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ABSTRACT

Guidelines designed to help individual communities achieve the second National Education Goal are offered in this document. The goal states that by the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent. Eight suggestions for creating successful dropout prevention efforts are discussed: start early; set high expectations for all students; monitor student progress closely; personalize instruction; keep classes small; make educational experiences relevant; make schooling flexible; and provide help for nonacademic problems. Other characteristics of successful dropout prevention programs include creation of an "insider environment" for at-risk students, legitimate opportunities for success in that environment, at least one totally committed person, and support from school and community leaders. Nine community dropout prevention programs are described and five resource groups are listed. (Contains 18 references.) (LMI)

What Other Communities Are Doing....

National Education Goal #2

By the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.

Few education issues have attracted more attention in recent years than the dropout problem.

While school completion rates have actually risen in recent decades, students who drop out of school face increasingly dim job prospects. The 14 percent of our 23- and 24-year-olds lacking a high school diploma are likely to spend much of their lives chasing after a shrinking pool of low-paying, dead-end jobs.

Today, most of us see a high school diploma as the "minimum credential" for pursuing the American dream. Most of us want to do whatever it takes to make sure that all our children stay in school and learn what they need to know in order to live, work, and compete in today's world.

So, what can a community do to increase its graduation rate to at least 90 percent?

However a community is organizing to reach the National Education Goals, creating a community-wide strategy to increase the graduation rate means developing answers to three important questions:

- **What is the graduation rate in our community now?** It may be helpful to note that there is a difference between the dropout rate and the graduation rate, and there are also various ways to measure them.

- **What will it take to increase the graduation rate to meet our goal?** Developing answers to this question also means determining what the community is already doing to help students stay in school.

- **What are other communities doing?** Every challenge you may face in increasing the graduation rate in your community is being met successfully somewhere by someone. By looking around the country, you can discover innovative approaches and ideas that may be right for your community.

Research points to at least eight approaches that are the ingredients of successful efforts to prevent students from dropping out of school.

1. Start Early

Most students who fall behind two grade levels (or more) never catch up. But many children have already fallen behind by the time they enter school.

As is suggested in the National Education Goal #1, "Readiness for School," preparation for success in school begins long before that first day in school.

That's why school districts in Missouri go to families of young children *before* they enter school. People from the community offer families with young children a variety of support—home visits by other parents who can help, screening for preschool children, books and toys, social activities with other parents, and more.

In Salem, Oregon, a community college, the Even Start program, the health department, the housing authority, the public library, the children's services division, the family services division, and the local newspaper work together to offer low-income families a strong preschool program, parenting skills, and basic employment and literacy skills.

2. Set High Expectations for All Students

As students enter junior and senior high, many find themselves "tracked" into remedial courses where the teacher expects little of them and where they're asked to do dull, repetitive, drill-and-practice assignments. They feel like they're doing time. Too often, they are.

High expectations, rigorous content, challenging assignments that require students to think, wrestle with ideas, write, solve problems scientifically, use mathematics, apply analogies from history—these are characteristics of what used to be thought of as an "elite" education. More communities are agreeing that is the only kind of education worthy of their children. And they want ALL their children, not just a few, to have it.

Many schools provide special programs for at-risk students—individual tutoring, one-on-one instruction, and others. But in schools where many or most students are at risk of dropping out, such "add on"programs are less effective. Schoolwide solutions are needed.

Schoolwide change is what Accelerated Schools are about. Created by Stanford professor Henry Levin, the idea is to accelerate—rather than slow down—instruction. The goal is to make sure that low-achieving children are brought up to grade level by the end of the sixth grade. This approach helped Daniel Webster Elementary School in San Francisco make the greatest gains in test scores in the city last year.

3. Monitor Student Progress Closely

The strongest sign that a child may quit school is poor academic performance—low test scores, low grades, failing a course, being held back a year. Any dropout prevention effort must include close monitoring to ensure that all students learn what they must know and be able to do to succeed at the next, more challenging level of academic performance. And such monitoring must be followed by intensive intervention for all students who need it.

At South Pointe Elementary School in Miami Beach, each student receives an individualized education plan. Developed with input from parents, these plans help teachers monitor student progress and adjust instruction to individual student needs.

4. Know the Signs

Research has identified at least six factors that are commonly found in students who drop out of school:

- Live with one parent
- Live in a low-income household
- Have parents who dropped out of school
- Have a brother or sister who dropped out of school
- Have limited proficiency with English
- Have no adult supervision when they arrive home from school.

These six factors were used in the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) to look at 8th graders nationwide. NELS:88 found that one out of five American 8th graders lives under two or more of those circumstances. These 8th graders are six times as likely as 8th graders sharing none of the six characteristics to say that they do not expect to graduate from high school.

Many schools are using these and other traits to help determine, "Who, among our students, is at risk?" Once identified, those students then are given special attention from the school, and in many cases, from business and the community.

4. Personalize It

There are as many reasons for dropping out as there are dropouts. But among those who leave school, a common complaint is often heard: "No one cared whether I stayed in school."

Personalized instruction tells these students that someone cares so much that lessons are being tailored specially for them. Many dropouts and at-risk students are able to learn basic skills when provided individualized opportunities to learn, often through self-paced, computer-assisted instruction.

