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ABSTRACT

A project was conducted in Kansas City, Missouri, to diminish the dropout rate by establishing an on-going linkage between the local high school and the adult basic education (ABE) program. The program involved the development of a system of dropout identification, contact, and referral from the secondary school to the ABE program for young adults 16 to 24 years of age and the collection and correlation of data on these young adults. Project activities included identification and direct referral by counselors, a home-school coordinator, other school district alternative programs, and outside agencies: meetings with counselors and principals at the secondary school to discuss the ABE program: involving secondary personnel in the advisory board: providing opportunities for secondary personnel to visit ABE sites: development of an ongoing system of feedback to secondary school personnel: and frequent communication. In the first year, 75 per cent of the 316 referrals enrolled in ABE classes. Data concerning area dropouts and program participants were collected and studied, and a follow-up study was also conducted. Although the project was considered highly effective, several recommendations were made to facilitate student involvement in high school equivalency programs. (Survey data and a project orientation unit are appended.) (MN)

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ADULT EDUCATION DROPOUT PROJECT

310 PROJECT REPORT

1981

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EVALUATION REPORT

July 1, 1980 - June 30, 1981

310 Project

KANSAS CITY MISSOURI SCHOOL DISTRICT

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INTRODUCTION

Dropoutism is an increasing societal problem. In Kansas City alone during the 1979-80 school year, over 1,200 students left school. On a state-wide basis the dropout rate is above 6%. Almost every school district in the state is faced with the "Dropout Dilemma."

Statistics show that "dropping out" can prove costly to both the individual dropout and society as a whole. A 1978 Department of Labor report noted that the unemployment rate for dropouts is more than double that of high school graduates. Also according to a Missouri Division of Corrections report, 95% of the individuals who are incarcerated in Missouri correctional institutions are high school dropouts. These two facts alone emphasize the need to more effectively deal with the dropout problem, and to provide workable solutions and viable alternatives for these young adults.

The Adult Education Dropout Project, a \$10 funded program, was established with the basic aim of diminishing the dropout population. The primary focus of the project was to establish an on-going linkage between the local high school and the Adult Basic Education program. The first major goal of the project was to develop a system of dropout identification, contact, and referral from the secondary school to the Adult Basic Education program for young adults 16 to 24 years of age. The second major goal was to collect and correlate data on these young adults and to share the results of this study with educators of all levels.

Since the beginning of the fiscal year, July 1, 1981, the three staff members have strived to meet the objectives and goals that were initially proposed. The activities and data explained in this report summarize the culmination of these efforts.

OBJECTIVE: To further develop a method of immediate identification, contact, and referral of the recent bonafide dropouts to Adult Basic Education; a system that will be compatible and usable by secondary personnel in all schools in the Kansas City School District.

PROPOSED SYSTEM

A study conducted by the Adult Dropout Project staff during the 1979-80 school year showed that 26% of the recent high school dropouts contacted, as compared to only 10% of those dropouts contacted who had been out of school for over a year, enrolled in Adult Basic Education classes. Therefore, in developing the referral system, recent dropouts between the ages of 16-18 were given primary consideration, and methods were developed which would more effectively reach recent high school dropouts. However, any student 16-24 years of age who was identified and referred by a high school counselor, principal, or home-school coordinator was accepted into the program.

The following identification and referral system has proved to be effective in the Kansas City Adult Dropout Project:

1. IDENTIFICATION AND DIRECT REFERRAL BY COUNSELORS: Each student who had an exit interview with his/her high school counselor was informed of the alternative of Adult Basic Education. At this interview the student was given materials which described the program, the name of a person to contact, and a "High School Dropout Referral Form." (See Appendix)

The counselor then provided follow-up by telephoning the Adult Dropout Project with the name and telephone number of the student who had been referred. If the student did not come to the ABE class, he/she was contacted by telephone, if possible, or by mail if no telephone number was available, by an Adult Dropout staff member.

2. IDENTIFICATION AND DIRECT REFERRAL BY HOME-SCHOOL COORDINATOR: When students in the Kansas City School District are absent over a long period of time or are having problems outside the high school which make attendance difficult, they are referred by the counselors to home-school coordinators.

Many of these students were identified by the home-school coordinators as dropouts and were referred to Adult Basic Education classes. In most instances, home-school coordinators actually brought these students to the ABE site and assisted them in enrolling. They also maintained contact with and provided follow-up on the students after they enrolled.

5. IDENTIFICATION BY ADULT BASIC EDUCATION INSTRUCTORS AND REFERRAL BY HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELORS OR PRINCIPALS: Some students did not officially withdraw from the high school. Instead, they just quit attending and were eventually dropped because of non-attendance. However, many of these same students came to Adult Basic Education classes to enroll. After interviewing each student the ABE instructors was able to identify him/her as a dropout. Once the dropout was identified, the former high school counselor was contacted and a "Dropout Referral Form" was requested. If the counselor was in accord with the student's decision to withdraw, a referral form was forwarded.

4. IDENTIFICATION AND DIRECT REFERRAL BY OTHER KANSAS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS: Through the Adult Dropout Project, open communication was established with various Kansas City School District alternative programs so that direct referrals from these programs were frequent. Programs participating in this direct referral system included:

- Operation Lift
- Teen-age Parent Center
- Fairview Alternative School
- The Double E Program

When students entered any of the aforementioned programs, they were counseled and referred to the most suitable alternative available. Bonafide dropouts who would be able to benefit from the Adult Basic Education program were referred to the Adult Dropout Project for further counseling and class placement.

5. IDENTIFICATION AND DIRECT REFERRAL BY OUTSIDE AGENCIES:

Agencies outside the Kansas City School District who work with young adult dropouts were also encouraged to make direct referrals to the Adult Basic Education program. When dropouts were identified, their names were referred to the Adult Dropout Project and a schedule was established. The student was then referred to an ABE class.

