

Educating All Our Children

A Comprehensive Plan for Reducing the Dropout Rate in King County

Prepared for the Reinvesting In Youth Steering
Committee

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The Reinvesting in Youth Challenge

Nothing could be more shocking in the current climate of No Child Left Behind and heightened focus on students required to meet testing standards for graduation than to learn that nearly one out of three public high school students still will not graduate. *One out of three*. The graduation rates are worse for Latinos and African Americans, approaching what *Time* magazine's cover story "Dropout Nation" called an "alarming" 50 percent. *Time*'s conclusion: "Virtually no community, small or large, rural or urban, has escaped the problem." This problem is not happening in somebody else's backyard, but everybody's across the entire country, including ours."¹

While shocking, we know from our experience and our assessment – the bulk of which is contained in this report – that the school dropout problem is not new and it is persistent. The losses are staggering in both human and economic potential. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education, the fiscal impact of the 1.2 million students who did not graduate from high school in 2004 will cost the nation more than \$325 billion in lost wages, taxes and productivity over those students' lifetimes. Applying the same formula to the number of non-graduating students in Washington State, lifetime losses add up to \$8.5 billion.

But the losses are more than economic. Young people who fail to navigate the education system to completion have a much harder time achieving equal footing in our society in a variety of ways. Students of color, students with emotional and behavioral disabilities, and students from poorer communities are all at greater risk for dropping out of high school, leaving them permanently at greater risk in our neighborhoods and communities. Data show that high rates of school failure are associated with higher rates of substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, and risk of delinquency, crime or violence.

We could continue citing statistics, but the mission of this report and the Reinvesting in Youth partnership is not just to regurgitate the known data, but to offer what is more important; a comprehensive action plan for preventing the problem of dropping out of school. As the reader will see by examining the data and conclusions cited in this report, the reasons why so many young people fail to finish high school are complex, involving many different segments of our communities, both within and outside of our schools. The answers to meeting the challenge of preventing dropping out of school are, in many cases, equally complex. This should not dissuade us from rolling up our sleeves and tackling the issues together. Regardless of the complexity of the issues only one question really matters: How do we respond?

Here is where there is some good news. There is a growing body of research and evidence that points us in what we believe is the most effective direction for preventing school dropout. Reinvesting in Youth seeks a set of positive outcomes related to school completion, which is a much broader view than simply preventing dropping out of school. **Reinvesting In Youth aims to prepare all students for postsecondary education and/or jobs that pay a living wage.**

¹ Thornburgh, N. (2006, April 9). Dropout Nation. *Time*. (Retrieved on 2007, March 12) <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1181646,00.html>

Promoting school completion requires a strengths-based orientation and selecting interventions that promote “good” outcomes, not simply prevent “bad” outcomes for students and society.

This report summarizes what we have found to be some of the most promising research-based practices and programs that we can draw from to implement the Comprehensive Plan we recommend. There is still a lot of work to do and many questions to be answered, but tapping into the existing research keeps us from wasting time reinventing any more wheels.

Specifically, the Reinvesting in Youth Challenge aims to reduce the gap in outcomes for traditionally underserved and underachieving students, while promoting improvements for all students during high school and beyond.

The Reinvesting in Youth Challenge

Primary Goals: *(For all student population groups in King County):* increase graduation rates, decrease dropout rates, increase retrieval of those that do dropout and increase enrollment in post secondary education and/or attainment of jobs that pay a living wage.

Desired Outcomes

1. Increase the graduation rates of Native-American, Hispanic, African American and Limited English students to 85 percent by 2014.
2. Increase the holding power of middle and high schools, measured by decreases in the number of cohort members who dropout each year.
3. Increase the number of students retrieved after dropping out.
4. Increase enrollment in post-secondary education and/or attainment of jobs that pay a living wage.

In order to reach our primary goals and desired outcomes, we propose concentrating on seven system-wide strategies using these key activities:

- 1. Reinvesting in Youth serves as a multidisciplinary catalyst by**
 - Leveraging the leadership of the Reinvesting in Youth Steering Committee to serve as an on-going catalyst.
- 2. Increasing the effectiveness of district and school systems practices by**
 - Providing supports to districts/schools to develop a systematic plan to meet the Reinvesting in Youth Challenge
 - Implementing or enhancing practices based on research, evidence and best practices to reduce the achievement gap and improve overall achievement
- 3. Widening and increasing the impact of school-based programs by**
 - Building on local, successful programs and other community resources
 - Using recommended programs for dropout prevention, intervention and retrieval after implementation of school-improvement practices

- Coordinating and collaborating with schools and among community programs to increase access to programs for students
4. **Changing state and district policies to**
 - Set accountability standards *for each population group* for the graduation rate goals established by the Washington State A+ Commission in 2005. The Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission was created in 1999 by the Washington state Legislature to develop and provide oversight for an accountability system focused on continuous improvement. Its duties were transferred to the State Board of Education in 2005.
 - Align district policy and resources with state and federal accountability requirements
 5. **Creating more useful, comprehensive data and research systems by**
 - Linking students and teacher data to better measure and support student success
 - Developing a data-based early warning mechanism to identify and intervene with students showing signs of dropping out
 6. **Improving financing and sustainability by**
 - Maximizing use of existing resources through realignment
 - Encouraging other funders to realign their resources
 - Obtaining foundation support for development, implementation and evaluation of the Comprehensive Plan
 - Developing increased capacity and infrastructure for sustainability
 - Developing a savings reinvestment plan
 7. **Designing and implementing effective evaluation plans for improving the overall performance of the strategies in the Comprehensive Plan by**
 - Providing formative or process evaluation
 - Providing summative or outcome evaluation

Reinvesting in Youth intends to demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed Comprehensive Plan in a selected number of school districts in King County. Outcome measurement will be derived from schools that have developed their own strategic plans based on the Comprehensive Strategy, then built the capacity required to implement their plans. We hope to also inspire and support adoption of the plan in other districts as we garner results and move forward.

Reaching the goals and outcomes we have stated in the Reinvesting in Youth Challenge requires our plan not only be comprehensive, but engage a broad range of stakeholders all working together and moving forward in a common direction. Reinvesting in Youth can serve as an important catalyst in this strategy, but only those who have policy and budget decision-making authority at the state and school district levels can ultimately make change happen.

Our King County Community can collectively achieve the vision of *all* students finishing high school by applying research-based lessons to the work already underway. Many hard-working,

deeply-caring adults work with our young people everyday, and across the state many effective reforms are already beginning to move in the direction recommended. What Reinvesting in Youth hopes to achieve with this report, and its implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, is to move all these promising ongoing efforts further down the road. We all know our future is at stake.

I. Introduction

A. About Reinvesting in Youth

Reinvesting in Youth (RIY) is a partnership of county and city governments, foundations and community representatives within King County that seeks to increase the health of youth and families, reduce juvenile crime, reduce reliance on incarceration, save public monies, and reduce the disproportional involvement of youth of color in the juvenile justice system.

In 2002, based on an extensive feasibility study, Reinvesting in Youth set out to reduce juvenile and adult crime, reduce reliance on incarceration and save public monies by implementing evidence-based intervention programs at sufficient scale and with precise targeting to lower the number of kids locked up. Its strategy for sustainability was to convince policymakers to recognize, capture, and reinvest public dollar savings that result from reducing recidivism.

Reinvesting in Youth was planned as a four-year project to be completed by the end of 2006. However, in late 2005, members of the Reinvesting in Youth Steering Committee began expressing interest in exploring a second generation of Reinvesting in Youth. They noted that Reinvesting in Youth has strong credibility with private funders and the legislature, and that it has performed a unique catalytic role for change in King County and the State. The Reinvesting in Youth Steering Committee wondered whether and how these strengths might be applied further upstream. In early 2006, the Steering Committee agreed to investigate a regional strategy to prevent students from dropping out of school and retrieving young people who are not connected to school or work. This topic dovetails well with the previous work of RIY, because school failure is a major risk factor for the commission of juvenile criminal offenses.

A January 2006 survey of youth on probation caseloads in the King County Juvenile Court, 26 percent were not enrolled in school, and 61 percent were behind in grade level or credits.²

One study looked closely at the relationship between academic performance and delinquency and produced important new findings to consider in preventing delinquency¹:

- Poor academic performance is related to the prevalence and onset of delinquency, whereas better academic performance is associated with desistance from offending. The poorer the academic performance, the higher the delinquency. The odds of delinquency for children with low academic performance is about two times higher than for children with high academic performance. Stated in another way, 35 percent of low academically performing children compared to only about 20 percent of high performing children became delinquent.
- Both males and females with a higher frequency of offenses, more serious offenses, or violent offenses had lower levels of academic performance.
- Improvements in academic performance co-occur with improvements in the prevalence of delinquency. Among intervention programs that showed significant effects for either

² Crime Free Futures. *King County Juvenile Court School Survey Results January 2006*. Seattle, WA: King County Superior Court.

academic performance or delinquency, improvement in either or both outcome variables was equally likely.

- Among children of elementary age, intervention programs that employed self-control and social skills training combined with parent training were more effective; they tended to produce improvements in both academic performance and delinquency.

The study recommended that communities should be especially alert to problems of academic performance, should take the problem of truancy quite seriously, and implement effective remedial education programs for some youth.

Reinvesting in Youth engaged a team of consultants to conduct research to develop a regional strategy to prevent students from dropping out of school and retrieving young people who are not connected to school or work to begin that investigation. The group believes that boosting academic success will have many community wide benefits, including the reduction of crime and delinquency.

B. Purpose of this report

This report summarizes the results of a research and data gathering effort carried out by the consulting team over many months. The three main goals of this report are to provide the Reinvesting in Youth Steering Committee and other stakeholders in the community with the following:

- An analysis of the school dropout problem in King County
- A description of what constitutes best practices and promising program approaches in the field
- A set of strategies to reduce dropout rates and retrieve students in King County

In addition to a fairly exhaustive summary of the latest data, we have devised a Comprehensive Plan, based on our findings, that states a series of goals and desired outcomes to do the following in King County:

- Reduce dropout rates for all population groups
- Increase graduation rates for all population groups
- Connect more students to a post-secondary education
- Reconnect students lacking current contacts with school or jobs

The overall Comprehensive Plan is based on a review of the literature, interviews with a range of stakeholders, guidance from the Reinvesting in Youth Steering Committee, and the perspectives of the consultant team. Information available on the feasibility of implementing the plan in King County is also summarized.

C. Definitions

In our report, we use the following key terms as defined by Washington State:

- *Dropout* - a student who leaves school for any reason, except death, before completing school with a regular diploma and does not transfer to another school.

Students who receive a GED certificate are also categorized as dropouts. If a student leaves the district without indicating he or she is dropping out, and the district is not contacted by another school requesting student records (an unconfirmed transfer), the student has an “unknown” enrollment status and is considered a dropout.

- *Graduate* - a student who has received a high school diploma or an adult diploma from a community college program during the reporting period.
- *On-time graduates* - those who receive a diploma in the expected year (four years after beginning grade 9).

D. Methodology

Information for this report was obtained from existing data sources, such as published books, articles, and reports from academic, government and philanthropic resources. We also drew information from web sources, such as the annual report on student data of the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the King County Crisis Clinic's Community Resources Online Community Information.

Sources were identified by staff and Steering Committee members of Reinvesting in Youth, by web searches, and in a few cases by telephone or in-person contacts who had access to specific types of information needed.

We interviewed a total of 22 stakeholders to gather additional information and perspectives, gathered input from a short questionnaire filled out by school superintendents, and benefited greatly from a guide to alternative education opportunities prepared by the Crime Free Futures Project of the King County Superior Court, Juvenile Division.

E. Approach and guiding principles

The consultant team has prepared this report based on the following principles:

- The goal of this Reinvesting in Youth project should be to prepare students for postsecondary education and/or jobs that pay a living wage.
- The achievement gap is the heart of the issue in regard to dropout prevention, academic success and reconnecting youth to school or work.
- Students’ paths toward early school withdrawal or successful school completion are the result of a complex interplay between student, family, school and community variables.

“The crisis deserves a comprehensive strategy, one that includes not only high school reform, but also support services and collaboration with criminal justice systems, families, health care, and other systems addressing the whole range of problems that are concentrated in these schools.”
 Gary Orfield
Introduction to Dropouts in America

- There are tremendous opportunities for improvement if all stakeholders work together on a common comprehensive strategy.
- Participants outside the school community can be an important catalyst for inciting action to address concern for dropouts.³

F. How this report is organized

Because we believe that the achievement gap between students of color and white students is the most important and intractable issue in school success, *Looking More Deeply at the Achievement Gap* is the opening section of our report rather than a subset of the rest of our findings. We believe by placing it first, we give it the prominence it deserves and allow its use as a lens in considering other portions of the report.

This opening chapter is self-contained. Chapter II describes the minority achievement gap on a variety of levels, summarizes what educators, schools and the community can do to address the issues, calls out the need for culturally responsive teaching and school practices, and suggests a set of key strategies that should immediately be examined to close the gap. These key strategies are also contained in our overall recommendations.

Chapter III, *A Snapshot of the Dropout Crisis: Where Do We Fit into the Picture?* provides a cogent summary of the key data underlying our report and recommendations for action. We discuss the current situation of national dropout and graduation rates and place King County's situation in this larger context.

To get to the heart of the matter as quickly as possible, Chapter IV features the details of our *Comprehensive Plan*. The plan is animated by our recommendations about which effective approaches to use to reach our goals. The Comprehensive Plan describes the seven system-level strategies we believe will help us reach our goals and desired outcomes. We detail the key activities we believe will help achieve our main goals to substantially reduce the dropout problem and increase graduation rates. A picture of how the whole plan fits together is summarized graphically in this section as an *Outcome Map*.

In Chapter V, *Financing and Evaluation*, we discuss the funding, sustainability and evaluation strategies embedded in our plan. Chapter VI contains our assessment of how feasible we believe achievement of the Comprehensive Plan is, noting factors that increase feasibility and realistically describing potential barriers that must be overcome. Chapter VII offers our perspective on how implantation could proceed.

To support our recommendations, several appendices follow the report. Appendix A details the most promising strategies we have found for increasing graduation rates, connecting students to post-secondary education and reconnecting youth to school and work at the national level. How do we do a better job of predicting *earlier* which students are at risk for dropping out and keep them in school all along the continuum? How do we do a better job of activating all the sectors and supports in a child's life that impact his/her success including not just schools, but families,

³ Murphy, L. (2006). *Changing the Landscape of Opportunity for Vulnerable Youth*. Voices in Urban Education. Providence: RI: Annenberg Institute for School Reform.

other caring adults, neighborhoods, programs, faith communities, businesses and institutions – all of which play an important part in raising successful young people? We examine the principles of effective programs.

Appendix B contains the consultant team’s recommendations for changes in school practices and programs, as well as offering descriptions of community-based programs that may also be needed to meet the Reinvesting in Youth Challenge. Appendix C offers a more detailed view of strong models of prevention, intervention and retrieval programs.

Appendix D enumerates and describes the existing programs and community resources we have in King County on which to base our efforts. We describe the current landscape and a variety of promising programs and strategies we believe can be woven together with our recommended strategies to reach our comprehensive vision for change. Appendix E provides a listing of the alternative education options available to King County students.

While schools need to be held accountable for helping students achieve the appropriate, measurable standards within their purview, there is a much larger picture here. In his book, *All Kids Are Our Kids*, author and President of Search Institute, Peter Benson, discusses the heroic struggle we are engaged in to find ways to raise all children and youth into “productive adulthood.” Benson articulates a vision in which we “shift some of the focus away from ‘fixing’ kids to transforming the developmental contexts in which young people are embedded.” In short, he concludes, “We need to transform the culture that raises them.”

II. Looking More Deeply at the Achievement Gap

It is impossible to talk about the school dropout, graduation, or college attendance rates without recognizing immediately that there are shocking disparities among students of different racial and ethnic groups. This disparity is well documented, but the solutions much less so. Despite the fact that we reviewed dozens of high-level reports on school improvement, for example, we found that few gave serious attention to determining if prevention or intervention activities are effective with diverse populations.

There has been an assumption in education circles for many years that if schools were adequately serving the needs of the majority of students then all students would do well. Research, however, indicates that different ethnic and racial groups are not achieving school success at the same rates as white students and that strategies for eliminating this disparity must be tailored to the needs of different populations. Our review of the literature concerning minority student success revealed exciting results and described the characteristics of successful schools producing high levels of academic achievement among minority students. These proven characteristics demonstrate a powerful set of factors that we believe should be embedded in *all* schools to create success for *all* students.

But because so little progress has been made in reducing the achievement gap, we wish start our discussion of school dropouts here. In dropout prevention, academic success and reconnecting youth who are disconnected from school and work, **the achievement or equity gap is at the heart of the issue.**

Consider these numbers:

- According to the 2000 Census, 25.4 percent of the total student population in Washington State was minority students. The percentage and number of young people of color in Washington schools is expected to continue to grow.
- However, the current public school system is predominantly characterized by middle-class principals and teachers, 90 percent of whom are white.
- The gap in 2002 WASL scores between white students and Black, Hispanic and American Indian students ranged from 20 to 30 percentage points in the three tested grades on reading and math.
- It is therefore not surprising that the dropout rate of Black, Hispanic and Native youth is double that of Asian and white students.⁴

The achievement gap in reading and math is believed to be narrowing at the elementary-school level rather than at the high school level. Nationally, for the school-year 2003-2004, some data indicate that elementary school age Black and Latino students made greater gains than white

⁴ Shannon, G. S. & Bylsma, P. (2002). *Addressing the Achievement Gap: A Challenge for Washington State Educators*. Olympia, WA: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. (Order No: 02-0060) Available: <http://www.k12.wa.us>

students in both subjects, although white students also made significant gains (the accuracy of these gains has been challenged by others). However, the performance of 17-year-olds remained flat. The gains in elementary school may reflect the efforts of many states to enhance investments in early learning and reading.⁵

There are at least two branches of research that provide important insights into the causes of the achievement gap and what is needed to reduce it. One branch describes revitalizing the school context and emphasizes building a set of generalized skills for culturally responsive teaching and school practices. The other branch focuses more on young people and addresses some of the unique factors that are in play for African American, Hispanic and Native Youth. This section of our report will summarize these issues from a big picture perspective.

We know the problems in this area are deep-seated, long-standing and complex. They will not be remedied easily and it will take more than just our good will and understanding to do so. However, there is reason for hope in reducing or eliminating the achievement gap. Some schools have made progress, showing that it is possible. More research is available and there is more focus on the issue. Before we talk about promising strategies in this area, let's summarize the issues.

A. The Black-White Achievement Gap

Factors Affecting the Performance of African American Students

There is no consensus on the causes of the ethnic achievement gap between black and white students. Some believe the gap is the result of economic disparities that can be traced to the legacy of slavery and other forms of oppression that blacks have suffered. Others believe that a lack of interest in education in black students is caused by family and individual problems such as unstable families, poor parenting skills, lack of drive and ambition, drugs and crime.⁶

Most discussions about the achievement gap assume that the statistics for whites are the natural or desirable state of society and the solution is thus to get black people to “act white.” However, “black people are not as impressed with the virtues of whites as whites are and see no need to emulate them.” As a result, individual black students who achieve academic success may be viewed by their peers as betraying the black struggle by conforming to the norms of white behavior and attitudes.⁷

More complex theories arise from research suggesting that the performance of any minority group depends on many factors, including whether the minority is a voluntary one (e.g., Asian immigrants to the U.S.) or involuntary (such as blacks brought here through slavery and Native Americans by conquest). In turn, the perception or reality of the relationship between effort and reward may differ. For years, and even today, blacks were denied employment and education

⁵ Dobbs, M. (2005, July 15). School Achievement Gap is Narrowing. *Washington Post*, pA07.

⁶ Singham, M. (1998, September) *The Canary in the Mine: The Achievement Gap Between Black and White Students*. ED Online, US Department of Education. Available at: http://lsc-net.terc.edu/do.cfm/paper/8108/show/use_set-1_equity

⁷ Ibid.

commensurate with their effort. As a result, blacks may not see or believe that the linkage between school effort and good employment applies to them.

There is also research that suggests that the performance of African American students, more than others, is influenced to a large degree by the social support and encouragement they get from teachers.⁸ The school and individual teachers may construct school identities for students either as high achievers or low achievers.⁹ Educators and community members in the U.S. have deeply ingrained stereotypes that connect racial identity to academic ability, including common assumptions that students will do better in school if they are White or Asian, and will not do well if they are Black or Latino.¹⁰

B. Hispanic/Latino Achievement Gap

The Latino Achievement Gap

The Latino population is the fastest growing ethnic minority in Washington state and the United States. The Latino population is heterogeneous; it is multi-racial, multinational, and presents a diverse educational and socio-economic background. Very little demographic data is available on non-English speaking Latinos. In addition much data collection mislabels Latinos as Mexican or Puerto-Rican, leaving Latinos from other nations invisible in data collection. Although the average achievement score gaps between Latino students and white students have decreased since the 1970s, the National Arts Education Partnership reports that one third of today's Latino students perform below grade level.

Low achievement is a precursor of dropping out of high school. Performing below grade level increases Latino students' likelihood of dropping out to between 50 and 98 percent depending on how far behind they are.¹¹ Latino students also tend to drop out earlier (between eighth and tenth grade) than other students. More than fifty percent of Latino dropouts in the country have less than a 10th grade education compared to 29 percent of white and 24 percent of African-American dropouts.¹²

⁸ Noguera, Pedro A. (2002, May 13) The Trouble with Black Boys: The Role and Influence of Environmental and Cultural Factors on the Academic Performance of African American Males. *In Motion Magazine*. <http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/er/pntroubl.html>

⁹ Cone, J.K., (2003, May/June) The Construction of Low Achievement: A Study of One Detracked Senior English Class. *Harvard Education Letter*. Available at: <http://edletter.org/past/issues/2003-mj/teacher.shtml>

¹⁰ Noguera, P. A. (2003, May/April). How Racial Identity Affects School Performance. *Harvard Education Letter*. Available at: <http://www.edletter.org/past/issues/2003-ma/noguera.shtml>

¹¹ U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee. The Congressional Hispanic Caucus. The U.S. Senate Democratic Hispanic Task Force. (2002). *Keeping the Promise: Hispanic Education and America's Future*. Washington, D.C.:U.S. Senate.

¹² The League of United Latin-American Citizens (LULAC). (2003). *The LULAC Democracy Initiative: A Latino Youth and Young Adult Voter and Advocacy Project*. Washington, D.C.: LULAC.

Factors Affecting the Performance of Latino students

Research by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the National Research Council (NRC), and the Urban Institute have identified some key challenges for Latino students to excel academically:

- Disproportionate attendance at resource-poor schools
- Lack of access to fully qualified teachers
- Lack of participation in rigorous college preparatory coursework
- Parents with low-household incomes and low levels of formal education
- English language learners with unmet instructional needs
- High mobility of students whose families are migrant farm workers

Poverty also has a deleterious affect on academic achievement. Latinos who attended schools with large numbers of poor students had lower test scores than Latinos who attended schools where less than 10 percent of the students came from low-income families.¹³

Lack of participation in rigorous college preparatory coursework

Latinos do not attend college at the same rates as white students. This disparity is partly due to Latinos not taking courses to prepare them for college.¹⁴ Studies have shown that some teachers and administrators relegate Latino students to less challenging coursework and do not inform them about Advance Placement classes. This gap is evidenced by 62 percent of white students enrolling in college preparatory courses compared to 45 percent of Latino students.¹⁵ Consequently only 19 percent of Latino students are highly qualified for admission to a four-year institution compared to 40 percent of white students.

Parents with low-household incomes and low levels of formal education

Income levels for Latinos are below those of the rest of the population. Latino children are twice as likely as African American children to have parents without a high school diploma and more than five times as likely as white children to have parents with less than a high school education.¹⁶

English language learners with unmet instructional needs

Eighty percent of all English language learners are Latino and most schools are ill equipped to meet their academic needs.¹⁷ Many teachers of ELLs lack proper training. ELL programs and practices are inconsistent across states and even classrooms. The classes lack rigor and high

¹³ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (2001). *Common Core of Data*. Washington, D.C.

¹⁴ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (2003). *Condition of Education*. Washington, D.C.: NCES.

¹⁵ Educational Testing Service (ETS). (2003). *Parsing the Achievement Gap: Baselines for Tracking Progress*. Princeton, N.J.: ETS.

¹⁶ American Federation of Teachers. (2004) *Closing the achievement gap: Focus on Latino students*. Policy Brief. Number 17. March 2004.

¹⁷ American Federation of Teachers. (2006). *Where we stand: English language learners*. Washington DC: Educational Issues Department, AFT. Item No. 39-0247.

quality content. In addition, only a few districts have programs addressing disabilities and language instruction simultaneously.¹⁸

High mobility of students whose families are migrant farm workers

Migrant students are children in families of agricultural workers who migrate seasonally to harvest crops, sometimes harvesting crops themselves. Latinos make up 80 percent of the migrant student population.¹⁹ Their frequent migrations interrupt their living arrangements, disrupt the continuity of their academic pursuits, and compromise the long-term support they could receive from the schools they attend. These barriers leave migrant Latino students with higher academic failure rates than other Latino students.²⁰

What can educators and communities do to support academic success of Latino students?

