



Updating a searchable database of dropout prevention programs and policies in nine low-income urban school districts in the Northeast and Islands Region

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This REL Northeast and Islands Technical Brief describes updates to a database first described in the Issues & Answers report, *Piloting a searchable database of dropout prevention programs in nine low-income urban school districts in the Northeast and Islands Region* (REL 2008–No. 046) and updated previously in another Issues & Answers report, *Dropout prevention programs in nine Mid-Atlantic Region school districts: additions to a dropout prevention database* (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2011–No. 103).

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Summary

This technical brief describes updates to a database of dropout prevention programs and policies in 2006/07 created by the Regional Education Laboratory (REL) Northeast and Islands and described in the Issues & Answers report, *Piloting a searchable database of dropout prevention programs in nine low-income urban school districts in the Northeast and Islands Region* (Myint-U et al. 2009). To update the database, a key informant from each of the nine pilot districts was interviewed on the status and characteristics of the dropout prevention programs and policies in 2010/11. Based on this new information, this brief classifies programs and policies as new, discontinued, or sustained since 2006/07, the years in which programs were included in the database (Myint-U et al. 2009). The term *active* is used to refer to the combination of new and sustained programs and policies—that is, all programs and policies being implemented in 2010/11.

The database now contains information on 151 dropout prevention programs and policies in the nine pilot districts, including 25 new programs and policies added to the database as a result of this update, 22 discontinued programs and policies, and 104 sustained programs and policies that were already in the database. In addition, 58 records on dropout prevention programs and policies being implemented in nine districts in the Mid-Atlantic Region were added to the database in 2010 (Burzichelli, Mackey, and Bausmith 2011). As a result, the database lists 209 dropout prevention programs and policies in the two regions. This brief updates records for the nine Northeast and Islands Region districts only; none of the records from the Mid-Atlantic Region districts has been updated, and thus none of the Mid-Atlantic Region districts is discussed in the analysis.

This technical brief reports on key findings related to characteristics of the new, discontinued, and active programs and policies: core strategies (strategies a program uses to reduce dropout, such as mentoring), service goals (interim goals a program or policy targets to reduce dropout, such as improving academic performance), specific target populations, district staff involvement, community involvement, funding sources, and whether the program has been reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse. Programs and policies can have more than one core strategy, service goal, or specific target population.

Among the 25 new programs and policies in the database:

- Of the 17 core strategies, the one most frequently used by new programs and policies is career education and workforce readiness (17 programs and policies).
- All 17 core strategies in the database are being implemented by at least one new program or policy.
- The service goal most frequently targeted by new programs and policies is improving academic performance (21 programs and policies).
- The specific populations most frequently targeted by new programs and policies are students with academic needs and students with behavioral needs (7 programs and policies each).

Among the 22 discontinued programs and policies in the database:

- The core strategy most frequently used by discontinued programs and policies was community collaboration (12 programs and policies).
- Career Academies, an intervention reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse and found to have a potentially positive effect on dropout prevention, was discontinued in two districts.

Among the 129 active programs and policies in the database:

- The core strategy most frequently used by active programs and policies is community collaboration (60 programs).
- The service goal most frequently targeted by active programs and policies is improving academic performance (88 programs).
- The specific population most frequently targeted by active programs and policies is students with academic needs (44 programs).
- The district staff most frequently involved in active programs and policies is teachers (82 programs).
- The type of community involvement most frequently reported by active programs and policies is partnerships with community-based organizations (51 programs).
- The funding source most frequently reported by active programs and policies is district-level funding (80 programs).

The What Works Clearinghouse has reviewed three active programs and found them to have potentially positive effects on at least one dropout prevention–related domain. Because multiple districts are implementing these interventions, they are found in 13 discrete records in the database: 6 districts are implementing Career Academies, 5 districts are implementing Talent Search, and 2 are implementing Job Corps.

Several improvements have been made to the database to increase functionality. Appendix A of the brief contains a revised user guide that reflects these updates.

February 2012

Technical brief

Why this brief?

According to a June 2010 *Education Week* report, the U.S. graduation rate in 2007 fell for a second consecutive year, with 30 percent of public school students failing to finish high school with a diploma (Editorial Projects in Education 2010). The report also finds that those most at risk for not graduating continue to be non-White students living in low-income urban areas. In 2007, less than 56 percent of Hispanic, Black, and Native American students nationwide graduated, compared with approximately 82 percent of White students.¹

In the Northeast and Islands Region, wide disparities remain in graduation and dropout rates across racial/ethnic groups.² In Massachusetts, for example, the 2008/09 statewide dropout rate dipped below 3 percent—the first time in a decade—but the dropout rate among Hispanic students was 8 percent (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education 2011). Similarly, in New York, graduation rates are lower among racial/ethnic minority students than among White students. For example, in 2009, 84 percent of White students graduated, compared with 57 percent of Hispanic students (New York State Testing and Accountability Reporting Tool 2011).

The drop in graduation rates across the country follows a decade of solid gains among some subgroups, including Black and non-Hispanic White students. For example, the four-year dropout rates for Black students declined from 21 percent in 1972 to 10 percent in 2008 (Chapman, Laird, and KewalRamani 2010). The research literature on dropout prevention suggests that several programs and interventions may be helping stop at-risk youth from dropping out (Dynarski et al. 2008; Balfanz and Herzog 2006; Hammond et al. 2007).

Since 2006, the What Works Clearinghouse has reviewed 28 dropout prevention

programs to determine their effectiveness. Of the 19 programs with evaluation studies that meet What Works Clearinghouse evidence standards, 13 programs were found to have evidence of a positive or potentially positive effect on dropout-related outcomes: 6 programs showed evidence of helping students stay in school, 6 programs showed evidence of helping students progress in school, and 5 programs showed evidence of helping students complete school (What Works Clearinghouse 2011). As Dynarski et al. (2008, p. 5) point out, “The greatest success in reducing dropout rates will be achieved where multiple approaches are adopted as part of a comprehensive strategy to increase student engagement.”

To learn what dropout prevention programs and policies low-income school districts with high racial/ethnic minority student populations in the Northeast and Islands Region were implementing, Myint-U. et al. (2009) constructed an interactive database covering nine pilot districts.³ The purpose of this interactive online database is to provide information about district dropout programs and policies and to foster communication and collaboration about dropout prevention across states and districts. Users can search the database for different types of dropout prevention programs and policies by such criteria as core strategies, target grades, and specific target populations.

The purpose of this study was to keep the database populated with the most current dropout prevention programs and policies being implemented since 2006/07. As noted in Myint-U et al. (2009, p. 16), keeping the database up to date sustains it as “a living resource that documents and supports information-sharing by districts facing similar challenges, in the Northeast and Islands Region and nationwide.” While data from nine districts in the Mid-Atlantic Region

have been added to the database (Burzichelli, Mackey, and Bausmith 2011), this brief covers data only for the nine Northeast and Islands Region pilot districts from the original study. It reports on new and discontinued programs and policies since 2006/07. It also presents the overall characteristics (such as core strategies and service goals) of all 129 active programs and policies (both new and sustained) being implemented in the nine pilot districts in 2010/11. Finally, this brief reports on changes in the use of What Works Clearinghouse–reviewed programs across the nine districts since 2006/07.

Updating the database

To update this database, the study team recontacted district-level staff in each of the nine Northeast and Islands Region pilot districts surveyed in the initial study. These individuals reviewed their district’s programs and policies and provided information to update database records. In turn, the study team reviewed the records to ensure that key informants applied definitions of program and policy characteristics in a consistent and valid manner. This

approach to updating the database is described in this section.

Study districts

The data collection sites for this project were the same nine Northeast and Islands Region pilot districts reported on in Myint-U et al. (2009): Bridgeport, Connecticut; Lowell, Massachusetts; New Bedford, Massachusetts; New Haven, Connecticut; Providence, Rhode Island; Rochester, New York; Springfield, Massachusetts; Syracuse, New York; and Worcester, Massachusetts.

As Myint-U et al. (2009, p. 5) note, these nine districts were selected because they are “mid-size urban districts with the highest percentage of non-White students, students living below the poverty line, and cumulative four-year dropout rates.” In 2006, each site had “a non-White population of at least 23 percent, at least 21 percent of children living below the poverty line, and four-year dropout rates of at least 15 percent” (Myint-U et al. 2009, p. 6). Table 1 shows the current demographic profiles and the four-year dropout rate for 2009/10 of each pilot city and school district.

TABLE 1
Demographic profiles of the nine Northeast and Islands Region pilot cities and school districts, 2009/10

City/district	Population of city ^a	Non-White population in city (percent)	Children ages 5–17 in the city who live in households below the poverty level (percent)	District student population ^b	Number of K–12 schools	Racial/ethnic breakdown of district student population (percent)	Four-year dropout rate (percent)
Bridgeport, CT	139,529	69.1	24.5	19,935	31	Hispanic 47.9 Black 40.3 White 8.5 Asian 2.9 Native American 0.14	24 ^c
Lowell, MA	105,167	31.4	21.8	13,600	26	White 35.4 Asian 29.1 Hispanic 26.6 Black 6.6 Multirace 2.1 Native American 0.3	14

(CONTINUED)

TABLE 1 (CONTINUED)

Demographic profiles of the nine Northeast and Islands Region pilot cities and school districts, 2009/10

City/district	Population of city ^a	Non-White population in city (percent)	Children ages 5–17 in the city who live in households below the poverty level (percent)	District student population ^b	Number of K–12 schools	Racial/ethnic breakdown of district student population (percent)	Four-year dropout rate (percent)
New Bedford, MA	93,768	24.8	30.6	12,037	26	White 51.2 Hispanic 27.9 Black 11.8 Asian 8.0 Multirace 7.1 Native American 0.9	21
New Haven, CT	123,626	56.5	31.0	20,359	45	Black 46.3 Hispanic 37.5 White 13.7 Asian 2.0 Native American 0.9	28
Providence, RI	173,618	45.5	36.3	23,314	54	Hispanic 62.0 Black 20.0 White 9.0 Asian 5.0 Native American 1.0	21
Rochester, NY	219,773	51.7	33.8	32,266	62	Black 64.0 Hispanic 22.0 White 11.0 Asian 3.0 Multirace 0.0 Native American 0.0	27
Springfield, MA	152,082	44.0	29.8	24,031	48	Hispanic 58.0 Black 22.0 White 14.0 Asian 2.0 Multirace 4.0 Native American 0.0	26
Syracuse, NY	147,306	35.7	29.5	20,076	35	Black 53.0 White 29.0 Hispanic 11.0 Asian 5.0 Native American 1.0 Multirace 0.0	27
Worcester, MA	172,000	23.0	21.7	22,638	47	Hispanic 38.0 White 37.0 Black 14.0 Asian 8.0 Multirace 3.0 Native American 0.0	12

a. Data are 2010 Census data.

b. Data are for the most recent school year for which data are available and generally include all students enrolled in grades PreK–12 or K–12.

c. Data are for 2007/08, the most recent year available.

Source: <http://factfinder.census.gov>, www.doe.mass.edu, http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/statistics/hsgrads/2011/rpt_district_Outcomes_allstudents.pdf, <https://www.nystart.gov>, http://sdeportal.ct.gov/Cedar/WEB/ct_report/DTHome.aspx, www.ride.ri.gov/applications/statistics.aspx; key informants.

