

**Two Can Reduce School Dropout:
A Live Student and a Wired Teacher**

A Paper Presentation

For

The American Education Week/Urban Education Conference

College of Education and Human Development

Jackson State University

Jackson, MS 39217

November 14, 2007

By

Ruben Gentry, Ed.D.

Professor of Special Education

Jackson State University

Jackson, MS 39217

ruben.gentry@jsums.edu

(601) 979-1064

**Two Can Reduce School Dropout:
A Live Student and a Wired Teacher**

Abstract:

If today's schools were perfect in everything that they do, they would only be 70% effective in educating American students. That is because 30 out of every 100 students drop out of school before graduation. Research has suggested a number of factors as causes and offered recommendations for intervention. The causes are categorized into two dimensions – individual and institutional. Many of the proposed solutions to the problem call for significant commitment in terms of money, school restructuring, and improving socio-economic conditions. Such remedies hold promise but they would require considerable time from the initiation of effort to the point where the impact could be felt; the current generation of students would not be helped. Here, the case is made for taking what is currently available and making the best use of it. Two things that all schools have in common are students and teachers. Students and teachers have unrealized potential for making school into what Americans dream it should be. If students would recognize and demonstrate that they are **Live** (endowed with a head to think, a heart to love, hands to serve, and health to survive) and teachers would recognize and demonstrate that they are **Wired** (prepared and positioned to transmit knowledge, transform minds, and illuminate lives), school would be too attractive, inviting, and beneficial for students to dissociate themselves from it before graduation. This paper addresses the school dropout problem from a very pragmatic point of view.

Introduction

School dropout is a major challenge for American schools and its effects are devastating to the victims, their families, and to society. There is a need to gain a clear understanding of the problem and to initiate promising strategies and plans for its resolution. Too much is at stake for anyone who has any responsibility for the education of children to further delay action.

The problem can be better understood by investigating researched reasons for school dropout, the extent of the problem's magnitude, key demographics of the picture, and the impact of the problem on the individual, family, and society. It is also important to review efforts that are in place to reduce school dropout; after which, it will be time to get creative and imaginative about finding effective solutions to the problem.

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to document the magnitude of school dropout and the various demographics associated with it; and to analyze noted dropout prevention plans, programs, and strategies to extrapolate what students and teachers might best do to minimize the probability of students leaving school before graduation. Emphasis is placed on strategies that can be implemented and made part of normal school functioning. It is felt that when school efforts are added to society's greater future commitment to education and improvement in socio-economic conditions, school dropout may become a concern of the past. A very proactive position needs to be taken. Every student and every teacher must "put their shoulder to the plow" and truly declare that "a mind is a terrible thing to waste." This paper provides students and teachers the tools with which to work in accomplishing the task at hand. It also provides an illustration of how two (a teacher and students) are taking steps to impact the problem, along with future implications for addressing the matter.

Magnitude and Demographics of School Dropout

It is reported that about two-thirds of all students -- only half of all Blacks, Latinos, and Native Americans -- who enter ninth grade graduate with regular diplomas four years later. For minority males, these figures are far lower (Orfield, 2006). The NEA reports that the 30 percent of high school students who drop out before graduation amounts to about one million students failing to graduate from high school each year. Only five in 10 Black and Hispanic students graduate on time with a standard diploma, and less than one-half of American Indian and Alaska Native students complete high school (*NEA on dropout prevention*, n.d.).

Students most at risk of dropping out of school are those with poor academic performance, repeat one or more grades, of low socioeconomic background, speak English as a second language, become pregnant, and are frequently absent and/or truant (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). Other research amplifies and expands these findings, stating that students most apt to drop out are in large cities (Hispanics are twice as likely as African Americans, while White and Asian Americans are least likely to dropout), have changed schools two or more times (25%), were held back a grade(20%), or put on in-school suspension (one-third) (Focus Adolescent Services, n.d.).