Agencies participating in this referral system were:

- DeLaSalle
- Juvenile Group Homes
- Walrond House
- Allegra House
- Slaw House
- Community Corrections Center
- Other Missouri State Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers

The aforementioned system placed the responsibility of identification, contact, and referral on secondary personnel, Adult Basic Education personnel, and other individuals who work with young adults. The success of the system depended on the cooperation and incorporation of as many groups as possible.

Another activity that was attempted and proved to be less effective was the list referral. In this activity, counselors were contacted and asked to send lists of names, telephone numbers, and addresses of dropouts to the Adult Dropout Project for contact. Only one counselor sent lists on a regular basis and of the 23 names sent only 6 students enrolled. Also, this activity would be difficult to continue with the utilization of only existing staff. The contact of potential students is time consuming and would appear to be an additional responsibility that existing personnel would find difficult to absorb.

DEVELOPING THE SYSTEM:

In establishing the linkage between the high school and the Adult Basic Education program, several activities were attempted. Since the final system was to be one that could be continued by utilizing only existing staff, methods had to prove both "people effective" and "cost efficient" to be included in the final system.

The key to establishing a referral system between the high school and the Adult Basic Education program, seems to be in the active involvement of educational personnel of all levels. The Adult Basic Education program must be presented and viewed as another link in the educational chain and in a co-operative rather than a competitive manner. Understanding of the mutual goals of the educational programs involved is essential.

In developing the referral system for the Kansas City program, the following activities proved most useful, and could easily be duplicated in other Adult Education programs:

1. MEET WITH COUNSELORS AND PRINCIPALS AT THE SECONDARY SCHOOL TO DISCUSS THE ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM AND TO DISTRIBUTE MATERIALS. This single activity appeared to be essential in developing a referral system. Early in the school year each school administrator was contacted and a meeting with the principal and counselors was requested. At the meeting, which generally lasted about thirty minutes, packets of materials were distributed and the Adult Education program was described. The packet of materials which had been developed through the Adult Dropout Project included the following: Referral Forms, Statement of Purpose Forms, Progress Report Forms, Telephone Scripts, Brochures, and other pertinent information. (See appendix). At this meeting the following facts were emphasized.

- a. The Adult Basic Education program can accept only bonafide dropouts 16 years of age and over into the program.

- b. Students, 16 or 17 years of age, must have a Dropout Referral Form on file before official enrollment in Adult Basic Education will be permitted.
- c. A progress report will be sent to the high school on a regular basis so that counselors and other personnel will receive feedback on their former students' progress.
- d. Adult Basic Education classes are individualized to meet each student's needs, and students functioning on any educational level may enroll.
- e. The Evening High School Diploma program can be a viable alternative for some dropouts.
- f. The Adult Basic Education program is another service offered within the Kansas City School District.

This first meeting with the counselors and principal proved to be very important. In a regular Adult Basic Education program, the meeting could be easily conducted by the local director, a supervisor, or even a knowledgeable teacher. The key to the success of this meeting is advanced planning and preparation of adequate materials for dissemination.

2. INVOLVE SECONDARY PERSONNEL ON THE ADVISORY BOARD: To facilitate the growth of the Adult Education Dropout Project and to strengthen the link between the secondary school, Adult Basic Education, and the community, an advisory board was utilized. This board provided valuable input on operating the total program. The members also helped develop an "Alternatives" booklet which outlined major alternative programs within the District. The most valuable contribution of the board was the actual program promotion and student recruitment that members provided. Before serving on this committee, some members had only limited knowledge of the Adult Basic Education program. Others were unaware of how ABE could serve as a viable alternative for high school dropouts. However, after serving on the committee, members became active referral sources and opened doors which helped to reach other counselors and secondary personnel.

Selection of key individuals proved to be essential. The chairperson of the Adult Dropout Project Advisory Board was also the chairperson of the Kansas City Guidance-Counselors Association. This individual was responsible for invitations being extended to the project coordinator to speak at two Guidance-Counselors meetings. Other members provided contact with various community and secondary groups which proved valuable in promoting the program.

When duplicating such a program within the regular Adult Basic Education program, secondary personnel should be included on the ABE Advisory Board. Counselors appear eager to learn about viable educational alternatives for high school dropouts, and inclusion of secondary personnel on the ABE Advisory Board seems essential in establishing the necessary linkage between the secondary school and Adult Basic Education.

The Adult Education Dropout Project met four times during the year and the following individuals were members of the Adult Education Dropout Project Advisory Board:

Ms. Cindy Russell, chairperson
Counselor
Fairview Alternative School

Ms. Joyce Nilson, secretary
Counselor
Community Corrections Center

Mr. Stephen Brown
Principal, Northeast High School

Mr. Luther Dale
Counselor, Paseo High School

Mr. Michael Rowan
Counselor, East High School

Ms. Jackie Hunter
Home-School Coordinator

Mr. James Carr
Division of Student Affairs
University of Missouri - K.C.

Ms. Linda Donovan
Counselor, Central High School

Ms. Claretha Shumate
Counselor, Northeast High School

Ms. Antronette Brown
Local Director, ABE

Ms. Patricia Long
Coordinator, Adult Education Dropout Project

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3. PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SECONDARY PERSONNEL TO VISIT THE ADULT BASIC EDUCATION SITE(S): Meetings were scheduled throughout the year at the Adult Learning Center site to bring secondary personnel closer to the Adult Basic Education program. The Advisory Board meetings were always held on site and different personnel were invited to each meeting to include the representation of more schools. Home-school coordinators were also encouraged to actually bring potential students to the Learning Center and tours of the classroom were available. The largest number of secondary personnel visited the Adult Learning Center at the last Advisory Board meeting. At this time, a special invitation was sent to each school to ask a representative to attend and then a follow-up call was made to encourage a counselor to come. The effort was very successful since 8 out of 9 high schools sent representatives and one school allowed all three counselors to attend. At this time, the counselors were given the opportunity to visit the classroom, to see the individualized program in action, and to talk with their former "dropouts". Allowing the counselors the opportunity to see their former students successfully continuing their education is probably the most positive and effective tool that can be used in building a linkage system.