In its 2004 Policy Brief the American Federation of Teachers made the following recommendations to improve educational outcomes for Latino students.²¹

- Promote access to more academically rigorous coursework for Latino students
- Strengthen dropout prevention programs
- Promote research-based, effective instruction for linguistically and culturally diverse students
- Advocate for stronger professional development programs for teachers on effective instruction for English language learners
- Continue to help resource-poor schools improve and promote strategies that work, including early childhood education programs.
- Promote adult education and parent involvement programs.

C. The American Indian/Native American/Alaska Native Achievement Gap

In this section we will refer to American Indian/Native American/Alaska Native/First Nations students as Native students. Historically, US federal policy approached the education of Native students as a means for cultural assimilation; eliminating Native peoples' languages, religion, dress, and general way of life and replacing it with "American" culture.²² Although individually

¹⁸ Zehr, M. (November 7, 2001). Bilingual Students With Disabilities Get Special Help. *Education Week*. www.edweek.org.

¹⁹ U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee. The Congressional Hispanic Caucus. The U.S. Senate Democratic Hispanic Task Force. (2002). *Keeping the Promise: Hispanic Education and America's Future*. Washington, D.C.:U.S. Senate.

²⁰ Huang, C. (2003). *The Political Economy of Migrant Education from 1968 to 2000. A Policy Reflection*. Edwardsville, Ill.: Southern Illinois University, Department of Educational Leadership.; Weyer, H. (2002). *Migrant Life. Many Faces of Migrant Workers*. Washington, D.C.: Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), "Point of View." *POLICY BRIEF NUMBER 17 / 7*; Associated Press. (2003, June 13). *Among Latinos, Migrant Dropout Rate Twice as High*. Washington, D.C.: AP.

²¹ American Federation of Teachers. (2004) *Closing the achievement gap: Focus on Latino students*. Policy Brief. Number 17. March 2004.

²² Trujillo, O.V., Alston, D.A. (2005). *A report on the status of American Indians and Alaska Natives in Education: Historical legacy to cultural empowerment*. Wash. D.C.: National Education Association of the United States.

Native people are experiencing increasing levels of academic success, as a broad cultural group they have historically benefited the least from the education institutions of the US.²³

Factors affecting the performance of Native students

- High student mobility and staff turnover²⁴
- Native students are disproportionately affected by violence and substance abuse²⁵
- Lack of an appropriate knowledge base for providing professional development and curricular development to meet student needs²⁶
- Differing views on the purpose of education²⁷
- Lack of Native American values reflected in the educational system²⁸
- Native students in poor areas are often dealt poorly trained teachers, out of date materials, and inadequate facilities.²⁹

Addressing factors unique to Native youth

Native cultures value education and children in ways that conflict with the expectations of student behavior in public schools. For example, Native cultures view education's purpose as a means to learn to be a better person rather than to become a better worker. Thus Native students may learn about values but not exhibit the desire to compete.³⁰

How can educators support the academic achievement of Native youth?

- Expose educators to the culture of Native students
- Establish one on one relationships with Native students in their classes and with their parents to understand and respect cultural differences
- Move beyond the “heroes and holidays” approach to multicultural education and focus on the experiences of the children in classroom
- Model the behavior they desire from children
- Show concrete examples of why processes are required

²³ Indian Nations at Risk Task Force. (1991) Indian nations at risk: An educational strategy for action. Final report. Washington, D.C.: US Department of Education. ERIC document Reproduction Service No. ED339587.

²⁴ Beaulieu, D.L. (2000). Comprehensive reform and American Indian education. *Journal of American Indian Education*, 39 (2) pp.29-38.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Levegue, D.M. (1994). *Cultural and parental influences on achievement among Native American students in Barstow Unified School District*. Paper presented at the National Meeting of the Comparative and International Educational Society. San Diego, CA: March, 1994.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Trujillo, O.V., Alston, D.A. (2005). *A report on the status of American Indians and Alaska Natives in Education: Historical legacy to cultural empowerment*. Wash. D.C.: National Education Association of the United States.

³⁰ Bergtron, A., L.M. Cleary, and T.D. Peacock. (2003). *The seventh generation: Native students speak about finding the good path*. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED472385.

There has been some promising research on curricula based on traditional culture. Traditional culture acts as a protective mechanism for students when used to guide curriculum.³¹ When a school reform model focused on cooperative learning and celebration of Native culture there was a narrowing of the achievement gap between Native students and white students.³² Another study indicated a relationship between Native student achievement and parental involvement.³³

D. The English Language Learner Achievement Gap

Students who are English language learners (ELL) make up 10 percent of the public school population in the country.³⁴ ELLs are expected to be 40 percent of the school-age population by 2030.³⁵ While more than 460 languages are spoken in public schools in the nation, 80 of ELLs are native Spanish speakers.³⁶ Typical programs across the United States have not succeeded in closing this achievement gap (from the 10th to the 50th percentile). In spite of ELLs making good progress with each year of school they do not make the dramatic progress needed to close the gap.

It is a common assumption that students should be fluent in English within 1 or 2 years. Based on that assumption, after about 2 or 3 years of exposure to English, most school districts begin to test ELLs on standardized tests in English. It is not surprising that at that time ELLs achieve around the 10th percentile as a group. In reality, to close the gap between ELLs and native English speakers, ELLs must accomplish more than a year's achievement for 6 years in a row (e.g., 15 months' growth per 10-month school year for 6 consecutive years).³⁷

Effective enrichment programs recognize that bilingual education is a better way to learn a second language and takes a minimum of 5 to 6 years to close the achievement gap.³⁸ In the face of this evidence, state (including California and Arizona) and federal legislatures have discussed moving in the opposite direction by pushing ELLs into mainstream classrooms sooner than ever before.

³¹ Goddard, J. & Shields, C. (1997). An ethnocultural comparison of empowerment between two districts: Learning from an American Indian and Canadian First Nations school district. *Journal of American Indian Education*, 36 (2) pp. 19-45.

³² Sherman, L. (2002). From division to vision: Achievement climbs at a reservation school high in the rocky mountains. *Northwest Education*, 8 (1), pp. 22-27.

³³ Levegue, D.M. (1994). *Cultural and parental influences on achievement among Native American students in Barstow Unified School District*. Paper presented at the National Meeting of the Comparative and International Educational Society. San Diego, CA: March, 1994.

³⁴ National Council of La Raza. (2006). *Improving assessment and accountability for English language learners in the No Child Left Behind Act*. Issue brief no.16. Washington, D.C.:NCLR.

³⁵ Collier, V.P. and Thomas, W.P. (1999). Making U.S. Schools Effective for English Language Learners, Part 1 *TESOL Matters*. Vol. 9 No. 4 (August/September 1999).

³⁶ US Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition. (2002). *Survey of the states' limited English proficient student and available educational programs and services, 2000-2001 summary report*. Washington, D.C.: NCELA.

³⁷ Collier, V.P. and Thomas, W.P. (1999). Making U.S. Schools Effective for English Language Learners, Part 1 *TESOL Matters*. Vol. 9 No. 4 (August/September 1999.)

³⁸ McAdam, M. (1998). TESOL Joins Forces with NABE and CAL to Strengthen Bilingual Education *TESOL Matters* Vol. 8 No. 5 (October/November 1998).

Factors unique to English Language Learners

- High mobility rates
- Low enrollment in early education programs
- Little or no prior formal schooling in their home country
- Lack of health services
- Disproportionate attendance at resource-poor schools.
- Lack of access to specialized instruction and staff
- Lack of participation in rigorous, college preparatory coursework
- Families lacking familiarity with the US school system
- Poverty

What can educators and communities do to support the academic success of English Language Learners?

The American Federation of Teachers compiled this list of recommendations:

- Recognize that bilingual education is a better way for ELLs to learn English
- Hire teachers certified in the requisite areas for second language acquisition
- Create appropriate assessments separately addressing content knowledge and English language proficiency
- Maintain strong leadership from school administrators who understand the challenges of ELLs face

A large body of research supports the proposition that teachers are the single most important factor in how much students learn. Yet poor and minority students do not get their fair share of high-quality teachers. The children who most need strong teachers are assigned, on average, to teachers with less experience, less education and less skill; a situation that widens rather than narrows the achievement gap.

Quality appears to matter a lot. Researchers at the Illinois Education Research Council combined a number of teacher quality measures into an overall index. The Council found that in the highest-poverty schools with high teacher quality index, there were about twice as many students meeting state standards as poor high schools that had a low index.³⁹

E. What Economic and Social Policies Can Reduce the Achievement Gap?

Poverty and Academic Achievement

There is currently a heated debate as to whether the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act has had a significant effect on narrowing the achievement gap (as well as whether it has had a significant positive effect on reading and math achievement).

Although the federal No Child Left Behind law is based on the premise that schools alone are responsible if students fail to make sufficient progress every year, we know that major factors

³⁹ Peske, H. G. and Haycock, K. (2006, June) *Teaching Inequality: How Poor and Minority Students are Short changed on Teacher Quality*. Washington, DC: The Education Trust.

outside of school affect children's success – or lack of it – in school. According to the National Center for Children in Poverty, 12 million U.S. children live in poor families and another twenty-seven million live in low-income families.⁴⁰ Here is how poverty affects children's success in school:⁴¹

- Poor children start school behind their peers.
- Learning for poor children tends to stagnate in the summer, whereas middle-class children return to school more advanced.
- Poorer children are more transient and lose progress when switching schools.
- Poorer children have higher rates of lead poisoning, asthma and inadequate health care, and are less likely to have eyeglasses when they need them.

Clearly, schools alone cannot fully counteract the impact of poverty. A body of research argues that improving academic success for younger children in economically-disadvantaged families requires addressing the fabric of their lives both outside and inside school. Policies that increase the quality and quantity of early learning environments, provide extended learning after school and during the summer, increase the supply of safe and affordable housing, and provide excellent health care for children can all help make improvements in children's academic success.

Poverty and Workforce Readiness

On the other end of the spectrum, a recent analysis of the 2-3 million youth ages 16-24 who have been out of school and the labor market for over a year identified three key policy areas for working to reconnect young African American and Hispanic men to school or the workforce:⁴²

- Increase development of occupational skills, early work experience, and contacts with the labor market for high schools students unlikely to attend college
- Gradual increases in the minimum wage and subsidies or tax credits for low-income adults
- Reduce barriers for entry into the workforce (including barriers particular to noncustodial fathers and ex-offenders)

F. What Can Educators Do?

Revitalizing the school context - A high school teacher in a racially diverse high school that instituted a “detracking” reform effort (assigning some students to a college preparation track and others to less challenging courses) to equalize academic achievement for all students conducted a study during a school year to determine why the detracking approach was still

⁴⁰ National Center for Children in Poverty (2003). *Child poverty and low-income rates by state*. Retrieved Jan. 19, 2006, from http://nccp.org/cat_8.html

⁴¹ *It Takes More Than Schools to Close the Achievement Gap*, New York Times, August 11, 2006.

⁴² The Urban Institute. (2006, January 12) *New Approaches Address Getting Alienated Young Men Back to School or Jobs*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

leaving minority students at low levels of achievement. She concluded that teachers and administrators could better address these issues if they:⁴³

- Examine school policies and practices that lead to low achievement. Examples include different curricula, instruction, behavioral and academic expectations, quality of assigned teaching staff, placement in low-level or remedial classes from which there was no way to catch up.
- Examine how beliefs about intelligence inform institutional decisions setting up school success for some students and failure for others.
- Refuse to lower expectations for students who skip classes, act inappropriately, and do little work. If school staff lowers expectations in response to those behaviors, they reinforce them and contribute to the negative identity of the students.
- Examine school lists (on bulletin boards, newsletters, classroom walls, etc.) to see what they reveal about school culture about who is valued and who is not and who is perceived as a learner and who is not.
- Provide regular contact between low-achieving and high-achieving students.

Presumably a deeper examination of these issues would lead to more open dialogue among teachers, staff, administrators and other stakeholders that would in turn, lead to changes in policies and practices that could help children do better in school.

*Addressing factors unique to youth of color - A Black Harvard professor combined research on the connection between identity and achievement and his observations of his son (who struggled in adolescence to develop his racial identity) to develop his ideas on what educators can do. He recommends that teachers:*⁴⁴

- Make sure students are not sitting in racially defined groups in the classroom; assign seats and create groups that mix students of different backgrounds.
- Encourage students to pursue things that are not traditionally associated with members of their group, which makes way for more students to challenge racial norms.

“. . . Suddenly, in the tenth grade, Joaquin’s grades took a nosedive. He failed math and science, and for the first time he started getting in trouble at school. . . The other thing that was changing for Joaquin was his sense of how he had to present himself when he was out on the streets and in school. As he grew older, Joaquin felt the need to project the image of a tough and angry young Black man. He believed that in order to be respected he had to carry himself in a manner that was intimidating and even menacing. To behave differently—too nice, gentle, kind, or sincere—meant that he would be vulnerable and prayed upon. . . part of his new persona also involved placing less value on academics and greater emphasis on being cool and hanging out with the right people.”

*Pedro Noguera
Harvard Graduate School of Education*

⁴³ Cone, J.K., (2003, May/June) The Construction of Low Achievement: A Study of One Detracked Senior English Class. *Harvard Education Letter*. Available at: <http://edletter.org/past/issues/2003-mj/teacher.shtml>

⁴⁴ Noguera, P. A. (2003, May/April). How Racial Identity Affects School Performance. *Harvard Education Letter*. Available at: <http://www.edletter.org/past/issues/2003-ma/noguera.shtml>

- Incorporate information related to the history and culture of students in the curriculum, to help students understand who they are, which aids in positive identity formation.
- Inspire students by getting to know them and encouraging them to believe in themselves, work hard and persist, and to dream, plan for the future and set goals.

Can Current School Reform Efforts Reduce the Achievement Gap?

School reform is a huge and sometimes volatile issue. One promising approach in reducing the achievement gap, however has come from researchers who have studied schools that produce high levels of academic achievement among minority students. They have found that these schools have the following characteristics in common:⁴⁵

- A clear sense of purpose
- Core standards within a rigorous curriculum
- High expectations
- Commitment to educate all students
- Safe and orderly learning environment
- Strong partnerships with parents
- A problem-solving attitude
- Supportive relationships between teachers and students (There is research that indicates that the performance of African American students, more than any other group, is influenced to a large degree by the social support and encouragement they receive from teachers.⁴⁶)
- Ethos of caring and accountability in the school

School reform efforts in Washington and other states are addressing many of these issues. If reform is undertaken with a clear commitment to embed these proven characteristics into our schools, more students are likely to experience the benefit from these changes, creating stronger possibilities to close the achievement gap.

On an even broader scale, it may be that the current passive model of education positing extrinsic rewards (such as credentials and jobs) does not provide sufficient motivators for learning. Research indicates that active learning methods (e.g. “inquiry” or “discovery” learning) produce significant academic gains for students, and that the most dramatic gains occur for students not well served by the traditional passive model (i.e., involuntary minorities and females).⁴⁷

“As long as society requires only a small fraction of educated people and does not care about gender or ethnic or socioeconomic equity issues, then the present system of education is quite adequate.”

*Mano Singham
University Center for Innovations
in Teaching and Education
Case Western Reserve University*

⁴⁵ Noguera, P. A. (2002, May 13) The Trouble with Black Boys: The Role and Influence of Environmental and Cultural Factors on the Academic Performance of African American Males. *In Motion Magazine*.

<http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/ex/pntroubl.html>

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Singham, M. (1998, September) *The Canary in the Mine: The Achievement Gap Between Black and White Students*. ED Online, US Department of Education. Available at: http://lsc-net.terc.edu/do.cfm/paper/8108/show/use_set-1_equity

Xavier University, a historically black college in New Orleans, adopted a curriculum based on the theory that students can be taught to perform better academically by a well-planned program that stresses the importance of higher-level thinking skills. Incoming freshmen improved their academic performance so much that Xavier became the largest supplier of black graduates to medical schools despite its small enrollment. Xavier succeeded by driving for excellence rather than remediation.⁴⁸

G. What Support is Needed at the Community Level?

Simultaneously with school reforms, other strategies are needed at the community level to provide Black children with additional support. In Northern California, community-based mentoring programs provide African American male students academic support and African American mentors who can provide knowledge and information about African and American history and culture and supporting pro-social values. Community organizations and churches can both help compensate for schools that are failing to address the issues or enhance the effectiveness of high-performing schools through after school programs and summer school programs that offer positive role models and social support.⁴⁹

Throughout King County there are myriad youth-serving programs run by varied community and parent groups as well as non-profits. Research in the area of positive youth development indicates that such community-based programs play an important role in enhancing young people's academic success. An adequate review of the full scope of proven community-based interventions is, for now, outside the scope of our inquiry. For purposes of this report, our research focuses on dropout prevention and retrieval programs with an explicit school-based connection that we address in the *What Works* sections of our study.

H. Recommended Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gap: What Works

It is vital that any plan for keeping youth in school and increasing graduation rates for all students begins by addressing the glaring gap in achievement among students of different racial and ethnic groups. While the reasons this gap exists are complex – and the solutions will no doubt also be complex – the implications cannot be ignored.

Fortunately there is a growing body of research and professional literature about what works on which we can build our own strategies. Some of these strategies must address the impact on young people themselves; others must change the school and community context in which they live.

⁴⁸ Singham, M. (1998, September) *The Canary in the Mine: The Achievement Gap Between Black and White Students*. ED Online, US Department of Education. Available at: http://lsc-net.terc.edu/do.cfm/paper/8108/show/use_set-1_equity

⁴⁹ Noguera, P. A. (2002, May 13) The Trouble with Black Boys: The Role and Influence of Environmental and Cultural Factors on the Academic Performance of African American Males. *In Motion Magazine*. <http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/er/pntroubl.html>

For any plan to succeed, we need to begin by **using data in all levels of decision making**. Unless we clearly understand the problems we are trying to solve, we cannot develop meaningful, measurable outcomes. Our first recommended strategy is therefore, a global one. It is essential that educators have access to accurate and complete data (in useful formats) to help improve teaching and learning. Educators also need to have the skills to understand and use data so that it has meaning in the everyday context of classrooms and helps appropriately guide instruction. This need for better data and research about all of our students is one of the seven overarching key strategies in our plan.

Here are some of the specific ideas we have gleaned from our analysis of the achievement gap:

Start by giving teachers the training and support they need to do the job

- **Ensure better teachers in impoverished areas** – If teachers are the single most important factor in how students learn, but poor and minority students do not get their fair share of high-quality teachers, then it is incumbent upon us to train teachers better and make it possible for more schools, particularly those in impoverished areas, to hire more of them.

Research has shown that when it comes to the distribution of the best teachers, poor and minority students do not get their fair share. The very children who most need strong teachers are assigned, on average, to teachers with less experience, less education, and less skill than those who teach other children.⁵⁰ Even when teachers in high-poverty schools have experience and credentials, they are generally inadequately supported to handle the enormous instructional challenges they face.⁵¹

- **Change beliefs and attitudes** - The importance of beliefs and attitudes of teachers, parents, families, and students is well documented. Genuine caring conveys a sense of value and worth to a student, which can lead to increased learning. Teacher expectations of themselves and their students also play a large role in how well students perform.
- **Incorporate successful techniques of cultural responsiveness in professional development for teachers** - Learning begins with the learners' frame of reference. Teachers often provide their instruction from their personal cultural framework, while students learn from the context of their own experience. Research emphasizes the importance of honoring students and their heritages and integrating that acknowledgment into the learning framework. Professional development for teachers needs to include culturally responsive content and skills.

⁵⁰ Peske, Heather and Haycock, K. (2006) *Teaching Inequality: How Poor and Minority Students Are Shortchanged on Teacher Quality*. Washington, DC: The Education Trust.

⁵¹ *Qualified Teachers for At-Risk Schools: A National Imperative* (2005). Washington, DC: National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools.

Culture can be defined as a way of life, especially as it relates to the socially transmitted habits, customs, traditions, and beliefs that characterize a particular group of people at a particular time. It includes the behaviors, actions, practices, attitudes, norms and values, communications (language), patterns, traits, etiquette, spirituality, concepts of health and healing, superstitions, and institutions of a racial, ethnic, religious, or social group.

Cultural competence entails “mastering complex awareness and sensitivities, various bodies of knowledge, and a set of skills that taken together, underlie effective cross cultural teaching.”

Culturally responsive education “recognizes, respects, and uses students’ identities and backgrounds as meaningful sources for creating optimal learning environments.” The dynamic nature of the word “responsiveness” suggests the ability to acknowledge the unique needs of diverse students, take action to address those needs, and adapt approaches as student needs and demographics change over time.

Culturally Responsive Practices for Student Success
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Use practices supported by research

While there is currently limited definitive or rigorous research linking culturally responsive practices to increased student achievement, the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NREL) reviewed practices that research indicates can contribute to the academic success of students from diverse racial, cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. NREL identified the common characteristics of culturally responsive practices that educators are using to help their diverse students be successful:⁵²

- A climate of caring, respect, and the valuing of student’s cultures is fostered in the school and classroom.
- Bridges are built between academic learning and students’ prior understanding, knowledge, native language and values.
- Educators learn from and about their students’ culture, language, and learning styles to make instruction more meaningful and relevant to their students’ lives.
- Local knowledge, language, and culture are fully integrated into the curriculum, not added on to it.
- Staff members hold students to high standards and have high expectations for all students.
- Effective classroom practices are challenging, cooperative, and hands-on, with less emphasis on rote memorization and lecture formats.

⁵² Klump, J. & McNair, G. (2005, June) *Culturally Responsive Practices for Student Success: A Regional Sampler*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

- School staff builds trust and partnerships with families, especially with families marginalized by schools in the past.

Next, we should give schools the tools they need to support teachers and students which may mean embracing school reforms

- **Provide greater opportunities to learn** - Schools can provide greater opportunities for students to learn by offering extended academic time (e.g., all-day kindergarten, before or after-school classes, summer school), using rigorous and challenging courses as the default curriculum, and expanding access in enriched and varied programs.
- **Use proven practices in effective instruction** - The research literature specifically describes instructional practices that relegate minority or low-income students to lower level content rather than teaching thinking, understanding, and application skills. Using *active learning* and emphasizing the importance of *learning with understanding* should become standard. Such instruction has been shown to dramatically improve the performance of traditionally under-achieving students.
- **Embed proven characteristics of high achieving schools in all schools** - Increase student success by replicating research-driven characteristics of schools that produce high levels of academic achievement among minority students. Incorporate characteristics of culturally responsive practices that educators are using to help a diverse student body be successful.
- **Increase quality and quantity of supports that enhance learning** - Schools alone cannot fully counteract the impact of poverty. Policies that increase the quality and quantity of early learning environments, provide extended learning after school and during the summer, increase the supply of safe and affordable housing, and provide excellent health care for children can all help make improvements in academic success.

Learn more about and promote effective family and community engagement and connection to schools

- **Deepen and expand the meaning of involvement** - The notion of parental involvement extends beyond attendance at school functions or field trips. When low-income and minority parents encourage learning at home, express high but reasonable expectations, and support their children's education, the children get better grades and test scores. The community can support extended educational opportunities for lower-achieving students.
- **Promote family and community outreach** - Implementing outreach programs to engage families and communities in partnerships requires resources, know-how, and the determination to make it happen. The achievement gap will be eliminated

only through partnerships that involve families and communities in the education of students of color and poverty. These partnerships can also be instrumental in building the resolve to marshal the necessary resources to achieve the goal.

Communities can support students of color and those in poverty by enhancing learning opportunities for students outside regular school hours. These experiences can include leisure activities, homework assistance, health and fitness programs, and professionally guided learning opportunities that provide students the chance to think, work with knowledgeable adults and peers, meet goals, and reach high standards.

Close cooperation between schools, parents, and the community is key to closing the achievement gap. Promoting an agenda of proven successful strategies will create powerful change by allowing teachers, schools, families and communities to build their existing work and maximize their resources.

The ideas articulated in this section of our report are all contained in the overall Comprehensive Plan we have outlined for meeting our primary goals of preventing dropping out of school and increasing graduation rates contained in Chapter IV.

III. A Snapshot of the Dropout Crisis: Where Do We Fit into the Picture?

Before solving a problem, one must know what it is. We began our work with an extensive review of the current data on school dropouts and graduation rates. We wanted to know the following:

- The larger picture of dropping out of school in the United States
- The context within that larger picture, defined by current data for Washington State and King County
- The overall impact of dropping out of school
- Why students dropout of school
- What the benefits of preventing dropping out of school and increasing graduation rates will be to a variety of stakeholders, not just students
- What factors contribute to youth staying in school
- What works to prevent dropping out of school, increase graduation rates, connect more youth to post-secondary education, and reconnect youth to school and jobs

The next section of this report will highlight the most salient findings gleaned from our review. For those wishing to see more extensive data and a deeper analysis of these issues, we have included the bulk of our findings in the appendices.