Retrieving updated records

To update the database, a key informant from each of the nine pilot districts was interviewed. The study team made initial contact by mailing and emailing an introductory letter to each district superintendent (see appendix B). Guided by the telephone interviewer instructions (see appendix C) and the interviewer template (appendix D), the study team asked respondents to report any changes to their district’s dropout prevention programs and policies since 2006/07. Within two weeks of the telephone interview, the research team sent each district’s revised records to respondents for review and approval.

The database now contains 209 dropout prevention programs and policies—151 programs and policies from the nine pilot districts in the Northeast and Islands Region and 58 from districts in the Mid-Atlantic Region. This brief reports on recent findings for the Northeast and Island Region districts only.

Obtaining permission to include program and policy records

During interviews with district staff, the study team asked about the public availability of the collected information and requested permission to include the information in the database. All nine districts granted permission to release upon request any information that was not publicly available on websites or from districts.

In addition to information gathered through interviews, respondents were encouraged to send any supplemental materials on new dropout prevention programs and policies that would be helpful in completing the database record. Information about each district was also collected from respondents and district or state department of education websites. The district information and population figures in the database are for the most recent year available.

Using the completed interviewer templates, the study team entered changes to the existing records into the database. Many key informants requested updates to existing database records.

For example, one key informant requested that a program originally coded as having two core strategies be coded as having four core strategies. These requested changes did not necessarily reflect programmatic changes; rather, they more likely reflected changes in how districts or key informants have come to think about their programs and policies over time.

Reviewing updated records

After integrating data from the districts into the database, the study team reviewed the field coding to ensure consistency in how the fields are defined and how respondents interpreted them. Two fields—intervention level and specific target population—were selected for additional recoding because some key informants misunderstood how these fields are defined and provided conflicting responses as a result. For example, Specific Target Population is defined as “Which, if any, populations . . . the program targets.” However, some key informants selected any subgroup of the student population that might be enrolled in a program (for example, English language learner students may be enrolled in a Career Academy, but that program does not specifically target English language learner students). As such, some universal programs, which should not have any Specific Target Population fields selected, were incorrectly coded. Two study team members reexamined each record and, after reviewing project descriptions and the interview template notes, recoded the Intervention Level and Specific Target Population fields as necessary to ensure that coding was consistent with the original definitions.

Intervention levels were defined as follows:

- *Universal:* These programs and policies target the entire student population (so no specific target populations were reported by key informants); most policies are universal.⁴
- *Selected:* These programs and policies target students considered at risk

for dropout because of their membership in a particular segment of a population. With a few exceptions—especially programs and policies with multiple target groups—programs and policies that target the following student subgroups were coded as *selected*:

- Students with limited English proficiency.
- Students who would be part of the first generation in their family to attend college.
- Students from low socioeconomic-status households.
- Students who are pregnant or are mothers.
- Students returning from incarceration.
- Special needs students with behavioral challenges.
- Special needs students with learning disabilities.
- Special needs students with mental health needs.
- *Indicated*: These programs and policies target students who exhibit behaviors that put them at high risk for dropout. For the most part (again with some exceptions—especially programs and policies with multiple target groups), programs and policies that target students with academic needs and students who are chronically truant or absent were coded as indicated.

In all, 109 records were recoded to ensure consistency: the intervention level was recoded in 59 records, and the specific target population was recoded in 50 records.

Database improvements

To increase database functionality, the following improvements were made to the database:

- On the Program and Policy Details page, a Region field was added to distinguish districts in the Mid-Atlantic

Region and the Northeast and Islands Region (see figure A2 in appendix A).

- On the Program or Policy Details page, under the Program Reviewed by What Works Clearinghouse? field, an If Yes, Review Status and Date of Last Update field was added.
- On the Program or Policy Details page, a search function was added to the Start Date and End Date fields.
- On the Program and Policy Details page, the end date of 9999 was added to all active records.
- On the District Details page, the District Information by Year label was changed to District Dropout and Graduation Rates by Year, and a more concise description of this section was also included (see figure A3 in appendix A).

Detailed instructions on using the database can be found in the user guide in appendix A.

Data analysis

To prepare findings for this brief, the study team reviewed existing database records and classified dropout prevention programs and policies in the nine Northeast and Islands Region pilot districts into three categories:

- *New programs and policies* are programs and policies that districts have initiated since 2006/07.⁵
- *Discontinued programs and policies* are programs and policies that have been discontinued since 2006/07.
- *Sustained programs and policies* are programs and policies that districts reported implementing in 2006/07 and reported still implementing in 2010/11.

Findings

Of the 151 database records of dropout prevention programs and policies in the nine Northeast and Islands Region pilot districts, 25 are new, 22 are discontinued, and 104 are

sustained. (Table E1 in appendix E lists all 151 programs and policies from the nine pilot districts that are in the database.)

The findings focus on four areas related to the programs and policies in the database: characteristics (core strategies, service goals, specific target populations, district staff involvement, community involvement, and funding sources) of new programs and policies launched since 2006/07, characteristics of programs and policies discontinued since 2006/07, characteristics of the 129 active programs and policies in 2010/11, and implementation of programs found to have positive or potentially positive impacts by the What Works Clearinghouse. (Table A1 in appendix A contains definitions of the database fields for the program and policy details).

Characteristics of new programs and policies

This section reports on the core strategies, service goals, and specific target populations of the 25 new programs and policies. None of the new programs has had evaluation studies reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse.

Core strategies. Of 17 core strategies, the one used most frequently used by new programs and policies is career education and workforce readiness (17 programs and policies), followed by case management/service coordination, community collaboration, and engaging and supporting families (15 programs and policies each; table 2). All 17 core strategies in the database are being implemented by at least one new program or policy.

TABLE 2

Core strategies of the 25 new dropout prevention programs and policies in nine Northeast and Islands Region school districts, 2010/11

Core strategy	Number	Percent
Career education and workforce readiness	17	68
Case management/service coordination	15	60
Community collaboration	15	60
Engaging and supporting families	15	60
Tutoring/extra classes	14	56
Advocating for student needs	12	48
Providing social and emotional support during transitions	11	44
Transforming the school environment	11	44
Individualized or culturally/linguistically relevant instruction	10	40
Instructional technologies	10	40
Social and emotional learning curricula	9	36
Monitoring attendance	8	32
Professional development	8	32
Systemic/policy renewal	7	28
Accelerated credit accumulation	6	24
Out-of-school enrichment	6	24
Mentoring	4	16

Note: Each program or policy can use more than one strategy.

Source: Authors' analysis of data from the Database of Dropout Prevention Programs and Policies in the Northeast and Islands Region.

Service goals. The service goal most frequently targeted by new programs and policies is improving academic performance (21 programs and policies), followed by increasing school attachment (19 programs and policies), and promoting college planning and linkages and providing career planning and preparation (16 programs and policies each; table 3).

Specific target populations. The specific populations most frequently targeted by new programs and policies are students with academic needs and students with behavioral needs (7 programs and policies each), followed by students who are chronically truant or absent (6 programs and policies; table 4). Seven new programs and policies are universal and do not target any specific population.

Characteristics of discontinued programs and policies

This section reports on the core strategies and reason for discontinuation of the 22 discontinued programs and policies.

Core strategies. All nine districts have discontinued one or more programs or policies since

2006/07. The core strategies most frequently used by discontinued programs and policies were community collaboration (12 programs), monitoring attendance (10 programs), and engaging and supporting families (9 programs; table 5). One intervention, Career Academies, which was reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse and found to have a potentially positive effect on helping students stay in school and progress in school, was discontinued in two districts.

Reason for discontinuation. The most commonly reported reasons for ending a program or policy were no new funding acquired or available and being absorbed into another program (4 programs and policies each; table 6). Key informants could not provide information on the reason for discontinuation for 10 programs and policies.

Characteristics of active programs and policies

This section reports on the core strategies, service goals, specific target populations, district staff involvement, community involvement, and funding sources of the 129 active programs and policies (of which 25 programs and policies are new and 104 are sustained).

TABLE 3

Service goals of the 25 new dropout prevention programs and policies in nine Northeast and Islands Region school districts, 2010/11

Service goal	Number	Percent
Improve academic performance	21	84
Increase school attachment	19	76
Promote college planning and linkages	16	64
Provide career planning and preparation	16	64
Decrease truancy	14	56
Provide support during transitions	12	48
Address behavioral needs	12	48
Address school safety and environment	11	44
Provide mental health support	10	40

Note: Each program or policy can target more than one service goal.

Source: Authors' analysis of data from the Database of Dropout Prevention Programs in the Northeast and Islands Region.

TABLE 4

Specific populations targeted by the 25 new dropout prevention programs and policies in nine Northeast and Islands Region school districts, 2010/11

Population	Number	Percent
Students with academic needs	7	28
Students with behavioral needs	7	28
Students who are chronically truant or absent	6	24
Students who are pregnant or parenting	4	16
Students who would be the first in family to attend college	3	12
Students from low socioeconomic status families	3	12
Students who are returning from incarceration	3	12
Students with mental health needs	3	12
Students who are English language learners	2	8
Students with learning disabilities	1	4
No student subgroups targeted (universal programs) ^a	7	28

Note: Each program or policy can target more than one specific population.

a. Programs and policies target the entire student population.

Source: Authors' analysis of data from the Database of Dropout Prevention Programs and Policies in the Northeast and Islands Region.

TABLE 5

Core strategies of the 22 discontinued dropout prevention programs and policies in nine Northeast and Islands Region school districts, 2010/11

Core strategy	Number	Percent
Community collaboration	12	55
Monitoring attendance	10	45
Engaging and supporting families	9	41
Transforming the school environment	8	36
Professional development	7	32
Social and emotional learning curricula	6	27
Advocating for student needs	5	23
Career education and workforce readiness	5	23
Case management/service coordination	5	23
Mentoring	5	23
Providing social and emotional support during transitions	5	23
Instructional technologies	4	18
Individualized or culturally/linguistically relevant instruction	3	14
Out-of-school enrichment	3	14
Tutoring/extra classes	3	14
Accelerated credit accumulation	2	9
Systemic/policy renewal	1	5

Note: Each program or policy can use more than one strategy.

Source: Authors' analysis based on data from the Database of Dropout Prevention Programs and Policies in the Northeast and Islands.

TABLE 6

Reasons for discontinuation of the 22 dropout prevention programs and policies in nine Northeast and Islands Region school districts, 2010/2011

Reason	Number	Percent
No new funding acquired or available	4	18
Absorbed into another program	4	18
Change in state/local policy	2	9
Determined ineffective by district	1	5
Loss of key staff	1	5
Reason not available	10	45

Source: Key informants in nine Northeast and Island Region pilot districts.

Core strategies. The three core strategies most frequently used by active programs and policies are community collaboration (60 programs), tutoring/extra classes (58 programs), and engaging and supporting families (57 programs; table 7).

Service goals. The three service goals most frequently targeted by active programs and policies are improving academic performance (88 programs and policies), decreasing truancy (67 programs and policies), and increasing school attachment (66 programs and policies; table 8).

