a negative net fiscal contribution to society of nearly $5,200 over their working lives, while the average high school graduate will generate a positive lifetime net fiscal contribution of $287,000. America's Promise Alliance reported that close to one-third of all 18- to 24-year-olds who had dropped out of school were "idle," participating in neither the labor force nor in educational programs (Balfanz, Fox, Bridgeland, & McNaught, 2009). Young people who are neither working nor in school are at risk for future lower earnings and poverty because they are neither investing in their education nor gaining work experience. It is important to note that although only 20% of workers needed some college for their jobs in 1959, this figure had risen to 56% by 2000 (Carnevale & Fry, 2000). Bureau of Labor Statistics employment projections for 2008-2018 indicate that the most rapid area of growth will be in professional and related occupations, which will experience an increase of more than 5.2 million jobs, while the fastest rate of decline will be in production occupations, which will experience a loss of approximately 349,200 jobs (Lacey & Wright, 2009, Table 1). In order to prepare today's youth for the workforce of tomorrow, it is critical that they are equipped with an appropriate education. A high school diploma is already a minimum requirement for entry to the labor market, and 12 of the 20 fastest growing occupations require an associate's degree or higher (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010).

Barriers to Reentry

Most students do not fully understand the necessity of entering the adult world with a high school diploma. It is typically only after students drop out that the negative repercussions of not having a diploma are felt (Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morison, 2006). Many students do not realize that they can return to school after dropping out, and those who want to return are often unaware of how to begin the reentry process. Additional barriers result from the fact that students who had poor relationships with teachers or who experienced frequent disciplinary procedures may not want to return to the same environments or may feel that they would not be welcome back. Adults who are significantly overage are often embarrassed to return to school. Fortunately, there are many reenrollment options for these individuals; however, the number of choices also complicates the reentry process. Reentry programs include charter schools, virtual schools, evening schools, adult education programs, community colleges, and alternative schools for youth with specific needs, schools with a dual focus on diploma/GED and vocational preparation, and dual enrollment high school/college programs.

Reentry options for youth in New York City also include transfer schools, Young Adult Borough Centers, and Learning to Work. In Philadelphia, students can reenroll in E[3] (Empowerment, Education, Employment) Centers and accelerated high schools. In Portland, Oregon, returning students can attend credit recovery schools, schools with flexible scheduling and proficiency-based credit, and programs that prepare students to take the GED and then transition into postsecondary education. In Los Angeles, returning students can attend continuation high schools, community day schools, education career centers, Alternative Education Work Centers (AEWC), or independent study programs. In Boston, there are also a variety of options, including small district schools, community-based alternative diploma programs, and

career exploration programs. With the numerous reentry points and program choices available to students, outreach efforts that inform students of their options are of critical importance. In fact, many states now require school districts to make parents and students aware of the available options.

Strategies to Recover Out-of-School Youth

The variety of choices for returning students makes locating out-of-school youth and informing them of their options an imperative part of the reentry process. The following section describes the dropout recovery initiatives that are being undertaken by school districts, charter schools, nonprofit organizations, public-private partnerships, and other collaborative partnerships around the country. These strategies include (a) home visits, (b) information sharing between schools, (c) collaboration with community-based organizations, (d) school expos/reengagement fairs, (e) reengagement/transition centers, (f) print and electronic media, and (g) communitywide campaigns. The responsibility for locating out-of-school youth is undertaken by various personnel and organizations, including district teams, school teams, nonprofit community-based organizations, contracted organizations, volunteers, and law enforcement officers. Initiatives involving these various entities are described following the description of strategies used to locate and reenroll out-of-school youth. A table summarizing strategies used by the various stakeholders to locate and reenroll youth is provided in Appendix A.

Home Visits

In September 2009, the Des Moines Public Schools collaborated with United Way of Central Iowa to launch a citywide dropout recovery effort, replicating Texas' Grads Within Reach initiative. Teams of school district and community volunteers spent one Saturday morning visiting the homes of out-of-school youth, during which time over 200 volunteers spoke directly with 127 dropouts. All high schools stayed open from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. that day so that students could begin the reenrollment process immediately (Des Moines Public Schools, 2009).

Volunteers also contacted students who had dropped out through phone calls and home visits prior to this event, which resulted in 115 students reenrolling before the day of the walk (Chen, 2009). Students who reenroll in district schools can take online credit recovery classes in an Academic Support Lab within the high school (R. Wright, personal communication, September 3, 2010). The individualized support and attention that students receive from teachers in these small classes is particularly beneficial for students with disabilities.

In 2008, Baltimore City Schools launched the Great Kids Come Back campaign. The district hired 12 community groups to knock on 6,000 doors in search of students who had dropped out. Over the course of three years, over 2,000 students returned to regular high schools or alternative programs (Bailey, 2011). Twice a year, the district holds resource fairs, which are advertised on the radio, online, and through flyers posted in the community. Students are invited to come to the district's central office building on a particular Friday or Saturday to be informed of their reenrollment options and to be matched with appropriate programs at which they can complete their diplomas (Baltimore City Public Schools, 2011). The resource fairs enable students with and without disabilities to learn about their reenrollment options.

For the launching of Richmond Public Schools' Dropout Prevention Initiative in Virginia, the superintendent and mayor went door-to-door to meet with dropouts to convince them to reenroll in school. Several teams also canvassed the city to locate out-of-school youth. Students were offered rides to the Adult Career Development Center where counselors were on hand to help students develop Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs) and to coordinate other services that would facilitate their return to school (Calos, 2010). Recovery specialists continue to visit "no shows" and truant students at their homes on an ongoing basis throughout the year. All recovered students participate in a two-day intake process during which time a counselor and social worker review their transcripts, help them develop long- and short-term goals, and problem-solve barriers to their returning to school (A. Jones, personal communication, September 8, 2010). Dedicated intake counselors work with students to develop ILPs, which identify needed courses and wraparound services. When students have disabilities, IEP meetings are also held to determine what transition services are needed (Richmond Public Schools, 2011).