A. National Level

More than 1.2 million students didn't graduate from U.S. high schools in 2004, costing the nation more than \$325 billion in lost wages, taxes, and productivity over their lifetimes, according to the Alliance for Excellent Education.⁵³ This organization estimates that the lifetime difference in income between a high school graduate and a dropout is about \$260,000. Multiplying that figure by the number of students in Washington State who did not graduate on time in 2004 shows that the state will have losses over the lifetime of the non-graduating students of \$8.5 billion.

In an aptly titled report, *From the Prison Track to the College Track*, the authors describe juvenile courts and facilities overpopulated with young people who have not been well served by our educational institutions. They cite:

- Most incarcerated youth lag two or more years behind their peers in basic academic skills and have high rates of grade retention, absenteeism, suspension, and expulsion.

⁵³ Alliance for Excellent Education. (2006, March 1). *High School Dropouts Cost the U.S. Billions in Lost Wages and Taxes, According to Alliance for Excellent Education*. Available at: http://www.all4ed.org/press/pr_022806.pdf

- More than one-third of all juvenile offenders (median age 15.5 years) read below the fourth-grade level.
- Nine out of every ten of the 11,000 youth in adult facilities have, at best, a ninth-grade education.
- Just as they are at higher risk of dropping out, youth of color are at greater risk of incarceration, whether in juvenile or adult facilities.⁵⁴

B. Washington State

A summary of the most recent dropout and graduation statistics (for school year 2004-05) for Washington State comes from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.⁵⁵ The information below reflects significant disparities for some races/ethnicities, for males, and for students in special education, who have limited English skills, and who live in families with low incomes.

Annual and Cohort Dropout Rates

A total of 15,921 Washington high school students dropped out of public school during the 2004–05 school year. This represents **5.1 percent of the students enrolled in grades 9–12** and is lower than the annual dropout rate reported for the previous school year (5.8%).

- The annual dropout rate gradually increased among the grades; grade 9 had the lowest rate (4.1%) and grade 12 the highest (6.8%).
- Asian/Pacific Islanders had the lowest annual dropout rate (3.3%) while American Indians had the highest annual dropout rate (10.2%).
- Males dropped out at a higher rate (5.8%) than females (4.3%).

Over half of students who dropped out had an unknown enrollment status and are categorized as dropouts. They may have dropped out, received a GED, or moved out of state. Another way to look at the dropout rate is to consider how many students left school without a diploma over a 4-year period. An estimated 19.1 percent of the students who began school in fall 2001 dropped out during their high school years. Another 6.6 percent were still enrolled and continuing their education beyond the four years.

In 2004, almost 12,000 students received a GED certificate outside of the K-12 system, and about 1,200 students received a high school diploma from a community or technical college.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Allen, L., Almeida, C. and Steinberg, A. (2004). *From the Prison Track to the College Track: Pathways to Postsecondary Success for Out-of-School Youth*. Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future.

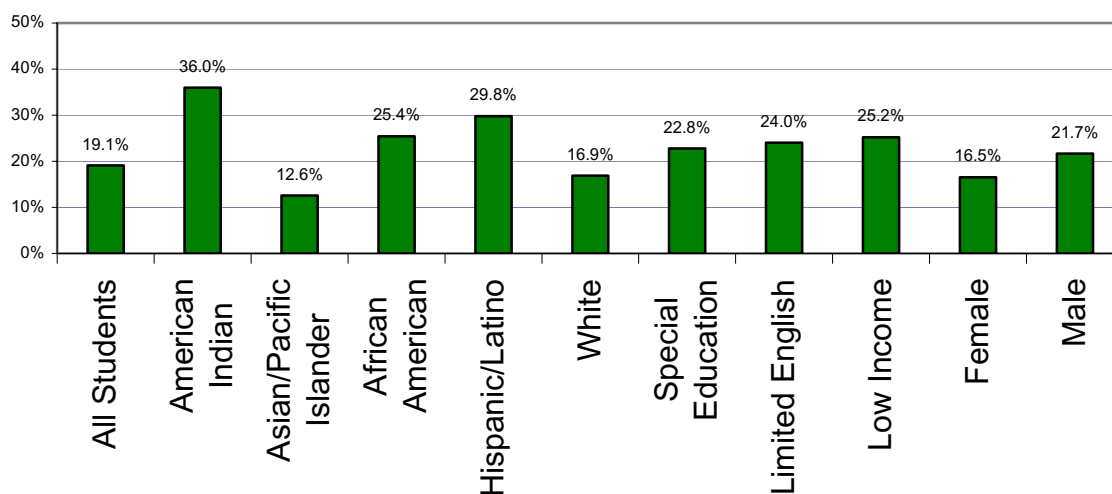
⁵⁵ Ireland, L. (2005) *Graduation and Dropout Statistics: For Washington's Counties, Districts, and Schools, School Year 2003-04*. Olympia: WA: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. (Order No: 05-0041) Available: <http://www.k12.wa.us/dataadmin/reports/>

⁵⁶ GED Certificates and High School Diplomas Obtained Outside the K-12 Program. *2005 Data Book*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Office of Financial Development.

This data indicates that a large number of youth who drop out of school do pursue high school attainment credentials by other routes.

As shown by the chart on the following page, cumulative dropout rates vary considerably among racial/ethnic groups and for other student characteristics.

Culmative Dropout Rates for Class of 2005
(Source: OSPI, State of Washington)



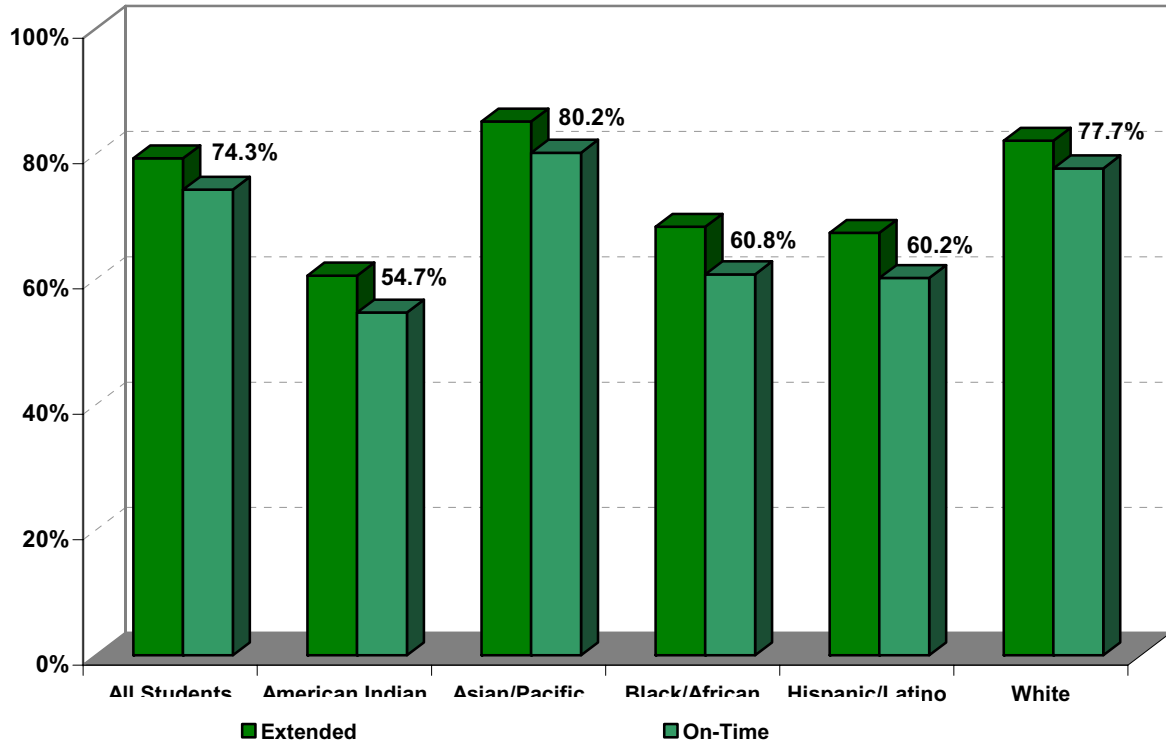
On-Time and Extended Graduation Rates

Of the students who were expected to graduate in 2005, an estimated **74 percent graduated on time** (i.e., in a four-year period) with a regular diploma. This *on-time* rate is 5 points higher than reported in the Class of 2004. Clearly a 5% change in one year is unlikely. The increase in the rate may be attributed in part to increased efforts by educators to help students graduate and in part to better record keeping and tracking of students at the school and district levels and better analysis of the data by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

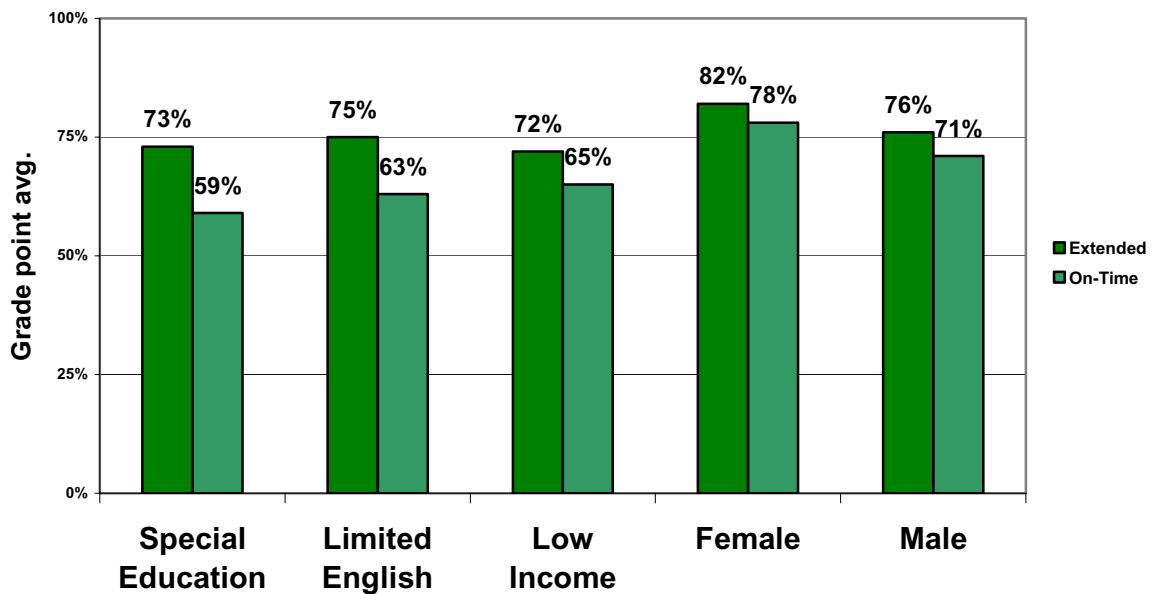
- Asian/Pacific Islander students had the highest on-time graduation rate (80%). White students graduated on time at a slightly lower rate (78%).
- American Indian students had the lowest on-time rates (55%). Black and Hispanic students had on-time graduation rates of 61 percent and 60 percent.
- Females graduated on time at a higher rate (78%) than males (71%).

The *extended* graduation rate includes students who take longer than four years to graduate. When they are included, the rate is **79 percent**, five points above the on-time rate. The extended graduation rate for the various student groups is generally 4–7 points higher than their on-time rates. Students with disabilities and limited English proficiency had the largest differences between the two rates.

**High School Graduation Rates
King County School Year 2004-2005**
(Source: OSPI Graduation and Dropout Statistics September 2006)



**On-time vs. Extended Graduation Rates by Program and Gender
(School Year 2004-05)**
Source: OSPI Graduation and Dropout Statistics September 2006



Currently, high schools must currently have a graduation rate of at least 67 percent to meet federal and state goals.⁵⁷

C. King County

In general, overall dropout and graduation rates in King County follow the patterns and types of disparities at the state level, with slightly better results. As noted in the OSPI report, there are a number of cautions about the accuracy and consistency of data reporting that suggest specific comparisons may not be appropriate.

- King County contains about one-fourth of all students in grades 9-12 in the state.
- Almost 3,200 high school students dropped out of King County high schools in 2004-05.
- Based on reported data, Mercer Island had the lowest annual dropout rate in 2004-05 (0.6%), with four other districts in East King County having annual rates under 2 percent. Kent had the highest dropout rate (7.0%), followed by Highline (6.5%) and Seattle (6.0%).
- Of the 941 youth on probation through King County Juvenile Court in January 2006, 61percent were behind on school level/credits and 26 percent were not in school.
- Within the Seattle School District, there is a wide range of on-time graduation rates among the traditional high schools in Seattle. Garfield is the highest (84.9%), with three north end schools (Ballard, Nathan Hale, Roosevelt) at or above 80percent. Cleveland has the lowest rate, at 42.9percent.

D. What happens when young people do not finish school

Youth suffer:

- High school dropouts are 72 percent more likely to be unemployed as compared to high school graduates.⁵⁸
- Nearly 80 percent of individuals in prison do not have a high school diploma.⁵⁹
- According to the National Longitudinal Transition Study of special education students, the arrest rates of youth with disabilities who dropped out were significantly higher than those who had graduated.

⁵⁷ This goal will gradually increase in Washington over time and will reach 85 percent in 2014. If the rate is below 67 percent, “adequate yearly progress” can be made if the rate is at least two percentage points above the previous year’s rate.

⁵⁸ U.S. Department of Labor, 2003.

⁵⁹ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1995

Our economy suffers:

- The state of Washington is forced to import educated workers from other states and nations to fill our best jobs, leaving the less stable and lower paying jobs for people educated here.
- Nearly one-quarter of employers report difficulty finding qualified job applicants with occupation-specific skills.
- A high school diploma no longer leads to a family-wage job.
- Increasing minority students' participation in college to the same percentage as that of white students would create an additional \$231 billion in GDP and at least \$80 billion in new tax revenues.⁶⁰

Society loses out:

- Dropouts place an increased burden on the criminal justice system, health care system, and public assistance.
- Dropouts die at a higher rate than those with more education.
- A 10 percent increase in the male graduation rate would reduce murder and assault rates by about 20 percent, motor vehicle theft by 13 percent, and arson by 8 percent.⁶¹

E. Why Students Drop Out of School

Dropping out of school is a process of disengagement that begins early. Many students who dropout of school are expressing an extreme form of disengagement from school preceded by indicators of withdrawal (e.g., poor attendance) and unsuccessful school experiences (e.g., academic or behavioral difficulties). Retrospective studies show the identification of potential dropouts can be accomplished with reasonable accuracy in the elementary years.

Young people dropout of school for a variety reasons and under a range of pressures. Economic and social conditions may increase the risks, but eventually a youth's experiences and poor performance in school as well as increasing disengagement may contribute to the decision to quit. Reasons vary by grade level and by individual. In our research, we identified a range of important factors that radiate out from the individual into the families, schools, institutions and communities that surround them.

Risk factors

The American Diploma Project Network cites three kinds of factors that put students at greater risk for dropping out:

⁶⁰ Alliance for Excellent Education. (2006, March 1). *High School Dropouts Cost the U.S. Billions in Lost Wages and Taxes, According to Alliance for Excellent Education*. Available at: http://www.all4ed.org/press/pr_022806.pdf

⁶¹ Alliance for Excellent Education. (2006). *Saving Futures, Saving Dollars: The Impact of Education on Crime Reduction and Earnings*. Washington, DC: AEE: Issue Brief, August.

1. **Students’ social background** – Includes such factors as students who are poor, members of minority groups, male, or transient during early school years.
2. **Students’ educational experiences** – Includes academic performance (struggle with poor grades – especially in English and math, low test scores and poor behavior) and poor educational engagement (high rates of truancy, absenteeism, little participation in extracurricular activities, poor relationships with teachers or peers).
3. **School characteristics** – Includes larger schools, lack of qualified teachers, lack of adequate resources, inadequate connection to the community, and low expectations for students.

Focusing on any one of these factors alone will not provide an accurate picture of why students dropout of high school. It is not solely an individual’s risk factors nor is it exclusively the educational establishment’s shortcomings but more importantly a combination of personal and education-related factors that fuel a student’s dropping out.

Research helps us identify the risk factors that are more highly correlated with dropping out of school and are most amenable to change. They include:

- Absence from school
- Low grades
- Discipline problems
- Lack of parental support for and involvement in learning and school
- Grade retention
- Poor or no teacher/student relationships
- Limited English proficiency

Fifteen people in King County who work in K-12 and higher education, juvenile justice, human services, workforce development and related fields, and who were identified by the RIY staff and Steering Committee members as having a high level of knowledge of dropping out were asked why they think youth in King County are dropping out of school.

The most common responses were:

- Students get too far behind to see any hope of graduating
- Not enough early interventions in elementary and middle school
- Receive messages at school that they are not going to be successful
- School is not relevant to their lives
- Students are anonymous; lost in the crowd
- Individual and family issues (e.g., learning disabilities, basic needs not met)
- Transitions from elementary to middle and middle to high school are unsuccessful.

“We’re losing a lot of kids we don’t have to.”

-King County Interviewee

Perhaps the most compelling answers, however, come from youth themselves. In a significant 2005 survey funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation of 500 high school dropouts age 16-24, participants cited the following reasons for dropping out:

- School was boring
- The work was not challenging enough and seemed irrelevant
- Teachers did not seem to be putting much effort into their work and had low expectations of students
- Hanging out with friends seemed more important

While many former students acknowledged sharing responsibility for dropping out, they also said they felt schools could have done more to help them stay in school and learn.

Who is Dropping Out?

While research gives us valuable information on what sort of risks contribute to dropping out of school. There is also important anecdotal evidence. For example, the same fifteen King County experts were asked during interviews, “Which groups of students are most at risk of dropping out of school?” The most common responses were:

- Court-involved youth
- Students with mental health problems
- Youth of color
- English-language learners who are older when they immigrate
- Students with learning disabilities (often not diagnosed)
- Homeless youth
- Teen parents

These findings obviously have implications for designing meaningful and measurable interventions. Despite the extensive list of variables and predictors associated with dropping out of school, the presence of one or more of these factors does not guarantee that a student will leave school early. However, the presence of multiple factors does increase the risk of dropping out of school. The challenge is in using efficient and accurate predictors to target students in need of intervention.

F. What Keeps Youth in School

Understanding what causes youth to leave school is only half the picture, however. In order to design meaningful interventions and measurable outcomes, we also need to fully understand what can help us reverse the trends and keep youth in school. Fortunately, research provides insight into the risk factors we should reduce, but the protective factors we should increase as well.

Protective factors are any circumstances that promote healthy youth behaviors and decrease the chance of youth engaging in risky behaviors. The most effective approach for improving young people’s lives is to reduce the risk factors while increasing the protective factors.

There are a number of factors that can protect students from risks that lead to dropping out of school. Young people who have the advantage of these protective factors can “beat the odds.” Among the important protective factors are:⁶²

- Positive school climate
- Sense of belonging at school
- Caring relationships with adults at school
- Positive attitude toward school and education
- Educational support in the home and community

As indicated earlier in this report what works for closing the achievement gap is infusing proven characteristics of high achieving schools in all schools and finding ways to build and promote these protective factors. We explore more about how to tap these characteristics and protective factors in the *What Works* sections of this report.

⁶² Lehr, C.A. et al. (2004, May). *ESSENTIAL TOOLS: Increasing Rates of School Completion: Moving From Policy and Research to Practice. A Manual for Policy makers, Administrators, and Educators*. Minneapolis, MN: National Center on Secondary Education and Transition.

IV. Recommendations for a Comprehensive Plan

The Reinvesting in Youth Challenge

Primary Goals: *For all student population groups in King County:* increase graduation rates, decrease dropout rates, increase our ability to retrieve those that do dropout and increase enrollment in post secondary education and/or attainment of jobs that pay a living wage.

Desired Outcomes

1. Increase the graduation rates of Native-American, Hispanic, African American and Limited English students to 85 percent by 2014.
2. Increase the holding power of middle and high schools, measured by decreases in the number of cohort members who dropout each year.
3. Increase the number of students retrieved after dropping out.
4. Increase enrollment in post-secondary education and/or attainment of jobs that pay a living wage.

Reinvesting in Youth is challenging itself and its partners to achieve a set of positive outcomes related to school completion, a much broader view than simply preventing dropping out of school. We aim to prepare all students for postsecondary education and/or jobs that pay a living wage. Promoting school completion requires a strengths-based orientation and selecting interventions that promote “good” outcomes, not simply prevent “bad” outcomes for students and society.

What animates the Reinvesting in Youth Challenge is the central idea that we must reduce the gap in outcomes for traditionally underserved and underachieving students, while promoting improvements for all students during high school and beyond.

Reaching these outcomes will require a comprehensive plan, one that engages a broad range of stakeholders in a common direction. Reinvesting in Youth can serve as an important catalyst in this strategy, but results will largely be determined by those who have policy and budget decision-making authority at the state and school district levels.

Reinvesting in Youth plans to demonstrate the effectiveness of the comprehensive strategy in a selected number of school districts in King County and inspire and support adoption of the strategy in other districts. Measurement of the outcomes will focus on schools that have developed, built the capacity, and implemented a strategic plan based on the comprehensive strategy.

A. Theory of Action

To meet the Reinvesting in Youth Challenge, we have developed a “Theory of Action” that describes our assumptions for how we expect the strategies in our plan to achieve our goals and produce the desired outcomes.

Our theory of action for our comprehensive plan takes into account three types of outcomes:

- *Influence Outcomes* describe changes in policy, regulations, systems, practice or public opinion. One such outcome might be a shift in the federal or state accountability policy to provide incentives to schools/districts that reduce the dropout rates and increase on-time graduation for all populations.
- *Leverage Outcomes* describe changes in investment by other public or private funders in community strategies to improve outcomes for children and families. For example, through catalytic leadership, RIY could play a role in increasing public and private resources for schools and districts, as well as working to increase cooperation and collaboration among schools, communities and other youth-serving organizations to promote school success.
- *Impact Outcomes* describe changes in conditions or well-being for children, adults, families or communities served by grants, programs, agencies or service systems. RIY intends to impact seven important areas that affect the conditions for students, families and communities:
 - Decreased achievement gap
 - Increased commitment and engagement in school
 - Increased academic achievement
 - Reduced behavior and discipline problems
 - Increased relationships with school, family, community and peers
 - Decreased truancy
 - Decreased delinquency

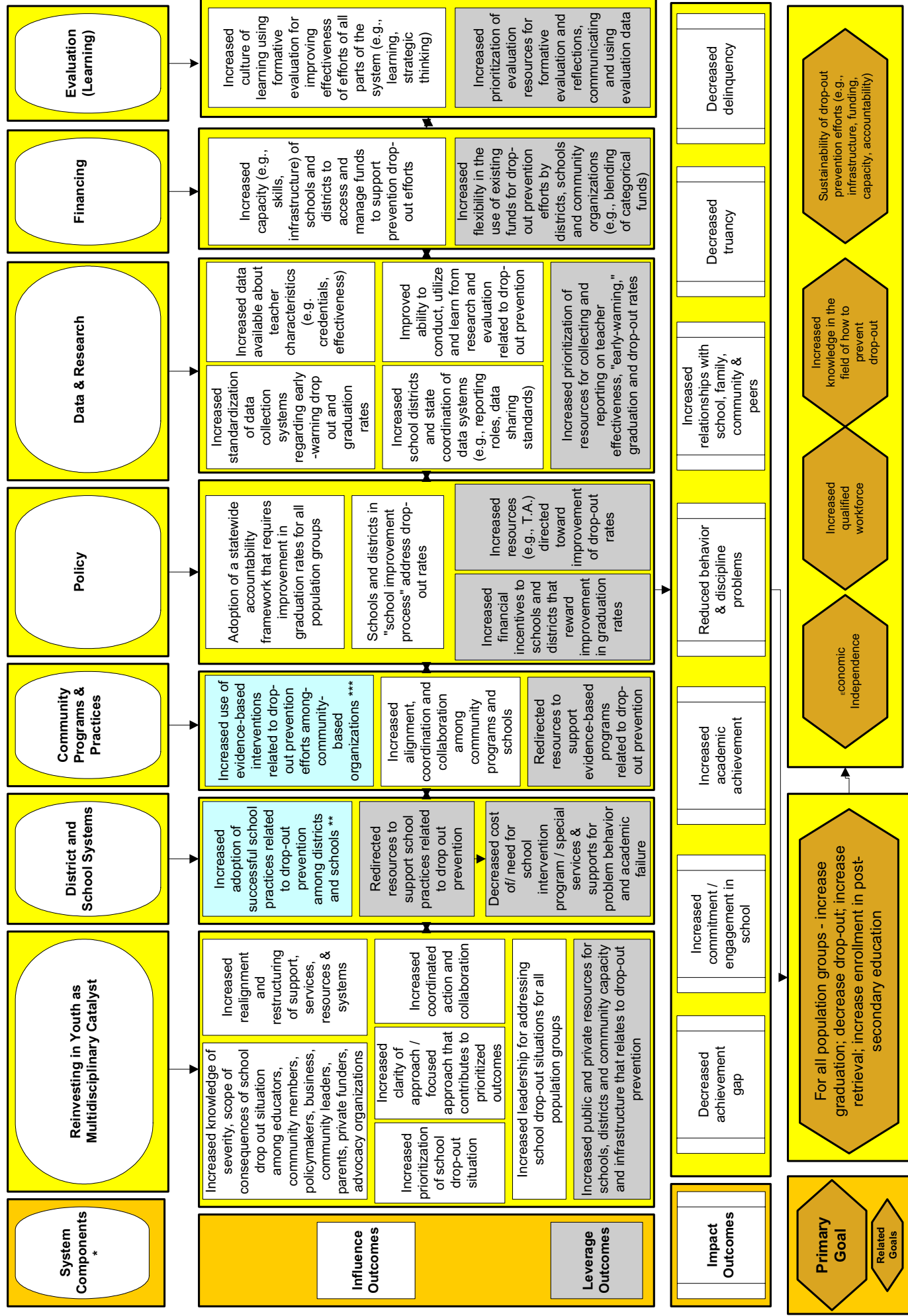
Our theory of action, goals, outcomes, and strategies are graphically displayed in the Outcome Map below. The map illustrates the need for simultaneous and interconnected strategies in many arenas to achieve the desired results, how strategies are intended to first build influence outcomes then lead to leverage outcomes and ultimately lead to impact outcomes.