While in the regular Adult Basic Education program, an open house or a small meeting which brings secondary personnel to the Adult Basic Education site would demand some fore-thought and planning; however, the net results of increased referrals and student success would appear to be well worth the time and effort.

4. DEVELOP AN ONGOING SYSTEM OF FEEDBACK TO SECONDARY SCHOOL PERSONNEL:

Counselors expressed concern early in the project that previously when they had referred a student to Adult Basic Education classes, no feedback was available on how the student was progressing. Therefore, a system was developed whereby counselors would receive a quarterly progress report on their former students.

A form was developed by the Adult Dropout Project staff (See appendix) and this form was sent to Adult Basic Education teachers each quarter. The instructors were asked to list all students 16-18 years of age who had been referred by a Kansas City High School. The instructor returned the completed form to the Adult Dropout Project office and the secretary compiled the lists and sent copies to each individual school.

Counselors noted that the progress report was one of the most useful and valuable results of the Adult Education Dropout Project.

5. KEEP LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN WITH SECONDARY PERSONNEL BY

USING FREQUENT MEMOS AND TELEPHONE CONTACTS: Frequent memos which outlined important events or statistical results were sent to the secondary schools. Open communication was maintained to ensure that the linkage system remained solid.

By opening lines of communication with the high school and community, dropout referrals became a frequent occurrence in the Kansas City program. The activities that were conducted to develop the system of referral were ones that could be easily duplicated in a regular Adult Basic Education program and were ones that showed positive results in terms of referrals and numbers of enrollees.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SYSTEM

Over 300 students were referred to the Adult Dropout Project by secondary personnel and other agencies which dealt with young adults. This was a 100% increase over the number that was referred in 1979-80. If the previous years dropout rate of over 1200 students continues in 1981, the number of students referred will represent 25% of the students who dropped out of the Kansas City Missouri Public Schools.

Of the 316 referrals, 75% enrolled in Adult Basic Education classes. Therefore, 20% of the students who withdrew from high school, really did not drop out. They merely chose to continue their education in an alternative program, Adult Basic Education. TABLE I in the Appendix shows the total number of referrals and the various referral sources.

As was exemplified in 1979-80, counselors referred the largest number of students. Therefore, counselors seem to be a key link in establishing a successful referral system.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CREATING A REFERRAL SYSTEM

1. Meet with secondary personnel in the school.
2. Provide opportunities for secondary personnel to visit the Adult Basic Education sites.
3. Provide feedback to counselors and other secondary personnel concerning the students who have been referred.
4. Include secondary personnel on the ABE Advisory Board.
5. Designate one ABE staff member to serve as the liaison person whom counselors can contact when questions arise.
6. Provide ample materials which will be needed to maintain the referral system to secondary personnel.

OBJECTIVE: To continue to provide an alternative through existing Adult Basic Education classes for persons 16 to 24 years of age in order to earn a high school education by obtaining a G.E.D. and thus lower the educational dropout rate.

For the majority of the 1980-81 school year, there were 23 classes open for dropout referral. By having classes that were open during the day and evening hours, some students could continue working or actively seek employment while others could arrange for child care, thus eliminating some problems that caused students to withdraw from regular high school. Classes were open throughout the city to eliminate transportation problems.

The largest concentration of students were referred to and enrolled at the Adult Learning Center. Throughout the year, 285 students enrolled at this site and 54 Dropout Project Students enrolled in satellite classes. Of the students who enrolled at the Adult Learning Center, 66% completed twelve hours of instruction, and of the students who enrolled in satellite classes, 48% completed twelve hours of instruction. This fact seems to suggest that young adults may need the consistency of a daily class to hold their interest and attention long enough to find success in Adult Basic Education.

With the large influx of young adults enrolling at the Learning Center, a special class was created for the 16-18 year olds. The rationale for making such a division was based on two hypotheses. First, older adults tend to prefer a quieter environment, and secondly young adults feel more comfortable in a class made up of essentially their peers. Young adults have a higher energy level which tends to lead to increased activity and a natural increase in the noise level. In studying the young adult, 16-18, one characteristic seems to be common; they desire to be an adult but are still wanting someone to guide and direct them. The two classes were not completely separate; breaks and other activities were conducted concurrently so that the younger adult would have the opportunity to talk with the older adult and gain from their experience.

The classroom was filled to capacity during most of the school year and a waiting list had to be developed in January, 1981. However, a waiting list may inhibit prospective enrollees and may even cause them to eventually decide not to enroll. Of the 72 students who were placed on the waiting list, 29% did not return when an opening occurred. Therefore, other methods of dealing with the increased number of students were examined. One technique used was to shorten hours of attendance so more students could attend. Also students were scheduled at odd hours when a time slot became available (i.e. Students might be scheduled to attend from 10:30-11:45 or from 2:45-4:00, whenever an opening existed.) A third method used was to set up a network of referrals to other Adult Basic Education sites, such as De La Salle and Genesis, which work exclusively with young adults.

OBJECTIVE: To establish at least one ongoing Adult Basic Education class within the customary secondary school setting, not a school serving students with special problems.

Although the Adult Dropout Project staff worked closely with one school, Northeast High School, to establish an Adult Basic Education class, no class was formed during the 1981 FY. In planning for the class, the principal noted that he wanted to broaden the educational alternatives within the high school, and members of the student council, counseling staff, and administration staff were selected for the planning committee. Two members of the student council and the instructional motivator visited the Adult Learning Center and talked with the Advisory Board in December to gather data on creating the ABE class on site. However, as the school year progressed and other important issues arose, the idea of creating the class at this school had to be abandoned. Also at this time, funding in the regular Adult Basic Education program was reaching the saturation point and expansion for a new class was almost impossible.

Early in the school year, the coordinator also discussed the idea of establishing an Adult Basic Education class at the new alternative school, Fairview. However, it was the feeling of the administrative staff at Fairview that a referral system would be more beneficial than an on-school site.

Although the original objective of creating an on-school site was not accomplished during the '81 FY, it does not appear that this was a totally unrealistic objective. The prospect was positively endorsed by the principal, and could be workable at a future date.