Information Sharing Between Schools

Each high school in the Socorro Independent School District in Texas has a campus committee that is responsible for recovering students who have dropped out. When students with disabilities reenroll, Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) meetings are held and students are assessed to determine what classroom modifications they need. Their performance is then closely monitored by classroom teachers (A Lopez, personal communication, January 11, 2011). Communication between schools and districts is overseen by the district's Dropout and Prevention Director, who also works with the Information System Department (ISD) at each campus to develop cohorts, dropouts, and leaver reports. At the beginning of each school year, the ISD holds a districtwide conference to provide updates on district coding policies. An audit team subsequently visits each secondary campus to review the cumulative folders of students who have left the district to make sure the coding and supporting

documentation is appropriate (A. Lopez, personal communication, August 30, 2010). Dropout recovery committees, comprised of the registrar, assistant principal, counselor, truant officers, attendance clerk, and nurse, meet every two weeks to review lists of dropouts and to attempt to track and recover these students. Committee members check whether students are enrolled in another school; if they are not, the team tries to contact students through phone calls and home visits. At the end of the school year, the district engages in a campaign to track and recover dropouts who were not located during the year (Smith & Burrow, 2008).

Communities In Schools of Georgia has 21 Performance Learning Centers (PLCs) throughout the state that serve struggling students as well as out-of-school youth. School districts, community organizations, and the PLCs work collaboratively to reenroll students. Students are typically referred to PLCs through local community organizations that have partnerships with the PLCs. In Athens, the county office gives the local PLC lists of students who have disenrolled from area high schools. The principal or services coordinator at the PLC then contacts students directly to inform them of their option to reenroll at the PLC (H. Keen, personal communication, January 28, 2010). If students' records indicate that they previously had an IEP, the special education teacher evaluates the IEP to make sure that the PLC is an appropriate placement. If it is determined that the student's needs could be better met in a different placement, the principal contacts the student to inform him or her of other options within the district (M. Middendorf, personal communication, January 20,

2011). Students with disabilities in the Clarke County School district in Athens can reenroll in a district school or pursue a fully-funded GED (Clarke County School District, 2011).

Collaboration With Community-Based Organizations

The Association for High School Innovation (AHSI), formerly the Alternative High School Initiative (AHSI, 2008) is a network of 12 youth development organizations that has 291 schools nationwide geared toward students who were not successful in traditional school settings. One of the member organizations is Big Picture Learning which has over 60 schools in 15 states (Big Picture Learning, n.d.). These schools use a variety of recruiting and outreach methods, which include going to churches, community centers, and Boys and Girls Clubs, as well as working with community service agencies. School personnel also target specialized populations, such as students in the juvenile justice system, who may experience difficulties returning to school (K. Thierer, personal communication, February 3, 2010). Considering that almost 40% of incarcerated youth have been found to be eligible for special education services (Quinn, Rutherford, Leone, Osher, & Poirer, 2005), it makes sense to develop partnerships with the juvenile justice system in order to reengage students with disabilities in school.

Gateway to College is another AHSI member organization. Gateway to College allows youth ages 16 through 21, who have dropped out of high school or are at risk of dropping out, to simultaneously accumulate high school and college credits. The program currently operates at 30 colleges in 16 states (Gateway to College, 2009-2010). Each college conducts different types of recruitment activities. Georgia Perimeter College, for example, tries to reach youth by connecting with local employers that hire dropouts (e.g., fast-food restaurants). Other colleges conduct recruitment activities at locations at which out-of-school youth might be found, such as Walmart, high school football games, and local churches. Portland Community College (PCC), home of the first Gateway to College program, partners with

school district outreach staff. PCC also collaborates with child welfare caseworkers from the Department of Human Services, and juvenile court counselors from the Department of Community Justice. Additional partnerships include a local juvenile rights project and several community-based youth-serving organizations. PCC also connects with local youth-focused mental health organizations, rehabilitation centers, and homeless shelters (J. Daugherty, personal communication, February 4, 2010). When students with disabilities enroll in the Gateway to College program they can receive services from Student Disability Services on the college campus.

School Expos/Reengagement Fairs

In August 2008, the Grand Prairie Independent School District in Texas hosted its first Launch Your Life—Achieve Your Dreams Beyond High School Fair, which featured representatives from district schools, charter schools, private schools, trade schools, cosmetology schools, community colleges, universities, a GED testing center, community services, and local businesses. Counselors, social workers, and parent liaisons also attended the event. In order to inform out-of-school youth about the fair, the district launched a media campaign with posters and brochures printed in English and Spanish. Staff from the district also called hundreds of students who had dropped out and mailed letters to students who could not be reached by phone. Approximately 100 out-of-school youth attended the fair (Smith & Burrow, 2008). In 2010, the event was combined with the district's

Title 1 Community and Health Education Fair, designed to provide information on community services for the whole family. Representatives from the state's Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services provide information on the Vocational Rehabilitation Program, through which students with disabilities can get assistance transitioning from school to the workplace (R. Mitchell, personal communication, January 27, 2011). In addition, representatives from the district's special education department attend the fair to provide information for youth with disabilities (Grand Prairie ISD, 2010).

Parents for School Choice and the Chicago Public Schools recently hosted the 4th Annual New Schools EXPO, which featured leaders from more than 80 schools that offer small classes, provide extended school days or years, and special themes (Parents for School Choice, 2011). Some of the schools at the EXPO were specifically focused on youth who had dropped out. One such school was Community Services West, an alternative school with a culinary focus, at which 17% of students have disabilities (Chicago Public Schools, 2011). Another school targeting students who had dropped out was Prologue Early College, a college-focused alternative high school at which students with learning difficulties can receive one-on-one tutoring (Prologue Inc., 2011). A marketing campaign to advertise the EXPO included advertisements in newspapers, on the transit system, and on cable television. The event was also marketed to local elected officials (K. Hayes, personal communication, February 2, 2010).