The theory of action for our Comprehensive Plan is based upon the following assumptions:

1. Accountability for graduation rates by race/ethnicity and other sub-populations is necessary to close the achievement gap.
2. Collective accountability among family, community and school is central to ensuring students' graduation.
3. Investments in infrastructure and capacity in schools are key to sustainable change.

4. Standardized, accurate and comprehensive data systems are needed to meet and measure the desired outcomes.
5. The use of data and data-driven decision making is vital to serving the correct populations with right services at the right time
6. If improvements and reform are undertaken with a clear commitment to embed proven and best practice principles and characteristics of high achieving schools into all of King County's schools with an intentional focus on dropout prevention, higher graduation rates will be achieved for all population groups.
7. If more of our students are engaged by and experience benefits in school, they are more likely to stay in school.
8. If we can keep young people in school, we create stronger possibilities to close the achievement gap, reduce school dropout and increase graduation rates.
9. Constant and meaningful attention on reducing the achievement gap will improve outcomes for students of color and limited English-speaking students, while improving outcomes for all students.
10. Coordination and collaboration will improve service delivery.
11. Realigning existing resources and becoming more intentional will help *all* students succeed.

Theory of Action For Reinvesting in Youth Comprehensive Strategy for Drop-out Prevention and Retrieval



B. The Recommended Strategies

Our recommended strategies are derived from our analysis of the current situation and our review of what works to achieve the outcomes in the Reinvesting in Youth Challenge. Each strategy identifies key activities we believe are needed to achieve our goals and outcomes. We also identify the important stakeholders who must be involved to achieve success.

The strategies are designed to lead to the influence, leverage and impact outcomes associated with each component in the theory of action map.

The seven system components are:

1. Reinvesting in Youth as multidisciplinary catalyst
2. District and school systems practices
3. Community programs and practices
4. State and district policy
5. Data and research
6. Financing and sustainability
7. Evaluation

Our plan describes what we believe is a feasible and effective pathway to fulfill the Reinvesting in Youth Challenge. Implementation will require planning by the stakeholders involved to develop details of how each strategy should be achieved from their unique perspectives.

The appendices contain critically important detailed information in support of the recommended strategies. To avoid making the report itself unwieldy, while still providing the amount of information necessary to make informed decisions about the multifaceted problem of students dropping out of school, we have placed that information the supporting information in appendices. At the end of this report, you will find the following information:

Appendix	Description of Contents
A: What Works on the National Level	An explanation of the need to make changes both within schools and in communities, along with a description of what is needed and why. Addresses prevention, intervention, retrieval, and post-secondary success.
B: Recommendations for King County School Districts and School Systems	Based on research at the national, state and local levels, recommendations for actions needed by school districts and schools in King County.
C: Program Matrix	Detailed descriptions of programs considered in the formation of recommendations.

Appendix	Description of Contents
D: Building on What Exists in King County	Description of the many existing non-school resources upon which to build and an assessment of how these resources compare to recommended community programs.
E: Alternative Education Options for King County Students	A compilation of available alternative education options, both those available from specific school districts, as well as those available countywide.

A good overview of what a comprehensive strategy for both reducing dropout rates and increasing academic success is provided on the following page.

Washington Learns Successful District Study

As part of Governor Gregoire's initiative to examine Washington state's education system—from early learning to K–12 to higher education—and find ways to improve it, a consultant team conducted a study to learn more about how successful districts and schools produce improvements in student academic achievements and how they use and reallocate resources to help accomplish those results.⁶³

Several themes emerged to form the core elements of successful systemic reform – all of which are simultaneously effective for increasing student achievement and preventing students from dropping out. These elements are listed below; those in italics illustrate strategies essential for prevention of dropping out. Schools working on these reforms are well on their way to reducing dropout rates.

If we could create schools to serve the hardest-to-serve kids, then I think it will make it better for all kids.

Steve Dobo, Dropout Sleuth
Denver Public School

1. Focus on educating all students

- *Mission and instructional vision statements set high expectations for all students.*
- *Teachers and administrators take responsibility for all students' learning.*
- *Gear curriculum and instruction towards all types of students.*

2. Use data to drive decisions

- Identify holes in curriculum and instruction.
- *Identify struggling students.*
- Create teams to address curriculum gaps.
- Focus professional development on improving instruction in targeted areas.
- *Create continuous assessment and feedback loops to identify struggling students.*
- *Differentiate instruction and provide struggling students with extra help.*

3. Adopt a rigorous curriculum and align to state standards

- Create in-house curriculum or adopt research-based curriculum aligned to state standards
- Train teachers and provide instructional coaches to effectively implement new curriculum.
- Develop formative assessments aligned to district's curriculum and state standards.

4. Support instructional improvement with effective professional development

- Instructional coaches focused on content
- Collaborative planning time
- Training on rigorous curricula and research-based instructional strategies

5. Restructure the learning environment

- Small learning communities for students
- Multi-age classrooms
- Continuous ability grouping for reading
- Reduced class sizes
- More instructional time in core content areas: block scheduling, longer school days, double periods

6. Provide struggling students with extended learning opportunities

- *Quickly identify struggling students and focus help on core curriculum*
- *Early childhood programs and full-day kindergarten*
- *Tutoring, double periods of core classes, WASL preparation, and ELL programs*
- *Before and after school programs*
- *Summer school*

⁶³ Washington Learns (2006) *A Roadmap to Success*. K-12 Advisory Committee.
<http://www.washingtonlearns.wa.gov/work/default.htm>

Recommended Strategies

1. Reinvesting in Youth as Multidisciplinary Catalyst

Strategy	Who	Key Activities
<p>Leverage the leadership of the Reinvesting in Youth Steering Committee to serve as a catalyst</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the Steering Committee representing the state legislature, King County Council, municipalities in King County, Puget Sound Educational Service District, education, juvenile justice, community-based organizations and community leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulate the ‘case’ and engage leaders across systems (e.g. juvenile justice, human services, city, county) and at the state, regional and local levels • Help to shape a King County Initiative worthy of private investment • Convene high-level leaders and seek aligned actions or coordination on issues of common interest • Act as the fiscal sponsor/agent for the Initiative funds

2. District and School Systems

Strategy	Who	Key Activities
<p>Provide supports to districts/schools to develop a systemic plan to meet the Reinventing in Youth Challenge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction • Educational Service Districts • School districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a theory of action, self-evaluation tool, and planning template that districts/schools can use • Engage students and families in determining what is working and where there are gaps in support • Engage community organizations in planning • Provide resources and incentives for districts/schools to create and implement an effective and feasible plan • Create mechanisms to allow state basic and special education dollars to follow the students • Provide technical assistance to districts/school to create systematic plans and mechanisms to assess progress • Provide professional development opportunities on related topics • Assess progress and adjust as needed • Coordinate and provide linkages between community supports and students, families, schools, and districts • Increase the knowledge/skill of OSPI staff about effective approaches to reducing the achievement gap, reducing the dropout rate, reconnecting students who leave school, increasing the graduation rate, and increasing the rate of students involved in post-secondary education
<p>Implement or enhance practices based on research or best practices to reduce the achievement gap and improve overall achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School districts • Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Appendices A and B
<p>Employ recommended programs for dropout prevention, intervention and retrieval beyond implementation of school improvement practices,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School districts • Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Appendix B

3. Community Programs and Practices

Strategy	Who	Key Activities
<p>Where appropriate, provide recommended programs for dropout prevention, intervention and retrieval</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts/schools • Community-based organizations • Public funders • Private funders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Appendices A and B
<p>Coordinate and collaborate with schools and other community programs to ease access to programs; build on existing resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puget Sound Educational Service District • Districts/schools • Community-based organizations • Public funders • Private funders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in Building Bridges Program (formerly called PathNet) if one or more programs are established in King County • Participate in King County Juvenile Court Integration Project • See Appendix D for local resources

4. Policy

Strategy	Who	Key Activities
<p>Set accountability standards for <i>each population group</i> for current official goals for graduation rates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Board of Education • Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction • Governor • State Legislature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and advocate for state accountability higher than required by No Child Left Behind • Negate pressure to meet test score accountability via ‘pushing out’ low-performing students • Provide incentives to districts with greatest need to inspire commitment and change • Require growth in all subgroups based on a fair but rigorous formula • Require annual public reporting by state and districts • Increase resources to meet accountability requirements
<p>Align district policy and resources with state and federal accountability requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local school boards • Superintendents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership committed to desired outcomes • Conduct internal audit of policies, systems, structures and programs to determine and make changes needed for alignment • Make a public commitment to fulfill the Reinvesting in Youth Challenge • Provide resources

5. Data and Research

Strategy	Who	Key Activities
<p>Create and link student and teacher data systems through a comprehensive data system in support of student success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the current student data system into an integrated early warning system to identify and intervene with students showing signs of dropping out Advocate for districts to select compatible data systems Create a teacher data system that represents the vital connection between quality teaching and student outcomes Link student and teacher data systems Require school improvement plans that address performance of students/staff based on data using the early warning system that highlights the needs of struggling students
<p>Use data system as an early warning mechanism to identify and intervene with students showing signs of dropping out</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Puget Sound Educational District Districts/schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and identify most relevant markers to track Develop system to screen students Develop referral system and sources Implement process for regular analysis and review of data from early warning system to identify trends and take required actions

6. Financing

Strategy	Who	Key Activities
Maximize use of existing resources through realignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction ▪ Educational Service Districts ▪ Reinvesting in Youth Districts/schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determine existing streams of funding and extent of flexibility ▪ Realign resources through pooled or blended funding ▪ Explore opportunities for pooled or blended funding by various stakeholders ▪ Explore reallocation of existing resources to best practices and specific accountability measures
Encourage other funders to realign their resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Way of King County • King County • City of Seattle • Municipalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information and advocacy about the comprehensive strategy • Help funders determine how their funding could be realigned to support implementation of the comprehensive strategy
Obtain foundation support for development, implementation and evaluation of comprehensive strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinvesting in Youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and identify interested local and national foundations • Develop funding proposals • Develop public-private partnerships
Develop capacity and infrastructure for sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction ▪ Educational Service Districts • Districts/schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build infrastructure that can be sustained • Build capacity at all levels
Develop savings reinvestment plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinvesting in Youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate opportunity for cost-savings at various levels of systems (education, juvenile justice, criminal justice, etc.) • Advocate for implementation of savings reinvestment mechanism

7. Evaluation

Strategy	Who	Activities
<p>Provide formative data to improve implementation of comprehensive strategy; implement summative evaluation after 3 to 5 yrs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinvesting in Youth • Public funders • Private funders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make formative evaluation a priority • Make adjustments in strategy based on evaluation results • Share evaluation results to increase the field knowledge and increase capacity at all levels of the system

V. Financing and Evaluation

A. Financial Resources and Sustainability

Three funding strategies and two sustainability strategies are included in the Comprehensive Plan. Although private and public funding will be needed for the development, implementation and evaluation of the Comprehensive Plan, much can be done through alignment of existing resources of Reinvesting in Youth stakeholders and other organizations.

The study of successful districts highlighted the ability of those districts to ensure all available resources were focused on improving teaching and learning. Schools and districts reallocated staff and redesigned scheduling to provide for teacher collaboration, class size reduction, and extended learning opportunities. By doing so, these districts were able to make significant and steady progress.⁶⁴

Realignment within school districts could include reallocation of funding for basic education, high school improvement, dropout prevention, special education, charter schools, No Child Left Behind, or reducing the achievement gap.

Realignment is also a viable strategy for stakeholders such as Washington State, King County, municipalities, and United Way of King County.

New funding for implementation of capacity-building strategies can be sought from government sources through funding streams for early learning, education, workforce development, human services, juvenile justice, mental health, substance abuse, and homelessness. In addition, RIY can approach current and other private foundations for support, including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, The Seattle Foundation, and national funders such as the Carnegie, MacArthur, Ford, Kellogg, Annie E. Casey, and Mott Foundations, as well as the Nellie Mae Education Foundation and Casey Family Programs. Businesses may also have a strong interest in increasing the supply of qualified workers.

The two sustainability strategies are capacity building and development of a savings reinvestment plan. Capacity building is the overall means recommended for “Meeting the Reinvesting in Youth’s Challenge.” Doing so involves working within existing systems to develop and integrate the people, skills, and mechanisms that will continue to produce the desired results long after Reinvesting in Youth’s involvement ends. This approach is much more likely to be sustainable than bringing in new staff who set up new systems to address a specific issue which then disappear when grant funding ends.

Reinvesting in Youth was successful in its prior initiative in developing a savings reinvestment plan that rewards those organizations that create cost savings by returning a

⁶⁴ Washington Learns (2006) *A Roadmap to Success*. K-12 Advisory Committee. <http://www.washingtonlearns.wa.gov/work/default.htm>

portion of those savings as an ongoing revenue sources. This current initiative has the possibility of producing cost savings in both the educational and criminal justice systems. Systems to track the data to make the case should be set up early in the implementation.

B. Evaluation and Accountability

We recommend a rigorous evaluation design for this initiative that includes a strong investment in both formative and summative evaluation. Formative evaluation enables an initiative, program or funder to assess and modify activities during implementation or operation. Summative evaluation is effective at assessing outcomes at the end of an initiative or after years of steady program implementation.

A substantial part of this initiative is focusing on capacity and infrastructure building as keys to sustainable improvements. We are defining capacity building as activities that help an organization identify, implement and sustain improved practices and programs necessary to accomplish desired outcomes and sustain them over time. These resources might include increased knowledge, improved systems, better technology infrastructure or improved human or fiscal capital. Evaluation of these outcomes requires considerable expertise.

Evaluation is important to various constituents including funders, internal customers, community members and clients. Invested parties will want to know how well implementation is going or want to guide program improvement. Formative evaluation is done while there is time for mid-course corrections. Summative evaluation, on the other hand, is a set of evaluative activities utilized to make a summary judgment on critical aspects of an initiative or program to determine if goals and objectives were met. It helps determine the impact a program or initiative has had— in this case achieving the required influence, leverage and impact outcomes spelled out in the comprehensive strategy.

The Need for Formative Evaluation

For an initiative as complex and multi-dimensional as this one, formative evaluation can serve purposes beyond tracking of outcomes. Formative evaluation enables initiative staff/participants, funders and community-based organizations to ‘take a peek under the hood’ of a grant-funded initiative to understand not just what is happening but also the quality and efficacy of the work. The foci of such an evaluation might be:

- Clarifying the needs of target populations such as students in racial groups with low high school completion numbers or male students who tend to drop out in higher numbers than females
- Identifying problems or challenges that surface during implementation phases, (For example the lack of data available poses a challenge in knowing which students require interventions and when they require them)
- Assessing programs to date is useful information for planning and effective allocation of resources
- Identifying ways to make mid-course corrections or enhancements to the quality of program or service delivery by knowing where high leverage entry points exist

VI. Assessment of Feasibility

Meeting the Reinvestment in Youth (RIY) Challenge is a complex undertaking. It requires the buy-in and cooperation of many individuals and systems, most of which are feeling overwhelmed by other pressures. However, this region and Reinvesting in Youth itself have a strong track record of undertaking major reforms with considerable success. We found many factors that we believe lean in favor of the feasibility of meeting this challenge and a number that could interfere in whole or in part.

Strategies	Factors Supporting Feasibility	Factors That Could Interfere with Feasibility
<p>1. Leverage the leadership of the Reinvesting in Youth Steering Committee to serve as a catalyst</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Norm Maleng, King County Prosecutor, will continue as chair ▪ Steering Committee has shown enthusiasm and support for a new initiative ▪ Puget Sound Educational Service District has formal relationship with school districts and has stepped into role as fiscal agent ▪ Prior RIY initiative viewed as successful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organizational model from first RIY initiative was heavily driven by Executive Director, who had experience in the juvenile justice system; steering committee role was limited. Leadership for the RIY Dropout Prevention initiative will require deep knowledge in the K-12 education system and perhaps a different balance of skills and responsibility among staff, the steering committee, schools, and other partners. ▪ Legislation may not adequately support RIY goals.
<p>2. Provide supports to districts/schools to develop a system plan to meet the Reinvesting in Youth Challenge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legislation may be introduced to support dropout prevention and retrieval grants ▪ Legislation may be introduced to upgrade the current student information system maintained by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inability to engage communities of color working on this issue ▪ Discouragement from past failures ▪ Inability to recognize and release existing bias ▪ Strong feelings and emotions may be in play
<p>3. Implement or enhance practices based on research or best practices to reduce the achievement gap and improve overall achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and many districts hold this as a goal ▪ Public attention to this goal may be increasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inability to engage communities of color working on this issue ▪ Discouragement from past failures ▪ Inability to recognize and release existing bias ▪ Strong feelings and emotions may be in play
<p>4. Where appropriate or necessary beyond implementation of school improvement practices, employ recommended programs for dropout prevention, intervention and retrieval.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Much is known about effective practices for some populations ▪ Some evidence-based programs are in use in King County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Danger of thinking that a new program will be the solution ▪ Lack of evidence-based programs that have involved refugee and immigrant youth ▪ Resistance or other barriers to use of evidence-based programs

Strategies	Factors Supporting Feasibility	Factors That Could Interfere with Feasibility
<p>5. Community organizations coordinate and collaborate with schools and each other to ease access to programs for students; build on existing resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continued success of King County Integration Project ▪ Funding for PathNet or a similar coordination mechanism ▪ Willingness of other organizations to participate in collaborative effort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unwillingness to pay for the cost of effective collaboration
<p>6. Set accountability standards for each population group for the goals in effect from the legislative or executive branches</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Desire for accountability on closing the achievement gap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Belief that students on the low end of the achievement gap cannot succeed in school at the rate or on the timeline required by the legislative or executive branches
<p>7. Align district policy and resources with state and federal accountability requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Districts are becoming more accustomed to state and federal accountability requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inherent belief that holding schools accountable for both high test scores and high graduation rates is contradictory ▪ Districts have a high degree of autonomy
<p>8. Create and link student and teacher data systems through a comprehensive data system in support of student success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is a model of the required longitudinal student and teacher data system through the Data Quality Campaign; Washington now has 8 of the 10 essential elements, up from 5 essential elements in the 2003–2004 school year.⁶⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resistance to adding teacher data ▪ Funding and time to get system up and running
<p>9. Use data system as an early warning mechanism to identify and intervene with students showing signs to dropping out</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OSPI maintains a Core Student Record System (CSRS) with a unique student identifier for each student in the state.⁶⁶ Currently not all fields are used, providing the potential for adding items that would help districts generate the early warning data unique to them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schools may be overwhelmed with data requests related to WASL tests ▪ Schools may not want to address needs of students identified as at risk of dropping out

⁶⁵ National Center for Educational Accountability. (2006). Washington: Summary of the ten elements. Data Quality Campaign. Available at http://www.dataqualitycampaign.org/survey_results/state.cfm?st=Washington

⁶⁶ Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. (2006) *Core Student Record System (CSRS): Monthly Collection Data Manual for the 2006-2007 School Year*. Olympia, WA: OSPI (Order No. 06-0010) Available: <https://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/TestAdministration/pubdocs/CSRSDataManual2006-2007%5B1%5D.pdf>

Strategies	Factors Supporting Feasibility	Factors That Could Interfere with Feasibility
10. Maximize use of existing resources through realignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Districts and schools can follow steps featured in <i>Successful Schools</i> report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current pressure on schools for other uses of resources
11. Encourage other funders to realign their resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ United Way of King County has selected dropout prevention and retrieval as one of its top priorities for youth funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus on passing WASL and early learning may make it difficult to tap into funds for education
12. Obtain foundation support for development, implementation and evaluation of comprehensive strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gates Foundation has a current focus on reducing the dropout rate in its education division ▪ Focus of Gates and other foundations on this issue is increasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus on passing WASL and early learning may make it difficult to tap into funds for education
13. Develop capacity and infrastructure for sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Requires less new funding ▪ Likely to be more effective than just starting a new program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deeper level of change may be needed for this type of strategy
14. Develop savings reinvestment plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have model from initial RIY project ▪ Have legislators on RIY Steering Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May not be good model for estimating cost savings on education side ▪ May be harder to determine effect on criminal justice costs than original initiative
15. Conduct formative evaluation to improve implementation of comprehensive strategy; implement summative evaluation after 3 or 5 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have experience and lessons learned from evaluation from initial RIY project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expense of high quality evaluation ▪ Resistance to time required of implementing organizations

On balance, we believe that there are significant compelling and urgent reasons to meet the Reinvesting in Youth Challenge and sufficient factors favoring success to move forward. Part of the next stage of development will involve determining ways to maximize factors likely to increase success and ways to avoid or minimize barriers.

VII. Next Steps

This report contains a comprehensive strategic plan for reducing dropout rates, but does not provide a work plan or timeline for how and when and by whom that strategy can be implemented. Making those decisions will require the Reinvesting in Youth Steering Committee to assess its strengths, resources, opportunities, potential partnerships and strategies. Given the comprehensive and complex nature of the strategic approach, there are a number of routes to begin work.

A general outline of phases for implementation is set forth below as a possible guide. The phases are interrelated and several likely would be overlapping in time frames over a period of five to eight years. However, the RIY Steering Committee has not yet engaged in the type of analysis and process needed to determine the criteria and process by which it will choose its pathway. An implementation plan could vary considerably from these initial thoughts.

Phase 1 Goal: *RIY commitment to shared goals*

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|---------------------|---|
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Develop succinct and clear “case statement” for and description of the dropout initiative▪ Ensure common and clear understanding by RIY Steering Committee members▪ Obtain commitment of organizations represented on the Steering Committee to participate in achieving the goals of this dropout initiative |
| Outcome | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Commitment by key stakeholders to pursue goals of dropout initiative |

Phase 2 Goal: *RIY conceptual design, theory of change and resource development*

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|---------------------|--|
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Engage staff and/or consultant expertise to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Support Steering Committee in developing initial conceptual design of implementation plan and theory of change○ Seek funding and other resource commitments |
| Outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Strong and strategic foundation for implementation and from which to seek resources➤ Increased knowledge of resources that may be available for implementation |

Phase 3 Goal: *RIY infrastructure development*

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|---------------------|--|
| Action Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Engage staff and/or consultant expertise to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Determine most effective roles of Steering Committee members and staff and/or consultants○ Determine most effective structure and operating processes |
| Outcome | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Organizational structure and leadership to champion a multidimensional initiative are in place |

Phase 4 Goal: *Partner Selection and Engagement*

- Action Steps**
- Develop detailed implementation plan and budget
 - Determine criteria for selection of initial partners and grantees
 - Engage partners (e.g., Puget Sound Educational Service District, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Board of Education, community-based organizations)
 - Seek applications from and select four to six school districts for projects to advance implementation plan
- Outcome**
- Development of key relationships for implementation

Phase 5 Goal: *Develop initial grantee and partner plans and evaluation plan*

- Action Steps**
- Develop process for working with district/school grantees and partners to develop capacity-building plans
 - Select evaluator
 - Work with evaluator, grantees and partners to develop formative and summative evaluation plan
- Outcome**
- Creation and alignment of substantive and evaluation plans

Phase 6 Goal: *Address data/research and policy components*

- Action Steps**
- Confer with grantees and partners and reach agreement on data sharing
 - Confer with partners, develop approach and reach agreement for creation of an effective early warning system to identify and address risk factors for dropping out
 - Conduct baseline evaluation and data collection
 - Advocate with State Board of Education to include incentive-based accountability for graduation rates in the state-wide accountability framework
- Outcome**
- Development of research and policy initiatives to support theory of change
 - Adoption of state level policies that recognize the importance of early warning data systems and shared accountability for college going rates

Phase 7 Goal: *Implement with fidelity the capacity building plans of district/school grantees and partners using formative feedback for adjustments*

- Action Steps**
- Develop and evaluate district and school models that could be replicated
 - Develop models of funding that can be adopted by districts/schools including realignment strategies and savings reinvestment
- Outcomes**
- Increased school and district capacity and tested model programs that can be replicated
 - Formative and outcome evaluations yields evidence of strengthened capacity, effective delivery and positive results
 - Investments in capacity result in achievement of goals

Phase 8 Goal: *Broadly disseminate results and encourage county-wide replication of successful practices and programs*

- Action Steps**
- Continue formative and outcome evaluation for several years
 - Develop and implement dissemination plan
 - Develop and implement plan to encourage county-wide replication

- Outcomes**
- Increased knowledge in the field of how to prevent dropping out of high school and increase graduation and college attendance rates
 - Sustainable models of dropout prevention efforts including infrastructure, capacity, policy, accountability and funding
 - Significantly higher graduation rates and college attendance rates in King County

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Risk Factors http://www.mfiles.org/Marijuana/take_action/b3_risk_factors.html

Resiliency http://www.mfiles.org/Marijuana/take_action/b3resiliency.html

The Three Basic Categories of Protective Factors

http://www.mfiles.org/Marijuana/take_action/b3_three_basiccategories.html

Resiliency Requires Changing Hearts and Minds by Bonnie Bernard

http://www.mfiles.org/Marijuana/take_action/b3_resiliency_source1.html

Prevention Should Emphasize Protective Factors by Bonnie Bernard

http://www.mfiles.org/Marijuana/take_action/b3_protective_source.html

Risk and Protective Factor Prevention: What does it mean for Community Prevention Planning? By Hawkins & Catalano

http://www.mfiles.org/Marijuana/take_action/b3_hc_riskandprotectivefactorprevention.html

New Research Adds to Knowledge on Resiliency by Bonnie Benard

http://www.mfiles.org/Marijuana/take_action/b3_resiliency_source2.html

Resiliency Paradigm Validates Craft Knowledge by Bonnie Benard

http://www.mfiles.org/Marijuana/take_action/b3resiliency_source3.html

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APPENDICES

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Appendix A: What Works at the National Level

Although the effective district and school practices in the report have strong potential to serve King County students – they are not necessarily ‘scientifically based.’ Random sampling and control groups have not been widely used to determine the effectiveness of specific school practices. Instead, correlational relationships along with anecdotal information provide us with much to learn and apply to district and school prevention and retrieval practices.