At Fairdale High School in Louisville, Kentucky, at-risk students are tutored by student volunteers from honors classes.

5. Keep It Small

The fewer students in a class, the easier it is for the teacher to manage personalized instruction.

Smaller schools, too, are generally considered more effective in keeping kids from dropping out. The Carnegie Corporation has recommended, for instance, that middle schools have no more than 200 to 300 students. Others suggest 300 to 500 students.

It has been said that the ideal size is where the principal knows every student by name. In schools with more than 500 students, it's easier for individual students to be unknown, lost in the crowd. And anonymity too often leads to apathy, low effort, low grades, and dropping out.

6. Make It Relevant

Many students see no connection between what they're learning in school and the outside world. They don't see how staying in school can improve their prospects for the future. When students do see a direct relationship between what they're doing in school, their work experience, and possible careers, they're more likely to stay in school and be engaged in school work.

To help students see that connection, many communities provide opportunities for students to learn academic and vocational skills together. Students at California's Partnership Academies learn English, mathematics, and science as they apply skills from those disciplines to health, business, computer science, or other vocations. Businesses donate equipment, lend facilities, and provide mentors and jobs for students.

7. Make It Flexible and Provide Second Chances

Many students have trouble with the rigid schedule of school. For these students, "alternative schools" can provide opportunities for curricular and organizational variation.

Hundreds of potential dropouts in New York City earn a diploma each year by attending class in the evenings at Manhattan Comprehensive Night School. Flexibility is the guiding principle at "Manhattan Comp," as it's called. Students may begin their "school day" later than the normal 5 pm if their jobs require it. A liberal "stop-out" policy allows students to leave school temporarily when work or family situations demand it.

Cities in Schools, with programs in San Antonio, Atlanta, and over 100 other communities, reaches adolescents who had dropped out of school. Parental involvement and small classes that emphasize interpersonal skills and traditional values are at the core of each program. Cities in Schools fosters unprecedented teamwork among businesses, schools, volunteer organizations, and social service agencies to help students re-enter and stay in school.

8. Help With Non-Academic Problems

Pregnancy, drugs, family problems—these problems walk through the schoolhouse door with many students every day. These students need someone to take a special interest in them, someone to spend time helping them with their in-school and out-of-school problems, someone to increase their interest in school.

Individual counseling is often a good way of working with troubled students. Small-group counseling, peer counseling, and family counseling can also help.

A one-on-one relationship with a mentor or tutor can give an at-risk student the individual attention that may be missing at home.

Providing health care and day care for children of students can help teenage parents stay in school.

The Los Angeles Education Partnership sponsors coordinators in schools to develop a "structured way of building relationships" with public and private agencies—relationships that they then use to arrange coordinated services for students.

Conclusion

Communities that begin to study this issue come across all sorts of statistics, programs, and other sometimes complicated challenges. It may be helpful to keep in mind that most successful approaches rely on a few basic principles.

Some of those principles were identified in 1989 by Dr. Barry Kibel. He reported findings from a comparison of dropout prevention activities in two

kinds of schools: schools having few dropouts and schools having many. Dr. Kibel found four low-cost characteristics of successful programs:

- ▲ The creation of an "insider environment" for students who are at risk—a program within the school that at-risk students can identify with, feel good about belonging to, and "exert energy and effort to retain good standing." This, says Kibel, is "the single most important ingredient" of the successful programs he observed.

- ▲ Legitimate opportunities to be successful within that insider environment. The environment has lots of "activities and challenges that the at-risk student can undertake and do well. Expectations are made clear, and progress toward goals can be mapped and acknowledged."

- ▲ At least one person who is 100 percent committed to making the dropout prevention program succeed. This person "cares about every single student within the insider environment."

- ▲ Support for the program from leaders within the school and the community.

The following pages include a number of more detailed descriptions of the approaches communities across the country are using to increase the graduation rate, as well as suggestions for further reading in this area:

What Other Communities Are Doing

Dropout Prevention, Tulsa County, Oklahoma

Purpose: Stringent enforcement of Oklahoma's Compulsory Education Law and a proactive dropout prevention program have reduced Tulsa County's dropout rate by 43 percent in two years.

Description: The enforcement effort is the combined work of the Tulsa County District Attorney, Superintendent of Schools, Police Department, and attendance officers designated by each of the county's 13 school districts.

During the first year of the 'crackdown' (1989-90), 250 truancy cases were processed through the courtroom of District Judge William Musseman, Jr. The fact that twice that number of students stayed in school over the previous year indicates that the mere threat of a misdemeanor charge is a deterrent to truancy.

Students with chronic attendance problems are visited at home by uniformed police officers, and parents are issued a written warning indicating that charges will follow if the situation does not improve. In most cases, this is sufficient to prevent further truancy and the ultimate slide to dropout status.

Augmenting the anti-truancy efforts is Tulsa County's Student Training and Reentry Program (STAR). STAR is a year-round dropout prevention and retrieval program sponsored by Tulsa County Area Vo-Tech, the *Tulsa World Newspaper*, and the Tulsa County Superintendent of Schools.