Why Students drop out of School

Research delineates both individual and institutional factors that lead to school dropout. At the individual level, the most specific reasons were “did not like school (46 percent), “failing school” (39 percent), “could not get along with teachers” (29 percent), and “got a job” (27 percent). The individual perspective focuses on attributes of the students including their values, attitudes, and behaviors that contribute to their decisions to quit school. The institutional perspective focuses on the contextual factors found in students’ families, schools, communities,

and peers. Some predictors of dropping out of school are poor academic achievement, absenteeism, discipline problems, residential and/or school mobility, high school employment, teenage pregnancy, demographic variables, disabilities, and low educational and occupational aspirations (Rumberger, 2006a). Other reasons for dropping out include did not get along with students, did not feel safe, had a drug or alcohol problem, and even “good” reasons such as to get a job to support the family, or got married, or became a parent. The later reasons may even be supported by people closest to the dropouts in belief that the dropout had no other choice (Focus Adolescent Services, n.d.). Added to the list may be peer pressure and lack of attention, which are most likely to occur between the ages of 15 and 17 (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.).

Impact of School Dropout

The implications of the high dropout rates are far reaching and devastating for individuals, communities, and the economic vitality of this country. Yet, because of misleading and inaccurate reporting of dropout and graduation rates, the public remains largely unaware of this educational and civil rights crisis. Very little energy has been put into addressing this problem, or even into producing accurate statistics on graduation levels (Orfield, 2006).

Dropping out often leads to economic and social tragedy. High school dropouts are far more likely than graduates to be unemployed, in prison, unmarried or divorced, and living in poverty. Two-thirds of prison inmates are dropouts, and 52 percent of all African American male dropouts, in their early thirties, have prison records (Orfield, 2006).

School dropout has negative consequences for both the individual and the country. For the individual dropout, employment opportunities are more limited; there is high-risk for such things as premature sexual activity, early pregnancy, delinquency, crime, violence, alcohol and drug abuse, and suicide are higher; income is lower; and welfare and other social programs are

likely used. For the country, the social and economic consequences of school dropout include an underskilled labor force, lower productivity, lost taxes, and increased public assistance and crime (Woods, n.d.).

The gap between dropouts and more educated people is widening as the need for higher skilled workers increases. Dropouts will earn \$200,000 less than high school graduates over a lifetime, will make up nearly half the heads of households on welfare, and will make up nearly half the prison population (Focus Adolescent Services, n.d.).

Despite the magnitude of school dropout, overall impact on the problem is limited. Educational Testing Services is credited as stating in *One-Third of a Nation: Rising Dropout Rates and Declining Opportunities* that little is being done to address rising dropout rates, earnings for dropouts are declining in the job market, and there has been a reduction in public investments in effective second-chance efforts. High school completion rates continue to dwindle (the U.S. ranks 10th in the world), students are dropping out earlier (more students are being flunked to repeat Grade 9), there are too few counselors, and there is a decline in federal investment in efforts to combat dropout (Focus Adolescent Services, n.d.).

Efforts to Reduce School Dropout

One of the National Education Goals adopted in 1990 was to increase the high school graduation rate to 90 percent by 2000, with a related objective to eliminate the existing gap in high school graduation rates between minority and nonminority students. The federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 requires states to incorporate graduation rates in their accountability systems for schools and districts. Consequently, numerous programs at the federal, state, and local levels have been established to help reduce the number of students who drop out of school (Rumberger, 2006a).

The literature reports a number of programs found to be successful in reducing dropout rates and increasing school completion rates. Among the programs are (1) The Adopt-A-Student Program in Atlanta, Georgia. It pairs business volunteers as mentors with low-achieving high school juniors and seniors in a career-oriented support system. The results was an increase in graduation rate; (2) The Lincoln Educational Alternative Program (LEAP) in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin is an alternative educational program within a larger high school. The two-semester program combines intense academic and counseling work on social and academic skills for juniors. It reported improved graduation rates for participants; and (3) at George Washington Preparatory High School in south-central Los Angeles, parents and students sign a contract for which parents must attend workshops on how to help their children and must visit the schools at designated times. Teachers must make daily calls to the homes of absentees. Absenteeism has fallen below 10 percent and 70 percent of the students go on to college (Woods, n.d.).

Other programs cited as being successful in increasing student retention are the Talent Development High School, the Communities in Schools program, Maryland's Tomorrow, and The Quantum Opportunities Program. Second-chance programs such as Job Corps, YouthBuild USA, the Center for Employment Training, and the Youth Corps have also been credited as effective at addressing school dropout (Focus Adolescent Services, n.d.).

Strategies reported as having positive impact on preventing school dropout include systemic renewal, professional development, early childhood education, conflict resolution, community collaboration, family involvement, and mentoring/tutoring. It stands out that staff cultural sensitivity and high standards for all students are reported as factors to prevent school dropout (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.).