TABLE 7

Core strategies of the 129 active dropout prevention programs and policies in nine Northeast and Islands Region school districts, 2010/11

Core strategy	Number	Percent
Community collaboration	60	47
Tutoring/extra classes	58	45
Engaging and supporting families	57	44
Providing social and emotional support during transitions	51	40
Career education and workforce readiness	50	39
Case management/service coordination	48	37
Advocating for student needs	44	34
Social and emotional learning curricula	42	33
Individualized or culturally/linguistically relevant instruction	40	31
Monitoring attendance	37	29
Transforming the school environment	35	27
Out-of-school enrichment	31	24
Instructional technologies	30	23
Professional development	28	22
Accelerated credit accumulation	27	21
Mentoring	22	17
Systemic/policy renewal	19	15

Note: Each program or policy can use more than one strategy.

Source: Authors' analysis of data from the Database of Dropout Prevention Programs and Policies in the Northeast and Islands Region.

TABLE 8

Service goals of the 129 active dropout prevention programs and policies in nine Northeast and Islands Region school districts, 2010/11

Service goal	Number	Percent
Improve academic performance	88	68
Decrease truancy	67	52
Increase school attachment	66	51
Provide support during transitions	61	47
Provide career planning and preparation	52	40
Promote college planning and linkages	50	39
Address behavioral needs	48	37
Address school safety and environment	41	32
Provide mental health support	31	24

Note: Each program or policy can target more than one service goal.

Source: Authors' analysis of data from the Database of Dropout Prevention Programs and Policies in the Northeast and Islands Region.

Specific target populations. The specific population most frequently targeted by active programs and policies is students with academic needs (44 programs and policies), followed by students with behavioral needs (28 programs

and policies) and students who are chronically truant or absent (26 programs and policies; table 9). Thirty-three active programs and policies are universal and do not target any specific population.

TABLE 9

Specific population targeted by the 129 active dropout prevention programs and policies in nine Northeast and Islands Region school districts, 2010/11

Population	Number	Percent
Students with academic needs	44	34
Students with behavioral needs	28	22
Students who are chronically truant or absent	26	20
Students from low socioeconomic-status families	18	14
Students with mental health needs	17	13
Students who would be the first in family to attend college	13	10
Students who are pregnant or parenting	13	10
Students who are returning from incarceration	10	8
Students with learning disabilities	8	6
Students who are English language learners	4	3
No student subgroups targeted (universal programs) ^a	33	26

Note: Each program or policy can target more than one specific population.

a. Programs and policies target the entire student population.

Source: Authors' analysis of data from the Database of Dropout Prevention Programs and Policies in the Northeast and Islands Region.

District staff involvement. The district staff most frequently involved in active programs and policies are teachers (82 programs and policies) and guidance counselors (62 programs and policies), followed by program directors (49 programs and policies) and principals (45 programs and policies; table 10).

Community involvement. The type of community involvement most frequently reported in

active policies and programs is involvement by community-based organizations (51 programs and policies; table 11). For example, districts are partnering with community-based organizations to provide community service or internship opportunities to students; partnerships with other community-based organizations allow programs to provide more comprehensive social supports to students and families. The next most frequently reported types of

TABLE 10

District staff involvement in the 129 active dropout prevention programs and policies in nine Northeast and Islands Region school districts, 2010/11

Position	Number	Percent
Teacher	82	64
Guidance counselor	62	48
Program director ^a	49	38
Principal/administrator	45	35
Special education staff	35	27
Social worker	33	26
Support specialist	27	21
Adjustment counselor	25	19
Paraprofessional	21	16
School nurse	21	16
Psychologist/therapist	16	12
Dropout specialist	13	10
Parent-community liaison	13	10
Truancy/attendance officer	13	10
Resource officer	11	9
Security guard	9	7
Tutor	8	6
School-wide	7	5
Behavioral resource officer	6	5
Crisis counselor	5	4
Day care provider	5	4
Student advocate	5	4
Nutrition counselor	4	3
Grant writer	3	2

Note: A program or policy can involve more than one type of district staff.

a. Program directors may be staff of an external organization working in schools. Because they are usually working in the school, they are considered district staff for the purposes of this study.

Source: Authors' analysis of data from the Database of Dropout Prevention Programs and Policies in the Northeast and Islands Region.

TABLE 11
Community involvement in the 129 active dropout prevention programs and policies in nine Northeast and Islands Region school districts, 2010/11

Position	Number	Percent
Community-based organization	51	40
Local higher education institution	21	16
Other volunteer	20	16
Parents	19	15
Mental health services	15	12
Department of Youth Services or Social Services	12	9
Corporate	10	8
Tutor	9	7
Mentoring program	8	6
Truancy court	8	6
Health clinic	7	5
Police	6	5
Job Corps	4	3
Religious affiliates	3	2
AmeriCorps	1	0.7
None reported	45	35

Note: A program or policy can report more than one type of community involvement.

Source: Authors' analysis of data from the Database of Dropout Prevention Programs and Policies in the Northeast and Islands Region.

TABLE 12
Funding sources for the 129 active dropout prevention programs and policies in nine Northeast and Islands Region school districts, 2010/11

Funding source	Number	Percent
District ^a	80	62
State	50	39
Federal ^b	37	29
Private	7	5
None reported	6	5

Note: A program or policy may have more than one funding source.

a. Includes, for example, support for afterschool or intensive summer school programs.

b. May be in the form of competitive grants submitted by a district, such as grants for Smaller Learning Communities.

Source: Authors' analysis of data from the Database of Dropout Prevention Programs and Policies in the Northeast and Islands Region.

community involvement are involvement by a local higher education institution (21 programs and policies) and other volunteers such as community volunteer mentors or career day speakers (20 programs and policies). Forty-five programs and policies did not report any community involvement.

Funding sources. The funding source most frequently reported for active programs and policies is the district (80 programs and policies), followed by the state (50 programs and policies), the federal government (37 programs and policies), and private funders (7 programs and policies; table 12). Key informants did not have information on funding sources for six programs.

Implementation of What Works Clearinghouse–reviewed programs with evidence of effectiveness

The updated database contains three programs reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse and found to have potentially positive impacts on at least one dropout prevention–related domain: Career Academies, Talent Search, and Job Corps. Because multiple districts are implementing these interventions in the region, the database includes 13 instances of the nine Northeast and Islands Region pilot districts implementing one of these program models. In 2010/11, six districts were implementing Career Academies, five were implementing Talent Search, and two were implementing Job Corps. In addition, two districts have discontinued use of Career Academies since 2006/07. Appendix F summarizes all the dropout prevention interventions reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse as of June 2011.

Study limitations

As with the original project, this study has some limitations. First, the accuracy and completeness of the data depend on the knowledge of the key informants and the accuracy of other publicly available information accessed by the study team. Most key informants were able to gather information on their district’s programs

within the time provided, but some respondents were unable to collect all the information requested, particularly reasons for discontinuation and data on student enrollment in specific programs. In addition, because most districts do not have official district documentation identifying which programs and policies constituted dropout prevention, some programs and policies in the database reflect key informants’ interpretations. Therefore, some districts might have reported programs and policies that others might not characterize as a dropout prevention program or policy. Multiple sources were used to collect information for each district (publicly available information, key informants during the 2006/07 school year, and current key informants).

As noted, district records already in the database were sent to one key informant in each district to review, and not all key informants had participated in the previous round of data collection. As a result of this review, several informants clarified or provided greater specificity to the database records. For example, some informants selected additional categories in some of the database fields (primarily core strategies and service goals). These revisions make it difficult to directly compare aggregate rates of program and policy characteristics between 2006/07 and 2010/11.

Appendix A

User guide for reading and navigating a searchable database of dropout prevention programs and policies

As of September 2011, the database for which this user guide has been prepared consists of data entered as part of three separate efforts. To generate and share knowledge on dropout programs and policies Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Northeast and Islands created a searchable database in 2008 that included information on programs and policies being implemented within the region in nine school districts with high dropout rates. The development, collection, and potential uses of data for the database are described in Myint-U et al. (2009). In 2010, data from nine school districts in the Mid-Atlantic Region, serviced by REL Mid-Atlantic, were added to the database (Burzichelli, Mackey, and Bausmith 2011). In 2011, REL Northeast and Islands researchers updated the information in the database to include programs and policies being implemented in the region in 2010/11; no changes were made to the 58 programs and policies implemented exclusively by REL Mid-Atlantic. The database is intended to be a living resource that can be updated and maintained, expanding to other districts within the regions and across the country.

The database can be used to search for programs and policies matching user-specified criteria. Examples of such criteria are core prevention strategies (such as a community learning curricula or tutoring/extra classes), service goals (such as increasing school attachment and decreasing truancy), specific target populations, district staff involvement, community involvement, funding sources, and whether programs have been reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse. The primary purpose of the database is to provide an informational resource to education professionals interested in learning more about what is being done in

the field to address the dropout problem. The database, with information on what districts are doing, can also help facilitate networking and collaboration among educators interested in implementing programs to keep students engaged in school by increasing communication across states and districts on strategies used and lessons learned.

Logging in to the database

Users can access the database through a link on the REL Northeast and Islands website: <http://fmpro.edc.org/fmi/iwp/cgi?db=Dropout&startsession>. They can sign in to the Guest Account (no registration or password required).

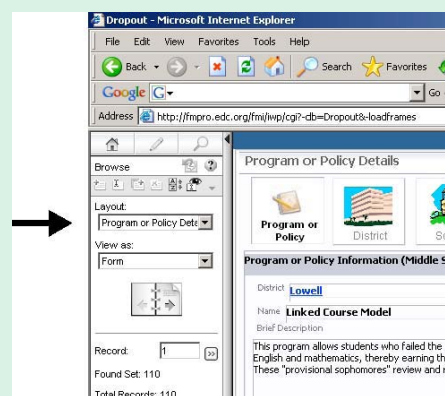
Viewing different layout pages

After logging in, users first see the Program or Policy Details page. The Layout pulldown menu in the left navigation bar is used to move to a different page layout, (figure A1).

The database is divided into four inter-linked page layouts:

- The Program or Policy Details page provides a range of information about a specific dropout prevention program or policy being implemented in the districts (figure A2).
- The District Details page provides information about each of the districts

FIGURE A1
Changing the page layout



and includes demographic information, such as percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, racial/ethnic composition of the student body, and dropout rates for the

most recent year available (figure A3). There are links to the Program or Policy Details page for each program and policy being implemented in the district.