STAR's program begins with an in-depth student interview and a series of assessment services in reading, math, career aptitude, and vocational interests. Nearly 70 percent of the students interviewed complete the assessment process and enter a follow-up conference with a STAR counselor. If the counselor and student feel it is appropriate, the student then enrolls in STAR's career orientation course, a nine-week, half-day instructional program for students aged 14 to 21.

Why It Is Promising: According to the program's survey of students, about three-quarters of the course's graduates enter or plan to enter vocational training. The other 25 percent expect to return to public school, or enroll in an alternative school or higher education program.

Kara Gae Wilson, Tulsa County Superintendent of Schools, describes the program this way:

> "There will always be two kinds of people: those who participate in responsible behavior because they want to, and those who participate because they have to. In Tulsa County, parents have a new awareness of the law and are participating in improved school attendance, one way or another."

In 1986 Oklahoma's graduation rate was 31st in the nation, at just over 70 percent. As a result of community-wide efforts to cut the dropout rate, Tulsa is well on its way to becoming the first county in the state to meet the second National Education Goal of a 90 percent graduation rate.

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Cities in Schools - Rich's Central Academy, Atlanta, Georgia

Purpose: Cities in Schools (CIS), the nation's largest non-profit organization devoted to dropout prevention, serves the second National Education Goal in a unique way. Since 1977, CIS has helped to establish 44 programs for more than 27,000 students in 110 communities in 16 states. CIS also helps communities develop partnerships between businesses, schools, volunteer organizations, and social service agencies to provide integrated services to at-risk youth. Integrated services make it easier for teenagers to get the right help, right away. And with the great variety of problems they face, they need no longer "shop around" from one service agency to another.

Description: Rich's Central Academy was originally located on the sixth floor of Rich's Store for Homes, a downtown Atlanta department store that closed its doors in 1991. The Academy represents a unique partnership between three bodies: the Atlanta Public School system, Rich's Store for Homes, Inc., and the Exodus Corp., a non-profit education group. Atlanta Public School System supplies all teachers and curriculum materials; Exodus hires the administrators and support staff and acts as the local affiliate of CIS; and Rich's provides financial support and—until recently—space for the school.

The Academy was founded in 1982 to reach adolescents who had dropped out of school, were low achievers, trouble makers, or were not able to succeed in a traditional school setting. Students are referred to the academy by guidance counselors, teachers, principals, parents, and former graduates. Over 100 students attend daily; and since its inception, over 200 students have graduated and gone to college, trade schools, the military, or found employment.

Classes at the Academy are small—the pupil/teacher ratio is about 12 to 1 and over 37 mentors and tutors volunteer their services. The program stresses interpersonal skills, and the importance of traditional values.

Parental involvement is the rule at the Academy. Phone calls to parents and progress reports are daily occurrences. It is not uncommon for teachers and the principal to call parents just to ask how they are doing and keep the parents informed about what is going on in school. Regular contact with parents also helps cut down on absenteeism. When a student fails to show on a given day, a call goes out to their parents. And roll calls are taken both in the morning and after lunch.

Why It Is Promising: According to Academy principal Leo Jackson, the secret of the school's success lies in the personal and one-on-one attention students receive from their teachers and the demonstrated commitment of the volun-

teer employees from Rich's Store for Homes who offer their services as mentors and tutors and even as members of the Board of Directors. "The staff try to convey to the students that each student matters," Jackson says.

Students succeed at the Academy. At least 91 percent of the seniors graduate; most enter job placement programs; and many enter the military. One goal yet to be realized is to have at least 20 percent of the seniors go on to some form of higher education. "In the meantime," says Jackson, "We are mindful that most of our students do not come from backgrounds that value education. If they weren't here, they'd be on the streets. Our goal is to help them build a better future than that."

The CIS model varies from city to city. The CIS program is supported through an interagency funding agreement involving the Departments of Justice, Labor, and Health and Human Services. Over the past six years about $12.8 million has been provided for the program.

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Paquin School, Baltimore, Maryland

Purpose: The Laurence G. Paquin Middle-Senior High School serves the second National Education Goal by preventing pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers from dropping out of school. Paquin is a one-stop service-school for pregnant girls who range in age from 11 to 19. Day-care, job training, pre- and post-natal counselling, health care, and a full slate of academic courses make up Paquin's comprehensive curriculum.

Description: Since its founding in 1966, the Paquin school has provided an alternative setting for girls to continue their education and learn useful work skills while awaiting motherhood. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, Baltimore has one of the nation's highest teenage-pregnancy rates, with mothers younger than 20 accounting for 23 percent of all births in 1988. The national figure is 12.5 percent. Yet, institutions like the Paquin School remain uncommon.

Paquin serves roughly 800 students over the course of a year, and attendance varies widely from month to month. The dropout rate fluctuates similarly, from 66 percent in the 1985-86 school year, to 8 percent in 1990-91.

To bolster attendance and encourage punctuality, Paquin offers a "dollar-a-day" program. Students with better than 80 percent attendance rates are awarded a dollar for each day they attend, with 25 cents subtracted for each lateness. These same students are also eligible for a $5 cash award for every "B" grade and $10 for every "A" under the school's Star Performance program. The funds for these programs are donated by members of the local community.