Reengagement/Transition Centers

Students who are chronically truant or have dropped out of school in the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) can attend the Center for Academic Re-entry and Empowerment (C.A.R.E), which is housed at a YMCA center. As a partner of the SFUSD, the C.A.R.E. program has one teacher and one counselor from the district on staff. Students attend the program for nine weeks and focus on making up credits and gaining life skills. In the three years that the program has operated, almost

70% of participants have finished the program and reenrolled in a city high school (Tucker, 2010). To avoid sending students back to the same schools that they stopped attending, students are typically referred to different high schools, continuation schools, or the Five Keys Charter School, an alternative public school, depending on their credit needs. They may also be referred to a GED program, which is also offered at the YMCA. If it is determined that students have a disability based on assessments conducted upon students' entry to the C.A.R.E. program and information in students' files, students are referred to a different program where they can receive specialized services (H. White, personal communication, January 19, 2011). At the Five Key Charter School, students with disabilities receive individualized instruction and their progress is monitored by a special education teacher (N. Bell, personal communication, January 19, 2011). Eligible students with disabilities are exempt from the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), a statewide graduation requirement (California Department of Education, 2010).

The Reconnection Center in the Portland Public School District in Oregon allows for the immediate reengagement of returning students to prevent them from falling further behind with course work while waiting to reenroll in their former high school, a charter school, or an alternative program to complete their diploma. Students can take online credit recovery courses at the center before returning to school; however, the aim is to place them in a school setting as soon as possible. The Reconnection Center provides students with academic assessments, credit evaluation, and identification of placements that meet their unique needs. When students with disabilities are referred to the center, a special education teacher is assigned to update the student's IEP and work with students on their course work. Students who are very skill deficient work on skill attainment in lieu of credit recovery (S. Morris, personal communication, January 21, 2011). Students with disabilities benefit from the support they receive transitioning back to school and follow-up services, which they receive for one semester (Portland Public Schools, 2011).

There are two Reengagement Centers in Philadelphia, which are one-stop centers jointly staffed by the Philadelphia School District and the City Department of Human Services. The centers are an initiative of Project U-Turn, which operates a hotline to provide out-of-school youth with reenrollment information. Center staff locates dropouts and encourages them to come to the center to get connected with service providers that can help address their academic, social, and emotional needs (M. Scott, personal communication, April 5, 2010). After students return to school, caseworkers monitor their progress for four months. In a one-year period from May 2008 to April 2009, the center referred more than 1,600 former dropouts to alternative education programs (Project U-Turn, 2009). In 2010, the centers hosted their first annual resource fair to provide students with information about various educational programs for out-of-school youth and adults, including accelerated high schools, GED programs, and skill-building programs. E³ Power Centers are designed to help young adults with and without disabilities develop skills in the areas of independent living and employment (School District of Philadelphia, 2011).

Print and Electronic Media

In 2007, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) launched the multimedia My Future, My Decision campaign as part of its Dropout Prevention and Recovery Program. Several videos were posted on YouTube, including videos of students who had returned to school explaining the reasons why they returned; the superintendent talking about the importance of earning a high school diploma; and teachers explaining the options available to returning students. The campaign also involved local radio stations airing messages encouraging youth to return to school and student mentors providing support for returning students via social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook. For the campaign kick-off event, 400 counselors walked through the streets of Los Angeles distributing informational flyers encouraging out-of-school youth to visit the Web site of the LAUSD Dropout Prevention and Recovery Program. The Web site provides comprehensive information

about programs available in the district, including options for students with disabilities; graduation requirements; and postsecondary options (LAUSD, n.d.).

California Adult Schools conduct an annual community outreach effort to inform youth and young adults about their options for completing a high school diploma or GED. Schools advertise their Drop-in Days in local newspapers, informing returning students of the need to bring their high school transcripts for evaluation. Counselors meet with students individually and provide them with information about the number of classes they need to earn a diploma and their enrollment options (Warth, 2010). Some schools, such as the Long Beach School for Adults, have expanded this initiative to create anytime "drop-in days" which are advertised on an electronic marquee outside the school. Individuals who express interest in returning to school are invited to observe programs and counselors are on hand to facilitate open entry for enrollees (G. Spooner, personal communication, September 24, 2010). The program is based on independent study with the teacher acting as facilitator, enabling students with disabilities to complete work at their own pace (N. Megli, personal communication, January 21, 2011).

Communitywide Campaigns

In North Carolina, the Pitt County Schools' (PCS) Dropout Prevention Task Force implemented a communitywide campaign to raise awareness about

the dropout problem. At the 2009 kick-off ceremony, the Task Force introduced their new logo; played a Reach Out to Stop Dropout video; and shared ways that business, faith-based, and civic communities could partner with PCS to help reduce dropouts. The event was attended by more than 100 elected officials; school administrators; and business, church, and community leaders (Pitt County Schools, 2009). A few months after this event, the North Carolina General Assembly's Committee on Dropout Prevention awarded grants ranging from $17,710 to $175,000 to 83 organizations, three of which were in Pitt County (Public Schools of North Carolina, 2009). These grants, together with funds raised through the campaign, enabled the implementation of several dropout prevention and reentry measures, including a Twilight Academy, a mentoring program, and an after-school/Saturday program (T. Lewis, personal communication, September 27, 2010). Students who attend the Twilight Academy for credit recovery can be co-enrolled in their regular high school, a situation which allows students with disabilities to receive special education services (Pitt County Schools, 2010).