FIGURE A2
Screenshot of Program or Policy Details page

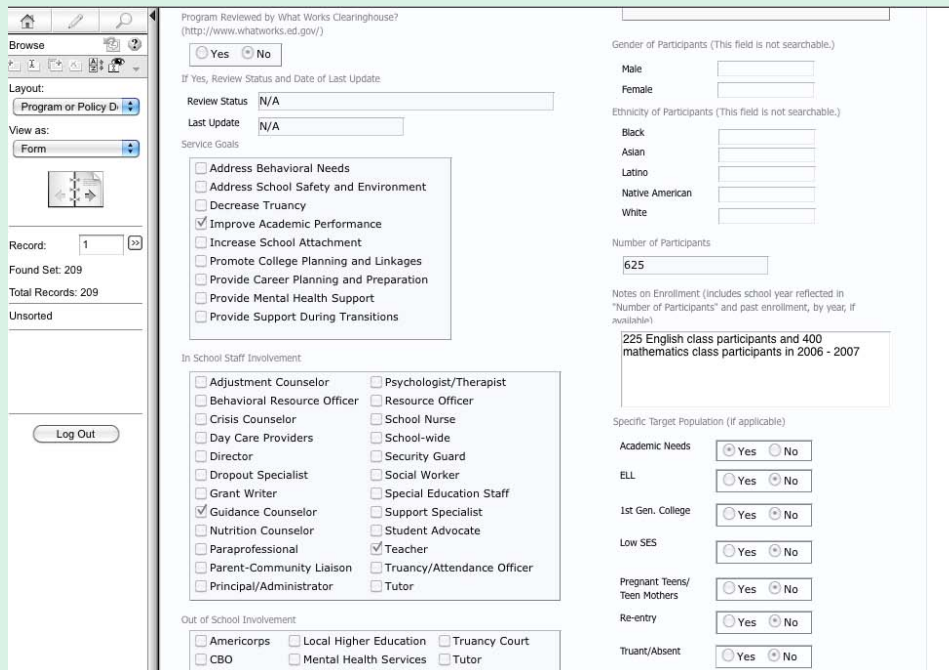
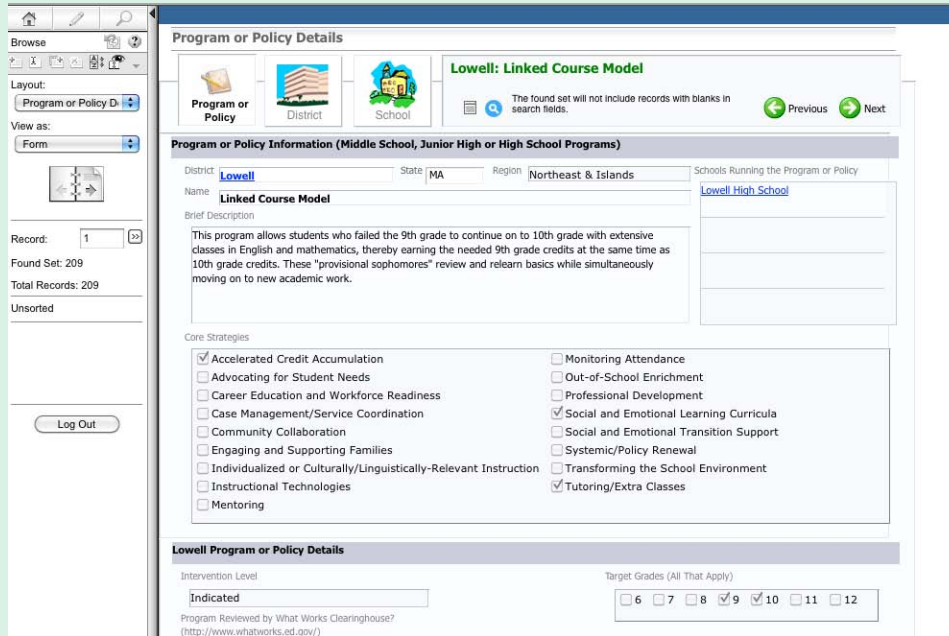
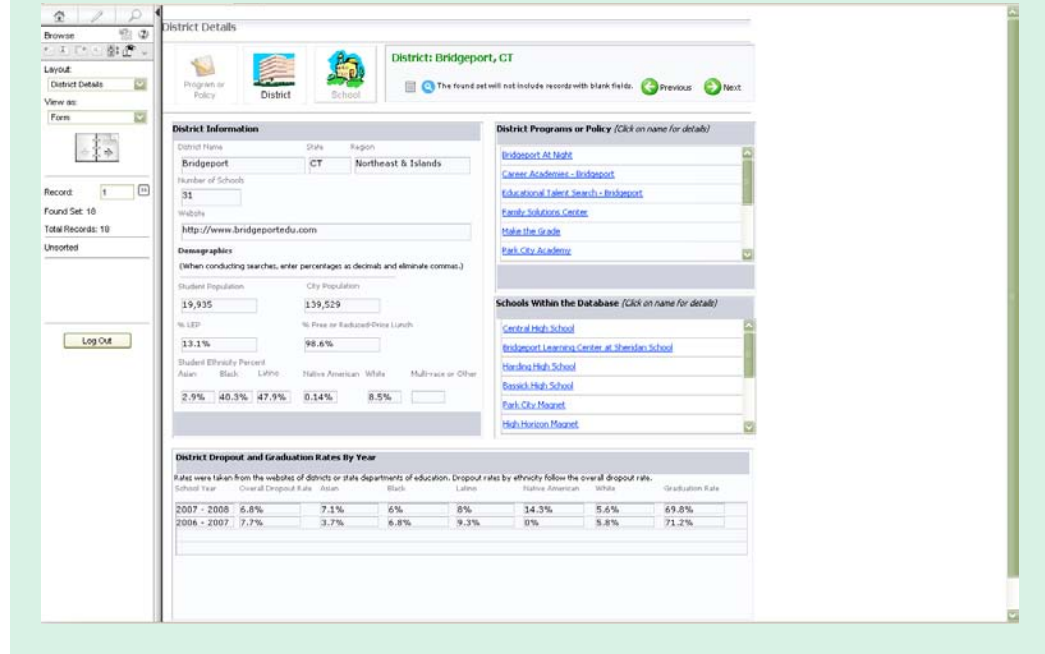
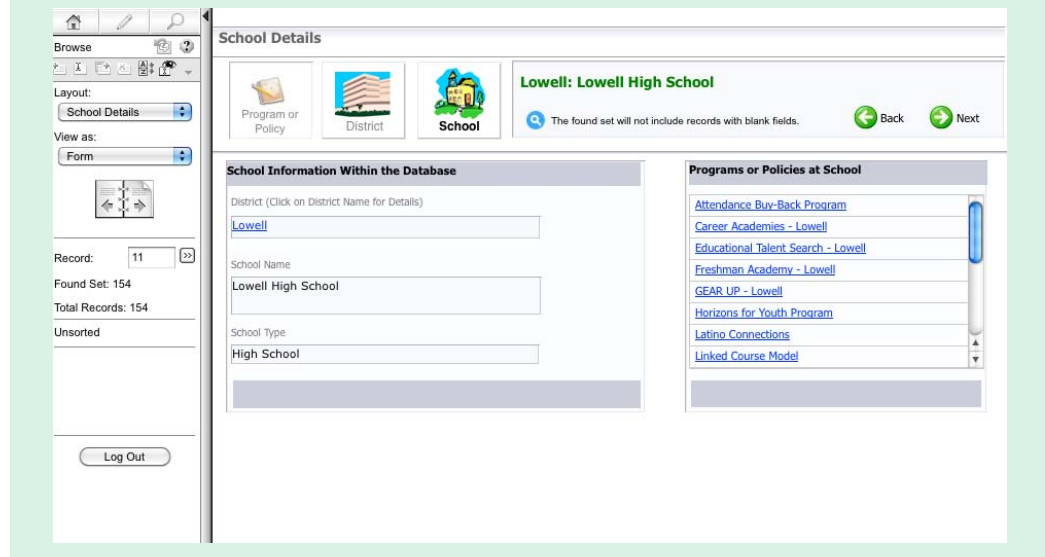


FIGURE A3
Screenshot of District Details page



- The School Details page captures program information for each of the schools included in the database. There are links to the Program or Policy Details page for each program and policy being implemented in the school (figure A4).
- The Programs List View Read-Only page contains two lists with the names of each program and policy in the database and the corresponding districts using it (figure A5). The list can be sorted by program or policy name

FIGURE A4
Screenshot of School Details page



or by district; hyperlinks take users to the Program or Policy Details page for each program or policy and to the District Details page for each district.

Each type of layout page has its own content fields.

Program or Policy Details page. The Program or Policy Details page provides a comprehensive snapshot of each dropout prevention program or policy in the database. Specifically, for each program or policy record, the page includes fields that reflect core strategies, service goals, district staff involvement, and whether the program has been reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse, among other characteristics. Table A1 lists the definition of each field in the Program and Policy Details page.

District Details page. Like the Program Details page, the District Details page provides a snapshot of each pilot district and the programs and policies being implemented to address dropout. Table A3 lists the sections of the District

Details page and the fields included within them.

School Details page. The School Details page shows which dropout prevention programs and policies are being implemented at a particular school. The fields are District name, Name of the school, and School type (high school, high school–magnet, high school–charter, middle school, middle school–magnet, middle school–charter, elementary school, and alternative). Like the District Details page, the School Details page includes a list of dropout prevention programs or policies at the school, with hyperlinks to the corresponding Program or Policy Details page as well as that school’s District Details page. The School Details page only lists those schools implementing one or more programs included in the database.

Programs List View Read-Only page. The Programs List View Read-Only page lists all the prevention programs or policies in the database. It shows the names of each program or

FIGURE A5
Screenshot of Program and Policy List page

	District	Program Name
1	Lowell	Linked Course Model
2	Lowell	Franklin Academy - Lowell
3	Lowell	Lowell-Middlesex Academy Charter
4	Lowell	Business Officers' Training Corps (B.O.T.C.)
5	Lowell	Career Academies - Lowell
6	Lowell	Initiatives for Youth Program
7	Lowell	MIDOC Program
8	Lowell	G.E.A.R. UP - Lowell
9	Lowell	Educational Talent Search - Lowell
10	Lowell	Multiple Alternatives
11	Lowell	8th Grade Repeaters
12	Lowell	Partnership for College Success
13	Lowell	Attendance Plus: Black Program
14	Lowell	Read 180
15	Lowell	Operation Attendance
16	Lowell	START Attendance Program
17	Lowell	One Lowell School Success for Newcenter
18	Lowell	Lefranc Therapeutic Day Program
19	Lowell	Lowell High School Alternative Program at Miller School
20	Lowell	Lowell Alternative Diploma Program
21	Lowell	JMI Corps - Lowell
22	Worcester	Juvenile Resource Center
23	Worcester	8th Grade Transition
24	Worcester	School Age Mothers Program (SAMP)
25	Worcester	8th Grade Repeaters

TABLE A1
Database fields for the Program or Policy Details page

Field	Definition
District	The district where the program or policy is being implemented. Clicking on the district name takes users to the District Details page for that district.
State	The state where the district is located.
Region	The region—Mid-Atlantic or Northeast and Islands—where the district is located.
Name	The formal or informal (as provided by key informants) title or name of the program or policy.
Brief description	One to three sentences describing the program or policy and the target population. A website address is provided, if available.
Schools running the program or policy	A link to the Schools Details page of the schools that implemented the program or policy. The list may not be exhaustive if additional schools began implementation after the program was entered into the database.
Core strategies	The core strategies that the program uses to address or prevent dropouts. Strategies that target preschool or elementary school students only (such as early interventions for developmental delays) are not included, reflecting the target grades of the programs in the database. Table A2 lists the core strategies, along with brief definitions of the strategies that are included in the database. Programs may incorporate more than one strategy.
Intervention level	Whether the program or policy uses a universal, selected, or indicated approach to dropout prevention, using definitions established by the Institute of Medicine (1994). A <i>universal</i> approach targets the entire student population. In universal programs or policies, no specific target populations are marked for Northeast and Islands Region districts (this does not apply to Mid-Atlantic Region districts). A <i>selected</i> approach targets subsets of the population considered at risk for dropout because of their membership in a particular segment of a population. An <i>indicated</i> approach targets individuals who have exhibited behaviors that put them at high risk for dropout. If a multicomponent program or policy uses more than one approach, the database includes the most inclusive approach (for example, universal rather than selected).
Program reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse	Whether the program has been reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse. If the program has been reviewed, the Review status and Date of last update fields are populated.
Service goals	The specific service goals targeted by each program or policy as a means of helping a student stay in school, progress in school, or complete school. The goals are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address behavioral needs • Address school safety and environment • Decrease truancy • Improve academic performance • Increase school attachment These goals have been identified in the literature as being associated with dropout prevention (Bridgeland, Dilulio, and Morison 2006; Dynarski and Gleason 2002; Neild and Balfanz 2006; Rumberger 2001).