Thursday is service day at Paquin. In addition to the regular staff of nurses and counselors, an obstetrician/gynecologist and a pediatrician are on site to provide medical, and maternal services. Paquin's services integration promotes regular attendance by eliminating the need to go elsewhere, and helps ensure the girls receive the care they and their babies need. Success is evidenced by high birth-weights, healthy babies, and very low infant morbidity.

When the students are not studying algebra or biology, they learn how to care for their babies and how to provide for them without resorting to welfare. In the Entrepreneur Room, students plan, design, create and market an entire line of children's clothing now available in local Baltimore stores and soon to go on the shelves at JC Penney. The experience builds self-confidence while teaching a variety of useful and saleable skills.

Paquin girls recently participated in the National Executive Women's Network Trade Show, where they modeled their clothing line, Young Sensations. During a visit to Paquin, US Air employees demonstrated that women are pilots, ground workers, and navigators, as well as stewardesses and air traffic controllers.

Why It Is Promising: The "I can you can too" program at Paquin invites women from the local community to meet with students and act as mentors and role models. Paquin's principal, Rosetta Stith, calls it "reality training." "Each one reaches one, and the girls learn up-close the life skills they need to survive in this world."

Stith maintains that this kind of enterprise demands versatility; but its ultimate success depends on a "consistent, collective vision shared by everyone involved. A caring and nurturing environment...recapturing the social capital that has been lost in recent times."

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Manhattan Comprehensive Night School, New York

New York City Public School System has taken a novel approach to keeping kids in school by adapting one high school's schedule to that of its working students. Classes at Manhattan Comprehensive Night High School are held from 5 pm to 11 pm. This school provides a way for working students to continue their education, and in doing so, serves the second National Education Goal—raising the graduation rate to at least 90 percent.

Description: Manhattan Comprehensive Night High School was the first in the country to offer young people the option of studying full-time at night toward a regular academic diploma. Flexibility is the school's guiding principle.

Courses are ten weeks long, and classes are held Monday through Thursday evenings. In those four days, the students meet the state requirement for five days of academic instruction. The school is closed on Friday nights to allow students a break from a hectic week of work and study. On Sundays, students with children may include them in a variety of extracurricular activities organized by the school such as field trips, cultural and family activities, parenting groups, individual studies, and lectures on health issues.

Most of the students have full-time jobs and live on their own; about half have children of their own. Most have been to two or three schools before coming to Manhattan. Students from all over New York City are eligible to attend, and there is active recruiting: The staff sends postcards to all students in a targeted age range listed on a city-provided roster of dropouts. The only criterion for admission is that the prospective student be able to complete studies before age 22.

Manhattan Comprehensive is a relatively small school, with approximately 450 students. It operates in a building which serves during the day as an annex to another high school and has easy access to public transportation. Friedman stresses that the school is "catered to the needs of the students and it helps greatly that transportation is centered around Manhattan."

The school works hard at acquiring the necessary tools to help students. For example, prior to Manhattan Comprehensive, night-time transit passes for city school children were unheard of but now exist through the Transit Authority. A liberal "stop-out" policy is used to allow students to leave classes temporarily when work or family situations require and to return later. What makes Manhattan Comprehensive a "school of choice," according to Friedman, is that "this is a community of people choosing to be there—students, teachers, and

businesses are partnering—and it is a very nurturing environment. There are no tricks, just flexibility."

Why It Is Promising: As a New York City Public School dependent on public resources, the school operates within a budget similar to those of conventional city schools. Collaborations with numerous private and public groups have enabled the school to offer some additional programs at little or no cost to the city. Officials observe that the dropout rate for students appears lower at this school than at most other New York City schools, and much lower for students with similar characteristics. School officials estimate that more than 60 percent of the graduates go on to college. Since opening Manhattan Comprehensive in February of 1989, the City of New York has opened three other schools in the same model, one in each of the city's other boroughs. "Every city should have one, or a version of it," says Friedman.

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Accelerated Schools -Daniel Webster Elementary, San Francisco, California

Purpose: The Accelerated Schools approach accelerates learning, so that children at risk for failure and dropping out can learn at a faster rate and catch up to their age peers.

Description: The Accelerated Schools program attempts "to transform schools that enroll high concentrations of students in at-risk situations so that they enter the educational mainstream by the end of elementary school." The program concentrates on teaching students to think rather than merely repeat and emphasizes that the process of change must involve a schoolwide effort.

Why It Is Promising: The Accelerated Schools philosophy is based on three underlying principles—achieving unity of purpose, giving schools power and responsibility for teaching, and building on strengths of the students, parents, and teachers. Henry Levin, the founder of the movement, developed the Accelerated Schools philosophy in response to his experiences studying the economics of education in the late 1970s:

1. Levin observed that no one in schools seemed to be aware of what anyone else was doing. For example, a third-grade teacher could be teaching something that would have bearing on a student's fourth grade experience, but the two teachers would never know it. Different entities were involved in planning, implementation, and evaluation, leading to fragmentation and conflict of purpose. To prevent this, Levin contends that school communities must establish a common vision shared by parents, teachers, staff, and students.