Unfortunately, few of those reports or studies give serious attention to determining if prevention or intervention activities are effective with diverse populations or in reducing the achievement gap. While we have some direction from some research, we still have a lot to learn about what really works with diverse populations to reduce the achievement gap. We believe it will be important to have a strategy for designing and evaluating our own programs as part of our comprehensive strategy.

This Appendix highlights the most salient findings from our review about what works and why, along with extensive data and a deeper analysis of the findings on school improvement issues. Strategies suggested in this appendix were drawn from school improvement literature. Recent reports consulted include: *WA Learns: Successful District Study* (2006) written by Lawrence O. Picus & Associates; *Promising Programs & Practices for Dropout Prevention – Report to the WA Legislature* (2005) by Pete Bylsma & Sue Shannon; *Gaining Traction, Gaining Ground – How Some High Schools Accelerate Learning for Struggling Students* (2005) prepared by The Education Trust; the *High Schools We Need: Improving an American Institution* (2006) prepared by Pete Bylsma and Sue Shannon of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and *The Silent Epidemic* funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

An excellent summary of fifteen strategies determined to prevent dropping out of school has been developed by the National Dropout Prevention Center:

1. Systemic Renewal

A continuing process of evaluating goals and objectives related to school policies, practices, and organizational structures as they impact a diverse group of learners.

2. School-Community Collaboration

When all groups in a community provide collective support to the school, a strong infrastructure sustains a caring supportive environment where youth can thrive and achieve.

3. Safe Learning Environments

A comprehensive violence prevention plan, including conflict resolution, must deal with potential violence as well as crisis management. A safe learning environment provides daily experiences, at all grade levels, which enhance positive social attitudes and effective interpersonal skills in all students.

4. Family Engagement

Research consistently finds that family engagement has a direct, positive effect on children's achievement and is the most accurate predictor of a student's success in school.

5. Early Childhood Education

Birth-to-five interventions demonstrate that providing a child additional enrichment can enhance brain development. The most effective way to reduce the number of children who will ultimately drop out is to provide the best possible classroom instruction from the beginning of their school experience through the primary grades.

6. Early Literacy Development

Early interventions to help low-achieving students improve their reading and writing skills establish the necessary foundation for effective learning in all other subjects.

7. Mentoring/Tutoring

Mentoring is a one-to-one caring, supportive relationship between a mentor and a mentee that is based on trust. Tutoring, also a one-to-one activity, focuses on academics and is an effective practice when addressing specific needs such as reading, writing, or math competencies.

8. Service-Learning

Service-learning connects meaningful community service experiences with academic learning. This teaching/learning method promotes personal and social growth, career development, and civic responsibility and can be a powerful vehicle for effective school reform at all grade levels.

9. Alternative Schooling

Alternative schooling provides potential dropouts a variety of options that can lead to graduation, with programs paying special attention to the student's individual social needs and academic requirements for a high school diploma.

10. After-School Opportunities

Many schools provide after-school and summer enhancement programs that eliminate information loss and inspire interest in a variety of areas. Such experiences are especially important for students at risk of school failure because these programs fill the afternoon "gap time" with constructive and engaging activities.

11. Professional Development

Teachers who work with youth at high risk of academic failure need to feel supported and have an avenue by which they can continue to develop skills, techniques, and learn about innovative strategies.

12. Active Learning

Active learning embraces teaching and learning strategies that engage and involve students in the learning process. Students find new and creative ways to solve problems, achieve success, and become lifelong learners when educators show them that there are different ways to learn.

13. Educational Technology

Technology offers some of the best opportunities for delivering instruction to engage students in authentic learning, addressing multiple intelligences, and adapting to students' learning styles.

14. Individualized Instruction

Each student has unique interests and past learning experiences. An individualized instructional program for each student allows for flexibility in teaching methods and motivational strategies to consider these individual differences.

15. Career and Technology Education (CTE)

A quality CTE program and a related guidance program are essential for all students. School-to-work programs recognize that youth need specific skills to prepare them to measure

Appendix B contains a matrix of recommended prevention and intervention practices and programs. This matrix forms a strong menu from which to select and build school and community practices and programs that provide a more effective, higher level, more equitable education experience for children in King County. The lists are based on extensive review of many reports, studies and ratings by organizations that specialize in disseminating information about promising and proven practices and programs.

The consultant team believes the following nine strategies are the ones that emerge from our research as having the most promise for reducing the dropout rate and increasing academic success for all.

1. Improve School Characteristics and Educational Experience

Over a decade of standards-based reform and the accountability pressures for student achievement precipitated by No Child Left Behind are forcing states and school districts to develop dual goals to improvement of high school outcomes for students. We need to find a way to raise graduation rates while simultaneously ensuring students meet the standards for graduation.⁶⁷

High school reform efforts present an opportunity to bring visibility and new attention to struggling students and out-of-school youth.⁶⁸

Recent research and experience convey three important lessons:

- **The dropout problem is not inevitable** - Demographics matter but what happens at school matters, too. Even for students with difficult home lives or other community risk factors, dropping out of school has much to do with how schools operate and the experiences students have at school.
- **We can do a better job of predicting which students are most likely to dropout of school** - Most dropouts follow identifiable pathways through the education system.⁶⁹ Some districts have identified those students as early as sixth grade.
- **We know more about how schools contribute to dropout rates than ever before** - We also know what can be done to improve educational experiences for struggling students.

2. Increase Accountability for Graduation Rates

The federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act was signed into law January 8, 2002. The law requires states, under threat of sanctions, to raise achievement each year in math and reading and to eliminate the achievement gap by race, ethnicity, language and special education status.⁷⁰

NCLB also calls for progress by states on graduation rates. However, while the original intent was to hold districts and schools accountable for making adequate progress on graduation rates through the adequate

⁶⁷ Jerald, C. (2006) *Identifying Potential Dropouts: Key Lessons for Building an Early Warning Data System: A Dual Agenda of High Standards and High Graduation Rates*. Washington DC: Achieve, Inc.

⁶⁸ Murphy, Lucretia (Summer 2006). Changing the Landscape of Opportunity for Vulnerable Youth. *Voices in Urban Education*. Annenberg Institute for School Reform.

⁶⁹ Jerald, C. (2006) *Identifying Potential Dropouts: Key Lessons for Building an Early Warning Data System: A Dual Agenda of High Standards and High Graduation Rates*. Washington DC: Achieve, Inc.

⁷⁰ Lee, J. (2006) *Tracking achievement gaps and assessing the impact of NCLB on the gaps: An in-depth look into national and state reading and math outcome trends*. Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.

yearly progress mechanism graduation rate accountability is not monitored seriously.⁷¹ In addition, NCLB does not require graduation rates to be disaggregated by minority subgroups for accountability purposes. States are accountable for minority student test scores but not minority graduation rates.⁷²

Several policy analysts have proposed that high school graduation rates should have stronger accountability under NCLB to encourage schools to prevent dropouts.⁷³ Several education policy experts argue that stringent test score accountability combined with low accountability for graduation rates can lead to a phenomenon referred to as “push-out.” Schools and districts may be motivated to encourage low-scoring students to dropout, or simply not give the dropout problem much attention. As low-scoring students dropout, the school’s test scores rise. Incentives to push students out of the system are exacerbated by the lack of graduation rate accountability at the state and federal levels.⁷⁴

3. Increase the “Holding Power” of Schools

The most promising strategy for reducing dropouts is restructuring schools to meet the needs of all students.⁷⁵ It is generally accepted that no one program or practice decreases dropout rates, but rather increasing student success at all levels of the system is a broad dropout prevention strategy. Students who have a high-quality elementary and middle school experiences will elude the ill effects of low achievement, retention in grade and dislike of school. On the secondary level, increasing the quality of teaching and the relevance of the curriculum is another promising approach to dropout prevention.⁷⁶

Comprehensive school improvement is a holistic strategy, one that aims to increase the effectiveness of many organizational elements simultaneously. This approach is in stark contrast to simply starting a new program or changing only one aspect of teaching practice. An important goal of school improvement is to increase the ‘holding power’ of schools.⁷⁷ Holding power, sometimes called ‘promoting power’, is the ability of a school to keep students in school and on track for graduation. The number of freshmen at a high school compared to the number of seniors four years later is thought to be a reliable indicator of the extent to which a high school is succeeding in its mission of graduating students. The literature tells us that one in five high schools in America has weak promoting power, unacceptably low graduation rates and high dropout rates.⁷⁸

To paraphrase Karen Pittman, the Executive Director of the Forum for Youth Investment, problem-free does not equal fully prepared. To find a broader set of positive outcomes related to school completion, we concentrated our search for success by examining the literature on school improvement. Strategies and processes from school improvement are pertinent for reducing dropouts.⁷⁹ However, not all models address dropout prevention directly. They advocate for changing the learning environment, curriculum and instruction and personal relationships in order to improve student performance – all of which have high

⁷¹ Orfield, G. (2004). *Dropouts in America: Confronting the Graduation Rate Crisis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Education Week Research Center. Dropouts. www2.edweek.org/rc/issues/dropouts/ retrieved March 14, 2007.

⁷⁴ Orfield, G. (2004). *Dropouts in America: Confronting the Graduation Rate Crisis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

⁷⁵ Shannon, G. S and Bylsma, P (2003). *Helping Students Finish School: Why Students Dropout and How to Help Them Graduate*. Olympia, WA: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Orfield, G. (2004). *Dropouts in America: Confronting the Graduation Rate Crisis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

⁷⁹ Shannon, G. S and Bylsma, P. (2005) *Promising Programs and Practices for Dropout Prevention: Report to the Legislature*. Olympia, WA: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. (Order No: 05-0049). p. 15. Available: <http://www.k12.wa.us/research/default.aspx>

correlation with increasing the ‘promoting power’⁸⁰ of a school resulting in fewer dropouts and higher graduation rates. Highly effective schools are characterized by a strong connection between students’ needs and what school’s offer in a broad array of academic and social/emotional supports.⁸¹

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has identified and invested in non-traditional high schools for some of the nation’s most vulnerable students. Models range from the national Communities in Schools that provide excellent learning opportunities and many other additional supports to students to Envision Schools that use project-based learning, art and technology to engage students to provide underserved students with a high quality college-prep education and several more. These models may yield valuable lessons for helping at-risk students succeed in high school, college and career.⁸²

The core elements of a successful school are consistent with other studies, which also reinforce the need for a comprehensive approach to school improvement as no one characteristic is potent enough on its own to make a significant difference. It is the combination of factors that makes a difference.⁸³

4. Pay Attention to Disparities, Transitions, Student Engagement and Reading

In addition to the qualities of overall school improvement described above which can reduce dropout rates, schools must also pay particular attention to four additional dimensions of “holding power” to keep students in school.

- o **Closing the Achievement Gap.** Within each and every element of systemic school reform, schools must first ensure that strategies intentionally maximize opportunities to close the achievement gap for students from low income families, students of color, English language learners and other students where disparities exist in academic achievement. Chapter II of this report includes information to guide reduction of the achievement gap.

Sadly, the best predictors of a school’s achievement scores are the race and wealth of its student body. A public school that enrolls mostly well-off white kids has a 1 in 4 chance of earning consistently high test scores; a school with mostly poor minority kids has a 1 in 300 chance.⁸⁴

- o **Transitions.** The literature tells us students often fall off track at transition points. Key transition points for students are sixth and ninth grades. At sixth grade, the transition to middle school, key indicators are declines in grades, attendance and poor classroom behavior. The transition to high school is also critical. Key risk indicators at ninth grade include: failing math or English, having too few credits, having failed a grade in elementary school or disruptive classroom behavior.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ Orfield, G. (2004). *Dropouts in America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University. p. 58-62.

⁸¹ Shannon, G. S and Bylsma, P. (2005) *Promising Programs and Practices for Dropout Prevention: Report to the Legislature*. Olympia, WA: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. (Order No: 05-0049). P. 13. Available: <http://www.k12.wa.us/research/default.aspx>

⁸² Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (2006). Various grant announcements in October and November 2006, retrieved Nov. 18, 2006 from <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/UnitedStates/Education>

⁸³ Shannon, G. S. and Bylsma, P. (2006, May). *Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools: a research-based resource for school leadership teams to assist with the School Improvement Process*. Olympia, WA: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. P. 1. Available: <http://www.k12.wa.us/research/pubdocs/pdf/9characterfor%20SIP.pdf>

⁸⁴ Touch, Paul (Nov. 26, 2006). What It Takes to Make a Student. New York: *New York Times Magazine*.

⁸⁵ Jerald, C.D. (2006). *Identifying Potential Dropouts: Key Lessons for Building an Early Warning Data System: A Dual Agenda of High Standards and High Graduation Rates*. Washington D.C.: American Diploma Project Network. p.21-22

- o **Engagement.** A sense of belonging and engagement is highly correlated with staying in school. Engagement is primarily related to relationships between students and adults in the school environment. Students crave interaction and connection. In many schools creating opportunities for more individualized student-adult relationships requires rethinking current structures and ways of working.

Engagement describes an inner quality of concentration and effort to learn. Research also notes substantive changes that are needed in the way schools are designed in order to increase the potential for students to identify with their school and feel like they belong.

- o **Reading.** Learning to read is a life-skill. It is virtually impossible for a student failing to meet the basic level of reading to succeed in high school.⁸⁶ There are some proven programs focused on early intervention in reading that would help to alleviate the problem of not reading leading to school failure. Recent research and programs have developed way to teach reading to middle school students who have not yet mastered basic skills in a way that honors their prior knowledge and is age-appropriate in its selection of materials. .

A large school system that invests in better data to support dropout prevention can obtain much better results for hundreds of thousands of even millions of dollars less than a similar system whose leaders decide to skip that step. Achieve, Inc.

5. Develop an Early Warning Data System

Recent research now makes it feasible for schools to identify potential dropouts with a high degree of accuracy, through an electronic data system that can trigger intervention efforts. An early warning data system can signal which students and schools most need intervention, thereby reducing false negatives and positives – and saving time and resources by focusing on students most likely to dropout.

The cost of building an accurate early warning system is relatively small compared with the cost of providing programs or systemic changes without an effective means to know for whom they should be deployed.⁸⁷

Prediction requires more than knowing what personal and educational risk factors dropouts are more likely to have, and even more than knowing how many or what combinations of factors are at play in a young person’s life. Only longitudinal studies in individual school districts have revealed the type and timing of indicators that can create a highly predictive system in their own schools. For example, the studies revealed nuanced patterns such as:⁸⁸

- Early dropouts (between 7th and 9th grades) exhibited different risk factors at different points in time than did later dropouts (during 10th to 12th grades).
- 4th graders who had substantially lower grades than their peers comprised one-third of all dropouts in the district.
- 9th grade is a “make or break” year for many dropouts, even though they may not leave until their junior or senior year.

⁸⁶ High Schools for the New Millennium: Imagine the Possibilities, p. 3.

⁸⁷ Jerald, C.D. (2006). *Identifying Potential Dropouts: Key Lessons for Building an Early Warning Data System: A Dual Agenda of High Standards and High Graduation Rates.* Washington D.C.: American Diploma Project Network.

⁸⁸ Jerald, C.D. (2006). *Identifying Potential Dropouts: Key Lessons for Building an Early Warning Data System: A Dual Agenda of High Standards and High Graduation Rates.* Washington D.C.: American Diploma Project Network.

- Low attendance during the first 30 days of 9th grade is a more powerful predictor of dropping out than any 8th grade factor, including test scores, age and academic failure.
- 6th graders with any one of four highly predictive factors (low attendance; and a failing mark in classroom behavior, math or English) had only a 10 percent chance of graduating on time and only a 20 percent chance of graduating a year late.

Customized information of this type is invaluable for effective prevention and intervention efforts to reduce dropout rates and promote higher graduation rates. It offers perhaps the most significant “upgrade” for dropout prevention efforts in decades.

An early warning dropout system should be created as part of a larger longitudinal data system that would give educators and policymakers better information for improving schools in all dimensions, including reduction of dropout rates. Longitudinal data is that collected on the same student from year to year, which makes it possible to pinpoint factors that accelerate or diminish academic achievement. A national Data Quality Campaign is underway to encourage and support state policymakers to improve the collection, availability and use of high-quality education data through a longitudinal data system that contains ten essential elements determined to be critical to making effective decisions that improve student achievement.⁸⁹

6. Make Effective Community and In-School Programs Part of School Improvement Efforts

Specific programs can address some of the risk and protective factors that contribute to students dropping out of school, and can thereby be part of a comprehensive dropout prevention strategy. However, programs by themselves are not an effective strategy to reduce dropout rates and cannot substitute for school- or district-wide improvement efforts.

Cautions in Using Programs

If data from an early warning system or longitudinal data system, student surveys or from other analysis indicates that a program is needed to promote positive changes that enhance student success and reduce dropout rates, three cautions should be considered in choosing a program:

1. **There is still a lack of rigorous program evaluations in this area.** Few studies reach the scientific accuracy/evaluation level needed to conduct a meta-analysis that would yield a list of proven components for success.
2. **Most effective programs are delivered by or involve the schools, although there are a few strategies that do not require school delivery or significant collaboration.** Most of the dropout prevention programs studied are school-based programs. Delivery by schools may be difficult because of lack of time and resources, differences in philosophy, or lack of consistency. Some community organizations would like to deliver programs in schools. However, partnerships between schools and community-based organizations rarely result in a relationship between equal partners, and are often fragile and difficult to maintain. That said, some prevention strategies can be delivered directly through community agencies. These include high quality mentoring and early learning programs, and neighborhood level approaches that reduce unemployment and crime.

⁸⁹ National Center for Educational Accountability. (2006). Washington: Summary of the ten elements. Data Quality Campaign. Available at http://www.dataqualitycampaign.org/survey_results/state.cfm?st=Washington

3. **Context and fidelity play a large role in success.** The fidelity with which an intervention is employed matters as much as the strength of the program design. Success depends on a strong and sustained commitment to increased student learning, adequate allocation of resources, and attention to relationship building.⁹⁰ When attempting to replicate programs shown to be effective in other places, it is important to consider cultural appropriateness, community and district values, educational philosophy, and availability of resources as factors that can influence outcomes.⁹¹

7. Incorporate Elements of Successful Dropout Prevention Programs

Programs that have been designed to prevent dropout vary widely. Researchers note that several components appear to be key to intervention success. Common components of successful dropout prevention programs, as identified by highly regarded sources, include:

- Personalized/individual interventions
- Positive relationships and frequent communication between school staff and students
- Small learning environments
- Academic assistance
- Relevance of education to future endeavors
- Helping students address personal and family problems
- Family outreach and connection to schools
- Fostering students' engagement in school and sense of belonging
- Early intervention
- Sufficient duration of assistance

8. Incorporate Elements of Successful Retrieval/Reconnection Programs

Many students who drop out want to finish school, know that a diploma is valuable, and have ambition. Others have mental health problems, are overwhelmed by personal or family responsibilities, or lack support from their families. With effective techniques and effective options, some of these youth can be retrieved to schools or connected with other educational and career preparation options.

We don't go after them [students who have dropped out] aggressively enough to get them back into school.

Michael Bennet, Superintendent
Denver Public Schools

Dropout recovery programs encompass traditional public schools, specially-created recovery-focused schools, alternative learning centers, community-based schools/programs, for-profit schools, federally-, state-, and county-funded efforts, community colleges, the adult education system and other social services. There is little rigorous evaluation of these programs at this time.

⁹⁰ Shannon, G. S and Bylsma, P (2006, May). *The High Schools We Need: Improving an American Institution*. Olympia, WA: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. (Order No: 06-0017) p. 201-202. Available: <http://www.k12.wa.us/research/pubdocs/HighSchoolsWeNeed.pdf>

⁹¹ Shannon, G. S and Bylsma, P. (2005) *Promising Programs and Practices for Dropout Prevention: Report to the Legislature*. Olympia, WA: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. (Order No: 05-0049). P. 5. Available: <http://www.k12.wa.us/research/default.aspx>.

The American Youth Policy Forum observes that the majority of out-of-school youth have been impeded by poor prior schools as well as social, economic, and psychological barriers to effective learning – and therefore they will need multiple supports to become successful adults.⁹²:

“Until recently, most of the alternatives available to these young people have been in the so-called “second chance” system—actually a fragmented array of alternative schools, GED centers, youth employment programs, and high school remedial programs offered on community college campuses. Historically, these schools and programs have served two, often conflicting purposes: a safety net for youth in free fall from mainstream institutions and an escape valve for the institutions themselves, as they fail to serve specific populations of young people. Not surprisingly, second-chance programs are sometimes thought of as a young person’s best hope, sometimes as a dumping ground or a dead end,” explain authors of a report on helping out-of-school youth build a path for success.⁹³

Disconnected older adolescents are among the most neglected and at risk of our young people.

*The Dropout Crisis: Promising Approaches in Prevention and Recovery, June 2004
Jobs for the Future*

Successful retrieval and reconnection programs:

- “Combine pressure and support, helping students manage life demands that may hinder learning, while simultaneously pushing them to meet high standards.
- Build a vibrant community where young people who may be discouraged or embittered by their previous education experiences can rebuild their trust in themselves, their teachers, their peers, and the process of learning.
- Mediate between remediation and acceleration for young adults who have gaps in their skills and knowledge but are not able or willing to spend four to six years obtaining high school credentials.
- Connect young people to opportunities to pursue both immediate vocational interests and needs, as well as longer-term academic and career goals.
- Recalibrate what they do on a regular basis, using data to inform the ways in which they balance the tensions listed above.”⁹⁴

9. Increase Post-secondary Success

To earn a family-wage income in the global economy, almost all young people will need some education beyond high school. Many employers now require the same levels and types of skills as colleges.⁹⁵

Twenty-six states are working together through the American Diploma Project to prepare students for post-secondary success. The four actions to which participating states have committed themselves are:

1. Align high school standards with the knowledge and skills required for success after high school.
2. Require all high school students to take challenging courses that actually prepare them for life after high school.
3. Streamline the assessment system so that the tests students take in high school also can serve as readiness tests for college and work.
4. Hold high schools accountable for graduating students who are ready for college or careers, and hold postsecondary institutions accountable for students’ success once enrolled.

⁹² Martin, N., & Halperin, S. (2006). *Whatever It Takes: How Twelve Communities Are Reconnecting Out-of-School Youth*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum. ISBN No. 887031-93-6. p. 1-4. Available: <http://www.aypf.org/publications/WhateverItTakes/WITfull.pdf>

⁹³ Allen, L., Almeida, C. and Steinberg, A. (2004). *From the Prison Track to the College Track: Pathways to Postsecondary Success for Out-of-School Youth*. Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future.

⁹⁴ Allen, L., Almeida, C. and Steinberg, A. (2004). *From the Prison Track to the College Track: Pathways to Postsecondary Success for Out-of-School Youth*. Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future.

⁹⁵ Pennington, H & Vargas, J. (2004, March) *Bridge to Postsecondary Success: High Schools in the Knowledge Economy*: Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future.

It is beyond the scope of this report to develop recommendations for post-secondary success. However, those involved in this initiative should remain mindful that their goal is to prepare each student for postsecondary education or a family-wage job – not simply to have a student receive a diploma that meets minimum requirements at a minimal level.