(CONTINUED)

TABLE A1 (CONTINUED)

Database fields for the Program or Policy Details page

Field	Definition
In-school staff involvement	Information about the type of in-school staffing needed to adequately implement the program or policy. In-school staffing includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustment counselor • Behavioral resource officer • Crisis counselor • Day care providers • Director • Dropout specialist • Grant writer • Guidance counselor • Nutrition counselor • Paraprofessional • Parent-community liaison • Principal/administrator • Psychologist/therapist • Resource officer • School nurse • School-wide • Security guard • Social worker • Special education staff • Support specialist • Student advocate • Teacher • Truancy/attendance officer • Tutor
Out-of-school staff involvement	Information about the type of out-of-school staffing needed to adequately implement the program or policy. Out-of-school staffing includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AmeriCorps • Community-based organization • Corporate • Department of Youth Services or Department of Social Services • Health clinic • Job corps • Local higher education • Mental health services • Mentoring program • Parents • Police • Religious affiliates • Truancy court • Tutor • Other volunteer
Target grades/gender of participants/ethnicity of participants ^a	Whether a program targets specific grades and includes the approximate breakdown of gender of participants or race/ethnicity of participants.
Number of participants	The estimated number of participants, as available.
Notes on enrollment ^a	More qualitative information on enrollment (such as whether the number reflects a range or a number per school). It includes school year reflected in the Number of participants field and past enrollment, by year, if available.
Specific target populations	Which, if any, populations that previous studies have identified as being “at risk” for dropping out the program targets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic needs • ELL (English language learner students) • 1st generation college (students who would be part of the first generation in their family to attend college) • Low SES (socioeconomic status) • Pregnant teens/teen mothers • Re-entry (students returning from incarceration) • Truant or absent (students who are chronically truant or absent) • Behavioral needs • Learning disabilities • Mental health needs

(CONTINUED)

TABLE A1 (CONTINUED)

Database fields for the Program or Policy Details page

Field	Definition
Funding sources	The funding sources for the program or policy. Funding sources include district, state, and federal government funding as well as private organizations.
Approximate cost to implement ^a	The yearly costs to run the program or policy, if available. Most cost information is approximate and could differ greatly based on the scope of the program, the number of program participants, and available funding.
Start date/end date	The start and end dates of the program and the reason for discontinuation (if applicable). For active programs with no end date, the end date is listed as 9999 to allow users to search for active programs only. Records with blank values in the start date or end date fields are not included in search results.
Reason for discontinuation ^a	Information on why a program was discontinued.

a. Field is not searchable.

TABLE A2

Core dropout prevention strategies

Core strategy	What the strategy does
Accelerated credit accumulation	Provides students with opportunities to fulfill credits in an expedited way so that they can catch up with their same-age peers.
Advocating for student needs	Encourages program staff to communicate with school officials or key personnel about students' needs and ways to address them.
Career education and workforce readiness	Introduces and exposes students to different types of careers and provides skills for entering the workforce.
Case management/ service coordination	Provides students or families who require multiple services (either through the district or the city) with coordinated care throughout service delivery.
Community collaboration	Works with various community agencies and individuals to increase school-community collaboration and to link students to services.
Engaging and supporting families	Involves parents, guardians, and other family members in program activities and provides support to families to help them address issues that may contribute to dropout.
Individualized or culturally/ linguistically relevant instruction	Customizes instruction to match students' needs and abilities and recognizes and incorporates the cultural and linguistic diversity of students.
Instructional technologies	Uses innovative new technologies, such as teacher-supported computer-based learning, to increase student motivation.
Mentoring	Matches students with adult mentors in an effort to establish a close and supportive one-on-one relationship.
Monitoring attendance	Uses tools or strategies to help schools more closely monitor whether or not a student is in school and to contact parents to let them know that their child is absent.
Out-of-school enrichment	Provides students with afterschool, Saturday, and summer enrichment programs.
Professional development	Provides opportunities for teaching staff to gain skills they can use inside and outside the classroom to enrich their experiences and those of their students.

(CONTINUED)

TABLE A2 (CONTINUED)

Core dropout prevention strategies

Core strategy	What the strategy does
Providing social and emotional support during transitions	Focuses on providing support to students who are in transition periods—going from middle to high school, pregnancy, returning from incarceration, newly immigrated, and parenthood; includes providing support to students with mental health needs.
Social and emotional learning curricula	Uses curricula in classrooms to help students develop social and emotional learning skills (for example, conflict resolution) to deal with circumstances that may place them at risk of dropping out.
Systemic/policy renewal	Focuses on creating a formal process to create or update coordinated district-level policies for dropout prevention to address the most current issues and risks.
Transforming the school environment	Strives to create an overall school environment that is caring, safe, and emotionally supportive and in which students feel safe and develop a sense of respect and self-worth; may include the establishment of smaller communities of students.
Tutoring/extra classes	Provides students with extra academic support for subjects in which they are failing or not excelling.

TABLE A3

Database fields for the District Details page

Field	Definition
District name	The district where the program or policy is being implemented. Clicking on the district name takes users to the District Details page for that district.
State	The state where the district is located.
Region	The region—Mid-Atlantic or Northeast and Islands—where the district is located.
Number of schools	The number of K–12 schools in the district.
Website	The district’s website address, if available.
Student population	The total student population served by the district.
City population	The total population of the city in which the district is located.
% LEP	The percentage of students in the district who are limited English proficiency students.
% free or reduced-price lunch	The percentage of students in the district who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.
Student ethnicity percent	The percentage of students who fall into the following racial/ethnic groups: Asian, Black, Latino, Native American, White, and multirace or other.
District programs or policy	List of all the programs and policies being implemented by the district that are included in the database. Clicking on the program or policy name takes users to the Program or Policy Details page and the specific record for that program or policy.
Schools within the database	List of all schools in the database in the selected district that are implementing one or more programs or policies. Clicking on the school name takes users to the School Details page for that school.
District dropout and graduation rates by year	The most recent data available on the district’s dropout and graduation rates from state department of education websites, district websites, and district staff. The school year reflected by the data is noted. Dropout rates by race/ethnicity are also listed, if available.

policy and the corresponding district. The list can be sorted by program or policy name or by district; hyperlinks take users to the Program or Policy Details page for each program or policy and to the District page for each district.

Navigating through records in each layout page

To move from record to record on the Program or Policy Details page, the District Details page or the Schools Details page, users can click the green Previous and Next buttons in the top right corner of the screen (figure A6) or click the pages of the notebook in the left navigation bar (figure A7). To move to a particular record, users can enter the desired record number in the Record field just below the notebook and press the Enter or Return key (figure A8).

On the Program List View Read-Only page, the arrows on the notebook allow users to scroll through the different pages of the list. Each page contains 25 records.

Searching the database

Users can expand or constrain the scope of their search using customized criteria via the Find button. However, not all fields are searchable (see table A1).

Program or Policy Details page. To search for records meeting specific criteria in the Program or Policy Details page, users must select Show All Records (the eye icon under Browse; figure A9) in the left navigation bar while on the Program or Policy Details page.

Users can then click the Find button (the blue circle with a magnifying glass) at the top middle of the screen (figure A10). Users will then see a blank Prevention Program or Policy Details Page, where they can begin a search. The found set will not include records with blank fields.

To search by program name, users can enter all or some of the program name into the Name field and click Perform Find on the left navigation bar (figure A11).

FIGURE A6
Moving from record to record using Previous and Next buttons

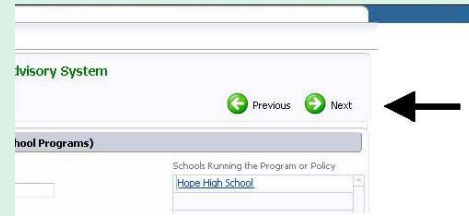


FIGURE A7
Moving from record to record using the notebook

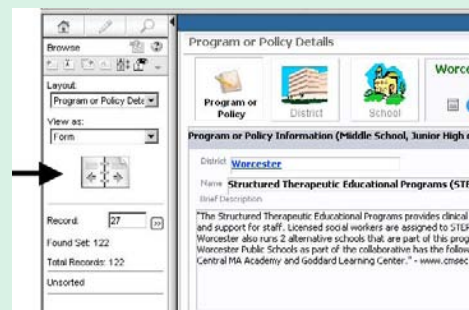


FIGURE A8
Jumping to a particular record

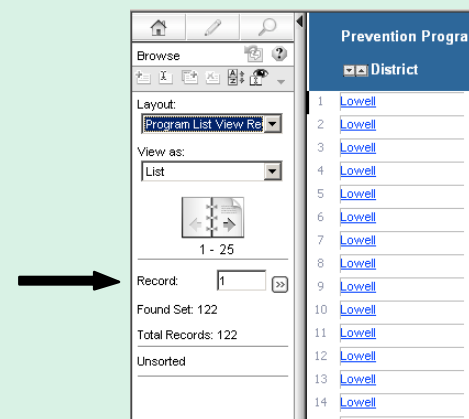


FIGURE A9
Showing all records on the Program or Policy Details page

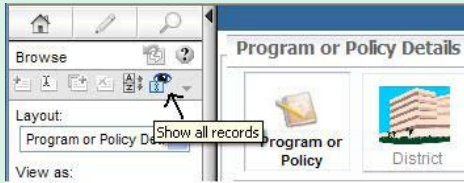


FIGURE A10
Locating the Find button to conduct a search

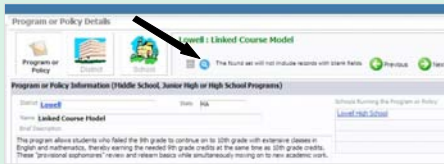
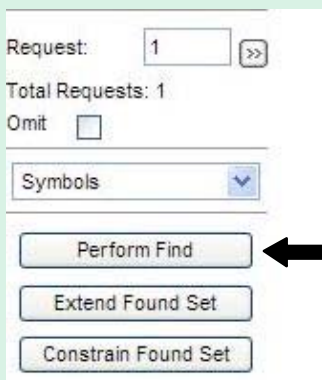


FIGURE A11
Locating the Perform Find button



To search by criteria, users can select the criteria for which they would like to find a matching program or policy and then click Perform Find. Searches can be made with criteria that use check boxes. The database will find all records that match both criteria (not either/or). Additionally, users can extend or constrain searches as described below.