OBJECTIVE: To provide informative in-service training and awareness sessions concerning the statistical outcomes and program results for secondary personnel in the Kansas City, Missouri School District for local Adult Basic Education staff members, and for Adult Basic Education directors throughout the state.

Inservice workshops were a basic part of the Adult Education Dropout Project. By sharing information and disseminating materials, many educational groups became aware of the function of the project and the goals of the Adult Basic Education program.

A slide-tape presentation was developed through the Adult Education Dropout Project that very briefly described the Adult Basic Education program. Actual students were used in the presentation and the emphasis was placed on how each student in Adult Basic Education, regardless of age, sex, race, or academic level, could find success. This presentation proved to be very effective and was used at various meetings to briefly describe the ABE program. A slide-tape presentation may be time consuming to develop; however, for inservice workshops and meetings, the use of audio-visual aids can be valuable.

Identical in-service workshops were held on the afternoons of January 21, and January 22, 1981, for Kansas City Adult Basic Education instructors.

At this meeting, statistical data was discussed, and the referral system was explained. A total of 22 Adult Basic Education teachers attended these workshops. Of the 8 teachers who attended and who had Dropout Students in their classes, all eight responded to the progress report, and 75% were active in identifying and insuring that dropout referrals were on file for their Dropout Project students. Of the teachers who did not attend this workshop, only 23% actively identified dropouts and requested referrals, and only 43% responded to the progress report. These facts alone prove that in-service workshops are needed and valuable. Various memos were sent to ABE instructors throughout the year as up-dates on the statistical findings and overall progress of the program.

Besides visiting with each school on an individual basis, the coordinator met with the Kansas City Guidance Association twice during the year on October 8, 1980, and April 7, 1981, and met with home-school coordinators at their monthly meeting on February 13, 1981. At these meetings implementation of the referral system was discussed and statistical data was outlined.

The project coordinator had the opportunity to provide workshops to share information with Adult Educators at the following meetings:

AEA/NAPCAE Conference (11/6/80)
St. Louis, Missouri

Mo. ABE Association Meeting (2/23/81)
Columbia, Missouri

MINKS Adult Education Directors Meeting (3/10/81)
"Sharing 310 Projects"
Falls City, Nebraska

310 Project Educational Workshop (5/26/81)
For teachers in Prison System
Jefferson City, Missouri

Co ABE Conference (4/16/81)
Providence, Rhode Island

MAACE Conference (4/29/81)
Columbia, Missouri

Other educational personnel became aware of the project through meetings and workshops that were held throughout the year. A meeting was held on December, 11, 1980, with the State Director of Guidance and Counselors Mr. Charles Foster, and his staff in Jefferson City, Missouri. Also, the coordinator was a speaker at the Northwest Principal's Association Meeting in St. Joseph, Missouri on January 14, 1981.

In the local community sector, the coordinator appeared as a speaker at the Northeast Community Council Forum, September 18, 1980, and also disseminated information to parents at a "Head-Start Carnival" on April 5, 1981.

The various in-service workshops provided the opportunity for the distribution of materials and for emphasizing the workability of the program. The main objective of each workshop was to heighten the awareness of various groups of the Adult Basic Education program which could eventually lead to increased referrals and the success of more "dropouts".

OBJECTIVE: To further develop from extensive data and experience gained in the project certain definable characteristics of dropouts who are likely to be successful in the Adult Basic Education program.

Each Adult Education Dropout Project student was interviewed upon entry into the program. The information was recorded on a Student Identification Sheet. Records were kept on reasons students left school, entrance test results, progress and attendance, reasons students left Adult Basic Education classes, and other follow-up information.

The two responses given by the students most frequently as reasons why they withdrew from high school were as follows: 1) lack of credits to graduate - given by over 25% of the students interviewed, and 2) disciplinary withdrawals - given by 16% of the students interviewed. (See Table II for complete results.)

However, both of these responses appear to be situations that forced the students to drop out of school rather than reasons that the students voluntarily left.

By collecting and correlating data on the students, it was found that 73% of the students who lacked credits to graduate scored above a 7.0 grade level on the entrance Tests of Adult Basic Education reading test. Also 44% of these students had the conception that they were about to enter their senior year, and 78% were 17 years of age or older. Two suppositions may be projected from these statistics. First, most students who are failing classes actually have the ability to achieve. Therefore, their failure is attributable to other factors such as poor attendance habits, lack of interest, employment, outside distractions, or any number of other reasons. Secondly, students know that they have failed a class or classes, yet many do not believe or accept the fact that they will not graduate with their class. Finally in their junior or senior class, they realize that they will not graduate and therefore, begin searching for an alternative program. The results of this study are exemplified in TABLE III.

Of the students who were interviewed and gave "lack of credits" as the reason for withdrawal, 70% enrolled in Adult Basic Education classes, and the success rate for this group was 65%. Success was defined as continuing to attend ABE classes, transferred to another training program, or passed the G.E.D.

Students who gave "disciplinary withdrawal" as the reason they left school were found to have lower entrance test scores, with 65% scoring below an 8th grade level on the Tests of Adult Basic Education reading section. This fact suggests that some students who exhibit deviant behavior may actually be frustrated with their lack of success and achievement. (See TABLE III for complete results). Of these students interviewed, 91% enrolled in Adult Basic Education classes and the success rate of this group was 52%.

As TABLE IV in the Appendix shows, 65% of all the students who entered the program and were tested scored below a 9th grade level on the reading test. Also, the largest single group scored at the 7th grade level. Most of the students had been out of school less than six months and almost three-fourths of the students were black.

In studying the students who passed the G.E.D. test while in the program, over 1/3 withdrew from high school because they were bored and almost 1/5 left because of lack of credits to graduate. Of the students who passed the G.E.D., 74% entered the program reading above a 9th grade level; however, many of these same students had deficiencies in the area of mathematics or language. Over 55% of the students who passed the G.E.D. were direct referrals from a high school and 67% had been out of school less than six months. The students in this category were almost equally divided as to age (i.e. 33% of the students were 16, 37% were 17 years of age, and 30% of the students were 18 or over).