2. Levin maintains that forces outside the school often dominate programs for at-risk students and create an environment of passive compliance. In keeping with much of the current research on school reform, Levin advocates giving schools increased responsibility for important decisions affecting student success.

3. Levin noted that schools tend to focus on the weaknesses of at-risk students. Accelerated Schools, by contrast, begin by building on the strengths of students, parents, teachers, and other school staff.

These three principles underlie the Accelerated Schools process from the selection of curricula and instructional strategies to the transformation of the entire school into a dynamic environment that pursues high academic achievement for *all* students.

The established process for starting an Accelerated School takes between three and five months to initiate. The entire school community takes stock, creates a vision, identifies priority challenge areas for action, creates governance structures, and uses an inquiry process to identify the underlying causes of priority challenge areas and to begin solving them. Specific guidelines are being published for accomplishing these steps. A newsletter has recently been started to report information on Accelerated Schools.

Evaluation: Levin and his colleagues have designed a model for evaluation that incorporates decision processes, implementation, and student outcomes. Efforts are in progress at Stanford to prepare an information-gathering protocol to be used by Accelerated Schools to collect data on both the process of acceleration and the progress of students.

Several schools that have adopted the Accelerated Schools program have reported some preliminary results that focus on student outcomes. For example, at Hollibrook Elementary School in the Spring Branch Independent School District in Houston, Texas, student and teacher self-esteem and morale increased; incidents of vandalism decreased by 78 percent; 94 percent of all parents attended the spring parent-teacher conferences; and students' scores on the Texas Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS) rose from 60 to 82 percent. At Jefferson Elementary School in Jacksonville, Illinois, the number of students scoring in the lowest percentile in reading decreased by 47 percent in one year.

Where to See It: Currently, there are approximately 50 different Accelerated Schools projects in operation, including several funded by Chevron, USA, and state networks of Accelerated Schools in Missouri and Illinois. The Daniel Webster School in San Francisco (described below) and Hoover Elementary School in Redwood City, California, in particular, welcome visitors.

Daniel Webster Elementary School: Daniel Webster Elementary School in San Francisco takes a nontraditional approach to compensatory education. Instead of focusing on drill and repetition, as do most remedial programs, Daniel Webster School seeks to develop students' abilities to think and reason. The curriculum emphasizes active and interactive learning, discourse, solving problems, and research. Daniel Webster School applies thematic learning, incorporating all subjects into single activities. The school depends heavily upon—and promotes aggressively—the involvement of parents.

Many of the 340 students in grades K-5 at Daniel Webster Elementary School are at-risk students. In addition, many of the pupils among the ethnically

diverse student body are bused to their school or are recipients of the free-lunch program.

During the first year of the program, the primary concern of Henry Levin and the school community was to promote the involvement of parents. By the end of the year, there were parent volunteers in the classrooms, in the front office, and on the playground. Furthermore, there were more opportunities for social interaction between parents and teachers.

From a staffing standpoint, Daniel Webster School's major challenge was to find time for teachers to work together to plan and implement change. Largely because the school's principal took an active role, many teachers actually sought, rather than avoided, chances to take part. Now, teachers participate in every aspect of running the school, including budget planning.

In 1990, Daniel Webster School had the largest percentage gain on the California Test of Basic Skills in language and the second-largest gain in mathematics of all 72 elementary schools in San Francisco. Since autumn 1986, when Daniel Webster and Levin's Stanford team first joined forces, the school has also witnessed significant increases in student interest and parent participation.

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James Comer's School Development Program (SDP)

Purpose: SDP allows parents and school staff to apply principles of child development to support healthy development of children and, in turn, promotes learning. The SDP brings together all members of the larger school community to adopt a "no-fault" problem-solving approach and to make decisions by consensus, with the purpose of creating a social infrastructure that makes improved teaching and learning possible.

Description: The SDP program was developed by James P. Comer of Yale University for inner-city elementary schools but is now operating in a few middle and high schools and in some schools in middle-income areas. The SDP model includes a governance and management team with representatives of parents, teachers, administrators, and staff; a mental health or support services team; and a parents' program. The governance and management team, which is representative of all adults involved in the school, meets on a weekly basis. The team serves four functions:

1. To establish policy guidelines for the curricular, social climate, and staff development aspects of the school program;

2. To carry out school planning and resource assessment;

3. To coordinate the activities of all individuals, groups, and programs at the school; and

4. To work with the parents' group to plan an annual social activity calendar.

A classroom teacher, the special education teacher, the social worker, and the school psychologist typically make up the mental health or support team. The team integrates mental health principles with the functioning of all school activities and gives individual teachers suggestions for managing problem behaviors.

The parents' participation program works at three levels:

1. It structures broad-based activities for a large number of parents.

2. Approximately one parent per teacher works in the classroom as a tutor, an assistant, or an aide.

3. A few highly involved parents participate in school governance.

Why It Is Promising: Comer identifies the underlying problems responsible for poor performance of inner-city elementary school students as "family stress and student underdevelopment in areas needed for school success, as well as organizational, management and child development knowledge and skill needs on the part of the school staff." Comer focuses on students' lack of social, as well as intellectual, skills needed for school success. Because school staff lack appropriate training, they blame students' poor achievement on a lack of inborn ability and poor motivation, and the staff respond with low expectations and punishment. The SDP incorporates a desire to work differently with actual building-level mechanisms to enable families and all school staff to address problems together.