To search for ongoing programs, users must enter 9999 into the End Date field. The Start Date field can contain a year or remain blank.

To search results by region, users can restrict search results by selecting a region from the dropdown menu. Region criteria can be applied in combination with one or more other search criteria.

To search for programs reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse, users can click Yes in that field and then click Perform Find.

To see the matching programs in list view, users can select Program List View under Layout.

To go back to accessing all records, users can select Show All Records (the eye icon under Browse in the left navigation bar).

District Details page. To search in the District Details page, users must click Show All Records (the eye icon under Browse) while on the District Details Page.

Users can then click the Find button at the top middle of the screen (blue circle with magnifying glass). They will then see a blank District page, where they can begin a search.

To search for programs in each district, users can type in the district name in the District Name field and click Perform Find in the left navigation bar.

To search for districts matching dropout or graduation rates or a demographic criterion, users must enter the criterion as a decimal (for example, > 0.50 under % Free and Reduced-Price Lunch to see only the districts with greater than 50 percent of the student population eligible for free or reduced-price lunch) and then click Perform Find in the left navigation bar.

To go back to accessing all records, users can click Show All Records (the eye icon under Browse in the left navigation bar).

School Details page. To search in the School Details page, users must click Show All Records (the eye icon under Browse) while on the School Details Page.

Users can then click the Find button at the top middle of the screen (blue circle with magnifying glass).

Users can enter a school name or district or select a type of school (for example, middle school) to perform a search for schools matching user criteria and click Perform Find on the left navigation bar.

Extending and constraining the found set

Users can extend or constrain their search results using the Extend Found Set and Constrain Found Set buttons in the left navigation bar (figure A12).

Extend Found Set. The Extend Found Set function is useful for finding records that meet one criterion or another—for example, a search on the District Details page that shows schools in districts of cities with populations greater than 170,000 *or* schools that have a percentage of Latino students greater than 40 percent (table A4).

To use Extend Found Set, users can click the Find button on the District Details page, enter the first criterion in the proper field (in the example, the criterion would be > 170000 in the City Population field) and then click Perform Find (figure A13).

Users would then click Find again (the blue magnifying glass), enter the second criterion

FIGURE A12
Locating the Extend Found Set and Constrain Found Set buttons

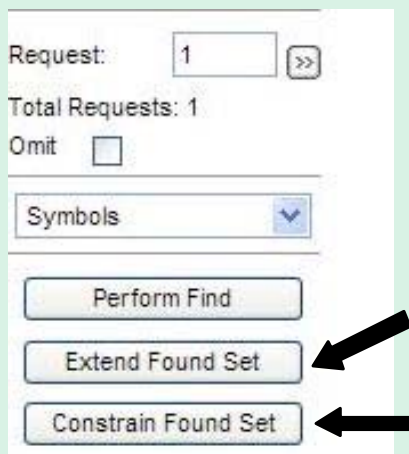
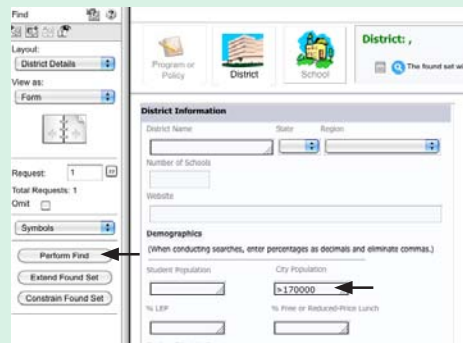


TABLE A4
Data from example Extend Found Set search

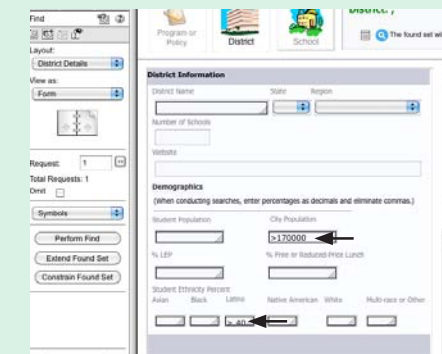
City	City population	Percent Latino
Bridgeport	139,529	47.9
Providence	173,618	62.3
Worcester	172,000	37.9
Springfield	152,802	58.2
Rochester	219,773	22.3

FIGURE A13
Entering the first criterion for the Extend Found Set



in the proper field (in the example, the criterion would be $> .40$ in the Latino field under Student Ethnicity Percent) and then click the Extend Found Set button (figure A14). Commas must be omitted and decimals must be

FIGURE A14
Entering the second criterion for the Extend Found Set



used for percentages to perform the search properly (in the example, 170000 rather than 170,000, and .40 rather than 40).

Users can use the green Previous and Next buttons on the top right of the screen or the Notebook icon on the left navigation bar to scroll through the search results.

In the example above, users would find cities with populations greater than 170,000 and a percentage of Latino students greater than 40 percent with one search: by clicking Find and entering the two criteria in their respective fields. Among the pilot sites, Providence would be the only district meeting these criteria.

Constrain Found Set. Because the database can find records matching multiple criteria, the Constrain Found Set button is most useful when users want to omit records from a found set—for example, to find programs or policies that target only middle school students. Searching for these programs or policies by conducting a search with 6, 7, and 8 checked in Target Grades would likely yield a Found Set with programs or policies that target other grades in addition to grade 6, 7, and 8 (such as programs that target grades 6–12). To find programs or policies implemented only in middle schools, users must first conduct three searches using Extend Found Set to find all programs that target students in grades 6, 7, or 8 and then use the Constrain Found Set and the Omit function to omit records that include high school grades. To do this, users must click the Omit button, click a grade to omit (such as 9), and then click Constrain Found Set. The process must be repeated for each grade level to be omitted, so four separate searches (to omit grades 9, 10, 11, and 12) must be conducted.

Sorting results

On the Program List View Read-Only Page, users can click the arrows to the left of District to sort in ascending or descending order by district or the arrows to the left of Program Name

to sort in ascending or descending order by program name (figure A15).

Users can also sort records by some fields in the Programs or Policy Details Page, the District Details Page, and the School Details page. The following is an example of how to sort by district population in the District Details Page. Users can follow similar steps for sorting on other pages.

To sort records, in Browse mode, users must navigate to the page that has the fields to be sorted in the Layout dropdown menu on (for example, District Details) and then click the Sort icon (the A and Z with up and down arrows; figure A16).

In the Choose Fields column, users must select the first field to sort from (for example, population; figure A17).

FIGURE A15
Sorting by district or program name

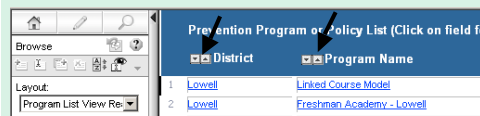


FIGURE A16
Sorting by other fields

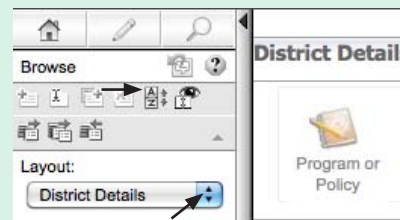
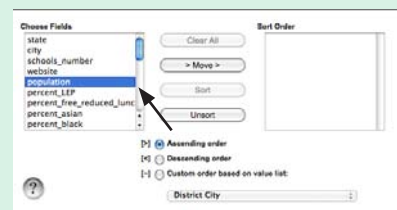
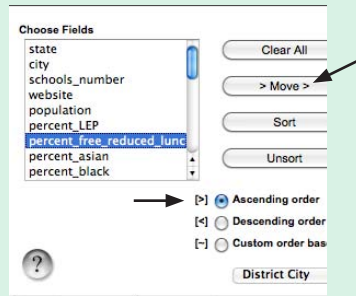


FIGURE A17
Choosing other fields



Users must then choose the sort order (ascending, descending, or custom based on predefined field values) and then click Move to populate the Sort Order box (figure A18).

FIGURE A18

Choosing sort order

Users can repeat steps 2 and 3, if needed (for example, to sort by region, then by state) and then click Sort. After a sort is conducted on a specific page, the resulting sort order will not carry over into another page layout view or to a new search on the same page.

Table A5 lists how names are displayed in the Choose Fields box during a sort function by layout view. For example, to sort by state on the Program and Policy Details page, users must select “PROG_district::state” in the dropdown menu. Sorting queries should be limited to the fields in table A5 because other fields are not easily sortable. (A Find search is more appropriate for other fields.)

TABLE A5

Cross-reference table on sort function field names for different layout views

Field name as displayed in layout view	Field name as displayed in Sort Field text box for		
	Program and Policy Details layout	District Details layout	School Details layout
District	Prog__district::city	city	SCH_district::city
State	PROG__district::state	State	—
Region	District_region	Region	—
Program name	Name	DIST_program::name	SCH_program: name
Intervention level	Intervention_level	—	—
School name	PROG__school::school_name	DIST__school::school_name	School_name
School type	—	—	School_type
Student population	—	Population	—
City population	—	City population	—
% LEP	—	Percent_LEP	—
% free or reduced-price lunch	—	Percent_free_reduced_lunch	—
Student ethnicity percentage			
African American	—	percent_black	—
Asian	—	percent_asian	—
Latino	—	Percent_hispanic	—
Native American	—	Percent_native_american	—
White	—	Percent_white	—
Multi-race	—	Percent_multirace	—

Using other navigation buttons

After users have selected Find (the blue magnifying glass) and performed searches in the database, four buttons will appear on the left navigation bar (figure A19). These buttons are generated automatically by FileMakerPro as part of its design template:

- *Add New Request* (blue arrow): provides a function very similar to that of the Extend Found Set button, allowing searches for records that meet one criterion or another.
- *Duplicate Request* (red arrow): duplicates the last request.
- *Delete Request* (green arrow): deletes the most recent request.
- *Show All Records* (orange arrow): shows all available records and is useful for returning to the full records view on a page after conducting a search.

In Browse mode (when not conducting a search), users will see six buttons on the left navigation bar (figure A20). These buttons are generated automatically by FileMakerPro as part of its design template.

- *New Record, Edit Current Record, Duplicate Current Record, Delete Record* (black arrows): not relevant to the database.

FIGURE A19

Using other navigation buttons in find mode

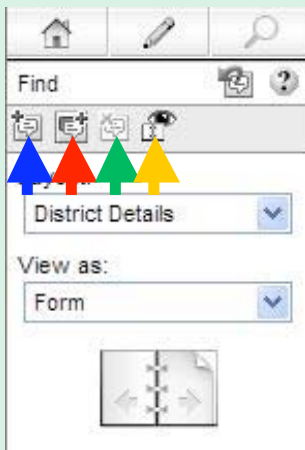
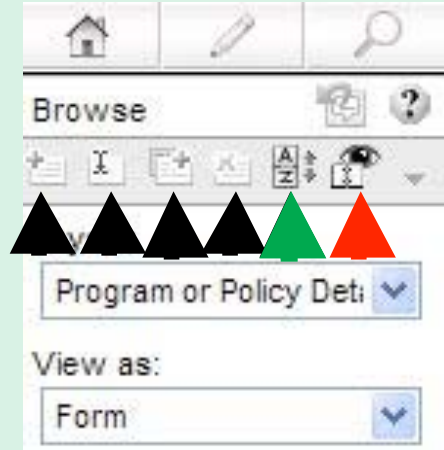


FIGURE A20

Using other navigation buttons in browse mode



- *Sort Results* (green arrow): sorts records by a chosen field on the Programs or Policy Details Page, the District Details Page, and the School Details Page.
- *Show All Records* (red arrow): shows all available records and is useful for returning to the full records view on a page after conducting a search.