Multiple Methods

Most school districts use multiple methods to locate and reenroll out-of-school youth. Newport News Public Schools in Virginia serves as just one example of a district that uses multiple recovery methods. Dropout recovery teams call other school districts to try to locate students who have not returned to school. Teachers send text messages to students and ask current students to help by sending text messages to their out-of-school friends. Counselors, attendance

officers, and graduation coaches also attempt to contact students through phone calls and home visits. If they are unable to locate students at their last known addresses, they try to obtain information about their whereabouts from neighbors. They also try to encourage students to return to school by "friending" them on Facebook. With information about students' credit needs on hand, they can inform students of the options available to them, one of which is a nontraditional high school that offers high engagement courses and online credit recovery in a small, supportive environment. In addition to hosting open houses at its two dropout recovery centers, the district also sends letters to students inviting them to "drop in" nights to learn about their options for finishing school. The events are advertised in the newspaper and on local cable television channels. Flyers that inform out-of-school youth about their reenrollment options are posted on bulletin boards in such locations as laundromats, thrift stores, Walmart restrooms, and Section 8 housing. Direct outreach is conducted in low-income housing developments where out-of-school adults and students who are too far behind to meet diploma requirements, are offered GED assessments, preparation classes, and free GED testing (C. Cooper, personal communication, February 3, 2011).

Personnel and Organizations Responsible for Recovering Out-of-School Youth

District Teams

As part of the San Diego Unified School District's (SDUSD) Project Recovery, central office teams make phone calls and home visits to dropouts at all district high schools each semester. In September 2010, 68 central office personnel participated on 11 teams and made 2,258 phone calls and 180 home visits. All teams included Spanish speakers. Recovery work focused on schools with high student mobility and/or a high number of dropouts and/or low student attendance (R. Phillpott, personal communication, October 15, 2010). Once students are located, school counselors and other staff work together to reenroll students in alternative educational programs. Options include credit recovery programs, independent study programs, online programs,

part-time programs, twilight programs, and Adult Education Joint High School Diploma programs. The range of options allows students with disabilities to be matched with programs that can provide appropriate services to meet their needs. Central office staff and school site team leaders meet at the end of each recovery cycle to discuss ways to increase the district's capacity to recover and reenroll out-of-school youth (San Diego Unified School District, n.d.).

School Teams

Newport News Public Schools in Virginia operate a "search and recovery program" at which school counselors and attendance officers identify students who have dropped out by reviewing lists of students who entered high school as freshmen four years earlier and are no longer enrolled. In order to locate these students, they call other schools and districts, check with alternative education programs, and try to find students' old home or work addresses (Grimes, 2009). Students are then invited back to school and are matched with appropriate programs (Newport News Public Schools, 2010).

Nonprofit Community-Based Organizations

Colorado Youth for a Change (CYC) is a nonprofit organization that has successfully recovered and reenrolled hundreds of out-of-school youth in the Denver area. It is highlighted as a promising practice in the shaded box.

Promising Practice: Colorado Youth for a Change

Colorado Youth for a Change (CYC), a Denver based nonprofit organization, works collaboratively with school districts throughout Colorado to create dropout prevention and recovery programs. As part of the Dropout Outreach and Recovery program, outreach workers get referrals from school districts, school personnel, community organizations, parents, and other youth helped by CYC. Outreach workers then meet with youth face-to-face to develop personal relationships geared towards getting youth back into school. Outreach workers also address students' barriers to returning, connect them with support networks of local service providers, help them find an appropriate school, and follow up with them and school staff after they reenroll (Colorado Youth for a Change [CYC], n.d.). Using information collected from two direct service areas to identify the needs of high-risk populations, CYC also helped to create New Schools designed to meet these students' specific needs (B. Brinkerhoff, personal communication, September 30, 2010). Futures Academy in the Aurora Public Schools system, for example, is geared towards students with and without disabilities who have dropped out of school and typically end up earning GEDs. Students at Futures receive an intensive year of reading, writing, and math, as well as skills needed for college-level classes. Students have the opportunity to co-enroll at the Community College of Aurora and start earning credits towards their associate's degrees, or to take career-technical classes at Pickens Technical College (CYC, 2010). CYC also works to reengage homeless youth and recruits students from a local drop-in center, as well as through direct referral, or information provided by friends and family members. Students with disabilities make up about 50% - 60% of the homeless youth served by CYC. Youth are provided services on a case-by-case basis, the aim being to get students to return to their regular high schools to earn a diploma. Prior to students' reenrolling, staff from CYC meet with service providers from the district's special education department to ensure that appropriate supports will be in place. CYC also provides a year of follow-up services to monitor students' success; in the event that students are unable to make progress towards a diploma or GED, students are referred to the state's School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP), which helps individuals with disabilities develop job skills and find employment (B. Brinkerhoff, personal communication, January 27, 2011).

Contracted Organizations

The American Academy (TAA) is a Salt Lake City-based for-profit education services provider. In addition to running its own accredited online high school, TAA operates a Dropout Recovery Program through which it partners with public school districts to reenroll students in their local school district and complete their district's high school program online through TAA. Students with disabilities benefit from the different presentation formats (e.g., text, video, audio) provided by computer-based learning. When a school partners with TAA, the district provides names of students who have dropped out of that school. TAA's Recruiting Teams then attempt to personally locate the students and also reach out to community organizations to help identify additional eligible students. When students are identified as students with disabilities, TAA obtains copies of their IEPs from the district to ensure that accommodations listed on the IEPs are provided by teachers and proctors. Districts compensate the American Academy for active students on a monthly basis; fees vary depending on the needs of the student and the services provided. Districts generally use a combination of state, local, and federal funding for the program (R. Richards, personal communication, October 1, 2010).

The Mobile County Public School System in Alabama has several dropout prevention and recovery initiatives, one of which is the use of Drop Back In Academies, an initiative of the private company, Alternatives Unlimited Inc. The school district gives Alternatives Unlimited a list of students who have either officially dropped out or have stopped coming to school. Staff from Alternatives Unlimited attempt to personally contact these students through phone calls and home visits. Alternatives Unlimited receives funding from the Alabama Department of Education based on the number of students it enrolls in the Academies. Once enrolled, students receive traditional classroom instruction and self-paced computer instruction in community-based sites to acquire the credits they need to graduate (Philips, 2010).