By isolating the students who were successful in Adult Basic Education classes and in studying their characteristics, an interesting fact was derived. The students who were successful were proportionately divided in almost the same manner as the overall student body. The test scores, number of referrals, and reasons for withdrawal from high school were almost equal, percentage wise, for the successful students and the total number enrolled. A slightly larger ratio of males were successful than females and 17 year olds seemed to be somewhat more successful than 16 year olds. However, to note one definable characteristic that will separate a successful ABE student from an unsuccessful ABE student is difficult. This tends to reinforce the philosophy that Adult Basic Education meets the needs of students of all academic levels and that each individual student is given an equal opportunity for success. (See Table V for complete results).

OUTCOMES

The following table shows the outcomes of the Adult Dropout students who completed twelve hours of instruction in Adult Basic Education classes (204 students):

Persons passing the G.E.D.	12%
Persons continuing to study toward G.E.D.	57%
Persons transferring back to regular high school	4%

These figures indicate that 12% of those students who left Kansas City High Schools in 1981 were actually not "dropouts" but were successful in continuing or completing their goal.

The Adult Dropout Project staff worked with 485 student during the school year.

A follow-up study was conducted on the Adult Dropout Project students who were enrolled at the Adult Learning Center during the 1979-80 school year. Of the 144 students, the staff was able to contact 84 or 58%. Of the group that could be contacted, the following outcomes were found:

Passed the G.E.D.	26%
Continuing to study for G.E.D.	31%
Returned to High School	12%



RECOMMENDATIONS

Adult Basic Education

When duplicating such a project within a regular Adult Basic Education program, the following recommendations are projected:

1. Do not use the word dropout in the title of the program. This word has a negative connotation to young adults.
2. Designate one staff member to serve as the "contact person" for counselors and dropouts.
3. If feasible, provide a separate class for young adults.
4. Provide special orientation sessions for teachers who work with young adults. (See appendix)
5. Develop or duplicate materials that will facilitate the referral process. (See appendix)
6. Develop linkages with as many groups as possible who work with young adults to set up a successful referral system.

Secondary Schools

The following suggestions may be useful for adaptation in the secondary schools:

1. On the student's report card, provide the number of credits earned and the student's actual class standing. Also contact students who are behind in credits as early as possible so that deficient units may be made up at night or during the summer.
2. When students withdraw from high school provide information on viable alternative programs within the District.
3. For students who are experiencing difficulty in class, provide some sort of individualized instruction so that a frustration problem does not become a discipline problem.
4. If possible, allow an Adult Basic Education class to be held at the high school site.
5. Include the number of students who pass the G.E.D. in the graduate number, rather than as a dropout statistic.

SUMMARY

The Adult Education Dropout Project has proved to be a successful program. Through the project, methods of initiating an on-going referral system with the high school were developed, techniques and materials for effectively incorporating young adults into Adult Basic Education classes were created, and data concerning the characteristics of young adults was collected and studied.

By adapting the guidelines that have been set forth in this report to meet the needs of the individual school district, Adult Basic Education directors throughout the state can duplicate similar dropout projects within existing ABE programs. Such projects will not only bring increased enrollment, but more importantly, will cause a decrease in the number of educational dropouts and success for the individual student.

APPENDIX

TABLES

- Table I - Direct Referrals
- Table II - Reasons for Withdrawal From High School
- Table III - Correlation of Reasons for Withdrawal and Characteristics
- Table IV - Summary of Adult Education Dropout Project Students
- Table V - Characteristics Statistical Data

MATERIALS

- Orientation Unit
- Statement of Purpose
- Dropout Referral Form
- Progress Report Form
- Telephone Script
- Follow-up Form
- Welcome Letter

TABLE 1

DIRECT REFERRALS

	Principal/ Administrator	Home Based Coordinator	Counselor	Total
Northeast	6	3	20	29
Pasco	2	0	25	27
Southeast	1	2	30	33
Southwest	3	7	10	20
Westport	0	1	14	15
Lincoln	2	1	8	11
Van Horn	0	0	12	12
Central	1	0	20	21
East	3	2	17	22
Fairview	0	0	5	5
G.R. Anderson	5	0	0	5
T.A.P.C.	0	0	5	5
K.C. Technical	0	0	2	2
Nowlin Jr. High	0	0	1	1
Board of Education Personnel	7	0	0	7
Court	0	0	30	30
De La Salle	8	0	0	8
Double E Program	0	0	2	2
Operation Lift	0	0	3	3
Out of the City	8	0	0	8
OIC	0	0	20	20
CEFA	0	0	1	1
Community Agency	0	0	9	9
Total	47	19	250	316

TABLE 11

ADULT EDUCATION DROPOUT PROJECT

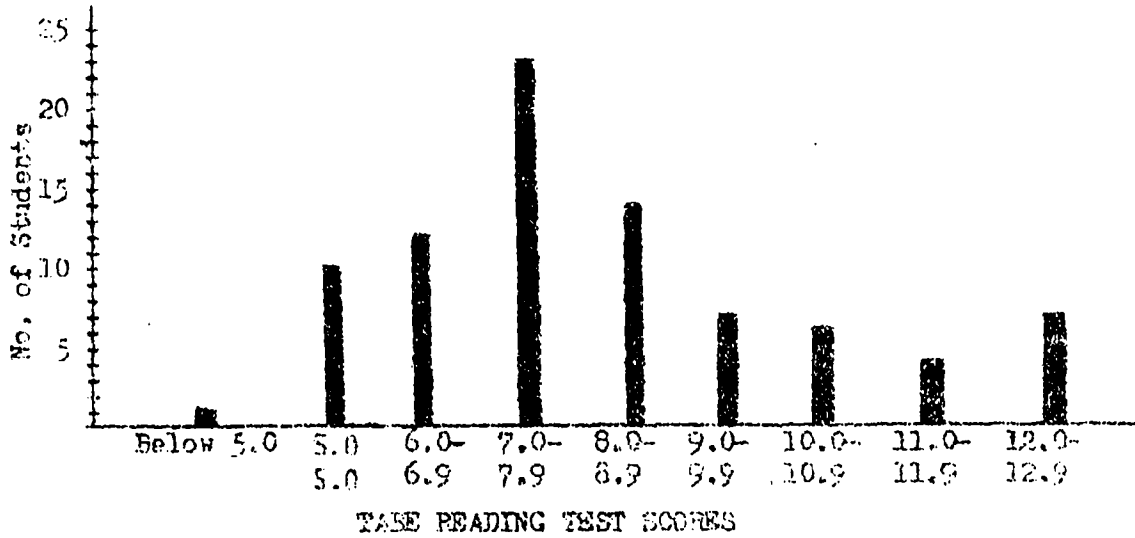
Reasons Given For Withdrawal From High School