Obtaining sample numbers for tables and tables shells

This section outlines steps for obtaining numbers to populate a specific type of table; for example, tables that report on the number of programs by a program characteristic (for example, core strategies or specific target populations) and in a certain geographical area (for example, Northeast and Islands only, both regions, or by state).

To obtain numbers for a table on the core strategies used among the Northeast and Islands Region districts only, users:

- Click the Find icon (the blue magnifying glass) on the Program or Policy Details page.
- Select the Region from the dropdown menu (in the example, Northeast and Islands).

- Select Core Strategies (for example, engaging and supporting families, mentoring, monitoring attendance, tutoring/extra classes).
- Click Perform Find.
- Record the number of records resulting from the Find search and repeat for each core strategy in the table.

To obtain numbers for a table on service goals in both the Northeast and Islands Region and the Mid-Atlantic Region, users:

- Click on the Find icon on the Program or Policy Details page.
- Leave the region field blank to search for service goals in both regions.
- Select service goals (for example, address behavioral needs, improve academic performance, provide mental health support).
- Click Perform Find.
- Record the number of records resulting from the Find search and repeat for each service goal in the table.

To obtain numbers for a table on programs by core strategies and service goals in one or more states, users:

- Click the Find icon on the Program or Policy Details Page.
- Select a state (for example, Massachusetts).
- Select core strategies (for example, accelerated credit accumulation and advocating for student needs) and service goals (for example, improve academic performance).
- Click Perform Find.

To continue finding programs that meet these criteria in additional states, users conduct a separate search using the Find and Extend Found Set buttons on the Programs and Policy Details page:

- Click the Find icon.
- Select a state (for example, Connecticut).
- Select core strategies and service goals.
- Click Extend Found Set.
- Scroll through each program.

Appendix B

Sample introductory letter

February 10, 2011
[ADDRESS]



Dear [SUPERINTENDENT],

As you may know, Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast and Islands (REL-NEI), funded by the U.S. Department of Education, recently created an online database of current dropout prevention policies and programs that target urban minority students in our region. This database was created to provide local, state and regional educators with an interactive, online tool where they could learn about dropout prevention strategies being implemented by districts similar to their own and, in turn, potentially increase communication and collaboration across districts.

We are pleased to let you know that the database currently contains data from 18 school districts in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions, including your district. The Northeast districts with records currently in this database are Bridgeport, CT; Lowell, MA; New Bedford, MA; New Haven, CT; Providence, RI; Rochester, NY; Springfield, MA; Syracuse, NY; and Worcester, MA. Data for these districts was collected during the 2006–2007 school year after a review of publicly available information and interviews with several individuals across the nine districts.

We have recently received a new round of funding from the Department of Education to update the records that are currently in this database. To do this, we would like to conduct a brief interview with you or another knowledgeable school official in your district to find out how the records in our database can be updated to accurately reflect your current dropout prevention efforts.

We would like to schedule the interviews to take place in March 2011, and anticipate they will last between 30 and 60 minutes. We will send hard copies of the database records for your district prior to any interviews so that the interviewee may be able to review the existing records prior to our conversation. We will not collect any personal information.

Our Research Assistant/Outreach Specialist, will follow-up to this letter in the next week to answer any questions you may have about the project, to determine the best person to interview, and, if possible, to schedule an interview time. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Athi Myint-U, Ed.M.	Lydia O'Donnell, Ed.D.
Study Leader	Study Leader

Appendix C

Interviewer instructions

1. Introduce the purpose of the phone interview:

Thank you for agreeing to speak with me today to help us update the dropout prevention records for [name of district] that are included in the REL-NEI's database on dropout prevention programs. Were you able to review the relevant printed records from 2006–2007 for your district in the REL-NEI database that I sent to you?

Before we start, do you have any questions I might answer?

2. Read consent form and get oral consent to participate.
3. Conduct interview—See *Interviewer Template for Recording Data for Each Program or Policy*.

For existing programs, ask interviewee if 2006–2007 programs are still in effect.

If still in effect, collect any information that may have changed for each program record since the last round of data collection using the *Interviewer Template for Recording Data for Each Program or Policy*.

For the existing records of dropout prevention programs or policies for your district, can you provide me with any updates or changes to the information?

If discontinued, ask for end date and reason for discontinuation.

If a new program is in place for 2010–2011, collect all information for a new database record using the *Interviewer Template for Recording Data for Each Program or Policy*.

Thank you so much for that information. Now I would like to find out if there are any additional programs or policies that your districts may have started implementing since the 2006–2007 school year. Can I ask you some more questions about these programs so the information can be entered into our database?

4. Request written materials (by mail, fax, or email) that may be available on the new dropout prevention programs and policies mentioned and that can help get information for the database.
5. If the interviewee was missing information for a specific record, ask for contact information for individuals who can provide this missing information.

Appendix D
Interviewer template

Names and Types of Schools Implementing the Program/Policy

District:

(Types: Elementary School, Middle School, Middle School–Magnet, Middle School–Charter, High School, High School–Magnet, High School–Charter, Alternative)

State:

Number of Schools in District:

Program/Policy Title:

Brief Description (1–3 sentences on program/policy and target population; include website address, if applicable)

Program Reviewed by Clearinghouse:
If Yes, Review Date & Status:

Core Strategies (check all that apply)

Strategy	Description
<input type="checkbox"/> Accelerated Credit Accumulation	Provides students with opportunities to fulfill credits in an expedited way so they can “catch up” with their same-age peers.
<input type="checkbox"/> Advocating for Student Needs	Encourages program staff to communicate with school officials or key personnel about students’ needs and ways to address them.
<input type="checkbox"/> Career Education and Workforce Readiness	Introduces and exposes students to different types of careers and/or provides skills for entering the workforce.
<input type="checkbox"/> Case Management/Service Coordination	Provides students or families who require multiple services with coordinated care throughout the service delivery process.
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Collaboration	Works with various community agencies and individuals to increase school-community collaboration and to link students to services.
<input type="checkbox"/> Engaging and Supporting Families	Involves parents, guardians, and other family members in program activities; provides support to families to help them address issues that may contribute to dropout.
<input type="checkbox"/> Individualized or Culturally/Linguistically-relevant Instruction	Customizes instruction to match students’ needs and abilities and recognizes and incorporates cultural and linguistic diversity of students.
<input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Technologies	Uses innovative new technologies, such as teacher-supported computer-based learning, to increase student motivation.
<input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring	Matches students with adult mentors in an effort to establish a close, supportive one-on-one relationship.
<input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring Attendance	Uses tools or strategies to help schools more closely monitor whether a student is in school and to contact parents/guardians to let them know their child is absent.
<input type="checkbox"/> Out-of-School Enrichment	Provides students with after school, Saturday, and summer enrichment programs.
<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development	Provides opportunities for teaching staff to gain skills they can use in and outside the classroom to enrich their own experiences and the experiences of their students.
<input type="checkbox"/> Social and Emotional Learning Curricula	Uses curricula in classrooms to help students develop social and emotional learning skills (e.g. conflict resolution) to deal with issues that may place them at risk for dropping out.
<input type="checkbox"/> Social and Emotional Transition Support	Focuses on providing support to students who are in “transition” periods (e.g., transition from middle to high school, pregnancy, returning from incarceration, newly immigrated, parenthood). Also includes provision of support to students with mental health needs.
<input type="checkbox"/> Systemic/Policy Renewal	Focuses on creating a new or renewed coordinated district-level policy related to dropout prevention that will address most current issues and risks.
<input type="checkbox"/> Transforming the School Environment	Strives to create an overall school environment that is caring, safe, and emotionally supportive and in which students feel safe and a sense of respect and self-worth. May include the establishment of smaller communities of students.
<input type="checkbox"/> Tutoring/Extra Classes	Provides students with extra academic support for subject matters in which they are not excelling or are failing.

- Intervention Level (check all that apply)
- Universal: Entire student population
 - Selected: Students considered at risk because they belong to some subset of the school population
 - Indicated: Students considered at risk because of individual performance or behaviors

- Service Goals (i.e., Project/Policy Goals; check all that apply)
- Address behavioral needs
 - Address school safety and environment
 - Decrease truancy
 - Improve academic performance
 - Increase school attachment
 - Promote college planning and linkages
 - Provide career planning and preparation
 - Provide mental health support
 - Provide support during transitions

Target Grades (circle all that apply):
 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Demographics of Participants:

Male % _____

Female % _____

African American % _____

Asian % _____

Latino % _____

Native American % _____

White % _____

Number of Participants:

- Specific Target Populations (check all that apply)
- Students with academic needs
 - Students with limited English proficiency
 - Students who would be part of the first generation in their family to attend college
 - Students in low socio-economic status families
 - Students who are pregnant or mothers

- Students returning from incarceration
- Special needs students with behavioral challenges
- Special needs students with learning disabilities
- Special needs students with mental health needs
- Students who are chronically truant or absent

- In-School Staff Involvement (check all that apply)
- Adjustment counselor
 - Behavioral resource office
 - Crisis counselor
 - Day care providers
 - Director
 - Dropout specialist
 - Grant writer
 - Guidance counselor
 - Nutrition counselor
 - Paraprofessional
 - Parent-community liaison
 - Principal/administrator
 - Psychologist/therapist
 - Resource officer
 - School nurse
 - School-wide
 - Security guard
 - Social worker
 - Special education staff
 - Support specialist
 - Student advocate
 - Teacher
 - Truancy/attendance officer
 - Tutor

- Out-of-School Staff Involvement (check all that apply)
- AmeriCorps
 - CBO
 - Corporate
 - Department of youth services or social services
 - Health clinic

- Job Corps
- Local higher education
- Mental health services
- Mentoring program
- Parents
- Police
- Religious affiliates
- Truancy court
- Tutor
- Other volunteer

Funding Sources (check all that apply)

- District
- State
- Federal
- Private

Approximate Cost to Implement per Year:

Start date:

End date (if applicable):

Reason for Discontinuation (if applicable):

Notes:

Is the above information publicly available? If no, do we have permission to include this information in the database?

Appendix E

List of all dropout prevention programs and policies

Table E1 lists all 151 dropout prevention programs and policies implemented in the nine Northeast and Islands region pilot school districts and included in the database by district, program name, and status.