Costs: There are continuing costs associated with research and development for the SDP at the Yale University Child Study Center. However, because the program uses existing personnel, the only additional costs to districts are training and related travel. As discussed later, the Rockefeller Foundation is considering ways in which training costs can be lowered without sacrificing any of the key elements of the program, through videotapes and local university training sites. However, the new strategies are untested.

The Rockefeller Foundation has committed $7.5 million to supporting the program over a five-year period. The main purposes of the effort are to explore ways to begin program implementation that are independent of Comer and to make the School Development Program more widely available to school districts across the country. The Rockefeller grants have been used to develop videotapes designed to instruct staff at the local level in applying SDP. The videotapes will provide individual schools with a permanent record of model SDP practices.

Evaluation: Achievement in SDP schools varies from district to district and from school to school within the same district. Variations in achievement may stem from variations in level and quality of implementation of the SDP; organizational stability at the district level; student mobility, curricular and instructional support; quality of teaching staff; and pedagogical sensitivity to cultural diversity and students' needs.

In districts where the SDP has been in place for several years, school achievement data show varying degrees of academic growth. Martin Luther King High School was one of the two New Haven schools where SDP was introduced in 1968. At that time students there were scoring below average and were at the bottom of the district in academic achievement; now they are scoring at or above grade level. For example, in 1989, fourth-grade students at

King scored at the 70th and 77th percentile in language and mathematics, respectively, on the Metropolitan Achievement Test.

Controlled studies that randomly selected students from carefully matched SDP and non-SDP schools have indicated significant differences in favor of SDP schools on measures of achievement, self-esteem, and behavior. For example, seventh-grade students in SDP schools earned significantly higher overall grade-point averages and mathematics grades than students in non-SDP schools. Haynes, Comer, and Hamilton-Lee (1988, 1989) reported significantly greater one-year gains for SDP elementary students on the California Achievement Test and on grade-equivalent scores in reading, mathematics, and language.

An evaluation of the SDP in Prince George's County, Maryland, middle schools is currently in progress with support from the MacArthur Foundation. The Rockefeller Foundation is also supporting a national evaluation of the SDP partnerships with universities and the recently established Comer Project for Change in Education.

Where to See It: Some 150 schools have adopted SDP. The New Haven schools, which were the first to adopt Comer's program, may still be the best place to see the program. The program is also operating in some schools in Prince George's County, Maryland, and is being started in the District of Columbia, in a partnership with Howard University. Other areas that have instituted SDP include Benton Harbor, Michigan; Sarasota, Florida; Norfolk, Virginia; and Leavenworth, Kansas.

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Partnership Academies, California

Purpose: The Partnership Academies provide academic and vocational training to disadvantaged students who are at risk of dropping out of school and who lack skills for entry-level jobs; build a partnership between business and public schools by satisfying the needs of companies for employees in rapidly growing fields of employment; and establish a model for dealing with youth unemployment.

Description: The academies model was initially developed by the School District of Philadelphia for disadvantaged students. The Partnership Academies model in California is a three-year school-within-a-school program for students in grades 10-12. Students must be at risk of dropping out of school but must also meet certain entry criteria—including a reading achievement level of at least grade 6 and sufficient motivation and self-management skills to succeed in the program.

The most important aspect of the Partnership Academies model is the integration of the vocational-technical program with core academic subjects in a way that lets students see the importance of their academic subjects in the world of work. Depending on the academy's vocational focus (e.g., health, business, computer science), students are "block scheduled" into integrated academic and technical courses involving three or four courses—including English, mathematics, social studies or science, and technical courses. Students move together from class to class during the day and are taught by the same team of teachers from year to year.

Although businesses donate equipment and allow the academies to use their facilities for field-trip sites, the most important function of businesses is to provide mentors and jobs for academy students. A mentor is assigned to each academy student in the 11th grade to serve as a role model. Students who successfully complete two years in the program *and* receive recommendations from their teachers work full-time in the summer after their junior year and half-time in the second semester of their senior year.

A reduction in the overall teaching load and the reduced student-teacher ratio in academy classes give teachers time to prepare specialized instructional and ancillary activities for students; to monitor and consult on student performance and attendance; to provide personal counseling, including referral to community agencies; and to contact parents as needed.

The Partnership Academies program in California was started in 1981 by the Sequoia Union High School District, the Stanford Mid-Peninsula Urban Coali-

tion, and a group of high-technology companies located in the northern portion of California's Silicon Valley. The California State Department of Education has designated the Partnership Academies as a model school-to-work program, and legislation was passed in 1984 to replicate the academies and in 1987 to expand those replications. There are 50 replications of the Partnership Academies in California, with state support of over $2 million in 1990-91.

Why It Is Promising: The academies have been cited as "the best single model in the country for business involvement in the schools" by Public Private Ventures, a nonprofit organization. The partnership between the academies and businesses provides opportunities for students to gain work experience, to meet adult supervisors and models in the workplace, and to relate their academic learning to the world of work—facilitating the transition from school to work for at-risk youth.