1.	Lack of credits to graduate/failing classes	125
2.	Disciplinary withdrawal	75
3.	Lack of interest/bored with school	44
4.	Had a baby or child care problems	44
5.	Needed or secured a job	31
6.	Excessive absences	26
7.	Family problems	21
8.	Moved out of original school's boundaries	20
9.	Peer problems	17
10.	Put in Juvenile Home	16
11.	Health problems	15
12.	Just didn't like school	15
13.	Went to Job Corps	12
14.	Conflict with teacher	4
15.	Felt wasn't learning	4
16.	Personal problems	3
17.	Got married	3
18.	School too confining	2
19.	Enrolled in alternative program	2
20.	Wanted to get G.E.D.	2
21.	Transportation problem	2
22.	Refused to go to school	1
23.	Records destroyed in fire	1
24.	Class placement conflict	1

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REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM HIGH SCHOOL:
LACK OF CREDITS TO GRADUATE

ENTRANCE READING TEST SCORES



AGE AT TIME OF WITHDRAWAL
FROM HIGH SCHOOL

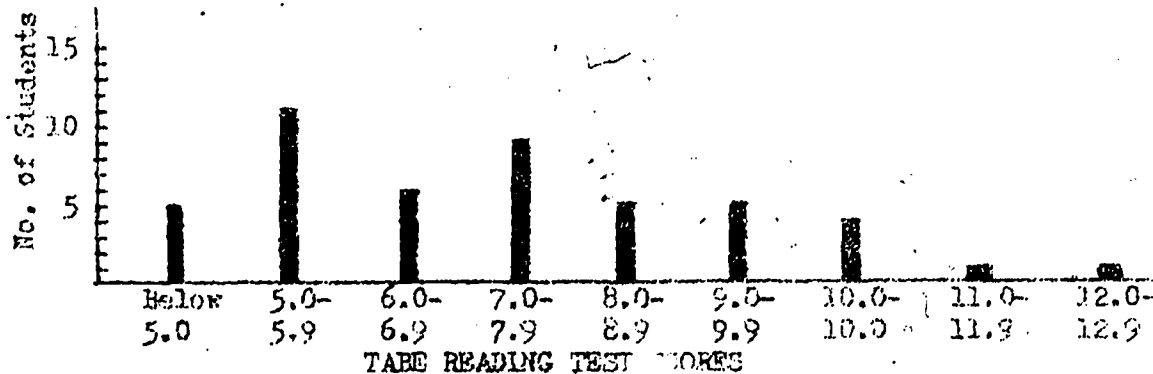
16 years - 22%
17 years - 43%
18 years - 24%
19 - 24 yrs - 6%

