

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS RESOLUTION ON DROPOUT PREVENTION

Resolution Summary

Dropping out of high school has life-long consequences. Adults who don't finish high school in the United States earn 65 percent less than those with a high school degree; \$260,000 less over his or her lifetime. Currently, nearly a third of high school students don't graduate on time; among African-Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans, it's almost half.

These high numbers of students leaving school often lead to young adults becoming incarcerated, living on public assistance or jobless. Economically, that can be devastating for any state; as these adults earn less salary, they contribute less in taxes.

America's public schools are developing ways for dropouts to return to the school environment through GED programs, alternative learning centers or anything that can get them motivated to move forward again. Educators have determined that in dealing with the issue, it is best to have as many options available to the student as possible. Many schools find the options that are most effective don't try to replicate high school, but offer scheduling flexibility, connection to jobs and structure.

Additional Resource Information

The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, March 2006:

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/Downloads/ed/TheSilentEpidemic3-06FINAL.pdf>

U.S. Department of Education: <http://www.ed.gov>

National Dropout Prevention Center: <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/>

Education Commission of the States: <http://www.ecs.org/>

American Youth Policy Forum:

<http://www.aypf.org/projects/briefs/DropoutPreventionRecovery.htm>

Dropout Prevention Management Directives

- **Management Directive #1:** Create a political sense of urgency concerning the need to assist public schools through legislation and policymaking which offers appropriate options to students so that all students can succeed and compete in a global society.
- **Management Directive #2:** Expand students' options through alternative education pathways such as partnerships with community colleges in career and technical education areas and with learning centers so that students have other avenues to obtain a diploma.
- **Management Directive #3:** CSG staff will post approved resolution on CSG's website and make available through its regular communication venues at the state and local level to ensure its distribution to the state government and policy community.

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WHEREAS, each year's class of dropouts will cost the country over \$200 billion during lifetimes in lost earnings and unrealized tax revenue;

WHEREAS, students from low-income families have a dropout rate of 10%; students from middle-income families have a dropout rate of 5.2%, and 1.6% of students from high-income families dropout;

WHEREAS, in today's workplace, only 40% of adults who dropped out of high school are employed;

WHEREAS, 75% of America's state prison inmates are high school dropouts;

WHEREAS, high school dropouts are 3.5 times more likely than high school graduates to be arrested in their lifetime;

WHEREAS, a 1% increase in high school graduation rates would save approximately \$1.4 billion in incarceration costs, or about \$2,100 per each male high school graduate;

WHEREAS, the cost to taxpayers of adult illiteracy is \$224 billion per year;

WHEREAS, male and female students with low academic achievement are twice as likely to become parents by their senior year of high school compared to students with high academic achievement;

WHEREAS, the U.S. death rate for those with fewer than 12 years of education is 2.5 times higher than the rate of those with 13 or more years of education;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that The Council of State Governments encourages state legislators and other elected leaders to support and promote state-wide efforts to engage in dropout recovery by ensuring students receive individual attention in safe schools, expanding graduation options, involving families in student learning and requiring educators to have the training and resources needed to prevent students from dropping out.

Adopted this 3rd day of December 2006, at the
CSG 2006 Annual Trends and Leadership Forum
In Phoenix, Arizona



Governor Jim Douglas
2006 CSG President



Senate President Earl Ray Tomblin
2006 CSG Chair