Costs: Depending on the technical focus of the academy, the start-up costs are substantial because of the need to purchase state-of-the-art equipment. For example, equipment for a fully networked computer lab costs approximately $60,000. Businesses involved in the partnerships often contribute a substantial portion of this cost; in the 1987-88 school year, the private sector contributed about $800,000 to support 10 academies. Annual costs average $750 to $1,000 per student, in addition to the regular district per-pupil expenditure.

Evaluation. Program evaluations have been conducted annually since 1981. Academy students have a higher daily attendance rate (90 percent) than the overall rate at their host schools (77 percent). They receive better grades and drop out of school half as often as the comparison group and perform at a level equal to that of the school as a whole on math, reading, and writing tests. When evaluated by their company supervisors on job performance, they received an average of 3.8 on a five-point scale (1=poor, 5=excellent).

Where to See It: Projects recently developed in Pasadena, California, include computer, aerospace, health care, and printing academies. The business technology academies in Sequoia School District have an interdisciplinary curriculum that uses interactive computer technology to incorporate thinking and problem-solving skills into the English, social studies, mathematics, and business technology coursework.

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LaGuardia Middle College High School, New York City

Purpose: LaGuardia is designed to reduce the high school dropout rate, to prepare students more effectively for college or work, and to attract more at-risk students to higher education.

Description: LaGuardia Middle College High School is an alternative high school located on the LaGuardia Community College campus for students in grades 9-12. LaGuardia shares all its facilities with the high school students. The students are given a college I.D. and have access to the college library, cafeteria, science and computer labs, art studio, and gyms. Location of the program on a college campus eliminates the stigma that is often associated with an alternative school. Daily association with college students enables high school students to identify with peers and mentors.

Location on the college campus encourages the college and high school faculties to team teach the interdisciplinary curriculum. For example, a college professor and high school teacher teach a science/English class together. This arrangement also gives teachers greater opportunities to develop curricula and to emphasize learning through projects which require students to use knowledge in more than one subject. Middle College students may choose their classes, including college courses, as long as they meet New York State and City diploma requirements.

Each year, students attend school for three trimesters, one of which is in an internship program usually with a social service agency. Students receive academic credit for the internship experience but are not paid.

Middle College has an intensive guidance program with three full-time guidance counselors and three paraprofessionals for 500 students. The students most at risk participate in daily group guidance sessions based on the principle that the students care most about what their peers think of them and will respond more readily when fellow students tell them to stop taking drugs or drinking. Small class size also enables teachers to give students personal attention.

An international Middle College has also been developed using the same structural model that recruits students with limited English proficiency (LEP) who have been in the United States four years or less. The purpose of the program is to reduce the dropout rate among LEP students and encourage immigrants to continue on to higher education. The program features instruction in the content areas in English.

Why It Is Promising: Middle College High School has been cited by Gene Maeroff, education writer for the *New York Times*, as one of the best examples of a merger of efforts by a high school and a college. The location of the program on a college campus not only eliminates of the stigma often associated with attending an alternative school for at-risk students, it allows use of college facilities and permits team-teaching efforts between college and high school faculties. It also provides an opportunity for students to become familiar with a college environment, encouraging them to enroll in postsecondary education.

Costs: The program is funded through the regular formula for alternative schools received from the New York City Board of Education. LaGuardia Community College annually provides approximately $40,000 worth of in-kind services, such as teacher training and building maintenance. The cooperative education segment of the program allows small class size and differentiated staffing. Because students spend three sessions in academic classes and one session in an internship, fewer students are in classes during any session. The program has also reallocated staff positions, so there are fewer administrators than in most high schools.

Evaluation: The dropout rate from Middle College has consistently been below the dropout rate for all New York City high schools and well below the average for the 16 alternative high schools in the New York City system. Attendance rates have been between 75 and 80 percent, substantially above the attendance rates of students targeted in New York's Dropout Prevention Initiative, who may have comparable academic histories.

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Valued Youth Partnership, Texas

Purpose: To help children who have limited-English proficiency and are at risk for dropping out of school to achieve academic success and improve their language-arts skills.

Description: The Valued Youth Partnership program was modeled after a cross-age tutoring program developed by the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA), funded by Coca-Cola USA, and implemented in collaboration with five school districts in San Antonio, Texas, between 1984 and 1988. The program targets middle school students who meet with their teacher-coordinator once a week to develop self-confidence and to improve reading, writing, and other academic skills so that they can teach these skills to elementary school students. Offered as an elective, the class is coupled with actual tutoring sessions which take place four times a week. Prospective tutors learn key elements of teaching, including development of lessons, appropriate teaching activities, and evaluation. Student tutors receive a minimum wage for their efforts. The program also encourages school attendance, which is closely monitored. When middle school tutors move to high school, they continue to be involved in the program as mentors of middle school tutors.

Students explore economic and cultural opportunities in the broader community through field trips throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to attend field trips. Mentors and role models, who are considered successful in their fields and who have ethnic backgrounds similar to those of students, participate as guest speakers. Students' efforts and contributions as tutors are recognized throughout the year; students receive T-shirts, caps, and certificates of merit; are invited on field trips with the students they are tutoring; receive media attention; and are honored at a luncheon or supper.