STUDENTS' CONCEPTION OF
GRADE LEVEL COMPLETED

9th Grade - 6%
10th Grade - 50%
11th Grade - 44%

REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM HIGH SCHOOL:
DISCIPLINARY WITHDRAWALS

ENTRANCE READING TEST SCORES



AGE AT TIME OF WITHDRAWAL
FROM HIGH SCHOOL

16 years - 33%
17 years - 51%
18 years - 10%
19-24 yrs - 6%

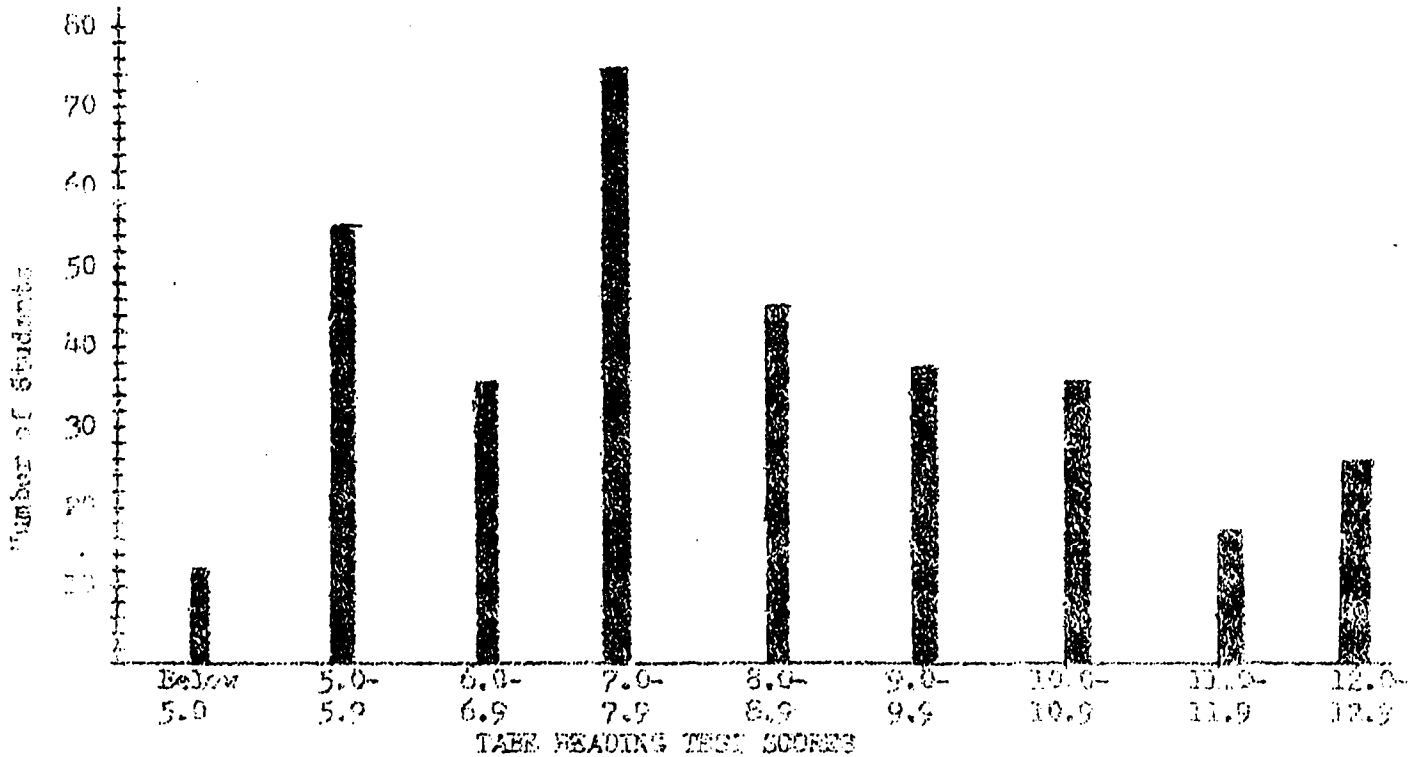
STUDENTS' CONCEPTION OF
GRADE LEVEL COMPLETED

9th Grade - 15%
10th Grade - 60%
11th Grade - 25%

TABLE IV

SUMMARY OF AIRLIFT EDUCATION DROPOUT PROJECT STUDENTS

ENTRANCE READING TEST SCORES



AGE AT TIME OF WITHDRAWAL FROM HIGH SCHOOL

16 years - 134 (28%)
 17 years - 194 (40%)
 18 years - 110 (22%)
 19-24 yrs - 47 (10%)

SEXES

Male - 277 (57%)
 Female - 203 (43%)

LENGTH OF TIME OUT OF SCHOOL

Less than six months - 276 (57%)
 Six months to one year - 166 (34%)
 One year or more - 43 (9%)

RACE OR ETHNIC GROUPS

Black - 344 (71%)
 White - 134 (28%)
 Other - 7 (1%)

TABLE V

CHARACTERISTICS STATISTICAL DATA

Age

	Overall	Successful Students
16 yr. old	28%	21%
17 yr. old	40%	51%
18 yr. old	22%	23%
19-24 yr. old	10%	4%

Number of Referrals

Referred to an ABE class	Overall	Successful Students
	75%	77%

Reading Test Scores

	Overall	Successful Students
Below 5	3%	4%
5.0-8.9	16%	16%
6.0-6.9	10%	14%
7.0-7.9	22%	22%
8.0-8.9	14%	18%
9.0-9.9	11%	10%
10.0-10.9	11%	10%
11.0-11.9	5%	3%
12.0-12.9	8%	3%

TABLE V
(Continued)

SEXES

	Overall	Successful Students
Male	57%	66%
Female	43%	34%

Reasons for Withdrawal

	Overall	Successful Students
Lack of Credits	28%	32%
Disciplinary	16%	20%
Lack of Interest	10%	13%
Job	6%	4%
Child Care/Baby	10%	7%
Moved	4%	4%
Health	3%	2%
Jail/Juvenile Home	3%	3%
Peer Problems	4%	4%
Job Corps	2%	2%
Absences	5%	4%
Family Problems	4%	3%
Married	.6%	1%
Transportation	.4%	1%

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ORIENTATION UNIT FOR
ADULT BASIC EDUCATION TEACHERS

"Incorporating Young Adults Into
Regular Adult Classes"

Each recent high school dropout who enters an Adult Basic Education class can represent an exciting challenge for the instructor. These young adults have unique characteristics, behaviors, and needs which may demand special attention. To successfully incorporate these students into regular Adult Basic Education classes, teachers must recognize the recent dropout's special needs and be prepared to meet these needs.

Many young adults who "drop out" of high school have poor self images. They have been labeled as failures and have negative attitudes toward school. However, the student has not given up on education. By enrolling in an Adult Basic Education class, the student is demonstrating his desire to complete his educational goal.

To facilitate teachers who will be working with young adults in their regular classrooms, the following orientation unit has been designed. Successful Adult Basic Education teachers are already utilizing some of the techniques that are mentioned; however, many guidelines have been added or modified to specifically meet the needs of the young adults. All experiences listed may not be relevant to every classroom, but most can be adapted for each individual class.

Objective: To motivate students to remain in Adult Basic Education classes through the first twelve hours of instruction.

Experiences and Techniques:

1. Recognize the student upon his/her entry into class. If it is not possible to immediately go to the new student, recognize him/her with a smile, a nod of the head, or other verbal or non-verbal responses that say, "I'll be right there."
2. Talk with the student on a one-to-one basis.
 - a. Discuss the student's previous school experience.
 1. Why and when did the student withdraw?
 2. How many credits does the student have?
 3. Was the student referred directly from the high school?
 - b. Explain the Adult Basic Education program to the student.
 1. The concept of individualized instruction.
 2. The importance of diagnostic testing.
 3. The student's role as an active participant.
 - c. Answer questions that the student may have about the program.
3. Describe the Adult Diploma Program to those students who lack only a few credits to graduate from high school. (See the ABE Teacher's Handbook for further details about this program.)
4. Aid the student in completing the Student Information Sheet and other forms which must be completed. Be sure that all blanks are completed and correct.
5. Discuss the regulations that have been set for the class. Young adults need to know immediately what they can and can not do.
6. (Optional) Give the student a welcome letter. (A copy of a welcome letter follows this unit.)
7. Give each enrollee a student folder in which progress, attendance, and test results can be recorded.
8. Begin each young adult on a standardized diagnostic test. Recent dropouts are accustomed to taking tests and do not fear this process.
 - a. Explain the examples and scoring procedure.
 - b. Place the student in a quiet area to take the test.
9. Outline the student's strengths and weaknesses on a prescription sheet and place the results in the student's folder.
10. Make assignments on the appropriate level for the student. See that the student finds success quickly and often.
11. Provide adequate feedback to the student on his progress.