Volunteers

Over 20 school districts in Texas are involved in an annual outreach effort to recover out-of-school youth.

Promising Practice: Grads Within Reach

The annual Grads Within Reach walk (formerly "Reach Out to Dropouts") is currently in its eighth year and involves 20 cities across Texas and 24 school districts. Teams of volunteers go door-to-door to meet with out-of-school youth to encourage them to return to school. Over a five-year period, 15,000+ volunteers made such home visits. Partners in this recovery effort include local government-funded agencies, faith-based organizations, and other nonprofit organizations (Expectation Graduation, n.d.). At the 2010 Grads Within Reach walk in Houston, teams of volunteers and staff, as well as the Superintendent, Mayor, U.S. Congresswoman, and former NBA players, spent one Saturday walking through the neighborhoods surrounding 23 Houston Independent School District (HISD) high schools and made direct contact with over 1,000 students who had dropped out. All high schools were open on the day of the walk so that students could reenroll that day. As a result of this effort, 75 students reenrolled in school immediately. Prior to the walk, volunteers from schools, businesses, and the local media, made phone calls to the homes of students who had not returned to school that year. Information from the calls was then used to provide volunteers with student names, addresses, maps, and exact information on what each student needed to graduate (HISD, 2010a, 2010b). Students who were contacted were informed of their reenrollment options including the new "Grad Lab" program at which students can recover credits in computer labs at each high school. Some students with disabilities benefit from this online option as they can reread material at their own pace and type their work. Modifications can be made for students on an individualized basis, and may include reducing the length or number of assignments due, accepting oral discussions in place of online discussion boards, or other modifications made in traditional courses (M. Grubb, personal communication, November 30, 2010).

Volunteers are recruited and trained by school districts to go door-to-door to meet with youth to inform them of their reenrollment options. This initiative has been replicated by school districts in Des Moines, Iowa, and in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and is highlighted in the shaded box on the previous page as a promising practice.

Law Enforcement

In Wisconsin, school districts receive "bonus aid" for reenrolling students to obtain a high school diploma (Princiotta & Reyna, 2009). In order to get students who have dropped out back into school, Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) collaborates with the Milwaukee Police Department and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee. In the Truancy Abatement and Burglary Suppression Program (TABS), law enforcement officers search the streets for youth who are not in school. They then transport the youth to local TABS centers where social workers provided by MPS and the Boys & Girls Clubs, complete initial intakes. Social workers have access to the MPS database so they can identify students who have histories of poor attendance. Social workers contact students' parents and work with them to develop attendance contracts or to find more appropriate school placements. Students may be referred back to their district school or an alternative program depending on their needs, and in-house social workers follow up with students to ensure that the placement is a good fit. Students with disabilities are also identified through the MPS database. Counseling is provided to determine the reasons these students were not in school and the services they need to return (K. Sinclair, personal communication, January 26, 2011). Caseworkers also contact students' parents to identify services that the family might need. Partnerships with a variety of community resources allow for the provision of wraparound services for students and their family members (Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee, 2011).

Conclusion

This review of strategies to locate and reenroll out-of-school youth reveals that efforts to track youth and inform them of their options are underway in school districts and communities across the nation. The number of different entry points and program options makes student guidance in this process a crucial component of reentry. While there is no shortage of information on dropout recovery initiatives, there are currently no studies assessing the effectiveness of the various methods used to recover youth or to determine whether these methods reach the youth who are most in need, who are typically those with disabilities. It is also not known whether these reenrollment initiatives achieve the ultimate aim of helping students obtain a high school credential. Research must be conducted so that future recovery efforts can be based on the replication of effective practices with regards to locating youth and reenrolling them in programs in which they remain until the completion of their high school diploma.

This review of literature, together with information shared by practitioners, has revealed many promising practices that can be used by administrators and school personnel to locate out-of-school youth and increase general awareness of reentry programs. Appendix A is designed to be used by dropout recovery teams as a planning tool when deciding how to publicize dropout reentry initiatives and make contact with students to inform them of their reenrollment options. Contact details for programs that have successfully used the methods listed are provided so that additional information can be obtained if needed. Appendix B is based on feedback from practitioners who have successfully recovered out-of-school youth and provides tips for program planners to consider when using particular methods to locate students. General barriers faced by reentry programs along with solutions that have been implemented by particular programs are presented in Appendix C.

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Appendix A

Summary of Strategies to Reach Out-of-School Youth

Direct Contact
Introduction: It is important to make direct contact with out-of-school youth to encourage them to return to school and to explain their reenrollment options to them. Listed below are some promising strategies that have been used by school districts to contact students who have dropped out. You may wish to consider using a combination of these methods when designing your outreach efforts.
Practices: • Make phone calls to students/parents of students who have dropped out of school • Enlist help of volunteers from the community to make home visits • Use high profile figures (e.g., mayor) to make home visits • Knock on doors of neighbors if students cannot be found at last known address • Employ outreach staff who can connect with students (e.g., bilingual, former dropouts) • Use multiple teams to track small numbers of dropouts who are known by team members • Send personalized letters to students who have dropped out • Conduct outreach in places where youth congregate (e.g., malls, youth centers) • Create a youth hotline that students can call to get reenrollment information • Ask current students to provide information about the whereabouts of hard-to-locate youth • Ask students in reentry programs to help recruit their out-of-school friends

Districts/organizations utilizing these practices:
 	