TABLE E1

Status of dropout prevention programs and policies implemented in the Northeast and Islands Region pilot school districts in 2006/07 or 2010/11, by implementing district

District	Program name
New	
Lowell, MA	Kids to College
	Latino Connections
	Upward Bound ^a
New Bedford, MA	New Bedford Secondary Summer School
	Virtual High School Global Consortium
	Where Are You Headed?
New Haven, CT	Juvenile Review Board
	Local Interagency Support Team
	Street Stops
	Supporting Pregnant and Parenting Teens
Providence, RI	Providence Career and Technical Academy
Springfield, MA	Credit Recovery Program
	Springfield Parent Academy
	Springfield Student Attendance Resource Center
Syracuse, NY	Better Expectations Starting Tomorrow
	Graduation Initiative
	Say Yes to Education
	Success Through Early Prevention
Worcester, MA	Adult Learning Center
	Challenge Academy
	Graduation Improvement Task Force
	Home Instruction
	Reach Academy
	St. Casmir's Alternative Program
	Teen Care Programs

(CONTINUED)

TABLE E1 (CONTINUED)

Status of dropout prevention programs and policies implemented in the Northeast and Islands Region pilot school districts in 2006/07 or 2010/11, by implementing district

District	Program name
Discontinued	
Bridgeport, CT	Career Academies—Bridgeport ^b
	Park Project
Lowell, MA	START Attendance Program
New Bedford, MA	West Side Alternative Junior and Senior School*
New Haven, CT	Court Program
	Holistic Anti-Truancy Program
Providence, RI	9th Grade Academy of Service
	GEAR UP—Providence ^c
	Providence Effective Schools Initiative
	Strengthen Academic Program
Springfield, MA	Ninth Grade Academic Pilot
	Twilight Program - Springfield
Syracuse, NY	GEAR UP—Syracuse ^c
	Syracuse Truancy Outreach Program
	Truancy Initiative
	Weapon Diversion Program
	Westside Community School Strategy
Worcester, MA	8th Grade Transition
	Career Academies—Worcester ^b
	Fanning Learning Center
	Middle School Task Force
	Ninth Grade Repeaters
Sustained	
Bridgeport, CT	Bridgeport At Night
	Educational Talent Search—Bridgeport ^d
	Family Solutions Center
	Make the Grade
	Park City Academy
	Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports—Bridgeport ^e
	Reconnecting Youth
	Student Assistance Team
Teen Pregnancy Program	

(CONTINUED)

TABLE E1 (CONTINUED)

Status of dropout prevention programs and policies implemented in the Northeast and Islands Region pilot school districts in 2006/07 or 2010/11, by implementing district

District	Program name
Sustained (continued)	
Lowell, MA	9th Grade Repeaters
	Attendance Buy-Back Program
	BRIDGE Program
	Career Academies—Lowell ^b
	Educational Talent Search - Lowell ^d
	Freshman Academy - Lowell
	GEAR UP—Lowell ^c
	Horizons for Youth Program
	Job Corps—Lowell ^f
	LeBlanc Therapeutic Day Program
	Linked Course Model
	Lowell Alternative Diploma Program
	Lowell High School Alternative Program at Molloy School
	Lowell-Middlesex Academy Charter
	McHugh Alternative
	One Lowell/School Success for Newcomer
	Operation Attendance
	Partnership for College Success
	Read 180
	Reserve Officers Training Corps
New Bedford, MA	Academic Support Programs—New Bedford
	Adult Diploma Education Program
	Algorithm
	Alternative Education Task Force
	Dropout Prevention Office
	Educational Talent Search—New Bedford ^d
	Freshman Academy—New Bedford
	Gang Intervention Collaborative
	GEAR UP—New Bedford ^c
	New Bedford Evening High School Extension Program
	Parenting Teens Program
	SMILES Mentoring
	The Whaling City Junior/Senior High School
	Trinity Day Academy
	Twilight Program—New Bedford

(CONTINUED)

TABLE E1 (CONTINUED)

Status of dropout prevention programs and policies implemented in the Northeast and Islands Region pilot school districts in 2006/07 or 2010/11, by implementing district

District	Program name
Sustained (continued)	
New Haven, CT	Alternative Schools
	Career Academies—New Haven ^b
	DCF School Initiative
	GEAR UP—New Haven ^c
	Polly T. McCabe Transitional School
	Reintegration of Incarcerated Youth
	Social Development Department
Providence, RI	ADEP Senior Credit Recovery Program
	Adult Diploma Evening Program
	Career Academies—Providence ^b
	College Crusade of Rhode Island
	Educational Talent Search—Providence ^d
	Parent-Public Engagement Initiative
	Senior Summer Credit Recovery Program
	Stop Truancy Outreach Program
Upward Bound—Providence ^a	
Rochester, NY	Career Academies—Rochester ^b
	Commencement Summer School Program
	Department of Parent and Community Involvement
	Family & Student Wellness Center
	Home/Hospital Program
	Monroe County Incarcerated Youth Program
	NorthSTAR Program
	Project Pace Program
	Special Education RCSD Summer Program
	Student and Family Support Center
	Transition Program
Young Mothers Program	

(CONTINUED)

TABLE E1 (CONTINUED)

Status of dropout prevention programs and policies implemented in the Northeast and Islands Region pilot school districts in 2006/07 or 2010/11, by implementing district

District	Program name
Sustained (continued)	
Springfield, MA	After-School MCAS Support
	Career Academies—Springfield ^b
	Community Reentry Centers
	Early College-High School Program
	Educational Talent Search—Springfield ^d
	GEAR UP—Springfield ^c
	Intensive Summer School Program
	Ninth Grade Advisories
	Plato/MCAS Math Support
	Regular Summer School
	S.A.F.E. Schools
	Upward Bound—Springfield ^a
Syracuse, NY	Advancement Via Individual Development
	Career Academies—Syracuse ^b
	Credit Recovery Program
	Family Life Program
	Parent Partnership Program
	Positive Alternatives to Student Suspension
	Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports ^e
	Syracuse Choice
Worcester, MA	Academic Support Programs—Worcester
	Gerald Creamer Center—Day School ^{**}
	Gerald Creamer Center—Credit Recovery Program ^{**}
	Gerald Creamer Center—Evening High School ^{**}
	Gerald Creamer Center—Returnee Evening Program ^{**}
	Job Corps—Worcester ^f
	Juvenile Resource Center
	Latino Education Institute
	New Citizens Center
	School Age Mothers Program
	Structured Therapeutic Educational Programs
Woodward Day School	

* Now divided into Trinity Day Academy and Whaling City Jr/Sr High School.

** Gerald Creamer Center was previously one record.

Note: A lettered superscript following a program name denotes a program also being implemented in another district with that matching letter.

Source: Authors' analysis of data from the Database of Dropout Prevention Programs and Policies in the Northeast and Islands Region.

Appendix F

Dropout prevention interventions reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse as of June 29, 2011

The What Works Clearinghouse reviews of dropout interventions (<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Default.aspx>) focus on three outcome domains: staying in school, progressing in school, and completing school. Programs that meet the What Works Clearinghouse evidence standards are reviewed, and interventions are assigned to one of six categories for each domain:

- Positive effect: strong evidence of a positive effect with no overriding contrary evidence.
- Potentially positive effect: evidence of a positive effect with no overriding contrary evidence.
- Mixed effect: evidence of inconsistent effects.
- No discernible effect: no affirmative evidence of an effect.
- Potentially negative effect: evidence of a negative effect with no overriding contrary evidence.
- Negative effect: strong evidence of a negative effect with no overriding contrary evidence.

Interventions with positive or potentially positive effects on two domains were:⁶

- Accelerated Middle Schools: staying in school (potentially positive) and progressing in school (positive).
- Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success: staying in school (potentially positive) and progressing in school (potentially positive).
- Career Academies: staying in school (potentially positive) and progressing in school (potentially positive).
- Check & Connect: staying in school (positive) and progressing in school (potentially positive).

Interventions with potentially positive effects on one domain were:

- Financial Incentives for Teen Parents to Stay in School: staying in school.
- High School Redirection: progressing in school.
- Job Corps: completing school.
- JOBSTART: completing school.
- New Chance: completing school.
- Talent Development High Schools: progressing in school.
- Talent Search: completing school.
- Twelve Together: staying in school.

Interventions with no discernible effects on any domain were:

- First Things First.
- Middle College High School.
- Project Grad.
- Quantum Opportunity Program.
- Service and Conservation Corps.
- Summer Training and Education Program.

The three interventions being implemented in one or more of the pilot districts involved in this study are Career Academies, Job Corps and Talent Search. The What Works Clearinghouse (2006a, p. 1) describes Career Academies as, “School-within-school programs operating in high schools. They offer career-related curricula based on a career theme, academic coursework, and work experience through partnerships with local employers . . . *Career Academies* were found to have potentially positive effects on staying in school, potentially positive effects on progressing in school, and no discernible effects on completing school for those youth most at-risk of dropping out prior to the intervention.”

The What Works Clearinghouse (2008, p. 1) describes Job Corps as, “a federally-funded education and job training program for economically disadvantaged youth, offers remedial education, GED (General Educational Development) preparation, vocational

training, job placement assistance, and other supports. *Job Corps* participants typically reside in a *Job Corps* center while enrolled in the program and can remain in the program for up to two years *Job Corps* was found to have no discernible effects on progressing in school and potentially positive effects on completing school.”

The What Works Clearinghouse (2006b, p. 1) describes Talent Search as a program that “aims to help low-income and first-generation

college students (those whose parents do not have four-year college degrees) complete high school and gain access to college through a combination of services designed to improve academic achievement and increase access to financial aid. Services include test taking and study skills assistance, academic advising, tutoring, career development, college campus visits, and financial aid application assistance *Talent Search* was found to have potentially positive effects on completing school.”

Notes

1. The methods used to calculate the graduation rate in the *Education Week* report may differ from the way states in the Northeast and Islands Region or other researchers such as Chapman et al. (2010) calculate graduation rates.
2. Graduation rates are generally calculated as the number of students who graduate within four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who entered high school as a single cohort (adjusted for students who moved and the like). There may be minor variations across states. Dropout rates are generally calculated as the number of students enrolled during the previous year who are not enrolled during the current year in any school and who do not meet other exclusionary criteria (such as illness or suspension) divided by the number of currently enrolled students as of October 1. Four-year dropout rates are generally calculated as the percentage of students who entered high school in grade 9 but did not graduate and are no longer enrolled in school. There may be minor variations across states. Graduation rates generally provide a good indication of dropout rates, but while the majority of students who do not graduate drop out of school, some students may be continuers, have lost all contact with the school, or be working toward a General Educational Development certificate outside of school.
3. A *program* is a free-standing set of activities, often implemented under a formal name, that are linked to the goal of dropout prevention. The program Gear Up, for example, enrolls students in grades 7 and 8 and promotes early college planning and links through workshops and field trips. A *policy* is a district- or state-level initiative that aims to reduce dropout rates through rules or strategies that target the entire student population. A policy in Lowell, Massachusetts, for example, allows repeaters in grade 9 (“provisional sophomores”) to move with their classmates into the building for grades 10–12, so that they can continue to interact with same-age peers while taking makeup classes to earn the credits they need.
4. Data collected by Regional Educational Laboratory Mid-Atlantic were not recoded using the same procedures; therefore, records for universal programs in Mid-Atlantic Region states may have specific target populations selected.
5. A small percentage of these new programs are programs newly identified as a dropout program by key informants during this round of data collection that may have been launched before 2006/07.
6. Programs in bold are being implemented by at least one of the nine pilot Northeast and Islands Region districts.

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