Nationally, only 67 out of every 100 students who enter the ninth grade graduate from high school; only 38 enter college, 26 remain enrolled in college after their sophomore year, and 18 graduate with at least an Associate's degree within six years of graduating from high school. The numbers are even worse for low income students and for African Americans and Hispanics, the fastest growing proportion of the youth cohort and those who traditionally have been least well served by our education system.⁹⁶

A major problem in Washington state is that the minimum state requirements for graduation are considerably lower than the requirements for admission to four-year public colleges and universities, and even further below admission criteria for selective institutions of higher learning. This situation may explain the large cost of remedial education at the college level and the struggle for some students to be adequately prepared for a college learning experience.

⁹⁶ Pennington, H & Vargas, J. (2004, March) *Bridge to Postsecondary Success: High Schools in the Knowledge Economy*: Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future.

**Washington State’s Minimum High School Graduation Requirements
and Recommended College Prep Courses for High School Students**

	Minimum State Requirements for High School Graduation	Minimum State Requirements for Four-Year Public Colleges and Universities	Recommended Courses for Highly Selective Colleges and Universities
English/Language Arts	3 years	4 years	4 years
Mathematics (<i>algebra or higher</i>)	2 years	3 years	3-4 years
Science (<i>one must be a lab</i>)	2 years	2 years	3-4 years
Social studies (<i>including Washington State history</i>)	2.5 years	3 years	2.5 years
Work-related education	1 year	None	None
World Language (<i>same language</i>)	None	2 years	3-4 years
Visual/performing arts or academic elective— <i>or— choose an extra class from those listed above</i>	1 year	1 year	2-3 years
Health and Fitness	2 years	None	None
Electives	5.5 years	None	Varies
Senior culminating project	Class of '04+	None	None
Certificate of Academic Achievement or Certificate of Individual Achievement (<i>pass 10th Grade WASL or WAAS</i>)	Class of '08+	None	None
Minimum Grade Point Average	None	2.00	Varies
High school and beyond plan	Class of '08+	None	None

Excerpted from Seattle Public Schools GEAR UP – Program Resource Guide

In Washington State, only 16 percent of Washington 9th graders finish college, which places us 31st in the nation. Half of the students who begin college do not graduate.⁹⁷

Implementation of the school improvement policies and practices and dropout prevention strategies described earlier in this report will go a long ways toward preparing students for postsecondary education. In addition, the following actions are also needed:

⁹⁷ Washington Learns. <http://www.washingtonlearns.wa.gov/work/reports.htm>

- Ensure that all strategies promote equity in outcomes for traditionally underserved and underperforming students, as well as promote improvements for all.
- Implement policies that promote more college-level learning in high schools so that more students graduate “college ready.”
- Improve the transitions between secondary and postsecondary education.
- Integrate the K-12 and postsecondary data systems into a single system.
- Create governance mechanisms that improve secondary and postsecondary alignment of goals, planning and budgets

Appendix B: Recommendations for King County School Districts and School Systems

As noted in this report, much of what needs to happen to decrease dropout rates involves changes in school systems and practices. In addition, some models or programs shown to be effective for reducing dropout rates must be delivered by schools and require strong leadership support.

In a few cases, prevention, early intervention and retrieval programs can be delivered in the community with little or no school involvement. The programs that can be delivered at the community level are labeled as such in the table below.

Appendix B contains the recommendations of the consultant team for school- and district-level changes to increase graduation rates and reduce dropout rates, as well as community-led efforts. Many of the recommendations are based on best practices, as there is currently a limited amount of rigorous research on the effect of these system and practice changes. The consultant team selected the most appropriate and effective of the choices available for the many levels at which schools need to consider and implement changes. The level and stage of intervention to which each recommendation applies is noted in the columns on the right.

<p style="text-align: center;">District and School Systems Recommended System Changes, Practices & Programs</p>	<i>District</i>	<i>PreK and Elementary</i>	<i>Middle School Transition</i>	<i>Middle School</i>	<i>HS Transition</i>	<i>High School</i>	<i>Retrieval/Reconnection</i>	<i>Career and Technical</i>	<i>Encourage Post-Secondary Education</i>
Commitment to educating all students	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖
Change beliefs and attitudes that contribute to the achievement gap	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖
Implement an effective Early Warning System	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖		
Set high expectations	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖
Strong consistent and ongoing leadership from principals and teachers	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖
A commitment to data-driven decision making	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖
Develop a collaborative culture and professional community	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖	📖

**District and School Systems
Recommended System Changes,
Practices & Programs**

	<i>District</i>	<i>PreK and Elementary</i>	<i>Middle School Transition</i>	<i>Middle School</i>	<i>HS Transition</i>	<i>High School</i>	<i>Retrieval/Reconnection</i>	<i>Career and Technical</i>	<i>Encourage Post-Secondary Education</i>
Improved instructional practice based on data and supported by professional development									
Adoption of more effective, research based curriculum programs aligned with state content standards									
Adoption by teachers of culturally responsive content and instructional practice									
Restructure learning environments, including smaller classrooms									
Provision of extended learning opportunities for struggling students									
Engagement of family and the broader community									
Focus on the 3R's: rigor, relevance and relationship									
An emphasis on student engagement									
Selection of providers and programs based on research or proven practice in prevention, intervention and retrieval									
Personalized individual intervention for academic, emotional, behavioral and social and family support									

<p style="text-align: center;">District and School Systems Recommended System Changes, Practices & Programs</p>	<i>District</i>	<i>PreK and Elementary</i>	<i>Middle School Transition</i>	<i>Middle School</i>	<i>HS Transition</i>	<i>High School</i>	<i>Retrieval/Reconnection</i>	<i>Career and Technical</i>	<i>Encourage Post-Secondary Education</i>
Schools and Districts High School Models⁹⁸									
<p>High Schools That Work (Ensures that all students, including those that do not plan to complete a four-year degree are prepared to enter the competitive work force; sets ambitious goals for all students and encourages academic and vocational teachers to work together. OSPI awarded grants to six schools in 2006 to adopt this model.)</p>						📖		📖	📖
<p>Career Academies (Improves students’ engagement and performance in high school and prepares them to make successful transitions to college or career. Strategies and structure vary. A rigorous evaluation showed significant reductions in dropout rates, increased attendance rates, credits earned, and preparation for post-secondary education.)</p>				📖		📖	📖	📖	📖
<p>Early College High (Combines secondary and post-secondary education, and makes higher education more accessible, affordable and attractive. Model is similar to Middle Colleges, which are alternative high schools housed on community college campuses; these schools exist on Seattle Community College campuses.)</p>						📖	📖	📖	📖

⁹⁸ Shannon, G. S and Bylsma, P (2006, May). *The High Schools We Need: Improving an American Institution*. Olympia, WA: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. (Order No: 06-0017). The models included here are a sample of over twenty successful secondary programs around the country, with an emphasis on those with intentional strategies to reduce dropout rates. Some of these models have had evaluation studies, but others have not. Experts believe that rather than any single reform strategy, it is the mix of several elements that leads to success.

<p align="center">District and School Systems Recommended System Changes, Practices & Programs</p>	<i>District</i>	<i>PreK and Elementary</i>	<i>Middle School Transition</i>	<i>Middle School</i>	<i>HS Transition</i>	<i>High School</i>	<i>Retrieval/Reconnection</i>	<i>Career and Technical</i>	<i>Encourage Post-Secondary Education</i>
<p>Talent Development High School (Creates separate programs for different grades, beginning with 9th grade to ease transition and provide opportunities to catch up. Teachers teach in small teams and are supported with professional development. Expelled students and others take regular classes in Twilight Schools.)</p>						📖		📖	📖
<p><u>Prevention Programs</u> (delivered at school by teachers)</p>									
<p>Perry Preschool (Two-year pre-school high quality early childhood education for children in poverty)</p>		📖							
<p>I Can Problem Solve (Training children to generate a variety of solutions and recognize thoughts, decreased impulsivity)</p>		📖		📖					
<p>Incredible Years Series (Training for parents, children and teachers to strengthen children’s social competence and reduce aggression at home and school)</p>		📖							
<p>FAST Track (Comprehensive and long-term program to prevent chronic and severe conduct problems; includes academic tutoring and PATHS curriculum)</p>		📖							
<p>Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers (Classroom, playground and parenting components to prevent antisocial behavior, involvement with delinquent peers, and drug/alcohol use; for all first and fifth grade students and their parents in neighborhoods with high levels of juvenile delinquency)</p>		📖							
<p>Good Behavior Game (Classroom management strategy to improve aggressive/disruptive classrooms that involves students and teachers.)</p>		📖							

**District and School Systems
Recommended System Changes,
Practices & Programs**

	<i>District</i>	<i>PreK and Elementary</i>	<i>Middle School Transition</i>	<i>Middle School</i>	<i>HS Transition</i>	<i>High School</i>	<i>Retrieval/Reconnection</i>	<i>Career and Technical</i>	<i>Encourage Post-Secondary Education</i>
Reading Recovery ⁹⁹ (Assists children in first grade who are having difficulty learning to read and write through individualized accelerated learning offering one-to-one tutoring, five days per week, 30 minutes a day, by a specially trained teacher until children can read at or above the class average.)		📖							
Success for All (Helps all children achieve grade level in basic reading, math and language skills by the 3 rd grade, through immediate and intensive intervention when children display learning and school problems) ¹⁰⁰		📖							
Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) (Promotes emotional and social competencies and reduces aggression and behavior problems while enhancing the educational process in the classroom)		📖							
Seattle Social Development Project (Teachers are trained in proactive classroom management, interactive teaching, and cooperative learning; students are instructed in problem-solving skills and refusal skills; parents are offered courses in child behavior management, academic support, and reducing risk of drug use.)		📖		📖					
Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (Universal intervention for reduction and prevention of bully/victim problems; individual interventions for bullies and victims.)		📖		📖		📖			

⁹⁹ Evaluation results are mixed at this time, and this program has not been rated yet by most of the organizations that review and rate programs based on strong results from rigorous evaluations.

¹⁰⁰ Not rated by most experts, yet represents a strategy highly suggested by research.

<p style="text-align: center;">District and School Systems Recommended System Changes, Practices & Programs</p>	<i>District</i>	<i>PreK and Elementary</i>	<i>Middle School Transition</i>	<i>Middle School</i>	<i>HS Transition</i>	<i>High School</i>	<i>Retrieval/Reconnection</i>	<i>Career and Technical</i>	<i>Encourage Post-Secondary Education</i>
<p>Positive Action (Integrated and comprehensive program that involves students, all school staff, family, and community in almost daily activities focused on positive school climate, and family and community involvement.)</p>		📖		📖		📖			
<p>GEAR UP¹⁰¹ (Develops a college-going culture at high-poverty middle and high schools to increase the number of under-represented students prepared to enter and succeed in post-secondary education. Twelve schools in Seattle were participating but federal funding has ended.)</p>				📖	📖	📖			
<p>Ninth Grade Dropout Prevention Program (School designs interventions to meet academic needs, create a caring atmosphere, and provide relevant and challenging curriculum. Provides orientation, peer tutoring, and small class size; builds relationships between home & school.)¹⁰²</p>						📖			

¹⁰¹ Not rated by experts, yet represents a strategy highly suggested by research.

¹⁰² Not rated by most experts, yet represents a strategy highly suggested by research

<p style="text-align: center;">District and School Systems Recommended System Changes, Practices & Programs</p>	<i>District</i>	<i>PreK and Elementary</i>	<i>Middle School Transition</i>	<i>Middle School</i>	<i>HS Transition</i>	<i>High School</i>	<i>Retrieval</i>	<i>Career and Technical</i>	<i>Encourage Post-</i>
<u>Intervention Programs</u> (delivered at school by teachers)									
<p>Check and Connect (Regular observations, recording and checking on indicators of student engagement such as attendance, social/behavioral performance, and educational progress. Where necessary, connects students with basic or intensive interventions in school or in the community.)¹⁰³</p>		📖	📖	📖	📖	📖			
<p>School Transitional Environment Project (Identifies students at-risk for potential problems at school transition times and helps them through the transitions. STEP redesigns schools to enlarge the role of the homeroom teacher and enhance communication between home and school.)</p>				📖		📖			
<p>Support Center for Adolescent Mothers (Decreases dropout and repeat teen pregnancies for first-time mothers.)¹⁰⁴</p>				📖		📖			
<p>Reconnecting Youth (Identifies students in grades 9 through 12 who show signs of poor academic achievement and potential to dropout. Teaches skills to build resiliency and moderate early signs of substance abuse.)¹⁰⁵</p>				📖		📖			
<p>Career Beginnings (Offers services to disadvantaged students who demonstrate commitment and motivation to guide them through the college admissions process or the process of finding full-time employment.)</p>						📖		📖	📖

¹⁰³ Not rated by most experts, yet represents a strategy highly suggested by research – IF it was accomplished with an effective Early Warning System.

¹⁰⁴ Not rated by most experts, yet illustrates a strategy to address one cause of dropping out.

¹⁰⁵ Not rated by most experts, yet represents a strategy highly suggested by research – IF it was accomplished with an effective Early Warning System.

<p style="text-align: center;">District and School Systems and Community Recommended System Changes, Practices & Programs</p>	<i>District</i>	<i>PreK and Elementary</i>	<i>Middle School Transition</i>	<i>Middle School</i>	<i>HS Transition</i>	<i>High School</i>	<i>Retrieval</i>	<i>Career and Technical</i>	<i>Encourage Post-Secondary Education</i>
Community -based <u>Prevention Programs</u> (delivered outside of schools)									
Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (Adult support and friendship through One-to-one mentoring.)		📖	📖	📖	📖	📖			
CASASTART (Employs case management, after-school and summer activities, and increased police involvement to improve children’s attachment to adults and prosocial norms, school performance, and participation in prosocial activities/peer groups.)				📖		📖			
Teen Outreach Program (Prevent dropout and teen pregnancy through volunteer and educational experiences and discussion of life-skills using the Teen Outreach curriculum.)				📖		📖			
<u>Retrieval Practices & Programs</u> (inside or outside schools)									
Flexible schedule and year-round learning							📖	📖	
Real world career oriented curriculum							📖	📖	📖
Opportunities for employment							📖	📖	📖
Self paced – often computer assisted							📖	📖	
Extensive support services (health, wellbeing, child care, homelessness, social, emotional)							📖	📖	
Adults who counsel, mentor, coach and facilitate							📖	📖	📖
Portfolio of options include (credit retrieval, completion at community college, GED)							📖	📖	📖
Early intervention starting at middle school				📖		📖	📖	📖	

<p align="center">District and School Systems and Community Recommended System Changes, Practices & Programs</p>	<i>District</i>	<i>PreK and Elementary</i>	<i>Middle School Transition</i>	<i>Middle School</i>	<i>HS Transition</i>	<i>High School</i>	<i>Retrieval</i>	<i>Career and Technical</i>	<i>Encourage Post-Secondary Education</i>
<p><u>Retrieval Programs (delivered outside of schools)</u></p>									
<p>YouthBuild (Provides unemployed and undereducated youth who are currently out-of-school with the opportunity to complete their high-school education, build work experience, and transition into job or post-secondary education.)</p>							📖	📖	📖
<p>Job Corps (Employs career training and youth development approach, mostly in residential settings, to economically disadvantaged youth to overcome barriers to employment and self-sufficiency.)</p>							📖	📖	📖

Appendix C

Program Matrix

Program Matrix Key:

Subgroups: M-Minority; SD-Students with disabilities; AR- at risk AA- African American; LI-Low Income, NA –Native American; PI – Pacific Islander/Asian; HS - Hispanic

Research (Design): RA - comparison groups w/random assignment; NRA - comparison groups without random assignments (e.g. matched); PREPO - pre-post comparisons

Study and Source

Lehr, C.A., Johnson, D.R., Bremer, C.D., Cosio, A, Thompson, M. (2004). Essential Tools: Increasing Rates of School Completion. Moving from policy and research to practice. National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET). Minneapolis: MN. www.ncset.org/publications/essentialtools/dropout/dropout.pdf

Leake, D. & Black, R. (2005). *Essential Tools: Cultural and Linguistic Diversity: Implications for Transition Personnel*. National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET). Minneapolis: MN. www.ncset.org/publications/essentialtools/diversity/EssentialTools_Diversity.pdf

Blackorby, J., & Wagner, M. (1996). *Longitudinal postschool outcomes of youth with disabilities: Findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study*. Exceptional Children, 62, 399–413.

P/PV: (Public/Private Ventures)

BluePrint: Center-Study of Prevention and Violence - Blue Print Promising or Exemplary Program Model. Blueprints Model Programs were selected from a review of 600+ violence prevention programs. The criteria for selecting the Blueprints programs establish a very high standard.

OJJDP: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Model Programs Guide

CSPV: Center for the Study & Prevention of Violence

CommCare: Communities that Care - Prevention Strategies: A Research Guide to What Works –Developmental Research & Programs, Inc.

MDRC: Founded as the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation- now MDRC; a nonprofit, nonpartisan social policy research organization (March 2004 Report)

SAMHSA: Programs included have been reviewed by SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP).

**Prepared by:
Aletia Alvarez, A³ Resources**

Prevention Programs

Key Components of Dropout Prevention Programs

Programs that have been designed to prevent dropout vary widely. Based on an integrative review of effective interventions designed to address high dropout rates (and associated variables) described in professional literature most of these interventions could be categorized according to the following types¹⁰⁶: **Personal/affective** (e.g., retreats designed to enhance self-esteem, regularly scheduled classroom-based discussion, individual counseling, participation in an interpersonal relations class); **Academic** (e.g., provision of special academic courses, individualized methods of instruction, tutoring); **Family outreach** (e.g., strategies that include increased feedback to parents or home visits); **School structure** (e.g., implementation of school within a school, re-definition of the role of the homeroom teacher, reducing class size, creation of an alternative school); and **Work related** (e.g., vocational training, participation in volunteer or service programs). The majority of the interventions (71%) included a personal/affective focus. Nearly half (49%) included an academic focus. Most of the intervention programs (73%) included more than one type of intervention. These findings and other research suggest that prevention dropout can be achieved in a variety of ways. **Given the vast array of program types, it becomes clear that there is no one right way to intervene.**¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Lehr et al. (2003)

¹⁰⁷ *Essential Tools – Increasing Rates of School Completion: Moving From Policy to Research to Practice*

Perry Preschool Project www.highscope.org/Research/PerryProject/perrymain.htm

Participants	Children and families are the participants
Age level	PRE
In King County	
Subgroups	AR/AA
Research	RA
Study/Source	Promising/SAMSHA
Cost	\$13,938
Description	<p>A two-year pre-school educational program for children in poverty, with weekly home-visits by teacher.</p> <p>Provides high-quality early childhood education to disadvantaged children in order to improve their later school and life performances. Promoting young children’s intellectual, social and physical development, by increasing academic success.</p>
Results	<p>Evaluations have demonstrated a wide range of successful outcomes for Perry Preschool children, compared to those who did not receive intervention, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less delinquency, including less contact with juvenile justice officials, fewer arrests at age 19, and less involvement in serious fights, gang fights, causing injuries, and police contact. • Less antisocial behavior and misconduct during elementary school and at age 15. • Higher academic achievement, including higher scores on standardized tests of intellectual ability and higher high school grades. • Less school dropouts at age 19 (33% vs. 51%), and higher rates of high school graduation. • Greater commitment to school and more favorable attitudes about high school. • Higher rates of employment (50% vs. 32%) and pay, and greater job satisfaction.

I Can Problem Solve (ICPS)

www.thinkingpreteen.com/icps.htm

Participants	Children are the participants
Age level	3-10 years
In King County	
Subgroups	AR/LI
Research	RA
Study/Source	Blueprint -Promising; CommCare; OJJDP- Effective
Cost	
Description	Training children in generating a variety of solutions to interpersonal problems, considering the consequences of these solutions, and recognizing thoughts, feelings, and motives that generate problem situations. By teaching children to think, rather than what to think, the program changes thinking styles.
Results	<p>An evaluation of ICPS that included nursery and kindergarten students revealed significant benefits for intervention students. Immediately following and one year after the program ended, ICPS children, compared to control students, demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less impulsive and inhibited classroom behavior, and better problem-solving skills. <p>A five-year study including inner-city, low income children in nursery school and kindergarten demonstrated that intervention children, compared to control students, had:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved classroom behavior and problem-solving skills, even 3-4 years after the program. <p>A replication with fifth and sixth grade students found that ICPS children, compared to a control group, demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More positive, prosocial behaviors; • Healthier relationships with peers; and better problem-solving skills.

Incredible Years Series (IYS)

www.incredibleyears.com

Participants	Parents and teachers are the participants
Age level	3-10
In King County	
Subgroups	AR
Research	NRA
Study/Source	Blueprint Model/CommCare/SAMSHA
Cost	Parent Training Program are \$1,300 for the BASIC program, \$775 for the ADVANCE program, \$995 for the SCHOOL program; \$1,250 for the Teacher Training Program; and \$975 for the Child Training Program.
Description	Promote positive, effective, and research-based parenting and teaching practices and strategies, which strengthen young children's social competence and problem-solving strategies and reduce aggression at home and at school. Reducing family management problems and early antisocial behavior problems through family management (parent and child training) and problem-solving skills. A preschool (3-7) year and school age (5-10) version of the program exists.
Results	<p>Six randomized control group evaluations of the parenting series indicated significant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases in parent positive affect such as praise and reduced use of criticism and negative commands. • Increases in parent use of effective limit setting by replacing spanking and harsh discipline with non-violent discipline techniques and increased monitoring of children. • Reductions in parental depression and increases in parental self-confidence. • Increases in positive family communication and problem solving. • Reduced conduct problems in children's interactions with parents and increases in their positive affect and compliance to parental commands. <p>Two randomized control group evaluations of the teacher training series indicated significant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases in teacher use of praise and encouragement and reduced use of criticism and harsh discipline. • Increases in children's positive affect and cooperation with teachers, positive interactions with peers, school readiness and engagement with school activities. • Reductions in peer aggression in the classroom. <p>Two randomized control group evaluations of the child training series indicated significant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases in children's appropriate cognitive problem-solving strategies and more prosocial conflict management strategies with peers. • Reductions in conduct problems at home and school. <p>Materials also available in Spanish.</p>

FAST Track	
Participants	Children and families are the participants
Age level	5-10 years
In King County	Yes
Subgroups	AM/Ar/LI
Research	NRA/RA
Study/Source	Blueprint-Promising/Ojjdp-Exemplary/SAMSHA
Cost	\$3,900 (includes TA) plus \$1,000 for evaluation; Vary from \$300-\$2,000 per family, largely depending on staffing
Description	A comprehensive and long-term prevention program that aims to prevent chronic and severe conduct problems for high-risk children. It is based on the view that antisocial behavior stems from the interaction of multiple influences, and it includes the school, the home, and the individual in its intervention. Academic Tutoring is offered three times per week to improve children's reading skills. Classroom Intervention utilizes the PATHS curricula.
Results	<p>FAST Track is an intervention that can be implemented in rural and urban areas for boys and girls of varying ethnicity, social class, and family composition (i.e., the primary intervention is designed for all youth in a school setting). It specifically targets children identified in kindergarten for disruptive behavior and poor peer relations.</p> <p>Currently, an evaluation of 3 cohorts who have completed first grade has been performed, and follow-up studies are underway. Compared to control groups, participants have shown the following positive effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better teacher and parent ratings of children's behavior with peers and adults. • Better overall ratings by observers on children's aggressive, disruptive, and oppositional behavior in the classroom. • Less parental endorsement of physical punishment for children's problem behaviors. • More appropriate discipline techniques and greater warmth and involvement of mothers with their children. • More maternal involvement in school activities.

Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers (LIFT)

www.oslc.org

Participants	Children and parents are the participants
Age level	5-10 years
In King County	
Subgroups	AR
Research	PREPO
Study/Source	Blueprint-Promising/OJJDP Exemplary
Cost	
Description	<p>A school-based intervention for the prevention of conduct problems such as antisocial behavior, involvement with delinquent peers, and drug/alcohol use, designed for all first and fifth grade students and their families living in at-risk neighborhoods characterized by high rates of juvenile delinquency. Includes a classroom, playground, and parenting component. The main goal of LIFT is to decrease children's antisocial behavior and increase their pro-social behavior by utilizing an existing service system with widespread access to children - connection with them at the earliest possible point in the life of a child - targeting malleable precursors of later conduct problems</p> <p>LIFT is a population-based intervention designed for all first and fifth grade elementary school boys and girls and their families living in at-risk neighborhoods characterized by high rates of juvenile delinquency.</p>
Results	<p>In evaluation of immediate, post-test results indicated significant changes in each targeted area of child and parent behaviors as a result of participating in the LIFT program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LIFT had a significant decrease of physical aggression on the playground for children in the treatment group, compared to the control group, and these effects were most dramatic for children who rated most aggressive at pre-test. • LIFT mothers who displayed the highest pre-intervention levels of aversive behaviors showed the largest reductions, compared to control mothers. • Third, teacher-rating data indicated a significant increase in positive social skills and classroom behavior in children receiving the LIFT program.