Des Moines Public Schools, Iowa
    Title: Destination Graduation
    Web site: http://www.dmps.k12.ia.us/ProgramsServices/DestinationGraduation.aspx
    Contact: Ruth Wright, Ruth.wright@dmps.k12.ia.us (515) 242-8397
Richmond Public Schools, Virginia
    Title: Dropout Prevention Initiative
    Web site: http://newweb.richmond.k12.va.us/programs/DPI/
    Contact: Angela Jones, ajones2@richmond.k12.va.us
Houston Independent School District, Texas
    Title: Grads Within Reach
    Web site: http://www.houstonisd.org/HISDConnectDS/v/index.jsp?vgnextoid=1040cd3ba7fla210Vgnc
        m10000028147fa6RCRD
    Contact: Mark White, MWHITE4@houstonisd.org

Aldine Independent School District, Texas
   Title: Expectation Graduation – Reach Out to Dropouts Walk
   Web site: http://www.houstontx.gov/education/reachout.html
   Contact: Ben G. Wilson, Assistant Superintendent of Community and Governmental Relations,
      bwilson@aldine.k12.tx.us (281) 985-6202

Gateway to College at Portland Community College, Oregon
   Contact: Jana Daugherty, Outreach and Intake Coordinator, jana.daugherty15@pcc.edu (503) 788-6213

Newport News Public Schools, Virginia
      Contact: Cynthia Cooper, Executive Director, Youth Development, Cynthia.cooper@nn.k12.va.us
      (757) 283-7850 x.10305

 San Diego Unified School District, California
   Title: Project Recovery Program
   Contact: Rebecca (Becky) Phillpott, Program Manager, Dropout Prevention, bphillpott@sandi.net
      (619) 725-5595

Socorro Independent School District, Texas
   Contact: Andres Lopez, Director of Drop Out & Recovery, alopez34@sisd.net (915) 937-1332

Colorado Youth for a Change, Colorado
   Web site: http://www.cycinfo.com/Home/tabid/36/Default.aspx
   Contact: Brian Brinkerhoff, Program Director-Denver, brian.brinkerhoff@coyouth.org (303) 888-3470

Media: Television, Radio, and Online

Introduction:

In order to increase the chances that out-of-school youth will find out about their reenrollment options, some districts have implemented successful publicity campaigns involving the use of mass media. You may wish to consider using one or more of these forms of advertising in order to "get the word out" about your reentry programs.

Practices:

- Place public service announcements on cable television channels
- Air announcements on local radio stations
- Use media such as YouTube to inform students of reentry options
- Use social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook to provide information and support for returning students
- Create Web sites with information and resources for out-of-school youth

Districts/organizations utilizing these practices:

Los Angeles Unified School District, California
   Title: My Future, My Decision
   Web site: http://myfuturemydecision.org/
   Contact: Debra Duardo, Director of Pupil Services, debra.duardo@lausd.net (213) 241-3844

Newport News Public Schools, Virginia
Contact: Cynthia Cooper, Executive Director, Youth Development, Cynthia.cooper@nn.k12.va.us
(757) 283-7850 x.10305
Parents for School Choice, Illinois
Web site: http://www.parentsforschoolchoice.org/
Contact: Katheryn Hayes, parentsforschoolchoice@gmail.com
Baltimore City Public Schools
Title: Great Kids Come Back
Web site: https://www.baltimorecityschools.org/216710122314273980/site/default.asp?
Contact: Jamil Roberts, Student Placement, (410) 396-8600
Richmond Public Schools, Virginia
Title: Dropout Prevention Initiative
Web site: http://newweb.richmond.k12.va.us/programs/DPI/
Contact: Angela Jones, ajones2@richmond.k12.va.us

Print Media

Introduction:

It is important to distribute information about your reentry programs throughout the community, not only to reach out-of-school youth, but also to increase general awareness about your initiatives. You may wish to consider some of the outlets listed below when deciding how to disseminate information in your local community.

Practices:

- Create flyers and brochures in different languages
- Place advertisements about reentry programs and reengagement events in local newspapers
- Place advertisements in publications produced by community organizations (e.g., recreation center newsletters)
- Distribute flyers to youth at sporting events, concerts, movie theaters, restaurants, basketball courts, bowling alleys, amusement arcades, etc.
- Post flyers in malls, stores, barber shops, nail shops, health clinics, laundromats, bus stop shelters, child-care centers, check-cashing places, courthouses, social services offices, hospital emergency rooms, etc.
- Disseminate flyers through local community organizations, such as churches, homeless shelters, food banks, and neighborhood community centers

Districts/organizations utilizing these practices:

Portland Community College, Oregon
Title: Gateway to College
Contact: Jana Daugherty, Outreach and Intake Coordinator, jana.daugherty15@ppc.edu
(503) 788-6213

Aldine Independent School District, Texas
    Title: Expectation Graduation - Reach Out to Dropouts Walk
    Web site: http://www.houstontx.gov/education/reachout.html
    Contact: Ben G. Wilson, Superintendent of Community and Governmental Relations, bwilson@
        aldine.k12.tx.us (281) 985-6202
Newport News Public Schools, Virginia
    Contact: Cynthia Cooper, Executive Director, Youth Development, Cynthia.cooper@nn.k12.va.us
        (757) 283-7850 x.10305
Grand Prairie Independent School District, Texas
    Contact: Ricky Mitchell, Executive Director of State, Federal, and Student Programs,
        ricky.mitchell@gpisd.org (972) 237-4044
Parents for School Choice, Illinois
    Web site: http://www.parentsforschoolchoice.org/
    Contact: Katheryn Hayes, parentsforschoolchoice@gmail.com

Communitywide Campaigns

Introduction:

Local businesses, elected officials, and neighbors can all make important contributions to your dropout recovery efforts and it is therefore important to increase awareness of your reentry initiatives among all stakeholders. You may wish to consider adopting one or more of the strategies listed to get "buy in" of the entire community.

