

Supporting Dropout/Graduation As a Part B SiMR





SSIP Interactive Institutes

Albuquerque, NM; April 20-30, 2015

Paula Kohler, NTACT

Matthew Klare, NTACT

Jacksonville, FL; May 12-13, 2015

Loujeania Bost, NTACT

Catherine Fowler, NTACT



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Chicago, IL; May 27-28, 2015
Valerie Mazzotti, NTACTION
June Gothberg, NTACTION

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NTACT

National Technical Assistance Center on Transition

Dropout/Graduation – Why Do We Care?

Negative impact on the dropouts

- Fiscally
- Physically
- Socially and emotionally
- Incarcerationally!
- Negative impact on the state and community
- Lost tax revenue to the state and community
- Increased reliance on social services and health care
- Increased demands on law enforcement & courts
- Smaller pool of skilled workers
- Negative impact on the state and LEAs
- Lower graduation rates
- Lower enrollments impact fed and state \$



NTACT
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A Little Background...

- Dropout is not a simple problem. There are myriad causes and reasons that youth quit school. Push effects and pull effects...
- Dropout is not a single moment in a child's life. It's a multi-act drama of disengagement with dropping out as the final act.
- Monitoring certain indicators can help a school identify youth who are at risk of dropping out in the short and the long term, and can be used to inform an individual student's IEP.



Who Drops Out?

There's a high incidence of dropout among:

- Youth from minority backgrounds
- Youth in poverty
- Youth in heavily urban or very rural areas
- Males
- Youth with disabilities (particularly LD and SED)
- Youth in 9th Grade – the transition years



Dropout: A Process of Disengagement

Begins in the Elementary Years

- Elevated dropout rates reported among children who were rated as highly aggressive by their 1st grade teachers
- Dropouts could be distinguished from graduates with 66% accuracy by the third grade using attendance data; and
- Identification of dropouts can be accomplished with reasonable accuracy based on review of school performance (behavior, attendance, academics) during the elementary years
- Students who had repeated a grade as early as K – 4th grade were five times more likely to drop out of school than students who were not retained



Alterable Variables Associated with Dropout

- High rates of absenteeism
- Behavior problems
- History of course failure
- Grade retention
- Negative attitudes toward school
- Low participation in extracurricular activities

A Little More Background...

- **School Completion** encompasses graduation, dropout, reentry, reengagement, and dropout recovery.
- One of the most important factors in keeping a child from dropping out is the presence of a caring adult in his or her life—someone who believes in that child and provides encouragement, guidance and support for staying in school.
- Relating and linking academic subjects and associated work and problems to a youth's interests and vocational choices will help improve academic engagement.



What the LEAs Need To Do

Each LEA needs to go through essentially the same process the State went through in identifying school completion as its SiMR

- Secure local stakeholder buy-in and support
- Thoroughly examine the local data related to school completion
- Use program improvement planning tools (nsttacplanningtool.org/local, STEPSS) to:
 - Identify areas of strength and need
 - Prioritize the needs and choose 2 or 3 for focus areas
 - Develop a local action plan
 - Implement and evaluate the interventions



Tools to Support the Local Work in Schools

- Dropout Data Tools: building-level tools that help a school examine and analyze its data related to school completion
 - Core Data Tool
 - Dropout & Graduation Data Tool
 - Attendance Tool
 - Academics Tool
 - Discipline Tool
- The Risk Calculator: a student-level tool that provides an estimate of each student's dropout risk and suggests areas in which he or she might need additional supports or intervention



Possible Areas of Support & Intervention

- **Attendance** – implement attendance programs that employ a balance of rewards and sanctions.
 - Review and revise local attendance policies (E.g., Don't tie attendance to grades or participation in activities)
- **Behavior** – Adopt a school-wide behavior plan
 - Environmental modifications: create environments to support the use of pro-social behaviors
 - Individual student need / self-management
 - Instruction in social skills and problem solving skills
 - Classroom
 - School-wide



Possible Areas of Support and Intervention

- Academic interventions
 - Implement increasingly intensive, evidence-based methodologies, strategies and interventions through high quality instruction.
 - Increase academic engagement.
- Mentoring programs – provide that caring adult!
 - Student checks in with the adult advocate regularly
 - Adult provides stability, guidance and some oversight
 - E.g., Check and Connect and DIY versions



Possible Areas of Support and Intervention

Student and family engagement – belonging to and participating in the school community

- Look at student and faculty **participation** in extracurricular activities
 - As time and budgets allow, **tailor activities** to student and faculty interests.
- Build on **partnerships** between the community and school to get students and families involved
- Develop **supports** for parents.
 - Get parents into the school
 - Provide ways for them to get involved in whatever capacity they can and want to.



Possible Areas of Support and Intervention

School climate

- Within the **school**, students must:
 - Feel physically safe
 - Feel social and emotional security
 - Believe they are supported in their learning and goals (both short and long term)
 - Believe their social and civic learning and activities are important and supported
 - Believe they are respected, trusted, and connected to the adults and the learning environment



Possible Areas of Support and Intervention

School climate

- Within the **classroom**, students must:
 - Feel welcome
 - Be disciplined and *not punished*
 - Be encouraged to contribute ideas for resolving problems
 - Be offered choices
 - Be taught replacement behaviors
 - Be taught how to self manage their behavior
 - Be taught social skills



Possible Areas of Support and Intervention

Provide quality transition planning and services

- Transition assessment
- Student-focused planning
- Career counseling and employment skills training
- Quality instruction to support mastery of core coursework
- Job hunting skills and strategies
- Work experience
- Service learning
- Partnerships between the school and businesses
- Connections with community organizations
- Partnerships between the school and local IHEs



Resources and Tools

- <http://transitionta.org> for access to the Dropout Data Tools, nsttacpanningtool, STEPSS, and The Risk Calculator
- www.ndpc-sd.org/
- www.nsttac.org
- <http://www.psocenter.org/>
- <https://www.urbandcollaborative.org/>
- www.attendanceworks.org



Useful References

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For More Information



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This presentation was supported in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, #H373Y130002. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

Project Officers: Richelle Davis and Meredith Miceli