Good Behavior Game (GBG)	
Participants	Teachers and children are the participants
Age level	6-10 years
In King County	
Subgroups	M/AR/AA
Research	
Study/Source	Blueprint-Promising/OJJDP-Exemplary/CommCare
Cost	
Description	A classroom management strategy designed to improve aggressive/disruptive behavior in the classroom. Primarily a behavior modification program that involves students and teachers. It improves teachers' ability to define tasks, set rules, and discipline students, and allows students to work in teams in which each individual is responsible to the rest of the group.
Results	<p>Evaluations of the program have demonstrated beneficial effects for children at the end of the first grade and positive outcomes at grade 6 for males displaying early aggressive behavior.</p> <p>At the end of first grade, GBG students, compared to a control group, had:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less aggressive and shy behaviors according to teachers, and • Better peer nominations of aggressive behavior. <p>At the end of sixth grade, GBG students, compared to a control group, demonstrated decreases in levels of aggression for males who were rated highest for aggression in the first grade.</p>

Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)

<http://www.prevention.psu.edu/projects/PATHS.html>

Participants	Children are the participants
Age level	6-10 years
In King County	
Subgroups	M/AR/AA/NA/PI/HS
Research	NA/PREPO
Study/Source	OJDP-Promising/Blueprint-Model/CommCare/SAMSHA
Cost	Over 3 year period; from \$15-\$45 per student per year
Description	<p>PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) is a comprehensive program for promoting emotional and social competencies and reducing aggression and acting-out behaviors in elementary-school-aged children, while simultaneously enhancing the educational process in the classroom. This innovative curriculum for kindergarten through sixth grade (ages 5 to 12) is used by educators and counselors as a multiyear, prevention model. The PATHS curriculum provides teachers with systematic and developmentally based lessons, materials, and instructions for teaching their students (1) emotional literacy, (2) self-control, (3) social competence, (4) positive peer relations, and (5) Interpersonal problem-solving skills.</p>
Results	<p>Children who have been through the PATHS program showed increased self control, emotional understanding, thinking before acting and use of effective conflict-resolution strategies (Greenberg and Kusche, 1993) In studies with normal children, there were also significant increases in cognitive skills, the PATHS curriculum has also produced positive effects on classroom atmosphere (Greenberg et al., 1995)</p> <p>This program produced significant long-term effects (as measured six years after the intervention) on delinquent behavior, aggression, academic achievement, and absenteeism (Elias, 1991)</p> <p>PATHS has been field-tested and researched in general education classrooms, with a variety of special-needs students (deaf, hearing impaired, learning disabled, emotionally disturbed, mildly mentally retarded, and gifted), and among African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian-American, Pacific Islander, Native American, and white children.</p> <p>Other endorsements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SAMHSA: Model Programs• NIJ: What Works• HHS: Surgeon General• Department of Education

Success For All (SFA)<http://successforall.com/>

Participants	Children and families are the participants
Age level	6-10 years
In King County	
Subgroups	
Research	
Study/Source	CommCare/CSQR
Cost	
Description	<p>The Success for All (a school reform) program focuses on promoting early reading success among educationally at-risk students. SFA helps all children achieve grade level in basic reading, math and language skills by the third grade. The program is designed to address academic failure and lack of commitment to school through two basic principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The prevention of problems by providing good school programs and involving the parents in the prevention effort • The delivery of unobtrusive, immediate and intensive intervention when children display learning and school problems. Accordingly, learning problems are addressed before they lead to grade retention and the need for remedial education. <p>Components of the Success for All program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading tutors and a reading program • Parent education/family support team. • Preschool and kindergarten. A half-day preschool and full-day kindergarten • Special education
Results	<p>A Spanish version of Success for All, by Lee Connmigo and Alas para Leer is available for bilingual classrooms.</p> <p>Research shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved student reading performance significantly (whether in large schools or small, urban or rural) By the end of the first grade students in the program schools have average reading scores almost three months ahead of those in matching control schools. In fifth grade, students were reading more than one year ahead of control peers • A reduced need for special education placements by more than 50% • An almost eliminated need for retention <p>These results were not short-lived: middle school students who came from schools where Success for All was implemented continued to read more than one year ahead of those in matching schools.</p>

Seattle Social Development Project (SSDP)

depts.washington.edu/ssdp

Participants	Children and parents are the participants
Age level	5-13 years
In King County	Yes
Subgroups	AR
Research	NRA
Study/Source	Blueprints-Promising/CommCare
Cost	\$2,991
Description	<p>Enhancing children's bonding with their families and schools. Teachers were trained in proactive classroom management, interactive teaching, and cooperative learning, while the students were instructed in interpersonal problem-solving skills and refusal skills to avoid problem behaviors. Parents were offered courses in child behavior management skills, academic support skills, and skills to reduce their children's risk of drug use.</p> <p>Risk Factors: early antisocial behavior, academic failure, early initiation of problem behaviors and family management problems</p>
Results	<p>Outcomes: The outcomes assessed included family involvement and interaction, academic achievement, school bonding, alcohol use, delinquency, proactive classrooms.</p> <p>Evaluations have demonstrated that the Project improves school performance, family relationships, and student drug/alcohol involvement at various grades.</p> <p>At the end of grade 2, Project students, compared to control students, showed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower levels of aggression and antisocial, externalizing behaviors for white males, • Lower levels of self-destructive behaviors for white females. <p>At the beginning of grade 5, Project students, compared to control students, had:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less alcohol and delinquency initiation; • Increases in family management practices, communication, and family attachment; • More attachment and commitment to school <p>At the end of grade 6, high-risk youth, compared to control youth, were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more attached and committed to school, and • boys were less involved with antisocial peers. <p>At the end of grade 11, Project students, compared to control students, showed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced involvement in violent delinquency (48.3% vs. 59.7%) and sexual activity (72.1% vs. 83%) <p>Intervention students reported more commitment and attachment to school, better academic achievement and less school misbehavior than controls at age 18. (Hawkins et al 1999)</p>

OLWEUS Bullying Prevention Program (BPP)

<http://www.clemson.edu/olweus/>

Participants	Teachers and children are the participants
Age level	5-18 years
In King County	Yes
Subgroups	AR
Research	NRA
Study/Source	Blueprints-Model/CPSV/SAMSHA
Cost	School Cost: Material costs range from \$900 to \$1,800, depending on the size of the school. The cost for the two-day training is \$2,000; required technical assistance for one year totals \$1,380.
Description	The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is a school wide effort that is both preventative and problem solving. The program successfully focuses on changing norms and behavior. Interventions are implemented at three levels: school-wide , classroom, and individually. The program has been designated a Model Program by the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and the Center for the Study & Prevention of Violence (CSPV).
Results	Outcomes include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduction of existing bully/victim problems• Prevention of the development of new bully/victim problems• Reduction of other antisocial behaviors such as fighting, vandalism, theft, alcohol use, truancy and classroom misbehavior• Improvement of peer relations• Improvement of school and classroom climate• Providing a universal intervention for the reduction and prevention of bully/victim problems. Additional individual interventions are targeted at students who are identified as bullies or victims of bullying.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA)www.bbbs.org

Participants	Children are the participants
Age level	5-18 years
In King County	Yes
Subgroups	Most subgroups
Research	NRA
Study/Source	Blueprints-Model/OJJDP-Exemplary/P/PV
Cost	\$1,000 per year
Description	Providing adult support and friendship to youth through mentoring for nearly a century. A report in 1991 demonstrates that through BBBSA's network of nearly 500 agencies across the country, more than 70,000 youth and adults were supervised in one-to-one relationships. BBBSA typically targets youth (aged 6 to 18) from single parent homes
Results	<p>An evaluation of the BBBSA program has been conducted to assess children who participated in BBBSA compared to their non-participating peers. After an eighteen-month period, BBBSA youth were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• better than control youth in academic behavior, attitudes, and performance.• missed half as many days of school as did control youth and felt more competent about doing school work• showed modest gains in grades (these gains were strongest among ethnic minority females)• 46% less likely than control youth to initiate drug use during the study period.• 27% less likely to initiate alcohol use than control youth• almost one-third less likely than control youth to hit someone.• more likely to have higher quality relationships with their parents or guardians than control youth.• more likely to have higher quality relationships with their peers at the end of the study period than did control youth.

Positive Action	
Participants	Children, families and communities are the participants
Age level	5-18 years
In King County	
Subgroups	M/AR
Research	NRA/PREPO
Study/Source	OJDP-Exemplary/SAMSHA
Cost	Various costs per program. High School Kit 1 is \$360.00.
Description	An integrated and comprehensive program that involves the entire school community: students, faculty, support staff, administrators, students' family members, and people who live in the community surrounding the school. The program includes a detailed curriculum with almost-daily lessons, a school wide climate component, and family- and community-involvement components. Risk Factors: academic achievement, dropout, absenteeism, behavior
Results	Multiple studies have consistently found PA effective for improving achievement scores, attendance, and self-concept and for reducing drug use, violence, and other problem behaviors. Results were often better in more disadvantaged schools. Compared with students in matched-control schools, students in elementary schools with PA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scored an average of 45% better - Florida Reading Test • Obtained 4.5% better - Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test • Had 68% fewer violence incidents 33.5% fewer out-of-school suspensions • Had 12.7% fewer students absent for 21 or more days Middle schools with three different levels of students from PA elementary schools (<60%, 60–79% and 80–100 %) -Compared with low-PA middle schools, medium-PA, and high-PA middle schools, respectively: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scored 10.8% and 16.5% better on reading • Scored 11.4% and 20.6% better on math • Reported 31–37% and 52–75% fewer incidents of problem behaviors High schools with three different levels of students from PA elementary schools (0–15 percent, 16–26 percent and 27–50 percent) - Compared with low-PA high schools, medium-PA, and high-PA high schools, respectively: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scored 2–6% and 9–15% better on five different standardized achievement tests • Reported 26–50% and 49–63% fewer problem behaviors • Had 8% and 12% less truancy • Had 11% and 37% lower dropout rates • Had 31% and 38% more graduates continuing their education

<p>Striving Together to Achieve Rewarding Tomorrows (CASASTART) http://www.casacolumbia.org/absolutenm/templates/AboutCASA.aspx?articleid=203&zzoneid=26</p>	
Participants	Children and families are the participants
Age level	11-14 years
In King County	
Subgroups	AR
Research	NRA
Study/Source	Blueprint-Promising/SAMSHA/OJJDP-Effective
Cost	
Description	The program seeks to decrease individual, peer group, family and neighborhood risk factors through case management services, after-school and summer activities, and increased police involvement. CASASTART also works to improve attachment to adults, attachment to prosocial norms, school performance, and participation in prosocial activities/peer groups.
Results	<p>The only significant difference immediately following the program was: a lower rate of past month drug use, lifetime use of gateway drugs, and any drug use among CASASTART youth compared to the quasi-experimental group; no differences between CASASTART youth and control group. Most differences between CASASTART youth, a control (C) group and a quasi-experimental (Q) group (of matched neighborhoods and youth) occurred at one-year follow-up. At one-year follow-up, CASASTART youth, compared to the two control groups (C and Q):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were less likely to report past-month use of any drugs, gateway drugs, or stronger drugs (C); • Were less likely to report past year use of any drugs and gateway drugs (C); • Were less likely to report lifetime use of any drugs or gateway drugs (Q); • Reported lower levels of violent crimes in the past year and were less likely to be involved in drug sales during the last month (C); and • Were less likely to report lifetime drug sales (C and Q).

Teen Outreach Program (TOP)

www.cornerstone.to/teen_outreach_program.htm

Participants	Youth are the participants
Age level	11-18 years
In King County	
Subgroups	AR
Research	NRA
Study/Source	NSCET
Cost	\$100-\$600 per student per year
Description	Designed to prevent dropout and teen pregnancy through volunteer and educational experiences and discussion of life-skills topics using the Teen Outreach Curriculum. Risk Factors: suspension, dropout, pregnancy, problem behaviors, course failure
Results	One study of TOP participants across several sites found they had significantly lower levels of suspension, school dropout, and pregnancy. Another study, conducted over a five-year period in 25 sites, found that TOP participants were about 40% less likely to become pregnant or cause a pregnancy, to be suspended from school, or to fail a class, compared to similar non-participants.

Behavioral Monitoring and Reinforcement Program (BMRP)

gsappweb.rutgers.edu

Participants	Children are the participants
Age level	11-18 years
In King County	
Subgroups	AR/M
Research	NRA
Study/Source	Blueprint-Promising/CSPV/SAMSHA
Cost	
Description	A school-based intervention program that helps prevent juvenile delinquency, substance use, and school failure for high-risk adolescents. Provides a school environment that allows students to realize that their actions can bring about desired consequences, and it reinforces this belief by eliciting participation from teachers, parents, and individuals. Outcomes: problem behavior, academic improvement, attendance, level of disruptiveness, parent-teacher - student relationship
Results	Evaluations of BMRP have demonstrated short- and long-term positive effects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of the program, program students showed higher grades and better attendance when compared to control students. • Results from a one-year follow-up study showed that intervention students, compared to control students, had less self-reported delinquency; drug abuse, school-based problems (suspension, absenteeism, tardiness, academic failure); and unemployment (20% and 45%, respectively). • A five-year follow-up study found that intervention students had fewer county court records than control students. <p>The program can be used in both low-income, urban, and racially-mixed and middle-class, suburban junior high schools. Students are eligible for inclusion if they demonstrate low academic motivation, family problems, or frequent or serious school discipline referrals.</p>

Ninth Grade Dropout Prevention Program (NGP) www.ncset.org/publications/essentialtools/dropout/part3.3.06.asp	
Participants	Youth are the participants
Age level	14-18 years
In King County	
Subgroups	AR
Research	NRA
Study/Source	NSCET
Cost	
Description	Schools design interventions to meet academic needs, create a caring atmosphere, and provide relevant and challenging curriculum. Utilizes strategies such as an orientation program, peer tutoring, and small class size and builds relationships between home and school. Outcomes: dropout, attendance, reading skills
Results	The original purpose of this program was to prevent school dropout and promote academic success. One study that examined the effectiveness of NGP was conducted, and results indicated a significant increase in student attendance across three years of implementation. The effect of NGP was strongest on student attendance. Students who participated in the program had an increase in attendance from 89.6% in the baseline year to 95.6% in the third year of the program. Results also showed the proportion of students who continued in school increased over three years, while the proportion of students who dropped out significantly decreased. The rate of dropout was significantly less among program participants as compared to data for non-participants.

Intervention Programs

Reconnecting Youth Program	
www.son.washington.edu/departments/pch/ry/	
Participants	Students are the participants
Age level	11-18 years
In King County	
Subgroups	M/AR
Research	
Study/Source	CommCare/SAMSHA
Cost	Training: \$3,000 (\$750 per day for 4 days; 1 trainer and 5-8 trainees) plus travel and expenses; \$6,000 plus expenses for 9 or more trainees; (adds a trainer) Materials: 2nd Ed. Curriculum—\$299.95 plus shipping; Student Notebook—\$24.95 or 10 for \$211.95 plus shipping
Description	Reconnecting Youth is a school-based prevention program that targets young people in grades 9 through 12 showing signs of poor school achievement and potential for dropping out of high school. The program teaches skills to build resiliency with respect to risk factors and to moderate the early signs of substance abuse. To enter the program, students must have fewer than the average number of credits learned for their grade level, have high absenteeism, and show a significant drop in grades. Or a youth may enter the program if he/she has a record of dropping out or has been referred as a significant dropout risk.
Results	Research shows that this program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves school performance • reduces drug improvement • Decreases deviant peer bonding; increases self-esteem, personal control, school bonding and social support • Decreases depression, anger, aggression, hopelessness, stress and suicidal behaviors <p>The program incorporates social support and life skills training with these components:</p> <p>Personal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth Class – a semester-long daily class designed to enhance self-esteem, decision making, personal control, and interpersonal communication • Social Activities and School Bonding • School System Crisis Response Plan

Check & Connect<http://ici.umn.edu/checkandconnect/>

Participants	Children and youth are the participants
Age level	Elementary through High School aged children and youth
In King County	
Subgroups	M/AR
Research	NRA
Study/Source	NSCET
Cost	\$1,100
Description	<p>Fundamental elements of the model include relationship building, routine observation of warning signs of withdrawal, individualized intervention, promotion of problem-solving skills, and encouragement of students' participation in school activities. These key features are carried out through an individual referred to as a monitor, who serves essentially as a mentor, case manager, and advocate.</p> <p>Check & Connect consists of two main components: checking and connecting. The check model involves checking on indicators of student engagement such as attendance, social/behavioral performance, and educational progress. These variables are observed and recorded regularly on a monitoring sheet. The connect incorporates both basic and intensive interventions designed to maximize limited resources.</p> <p>Intensive interventions are provided for students identified as exhibiting signs of withdrawal and may include providing tutoring services, facilitating meetings between home and school, linking with community resources, or assisting with the development and implementation of behavioral interventions.</p> <p>Check & Connect has been replicated for students with and without disabilities in grades K-12.</p>
Results	<p>Four longitudinal research studies have been conducted on Check & Connect. Overall outcomes have yielded decreases in truancy and dropout rates, as well as increases in accrual of credits and school completion. Another Check & Connect project began in 1996 and concluded in 2001 (youth w/emotional and behavioral disabilities - grades 9 to 12). Outcomes revealed that more students in the participant group were in school as of June 2000 than students in the control group. In addition, more students in the participant group completed school or were within one year of completing as of June 2000 than students in the control group. C&C program with students in grades K through 6 from 1997 to 2002, and these youth were followed up through the secondary grades. Individuals with and without disabilities and their families were involved in the research project. After two years with C & C, the percent of students present and arriving to school on time increased dramatically.</p> <p>Additionally, the School Success Truancy Intervention (ages 11 to 17 w/ & without disabilities)- Outcome indicators of the project's impact include a reduction of student absences and an increase in the percentage of students who were present in school at least 95% of the time after two years with Check & Connect. Students attended full-time for one semester. Program consisted of classroom instruction, individual tutoring, and group and individual counseling.</p>

School Transitional Environment Project (STEP)		http://www.ncset.org/publications/essentialtools/dropout/part3.3.09.asp
Participants	Youth and teachers are the participants	
Age level	11-18 years	
In King County		
Subgroups	AR/HS/AA	
Research	NRA	
Study/Source	NSCET/Blueprint-Promising/OJJDP Effective/CommCare	
Cost		
Description	<p>Designed to identify students at-risk for potential problems at predictable school transition times (e.g., from elementary school to junior high, or junior high to high school) and help them through those transitions. STEP redesigns the high school environment to make <i>school transitions</i> less threatening for students. Alters the environment of the school, modifies the role of the <i>homeroom</i> teacher, and works to enhance communication between home and school. Targets students who are entering large schools, which receive students from multiple feeder schools.</p>	
Results	<p>Evaluations performed at the end of ninth grade demonstrate that STEP students, compared to control students, display:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreases in absenteeism and increases in GPA • Stability of self-concept (compared to decreases for control students); and • More positive feelings of the school environment, perceiving the school as more stable, understandable, well-organized, involving, and supportive. <p>Long-term follow-up indicated that STEP students, compared to controls, had:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower dropout rates (21% versus 43%), and • Higher grades and fewer absences in 9th and 10th grades. <p>Replication carried out in two lower to lower-middle class high schools and three junior high schools showed that STEP students, compared to control students, had:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer increases in substance abuse, delinquent acts and depression; • Fewer decreases in academic performance and self-concept; and • Lower dropout rates. <p>A replication including students from lower risk backgrounds demonstrated similar results. One year after the program, STEP students, compared to controls, demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less self-reported delinquency, depression and anxiety • Higher self-esteem, academic performance, and school attendance. 	

Support Center for Adolescent Mothers (Family Growth Center)		www.socio.com/srch/summary/pasha/full/passp03.htm
Participants	Teen mothers are the participants	
Age level	11-18 years	
In King County		
Subgroups	Female AR	
Research	NRA	
Study/Source	NSCET	
Cost	\$3,00-\$3,500	
Description	Created for first-time mothers to decrease dropout and discourage repeat teen pregnancies. Incorporates a significant community component. The original purpose of this program was to decrease the rate of adolescent pregnancies by providing social support and other services in order to prevent repeat pregnancies and school dropout.	
Results	An extensive longitudinal study was conducted examining the effectiveness of the program. This longitudinal study occurred over a period of three years and gathered data on the occurrence of repeat pregnancies and school status (i.e., attendance, dropout). Data were collected at three points in time over the course of the study. Results indicated participants had significantly lower rates of repeat pregnancies as well as a significantly higher rate of school completion (lower dropout rate) when compared to adolescent mothers who had not received any intervention.	

Career Academies		guide.helpingamericasyouth.gov/programdetail.cfm?id=96
Participants	Youth are participants	
Age level	14-18 years	
In King County	Yes	
Subgroups	MIN/AR	
Research	RA/NRA	
Study/Source	Effective MDRC- Promising	
Cost	\$600 per student per year	
Description	<p>Career Academies were first developed 35 years ago with the aim of restructuring large high schools into small learning communities and creating pathways between high school and further education and the workplace. Career Academies has taken root in an estimated 2,000 high schools nationally. Employs a combination of career and academic training for students considered at-risk. The focus of career academies varies (e.g., health, technology). Operating as “schools within schools” and typically enrolling 30-60 students per grade, provide rigorous core academic curriculum, utilize small learning communities, combine academic and career and technical in curricula, and establish partnerships with local employers to provide work-based learning for students.</p>	
Results	<p>Overall, the findings of these studies indicate that on average career academies reduce the rate of school dropout and increase attendance, credits earned, grade-point averages, and graduation rates. One study also indicated increased college attendance and completion rates, in comparison with similar students from the same district when matched prior to academy entry. Career Academies are one of the few interventions that have been found to improve the workplace prospects of young men. Students in the Academy and control groups were equally likely to graduate from high school and to enroll in college. The results indicate that there is a clear value in investing in career-related experiences during high school. Career Academies had no significant impacts (positive or negative) on labor market outcomes for young women.</p>	

Career Beginnings		guide.helpingamericasyouth.gov/programdetail.cfm?id=617
Participants	Youth are participants	
Age level	14-18 years	
In King County		
Subgroups	M/AR	
Research	NRA	
Study/Source	OJJD- Promising Program/Blueprint -Effective	
Cost		
Description	<p>Targeting disadvantaged students, Career Academies concentrates on those who demonstrate commitment and motivation. Career Beginnings offers services to help guide students through the college admissions process or through the process of finding full-time employment.</p> <p>Career Beginnings was developed to enhance the life options of disadvantaged, urban high school students. The program is a school–community–university partnership that offers a comprehensive package for juniors and seniors with college potential who, because of their average grades or economically educationally disadvantaged family backgrounds, would be otherwise unlikely to pursue college or better career options.</p> <p>Career Beginnings study found several positive outcomes. High school attendance was slightly higher for participants than for control group individuals. Participants reported having higher occupational aspirations. The program succeeded in increasing participants’ college attendance in the year immediately following graduation. Across seven diverse sites, the proportion of participants who enrolled in a 2- or 4-year college rose 5 percent over non-participants. Limitations of the study are that there was a wide range of delivery compliance among the sites—that is, many of the control group students received services and some of the experimental group did not participate in program services.</p>	
Results		

RETRIEVAL PROGRAMS

www.youthbuild.org	
YouthBuild	
Participants	Youth are the participants
Age level	16-24 years
In King County	Yes
Subgroups	
Research	Survey 2004
Study/Source	
Cost	\$20,000 per year
Description	Provide unemployed and undereducated youth who are currently out-of-school. In the course of a year, students have the opportunity to complete their high school education, build work experience, and transition into job or post-secondary education - by building affordable housing for homeless and low-income people. Education and job training are integrated, revolving between two weeks of work and two weeks of school. Participants are paid to work. Nationally, youth spend an average of 8.2 months in the program.
Results	<p>In September 2003, researchers at Brandeis University and Temple University completed Life After YouthBuild, a study on almost 900 YouthBuild graduates and found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seventy-five percent were currently working at an average wage of \$10 an hour, going to school, or training for jobs. • Seventy-six percent were receiving none of three government supports (food stamps, welfare, or unemployment benefits) • Eighty percent exhibited none of three negative behaviors (sold marijuana or hard drugs, been convicted of a felony, or spent time in prison). • Eighty-five percent were involved in at least one community-oriented activity. <p>Each program must secure its own funding. For the King County program, funding comes from King County, Youth Build USA and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.</p> <p>Some Youth Build programs have established public charter schools to access state education dollars.</p>

Appendix D: Building on What Exists in King County

King County already has a number of resources supporting academic success, prevention and intervention for the dropout problem, retrieval of students who become disconnected from school, and helping students pursue post-secondary education.

As Reinvesting in Youth, schools and community partners determine how to move forward in reducing the dropout rate in King County, it will be essential to build on existing resources, better align them with a common goal, and coordinate them with one another.,

This appendix contains a summary of local resources to improve academic success for students in King County.