Practices:

- Launch public awareness campaigns (e.g., posters, billboards, signs outside gas stations)
- Display posters in prominent locations, such as on city benches
- Advertise on public transportation systems (e.g., buses, subways)
- Display posters on the outside of school buses
- Host kick-off ceremonies using high profile public figures (e.g., mayor, superintendent)
- Invite elected officials; school administrators; and business, church, and community leaders to events focused on dropout recovery

Districts/organizations utilizing these practices:

Pitt County Schools, North Carolina
    Title: Dropout Prevention Campaign
    Web site: http://www.pitt.k12.nc.us/198710525104525277/site/default.asp
    Contact: Executive Director of Student Services, (252) 830-4237
Parents for School Choice, Illinois
    Web site: http://www.parentsforschoolchoice.org/
     Contact: Katheryn Hayes, parentsforschoolchoice@gmail.com

Grand Prairie Independent School District, Texas
  Contact: Ricky Mitchell, Executive Director of State, Federal and Student Programs,
    ricky.mitchell@gpisd.org (972) 237-4044

Connect With Other Schools, Organizations, and Agencies

Introduction:

  Establishing connections with other schools and community-based agencies is an effective way to locate students and get referrals of out-of-school youth. Some partnerships you may wish to consider in your efforts to locate out-of-school youth are listed below.

Practices:

- Contact other school districts to see if students have enrolled in another school
- Establish connections with social service agencies, such as child welfare and juvenile justice to help identify out-of-school youth
- Get referrals from local youth-serving organizations such as homeless shelters or rehabilitation centers
- Work with law enforcement officers to locate youth
- Collaborate with Workforce Investment Boards to identify youth seeking reentry into workforce/education systems
- Make presentations in churches and enlist help of church leaders to disseminate information
- Develop relationships with local employers who hire dropouts to gain access to potential enrollees
- Create information-sharing systems to track youth and share student referrals

Districts/organizations utilizing these practices:

Socorro Independent School District, Texas
  Contact: Andres Lopez, Director of Drop Out & Recovery, alopez34@sisd.net (915) 937-1332
Newport News Public Schools, Virginia
  Contact: Cynthia Cooper, Executive Director, Youth Development, Cynthia.cooper@nn.k12.va.us
    (757) 283-7850 x.10305
Classic City High School, Georgia
  Contact: Kelly Girtz, Director, girtzk@clarke.k12.ga.us (706) 353-2323
Gateway to College at Portland Community College, Oregon
  Contact: Jana Daugherty, Outreach and Intake Coordinator, jana.daugherty15@pcc.edu
    (503) 788-6213
Colorado Youth for a Change, Colorado
  Web site: http://www.cycinfo.com/Home/tabid/36/Default.aspx
  Contact: Brian Brinkerhoff, Program Director-Denver, brian.brinkerhoff@coyouth.org
    (303) 888-3470

Program Information and Access

Introduction:

Students who want to return to school need to be aware of their reenrollment options. There are several strategies that have been used by districts to increase students' awareness of options and to simplify the process involved in their reenrollment. You may wish to consider one or more of these initiatives as you plan your reenrollment procedures.

Practices:

- Open school during nonschool hours so that students can reenroll immediately after contact
- Host drop-in days at which students can get one-on-one counseling about credit needs and program options
- Host school fairs at which students can obtain information from a variety of school programs and service providers
- Create a reengagement center that students can attend to get needed services before transitioning back to school
- Invite parents and students to attend school orientations

Districts/organizations utilizing these practices:

Grand Prairie Independent School District, Texas
Contact: Ricky Mitchell, Executive Director of State, Federal, and Student Programs, ricky.mitchell@gpisd.org (972) 237-4044

Reconnection Center, Portland Public Schools, Oregon
Contact: Sue Ann Higgens, Director of Education Options, shiggens@pps.k12.or.us

Aldine Independent School District, Texas
Title: Expectation Graduation - Reach Out to Dropouts Walk
Web site: http://www.houstontx.gov/education/reachout.html
Contact: Ben G. Wilson, Assistant Superintendent of Community and Governmental Relations, bwilson@aldine.k12.tx.us (281) 985-6202

Center for Academic Re-entry and Empowerment (C.A.R.E), California
Web site: http://www.ymcasf.org/bayview/facilities/center_for_academic_reentry_and_empowerment_care
Contact: Eason Ramson, Director, eramson@ymcasf.org (415) 822-7728 x 231

Newport News Public Schools, Virginia
Contact: Cynthia Cooper, Executive Director, Youth Development, Cynthia.cooper@nn.k12.va.us (757) 283-7850 x.10305

Appendix B

Implementation Guide

Method for Locating Students	Tips
Use of volunteers to go door-to-door	• Allow volunteers to choose from a variety of activities (e.g., phone bank, home visits, fair, business outreach) • Identify staff to be responsible for organizing training for volunteers • Conduct background checks on volunteers who are not employed by the district • Register volunteers with contact information through district's Web site • Follow policies with regards to unauthorized personnel viewing Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protected student data • Pair volunteers with district employees who have experience making home visits • Create multilingual teams/use translators to ease communication with families • Wear clothing that does not seem official to alleviate fear for undocumented immigrants who receive home visits
Citywide outreach	• Use volunteers to meet with business owners; conduct community outreach in stores, restaurants, parks—places where information can be posted regarding school enrollment, attendance laws, and contact numbers • Prior to home visit organize a telephone bank for placing calls to unregistered students • Place stories in the news media to inform communities about the effort prior to home visit day so that families will be prepared for a visit • Designate campus coordinators to identify which students should receive a home visit • Provide academic counseling for students on day of home visit; if possible, have academic information for each student (e.g., number of credits/classes needed to graduate) • Prepare brochures with school contact information, educational options available in the community, and United Way's 2-1-1 referral hotline to leave behind with students and families who receive a visit • Target students from schools with high student mobility, high numbers of dropouts, and low student attendance and students who were in school in May, but not following fall • Develop time lines for dropout recovery activities (e.g., phone calls, home visits, paperwork completion, updating student records) and outline staff responsible for activities