Outcome: Over 80% of the student who enroll in the Adult Basic Education class, should complete 12 hours of instruction.

Section II
Referral and Feedback

Objective: To maintain an on-going referral and feedback system between high school personnel and Adult Basic Education instructors.

Experiences and Techniques:

1. Make sure that each recent high school dropout (16 or 17 years of age) has a "High School Dropout Referral Form" on file before officially enrolling him/her into the Adult Basic Education class.
 - a. If the student does not have a referral form, one of two courses of action may be followed:
 1. Give the student a Referral Form and ask him/her to return it to his/her former counselor or principal for completion.
 2. Telephone the student's former counselor and ask that a Dropout Referral Form be mailed to the Adult Basic Education office. (This option is recommended when students seem particularly upset or anxious about returning to their former school.)
 - b. Remember: When calling counselors or principals ABE instructors should identify themselves as being part of the Kansas City School District's Adult Basic Education program.
2. Provide feedback to the high school counselors on the progress of their former students who are now enrolled in the Adult Basic Education classes.
 - a. Student's progress and attendance should be recorded on a "Dropout Referral Progress Report" form and returned to the Adult Basic Education office for distribution on a quarterly basis. (A sample copy of a Progress Report form is at the end of this unit.)

Outcome:

1. All students 16 and 17 years of age will have referral forms on file in the Adult Basic Education office.
2. Progress reports on recent high school dropouts will be made and distributed to secondary counselors on a quarterly basis.

Objective:

1. To motivate former high school dropouts who have enrolled in Adult Basic Education classes to complete their educational goals.
2. To increase retention in Adult Basic Education classes by maintaining a follow-up system.

Experiences and Techniques:

1. Help each student develop realistic short-term goals, define attainable long-term goals, and discuss methods of reaching those goals.
2. Evaluate students at regular intervals to see that progress is being made. For full time classes, students should be retested on a standardized test after every 50 hours of instruction.
3. Encourage student's successes by acknowledging progress.
 - a. Praise the student.
 - b. Use certificates of achievement when possible.
 - c. Display "Success" charts and graphs listing people who have completed a goal or shown improvement.
4. Make follow-up contact on students who have not attended class for three consecutive class meetings.
 - a. Record telephone contacts on a follow-up form. (See attached sheet)
 - b. Send letters to students who do not have telephones. (See attached sheet)

Outcomes:

1. Students should improve one grade level in one area for every fifty hours of instruction.
2. Retention rate should be above 80%.
3. Over 1/3 of all students who are not attending ABE classes will return after being contacted by the teacher.

SUMMARY

Incorporating young adults into regular adult basic education classes can be a challenge. They require special attention, motivation, and direction. But by utilizing the special techniques and experiences that are mentioned in this Orientation Unit, teachers can effectively work with young adults and help them to find success.

ADULT EDUCATION DROPOUT PROJECT

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We in Adult Basic Education believe that it is best for young adults, 16 to 18 years of age, to remain in high school.

We believe that the total high school experience offers many opportunities that the single Adult Basic Education class does not afford. We feel that the secondary school environment allows for the gradual maturing of the student, as well as providing a well rounded curriculum which helps prepare the student for adult responsibilities.

The Adult Education Dropout Project was developed to facilitate only the confirmed dropout. The program was designed to serve those students who, after all retention and counseling techniques have been exhausted, will not continue in high school. The Adult Education Dropout Project may be viewed as a viable alternative for the confirmed dropout who would not or could not otherwise complete his/her high school education.

HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT REFERRAL

High School

Date

_____ is being referred to Adult Basic
Student's Name

Education classes to study toward eventual GED Testing.

This student has permission to take the GED test when he/she is academically
prepared to do so.

School Official's Signature and Title

DROPOUT REFERRAL PROGRESS REPORT

Each of the following students has been referred by a Kansas City Missouri High School into the Adult Education Program. This report reflects data accumulated during the month of _____.

NAME	ENROLLMENT DATE	REFERRAL HIGH SCHOOL	ATTENDANCE			PROGRESS			COMMENTS
			STEADY	PERIODIC	NOT ATTENDING	GOOD	FAIR	NONE	

"WHAT IS ADULT BASIC EDUCATION?"

Telephone Script

CALLER: "Hello _____ . I'm calling from _____
Name of Student Name

of organization."
"Our records show that you have withdrawn from _____
Name of

high school."

(PAUSE BRIEFLY FOR RESPONSE.....THEN CONTINUE)

CALLER: "Let me tell you about an exciting program that was designed just for you. Through the Adult Basic Education Program you may enroll in day or evening classes, set your own schedule, attend classes in your own neighborhood, get individualized instruction, and prepare for G.E.D. testing." (PAUSE)

"And all of this is free!"

"If you would like more information about this program or other alternative programs, call 842-8965, or visit the Adult Learning Center at 1514 Campbell. Let me give you that number again, it's 842-8965."

ABE STUDENT FOLLOW-UP FORM

SITE: _____

INSTRUCTOR: _____

Each student who, without prior notification, has missed over three consecutive class meetings should be contacted.

NAME	PHONE	FIRST CONTACT Date: Response:	SECOND CONTACT Date: Response:	THIRD CONTACT Date: Response:	REMARKS DATE
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					



**Adult Education Dropout Project
Welcomes
YOU**

Dear

We are very happy that you have enrolled in one of our Adult Basic Education classes, and are hopeful that you will be successful and meet your goals.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at 842-8965.

Good luck in this new educational endeavor!

Sincerely,

**Patricia N. Long
Project Coordinator**