Why It Is Promising: The Valued Youth Partnership program's success is attributed to the idea of valuing at-risk children by placing them in positions of responsibility, as tutors of younger students, and paying them a minimum wage for participation in the program.

Costs: In June 1990, the Coca-Cola Foundation announced a five-year, $1.325 million grant to the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) to expand the Valued Youth Partnership program in five school systems in predominantly Hispanic areas of Texas, California, Florida, and New York. An administrator from IDRA monitors program implementation and ensures that in-service training is provided for teachers and coordinators. A program coordinator, overseen by a school principal, is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the program at each site. School districts are respon-

sible for the teacher-coordinator's salary; grant funds are used for the remainder of program services, including stipends for tutors, training, field trips, and the awards banquet. Per-student costs, based on 25 tutors and 75 students tutored, range between $140 and $200 per year.

Evaluation: An evaluation of Valued Youth Partnership program sites funded in 1988 compared at-risk, limited English-proficient middle school student tutors with a matched comparison group. After two years, only 1 percent of the tutors had dropped out of school, compared with 12 percent of the comparison group. The reading grades of tutors also improved more than expected over the two-year period, while the reading grades of the comparison group were not significantly better than expected based on their baseline reading grades.

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Sources of Further Information

Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students
The Johns Hopkins University
3505 North Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21218
(301) 338-7570

Funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education, the center attempts to improve significantly the education of disadvantaged students, focusing on the school as the major source of improvement; to address the needs and interests of the educationally disadvantaged at all levels of development; to address the unique needs of language- minority students; and to incorporate the family and community into the school improvement effort.

National Research Center on Education in the Inner Cities
Temple University
13th Street and Cecil B. Moore Avenue
933 Ritter Hall Annex
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19122
(215) 787-3001

Funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education, the center aims to strengthen education and related resources in inner cities by conducting interdisciplinary research and development on child socialization practices in inner-city families, on childrearing skills support programs, and on major problems such as substance abuse faced by adolescents in the inner-city schools; by investigating school interventions that foster success among inner-city students with diverse learning characteristics and needs; and by encouraging linkages between schools and community organizations designed to improve the education of inner-city children, youth, and young adults.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation
New Futures Initiative
One Lafayette Place
Greenwich, Connecticut 06830
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New Futures is a multicity, foundation-funded initiative designed to reduce school dropouts and school failure, teen pregnancy, and youth unemployment. New Futures seeks to develop a sense of community urgency and public

accountability for the problems and dilemmas facing youth and to foster changes in the way community institutions collaborate, fund, plan, and deliver services to youth. Four cities have been awarded grants to develop and implement an oversight collaborative group representing all facets of the community, a case management system that puts each youth in contact with one adult who focuses specifically on that youth's needs, integrated services to youth, and a management information system that allows the progress of youth cohorts to be tracked over time.

The National Dropout Prevention Center
Clemson University
205 Martin Street
Clemson, South Carolina 29634-5111
(803) 656-2599

The National Dropout Prevention Center maintains a program profile data base on dropout prevention projects across the United States, publishes a newsletter and other reports on solutions and strategies for dropout prevention, and organizes an annual National Dropout Prevention Conference.

The WAVE (Formerly 70001 Training and Employment Institute)
501 School Street SW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20024
(202) 484-0103

The goal of Work, Achievement and Values in Education (WAVE) is to help school systems design and implement dropout prevention programs and to provide preemployment training and related services to at-risk youth. The WAVE model is made up of competency-based preemployment training, remedial education, motivational development services, job placement, and follow-up services.

Further Reading on National Education Goal #2

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Eckstrom, R., M. Goertz, J. Pollack, and D. Rock. 1987. "Who Drops Out of High School and Why? Findings from a National Study." In G. Natriello ed., *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies.* New York: Teachers College, Columbia University. Analysis of *High School and Beyond* data on school-related and socioeconomic background factors related to dropping out of high school.

Elmore, R. ed. 1990. *Restructuring Schools: The Next Generation of Educational Reform.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. A collection of papers on the varied proposals for restructuring schools to address a range of curricular, professional, and organizational issues and the resources required for successful reform.

William T. Grant Foundation Commission. 1988. *The Forgotten Half: Non-College Youth in America.* Washington, DC: Youth and America's Future: William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family, and Citizenship. Recommendations on the improvement of secondary education for those students who do not enroll in college or other postsecondary training.

Howe, Harold II. 1987. "1980 High School Sophomores from Poverty Backgrounds: Whites, Blacks, Hispanics Look at School and Adult Responsibilities" *Research Bulletin.* Washington. DC: Hispanic Policy Development Project. Fall. Analysis of *High School and Beyond* data on student attitudes and expectations about assuming adult responsibilities and policy recommendations.

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Reisner, E., and M. Balasubramaniam. 1989. "School-to-Work Transition Services for Disadvantaged Youth Enrolled in Vocational Education." Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates. An examination of the circumstances underlying the school-to-work transition problems of disadvantaged youth and strategies adopted to address these problems.

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