Method for Locating Students	Tips
Keep school open during nonschool hours so students can reenroll on day of home visit	• Designate a staff member responsible for preparing students who may wish to reenroll on same day as home visit • Compile list of contacted students who need additional support to reenroll and share information with other staff
Contact students who have withdrawn from area schools	• Designate a coordinator whose primary responsibilities are to obtain lists of students who have dropped out of area schools and contact them to inform them of reenrollment options; prior to phone call, check Student Locator to verify student's enrollment status • Establish partnerships with agencies and community organizations that serve out-of-school youth, e.g., Juvenile court counselors, Department of Human Services caseworkers, youth addiction and recovery organizations, mental health organizations that serve homeless and LGBTQ youth • Visit student homes, workplaces, etc., and offer to bring them back that day. Continue to follow up until all "no-shows" have been located and returned to school • Create a follow-up system to ensure students enroll and/or maintain enrollment status
Reengagement fair	• Provide an exhibitors' contact list and include information of additional schools/programs that could not attend the fair
Drop-in-days	• Provide credit recovery class to which students can return immediately, and make class available after school hours • Explore ways to use funding to support 12 month student reenrollment and to provide 12-month teacher contracts

Contributors: D. Duardo, Los Angeles Unified School District, CA; B. Wilson, Aldine ISD, TX; M. White, Houston ISD, TX; R. Philpott, San Diego Unified School District, CA; K. Gertz, Classic City High School, Athens, GA; J. Daughtery, Gateway to College, Portland Community College, OR; R. Mitchell, Grand Prairie ISD, TX.

Appendix C

Barriers to Reenrolling Students

Appendix C lists common barriers faced by reentry programs and youth returning to these programs, along with solutions that been adopted by particular programs to mitigate these barriers.

Barrier	Solution
Lack of transportation	Collaborate with public transit system to provide students with passes
Responsibilities involving children	Provide child care; partner with local day-care centers/contribute to payments for low-cost child care
Time conflicts	Offer early morning and evening classes and allow for flexible scheduling
Personal issues such as pregnancy, substance abuse, mental health/medical issues	Refer students to social services; use resources such as United Way's 2-1-1 referral hotline to get information on local services Maintain current information on a range of community resources (including name of key contact person); when referring students, provide them with the name of the contact person
Dropouts may not respond to contact from school-based staff such as teachers, counselors, and social workers	Solicit help of community organizations and individuals to "reach out" to dropouts, e.g., faith-based programs, local government leaders, nonprofit organizations, civic groups, local businesses, law enforcement, and neighbors
Some states do not allow districts to count attendance for students who do not attend physical facilities (e.g., those who reenroll in online programs)	States such as Florida,[a] Texas,[b] and Washington[c] have passed legislation to ensure that school funding models support online schooling Several states (16) fund districts based on Average Daily Membership (ADM) whereby the daily count includes students who are not physically present
Programs for recovering dropouts and keeping them in school require financial commitment from school district	Dropout recovery efforts can be supported through a combination of state, local, and federal funds. Seattle Public Schools (SPS), which partners with the American Academy to deliver an online dropout recovery program, for example, was awarded a U.S. Department of Education High School Graduation Initiative grant, which supports such activities as reengagement programs for out-of-school youth
Community capacity and/or geographical barriers	Provide a variety of options for students throughout the city
Lack of student follow-through after initial contact	Use caring, individualized approach to reengage students; provide students with information on educational options—do not let them walk away "empty-handed" Provide ongoing monitoring, support, and alternative education plans

School policies/schedules may not allow students to reenroll mid-semester	Provide credit recovery classes within the school as the entry point for all students who have dropped out, and allow for immediate reenrollment
Identifying program that is good match for student	Provide mentors, involve families, help students identify appropriate programs prior to enrolling Provide multiple points of entry [e.g., Gateway to College (GtC) is one point of entry to Portland Community College, but if students are not a good fit for GtC, they can enroll in YES! program]
Students have different credit needs and time frames for completing diploma	Evaluate students' transcripts; determine best route for diploma completion; provide alternatives such as GED dby distance learning Work with school guidance counselors to determine what courses each student needs to complete in order to graduate or to get back on track to graduate
Obtaining information on district dropouts	Designate staff member responsible for contacting local high schools to obtain lists of dropouts
Fear of failure, previous negative school experiences, involvement with groups/gangs that do not value education	Talk to students about their barriers; be open, accepting, and nonjudgmental; take seriously any concerns that students discuss Provide counseling, mentorship, involve families, identify appropriate programs to meet students' specific needs Provide dedicated staff members to advocate for and mentor students

Contributors: K. Gertz, Classic City High School, Athens, GA; P. Leong Kappel, Milwaukee Area Technical College, WI; M. White, Houston ISD, TX; J. Daugherty, Gateway to College, Portland Community College, OR; T. Lewis, Pitt County Schools, NC; R. Richards, The American Academy, Salt Lake City, UT; S. A. Higgens, Portland Public Schools, OR; A. Jones, Richmond Public Schools, VA; R. Philpott, San Diego Unified School District, CA; T. Cook, Dorchester County Adult Education, SC; L. Kincer, Gateway to Success Program, Warren County, OH; R. Wright, Des Moines Public Schools, IA.

[a] The 2003 Florida Statutes, Title XLVIII, Chapter 1002, Sec. 1002.37(3). Available: http://www.flsenate.gov/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=Ch1002/Sec37.HTM

[b] S.B. No. 1788, Sec. 30A.054(c). Available: http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/tlodoc/80R/billtext/pdf/SB01788f.pdf#navpanes=0

[c] Substitute Senate Bill 5410, Chapter 542, Laws of 2009, Sec. 7(1). Available: http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2009-10/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Law$202009/5410-S.SL..pdf

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