1. Current Landscape of Dropout Prevention, Intervention and Retrieval Programs in King County

Overview

We were asked to determine what resources currently exist in King County to address dropping out. Throughout King County there are myriad youth-related programs, run by varied groups, including: high schools, higher education, community and parent groups, and non-profits. For purposes of this report, our research focuses on dropout prevention and retrieval programs with an explicit school-based connection. They are programs either run by a school (e.g., an alternative high school) or in partnership with another education provider (e.g., Running Start, a partnership between high schools and community colleges).¹⁰⁸

This does not include an inventory of the many additional community-based youth programs designed to enrich life and/or educational experience and, thereby, help youth stay in school (e.g., mentorship programs such as Community for Youth). While a complete inventory of all such programs in King County is beyond the scope of this report, much can be learned from our research focus on the programs described above.¹⁰⁹

Types of Programs

Local dropout prevention and retrieval programs are grouped into three overarching categories:

(1) Prevention

Prevention services are generally defined as those offered to avoid a bad outcome. Prevention services can be offered to all children and families, or to specific groups that have a higher likelihood of experiencing the bad outcome. Some prevention programs have been shown to promote positive academic outcomes and can achieve significantly more benefits than costs. Examples include the Perry Preschool Project, the Nurse Family Partnership home visiting program and evidence-based anti-bullying programs.

¹⁰⁸ Program information by School District obtained from Crime Free Futures Project. (2005). *King County Superior Court Guide to Alternative Education Opportunities for Youth in King County, 2004-05*. Compiled by Susie Bridges Weber. Seattle, WA. and *Alternative Schools In Washington State* (a list maintained by Washington Association for Learning Alternatives; www.walakids.com)

¹⁰⁹ However, we do conclude that there is a need for such a comprehensive reference guide and a centralized referral point to help teachers, youth, parents, and advocates find appropriate assistance.

(2) Intervention

- ◆ *Alternative Education* - a school that is nontraditional, especially in educational ideals, methods of teaching, or curriculum. Intervention programs may also have a unique focus, (e.g., Arts, Cultural, Career Path, Technology). Alternative education is often a promising option for students who have been unable to succeed in a traditional school setting. For this report, home schooling support centers are also included in this category.
 - *Examples:* NOVA High School (Seattle), Two Rivers School (Snoqualmie Valley)
- ◆ *School to Career and/or College* - educational opportunities for students currently in school, with an explicit focus on college prep and/or career exploration. This focus can be achieved through specialized curriculum integrated into a middle or high school experience and/or through partnerships with college vocational institutions.
 - *Examples:* Middle College High School @UW Office of Minority Affairs (Seattle); Running Start (an option in every King County School District), Auburn Riverside High School's Auto Body Program (with Green River Community College).

(3) Retrieval/Reconnection

- ◆ *Retrieval: Goal of Middle or High School Re-Entry/Completion* - educational programs for youth who have separated from traditional classroom (voluntarily, court-involved, suspended, or otherwise) and are seeking to return to a school and/or stay on track to obtain a high school diploma.
 - *Examples:* Middle School Re-Entry Program - Center for Career Alternatives (Seattle School District); Night Academy (Kent School District);
- ◆ *Retrieval: Goal of Connecting Out of School Youth with an Education and/or Career Track (high school re-entry or on-time graduation not a primary goal)* – educational or vocational programs for youth age 16 - 21, often at community colleges, with a focus on obtaining job skills and developing a career path. The program may include high school diploma or GED completion, job placement, and/or pursuit of a community college degree.
 - *Examples:* Career Education Options (CEO) at Shoreline Community College (Shoreline School District); Digital Bridge Technology Academy (10 sites in King County); Cascadia Community College GED and High School Completion programs (Lake Washington School District)

King County Dropout Prevention and Retrieval Programs by School District

The numbers and types of programs in King County are summarized in the chart below. A listing of resources for each school district in King County is provided at the end of this Appendix.

Interventions appear to be lacking for:

- Transitions into 9th grade
- Retrieval or reconnection with students who have disengaged with school
- Prevention and retrieval programs at the middle school level. Given ample evidence of early student disengagement (especially at Grade 6), middle school is not too early to help children make tangible, inspiring connections between school and careers.

There are some notable strengths in King County for the prevention, intervention and retrieval stages of dropping out of school.

- *Community College Partnerships*

In virtually every King County School District, local high schools have partnered with the local community college to offer several prevention and retrieval programs, such as:

- Running Start
- Upward Bound
- Tech Prep
- GED completion
- High School Completion

- *National Programs Serving Out-of-School Youth*

- Job Corp
- YouthBuild

King County Dropout Prevention and Retrieval Programs, by School District

	MIDDLE SCHOOL (Grades 6-7-8)				HIGH SCHOOL (Grades 9-10-11-12)			COMMUNITY COLLEGE/WORKFORCE TRAINING (Ages 16-24)	
	Alternative Education	School to Career and/or College	Retrieval	Enrollment*	Alternative Education	School to Career and/or College	Retrieval: Goal of Middle or High School Re-Entry/Completion		Enrollment
Seattle	9	1	6	10,070	21	13	13	14,352	15
North King County									
Northshore	2	0	0	4,856	4	10	0	6,918	6
Shoreline	2	0	0	2,381	3	11	2	3,318	10
South King County									
Auburn	1	0	0	3,276	3	7	4	4,664	3
Enumclaw	1	0	0	1,227	3	2	2	1,692	1
Federal Way	2	0	0	5,222	4	4	0	7,238	8
Highline	3	0	1	4,062	5	9	3	5,627	8
Kent	1	0	1	6,612	4	6	2	8,612	8
Renton	1	0	0	3,100	2	4	1	3,878	6
Tahoma	1	0	0	1,628	2	7	1	2,086	8
Tukwila	0	0	1	624	3	9	1	749	11
Vashon	1	0	0	401	2	7	0	556	7
East King County									
Bellevue	2	0	0	3,712	3	8	0	5,311	4
Issaquah	0	0	0	3,759	2	8	0	4,855	4
Lake Washington	3	0	0	5,582	7	9	0	7,359	4
Mercer Island	2	0	0	1,039	1	8	0	1,461	7
Riverview	1	0	0	725	2	8	0	866	5
Skykomish	1	0	0	23	1	7	0	24	5
Snoqualmie Valley	1	0	0	1,135	1	8	0	1,435	5
Total	34	1	9	59,434	73	145	29	81,001	125

Program information by School District obtained from King County Superior Court Guide to Alternative Education Opportunities for Youth in King County, 2004-05 (Compiled by Susie Bridges Weber, Crime Free Futures Project) and Alternative Schools in Washington State (a list maintained by Washington Association for Learning Alternatives; www.walakids.com)

Enrollment Numbers from OSPI Report 1798A: Public School Enrollment by Minority-Grade-Gender, 2004-05

Responses to Truancy

Truancy (unexcused absence from school) has been clearly identified as one of the early warning signs of students headed for educational failure via suspension, expulsion, dropping out, or delinquent activity. Students with the highest truancy rates have the lowest academic achievement and are the most likely to dropout.¹¹⁰

Truancy can lead to legal action in court in Washington. Pursuant to the truancy provisions in the “Becca Bill”¹¹¹ passed in 1995, schools have mandated duties to inform parents of unexcused absences, and if absences continue, to meet with parents. When a student reaches five unexcused absences in a month, the school *may* take action in juvenile court. If a student has seven unexcused absences in a month or ten in an academic year, the school *must* file a truancy petition in court.

The King County Superior Court supports many responses to truancy including small grants to community agencies and school districts to improve early intervention, technical assistance to all schools and school districts in King County, community truancy board development, volunteer recruitment and training, attendance workshops and a formal, court process.¹¹²

2. How Current King County Programs for Dropout Prevention, Intervention and Retrieval Compare to Recommended Community Programs

While we were able to gather a great deal of information about the quantity of existing programs to assist with dropout prevention, intervention, retrieval and school success, there is not enough information available to determine the quality and effectiveness of current programs. Most local programs have little or no outcome evaluation data, as few have had the resources to conduct extensive evaluations. Consequently, the scope of this project does not include assessments of individual programs compared to best practices determined by research.

Some Evidenced-Based Programs are Operating in King County

Although we did not have a practical way to determine the extent of use of evidence-based programs for dropout prevention, intervention and retrieval in King County, we compiled a small sample of programs as follows:

Olweus Bully Prevention Program

Many elementary and middle schools in King County have implemented this program, which has been designated as a ‘Model Program’ based on its extensive research base

¹¹⁰ Gonzales, R. et. al. (2002, September) *Youth Out of School: Linking Absence to Delinquency*, 2nd Ed. Denver: CO. Colorado Foundation for Families and Children.

¹¹¹ Washington State Legislature: (Retrieved 2007 March 12). *Compulsory school attendance and admission. Revised Code of Washington*. Chapter 28A.225. <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=28A.225>

¹¹² Truancy. King County Superior Court at <http://www.metrokc.gov/kcsc/juv/truancy.htm>.

showing effectiveness and the ability to replicate successfully. The Puget Sound Educational Service District provides training on this program to school staff and technical assistance for implementation for 12 months.

Life Skills

Using the nationally-recognized Life Skills program, Neighborhood House staff teach middle school students in White Center and Auburn how to avoid the trap of alcohol and drug use. Our students work on improving their social skills, decision-making and assertiveness so that they can effectively combat peer pressure and not derail academically.

CASASTART

Neighborhood House has recently received a grant to implement CASASTART (Striving Together to Achieve Rewarding Tomorrows) in King County. This community-based, school-centered program is designed to keep high-risk preadolescents (8 to 13 years old) free of drug and crime involvement. The program strives to build resiliency in children, strengthen families, and make neighborhoods safer.

YouthBuild¹¹³

In the 2004-05 class, over 50 King County youth participated in YouthBuild.

Participant overview:

- ◆ 100 percent had dropped out of school
- ◆ Over 60 percent had been involved in the criminal justice system
- ◆ 75 percent were people of color.

Program performance:

- ◆ Over 80 percent of students completed the program and
- ◆ Attendance rate was over 90 percent
- ◆ Over 70 percent achieved their GED or high school diploma
- ◆ 85 percent of students moved into employment
- ◆ 25 percent graduated to post secondary/higher education.

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Matches children ages 7 through 16 with mentors in professionally supported one-to-one relationships. Serves children in King, Pierce & Jefferson Counties Through its Incarcerated Parent program, BBBS provides a one-to-one mentoring relationship for children who have a parent in jail or prison. These children are less likely to attend school, and when they do attend, teachers are more likely to report behavior issues and diminished academic performance. These children are also 3-6 times more likely to exhibit violent or delinquent behavior as a juvenile.

¹¹³Sims, Ron (Feb. 1, 2006). YouthBuild Receives \$700,000 Federal Grant. Seattle, WA: King County Executive Office, retrieved at <http://www.metrokc.gov/exec/news/2006/0201youthGrant.aspx> on March 14, 2007.

Examples of Local Programs Following Best Practices

We identified examples of local programs that appear to follow the general principles of best practices based on current available research and that have some data to illustrate their effectiveness. They are briefly described below, as examples only, as we have an insufficient basis on which to indicate which programs are most effective.

Metrocenter YMCA Career Academy is a comprehensive education and career center that serves students ages 16-21 who have dropped out of school or are behind in academic credits. Students can begin educational services at any time during the year and stay as long as needed. The Youth Employment program lasts from three months to several years, depending on the need. Each young person works individually with a personal advisor who helps set training objectives and address barriers such as transportation, housing or access to medical care. The program is currently overenrolled and has a waiting list.

Community for Youth was founded in 1985 by a group of Seattle residents committed to the idea that all students, if given the support of a dedicated community of adults and peers, could complete high school successfully and become productive members of our community. Community for Youth pairs students from the Seattle High Schools with the highest dropout rates with adult volunteers. The adults and youth form a strong community that supports the students in achieving the goals they set for themselves. Community for Youth reports that 99 percent of its students stay in school.

Nova High School is small alternative high school in Seattle with a liberal arts focus. Nova students range from the academically capable who are not sufficiently challenged/engaged by traditional high school to those who have been failing academically due to personal or social at-risk factors. Nova students score well on assessment tests and have a high participation rate in community college classes. Although entering students often do not consider a postgraduate education, Nova has been successful at directing its graduates to higher education, with a majority going on to four-year colleges.

Nova Performance (2003-04)

- ◆ Annual Dropout Rate: 1.5% [King County overall: 4.3%]
- ◆ On-Time Graduation rate: 63% [KC: 75%]
- ◆ Extended Graduation Rate: 76% [KC: 79.8%]

Center for Career Alternatives - Middle School Re-entry Program

Center for Career Alternatives' re-entry program is one of nine middle school re-entry programs identified in our research. The program provides expelled and suspended students (ages 11-14 years of age, 6th through 8th grade) with the opportunity to continue their educations as they improve their behavior, attendance, and academics in order to return to school. The program includes instruction to accelerate academic skills, behavior and anger management instruction, attendance follow-up, as well as life skills activities around substance abuse, legal, and health issues, physical education at the local recreation center, and community service activities.

TeamChild

TeamChild is a nonprofit legal services and community advocacy organization with offices in four counties in Washington. TeamChild makes a difference for youth in trouble by helping them get the services they need to change their lives. TeamChild addresses the underlying causes of juvenile delinquency by advocating for education, mental & medical health services, safe living situations and other supports. TeamChild focuses on the right to education, mental and medical health treatment, and safe living situations.

Many youth in the juvenile justice system experience difficulties in school. Some are failing, have dropped out or have been expelled, often because they have special needs that are not being addressed. TeamChild helps youth gain access to appropriate educational programs so they can achieve success in school.¹¹⁴

3. Building on Two System-Level King County Projects

Opportunities for coordination and collaboration across systems to support the educational success of students are being enhanced by two large projects currently underway in King County.

King County Systems Integration Project

The Systems Integration initiative is a collaboration of state and local community agencies and organizations in King County (Seattle), Washington, that have come together under the auspices of the King County Juvenile Court to examine and improve integrated program development, policy development, and service delivery for children, youth, and families served by the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. One of the goals is to better engage with educational systems to improve educational outcomes, and an Education Integration Task Force has been created for that purpose.

PathNet – Strategy for Coordination, Linking and Case Management for Retrieval

King County has a unique partnership of community leaders from youth-serving organizations, community colleges, and the Workforce Development Council. It is currently led by the Puget Sound Educational Service District, which has developed a strategy to create a coordinated web of resources. Coupled with a ‘care manager’ middle and high school students carry out an individualized plan to reconnect with and succeed in school. The care manager links students to the services and supports in the community they need to fulfill their plan.

PathNet plans to focus its services on students who are likely to dropout due to chronic truancy or lack of credits, a significant number of whom are either on probation or are in special education. PathNet provides a single point of entry for students to access myriad services for both out-of-school youth and those at risk of dropping out.

¹¹⁴ Team Child and Casey Family Programs. (2003) *Make a Difference in a Child's Life: A Manual for Helping Children and Youth Get What They Need in School*. Seattle, WA. TeamChild. Available at <http://www.teamchild.org/manual.html>

PathNet advocates the following components of an effective retrieval program:

- An individualized plan
- A care manager assisting the student in the management of the plan
- A cadre of special education certificated staff providing uniquely designed instruction and monitoring federally mandated, individualized education plans

PathNet holds the potential to have a variety of benefits. The approach is systemic and will reduce overlapping services for a cost savings to multiple agencies. The schools will benefit from a more consistent enrollment and ability to track students. The juvenile justice system will benefit from students gaining assistance in finding employment and alternatives to crime. The community will benefit from students engaging more productively as community members and reducing negative impacts. Most importantly, students often report they want to finish school but need support and program options to do so. PathNet will benefit students with a holistic approach to their needs.

4. Initial Assessment of the Overall Constellation of Dropout Prevention, Intervention and Retrieval Programs in King County

Fifteen adults, identified as having a high level of knowledge about youth in King County who have dropped out of school or are at risk of dropping out of school, were asked during interviews to indicate how well they believed specific aspects of the dropout prevention, intervention and retrieval “system” in King County were working. A summary of their responses is provided below:

Component	Assessment by Local Key Informants
Quantity/Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most people said there are not enough programs, there are huge gaps in service, there are waiting lists in many places, and that the problem is likely to get worse as more students are unable to pass the WASL to graduate ▪ A few said there are many options, especially in Seattle, but that they cannot always place a student in the program that would be best for him/her
Quality/Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most said quality was variable, and negatively impacted by staff turnover, lack of resources for staff training, and lack of evaluation resources ▪ Several people noted that the comprehensive programs were more effective than those that only addressed a limited number of the issues facing struggling youth

Component	Assessment by Local Key Informants
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Many spoke of restrictive funding sources that precluded organizations from serving some of the youth most in need; some programs will not take students younger than age 16, are court-involved, or who may not be able to meet outcomes demanded by WIA-funded programs ▪ Unless a student is Medicaid eligible, cost is a major barrier for substance abuse and mental health treatment ▪ Transportation can be a problem, especially for middle-school youth
Cultural Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Several people noted the lack of bilingual staff in programs, and the inability to serve the full range of languages needed ▪ One person wondered whether youth who are sexual minorities are well-served ▪ Street Soldiers (at Metrocenter YMCA) addresses internalized oppression of youth of color; being and understanding who you are and that there are others like you
Intentionality To Reduce Achievement Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Few people had a response to this question. ▪ One person noted that City of Seattle funding is directed to low income youth of color without identifying the achievement gap explicitly.
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most people were adamant that funding for this population of youth is inadequate and always has been ▪ Many believed that both basic education and special education dollars should follow the student when he/she is being served by a different organization than the school where he/she was included on “census day” ▪ Several people noted that funding to community-based organizations is not stable and has been decreasing
Coordination/ Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Several people indicated there is no overall strategic plan for serving these youth ▪ Several noted the existence of an Out-of-School Youth Consortium and emerging models such as the King County Integration Project and PathNet

5. Non-Specialized Services That Can Assist with Dropout Prevention, Intervention and Retrieval

In addition to the dropout prevention and retrieval programs described above, there are hundreds of additional programs, activities and resources that support the well-being of children and youth, help reduce the risk factors that contribute to students' departure from school, or reconnect them to school or work.

Non-Specialized Prevention Services. Among prevention services offered to King County children, youth and families by federal, state and local governments are:

- Health and nutrition
- Parenting education
- Family support (including home visiting programs)
- Early childhood education (Head Start and Early Head Start; Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program, child care subsidies)
- Youth development
- Refugee/immigrant services

Some school districts offer preventive services in their school buildings. For example, Seattle Public Schools has ten high school Teen Health Clinics and four middle school Wellness Centers; provides health education that covers child abuse, sexuality, mental health and drug/alcohol prevention; helps students and families meet basic needs through a Family Support Worker program; and supports parent involvement in elementary schools. Non-profit organizations also provide an array of preventive services, including mentoring, tutoring and programs falling in the categories above. A search of “tutoring” in Community Resources Online turned up 129 entries, from after-school programs, to libraries, faith communities and ethnic-specific organizations.

Non-Specialized Intervention Services. Intervention services are offered in response to a condition or behavior that is causing a problem for the affected child, or his or her family, school or community. Among intervention services offered to King County children, youth and families by federal, state and local governments are:

- Counseling and support groups
- Mental health diagnosis and treatment
- Addiction diagnosis and treatment
- Health care
- Crisis intervention
- Case management
- Income support

A search of “educational counseling/career planning” in Community Resources Online resulted in a listing of 28 services. A search for “adult basic education/GED” brought up 50 entries and one for “vocational education” contained 41 services – among them the Technology Access Foundation that prepares students ages 13-18 for a career in

information technology, and the Community Psychiatric Clinic that provides vocational services for enrolled consumers.

Non-Specialized Deep-end Services. Deep-end services are those responding to severe problems that require a high level and/or expensive responses, often involving residential care or confinement. Among deep-end services provided to King County children, youth and families by federal, state and local governments are:

- Juvenile detention
- Temporary emergency shelter
- Transitional housing
- Subsidized housing
- Foster care
- Group homes
- Inpatient mental health for addiction treatment

In summary, King County is rich with existing resources and programs that likely are not being fully utilized to help youth at risk of dropping out of school or who have dropped out of school. Better coordination and linkages, especially between schools and community-based organizations, would improve this situation to some extent. However, additional funding and resources are needed to provide effective prevention, intervention and retrieval programs.

Appendix E

Alternate Schools in King County

Programs Focused on American Indian Youth
American Indian Heritage Middle College
Huchoosedah Indian Education Program
Indian Education Program (Renton)
Iwasil Boys and Girls Club
Muckleshoot Tribal College/School
Native American Education Program
Seattle Indian Center
United Indians of All Tribes Foundation
Virginia Cross Native Education Center

Schools and Programs Available Across School Districts and Counties
Bellevue Community College
Cascadia Community College
Center for Career Alternatives
Digital Bridge Technology Academy
Early Head Start Program
Eastside Academy
Edmonds Community College
Everett Community College (U3 Youth Re-engagement Program)
Green River Community College
GYBSS (Getting Youth Beyond School Suspension)
Highline Community College
Internet Academy
King County Work Training Program/Youth Source
Lake Washington Technical College
Learning Center North
Literacy Source
Metrocenter YMCA of Greater Seattle
New Start/Safe Futures
North Seattle Community College
Opportunity Skyway
Out of School Consortium/ Youth Enhancement Projects
Renton Technical College
Sartori Education Center
SeaTac Occupational Skills Center
Seattle Central Community College
Seattle Early Scholars GEAR UP (UW)
Seattle Urban Academy
Seattle Vocational Institute
Shoreline Community College
South Seattle Community College
Stay in school programs
Youth Opportunity Program
Youth Source (Kent and Renton)
YouthBuild

High School and Middle School Programs by District

(Note: Programs that are associated with a specific school are noted across from the school name. If a program is not associated with a specific school or if it is not known whether a program is associated with a specific school, there will be no entry in the “Schools” column.)

Districts	Schools	Programs
Auburn	Auburn High School	Green River CC Auto Body Options Recapture
	West Auburn High School	Learning Center Bridges Re-Entry STAR Program Virginia Cross Native ED Center Day School Green River CC Auto Body Recapture
		Running Start, Tech Prep, Home School
	Olympic Middle School	Reconnect Program
Bellevue	Robinswood Middle/ High School	
		Running Start, Tech Prep
	Kelsey Creek Home School	
Edmonds	Scriber Lake High School	
Enumclaw	Enumclaw High School	Evening Classes, Flex Schedules, IEP Tutoring
		Home School, Contract School
	Collins Alternative Middle School, High School, Extension Center Programs	
Federal Way	Internet Academy	
		Running Start, Tech Prep, Choice HS Programs, Home School, Merit School (Special ED only)
Highline	SeaTac Occupational Skills Center CHOICE	
	Aviation High School	
		Running Start, Tech Prep, Home School, New Start/Safe Futures, GBSS
Issaquah	Tiger Mountain High School	
		Home School
Kent	Night Academy	
	Kent Mountain View Academy	Transition Program
		Running Start, Tech Prep, Home School
		Work Your Way Back To School
Lake Washington	BEST High School	Day School Evening School
		Extended Core
	Futures School	
		Running Start, Tech Prep, Family Learning Center (Home School)

District	Schools	Programs
Mercer Island	Crest Learning Center	
		Running Start, Tech Prep, Home School
Northshore	Secondary Academy for Success	
		Running Start, Tech Prep, Consultation Program, Project Hope (Special Ed only), Home School Networks
Riverview	CLIP Alternative High School	
		Running Start, Tech Prep, Parade Program (Home School)
Seattle (See end of list)		
Shoreline	Shorewood Options Program	
	Shorecrest Options Program	NovaNet Credit Recovery
		Running Start, Tech Prep, Home Education Exchange
	Room9/Journey at Aldercrest	
Skykomish		Running Start, Tech Prep, Home School
Snoqualmie	Two Rivers School	
		Running Start, Tech Prep, Home School
Tahoma	Maple Valley Alternative High School	
		Running Start, Tech Prep, Russell Ridge Center (Home School)
Tukwila	Foster High School/Academies	
		Running Start, Tech Prep, Home School, GBSS
Vashon Island		Running Start, Tech Prep, Home School

District	Schools	Programs
Seattle	Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center	
	South Lake Alternative High School	
	Middle College High School	
	Education Centers	Credit retrieval or GED
	The Center School	
	NOVA	
	Summit	
	Marshall Alternative High School	
		Home School Resource Center, Running Start, Tec Prep
	Interagency Academy	
	Alder Academy	
	Career Development Learning Center	
	Columbia Annex	
	Detention School	
	Everyone Has a Song (EHAS)	
	Empowerment Institute	
	Iwasil	
	King County Jail	
	Koinonia	
	New Holly	
	Opportunity Skyway	
		Orion Center
		Peace for the Streets by Kids from the Streets
	Ryther	
		Southwest youth and Family Services
		University District Youth Center
		YO! Columbia
		Youth Education Program (YEP)
	Seahawks Academy	
	Marshall Academy	
		Home School Resource Center
	African American Academy	
Zion Preparatory Academy		
	Getting Youth Beyond School Suspension Middle School Re-entry Program	
	Seattle Early Scholars Outreach (GEAR-UP)	
	Metrocenter YMCA of Greater Seattle	

Source: Weber, Susie Bridges. *King County Superior Court Guide to Alternative Education Opportunities for Youth in King County 2004-2005*. Seattle, WA: Crime Free Futures Project of the King County Superior Court.