The NEA has made a strong commitment to dropout prevention. It calls for investing \$10 billion over the next 10 years to support dropout prevention programs. The organization (NEA) has established 12 dropout action steps which include mandating high school graduation or equivalency as compulsory for everyone below the age of 21, graduation centers for students 19-21 years old, make sure students receive individual attention, and acting early so students do not drop out (*NEA on dropout prevention*, n.d.).

Because dropping out is influenced by both individual and institutional factors, intervention strategies can focus on either or both sets of factors. In essence, strategies can address the individual's values, attitudes, and behaviors associated with dropping out; or they may focus on altering the characteristics of the families, schools, and communities that contribute to dropping out of school. Common features among effective programs are (1) a nonthreatening environment for learning, (2) a caring and committed staff who accepts a personal responsibility for student success, (3) a school culture that encourages staff risk-taking, self-governance, and professional collegiality, and (4) a school structure that provides for a low student-teacher ratio and a small class size to promote student engagement. The big question raised was --“Does the U.S have the political will to invest the resources to substantially reduce dropout rates and eliminate disparities among racial and ethnic groups? The answer appeared to be “no,” based on limited support of promising programs (Rumberger, 2006b).

Small Steps for Two

Throughout the literature there are implications for teacher-student based actions that could positively impact school dropout. Under the area of organization/administration, fair but uncompromising discipline and staff development are listed; under the area of school climate, intercultural sensitivity and involving parents in school activities are suggested; under the area of

service delivery/instruction, student-centered programming, providing early intensive intervention, use of tutoring and mentoring programs, and use of instructional technologies are recommended; under the area of instructional content/curriculum, concentrated reading and writing activities, basic skills remediation, test-taking skills, self-esteem building, social skills training, and parenting skills are strongly supported; and under the area of staff/teacher culture, commitment to program success and high student expectations for academic achievement and behavior are suggested (Woods, n.d.). From this general perspective, the concept of the live student and wired teacher is presented. The magic of two is presented as a preface to the concept. A class retention report follows the presentation of the concept.

The Magic of Two. Is one number more efficient and effective than another in bringing about change? In the popular song – “It takes two,” it states that “One can wish upon a star, Two can make a wish come true” (Turner, n.d.). Here are some particular characteristics of the number two. In mathematics, two is the smallest and the first prime number, and the only even one; in religion, everything God created is a duality -- e.g., heaven and earth, sea and land, male and female; animals boarded Noah’s Ark two by two; in culture, perhaps the most common philosophical dichotomy is that of good and evil; in sports, American football, 2 is a jersey number worn by quarterbacks, kickers, and punters; in television (U.S., Canada, and Mexico), two is the lowest channel on which signals are broadcast (Wikipedia, n.d.); in education, two is used as in teaching and learning; and here, two makes reference to student and teacher.

To respond specifically to the question, is one number better than another in bringing about change? The answer may depend on what the change is and how soon it should happen. For immediate and substantial reduction in school dropout, two people -- the student and the teacher, are viewed as key to make an immediate and positive impact on the problem.

The Live Student. A live student is one who demonstrates certain characteristics of existence. To put the characteristics in perspective, consider the content included in the 4-H Club pledge. The four Hs are for head, heart, hands, and health (*4-H in Virginia*, n.d.). It is suggested here that a live student is one who recognizes and demonstrates that he/she has a head to think, a heart to love, hands to serve, and health to survive. Once this level of recognition and performance is achieved, the student will know that he/she is live and ready to take on the challenges of school and life in general.

Live students connect emotionally with the teacher and are motivated to participate actively in their education (Buskist & Bryan, n.d.). During the presentation of this paper, an image was shown of a child with one hand raised as to the sky, eyes bright as a light bulb, and mouth positioned to verbalize at any moment; it was no question as to whether the child was live and ready to learn.

The Wired Teacher. Wereschagin (2007) stated that who the teacher is might be the best predictor of how well students will do. In the study, it was observed that math scores varied as much as 59% from the top teacher's classroom to the bottom, though it was not clear what the teachers did differently. Teachers can work with parents and others to help children remain in school. They can help in making up missed work, help with personal problems, and help them understand that the choices they make can disrupt the chance to finish school (Focus Adolescent Services, n.d.).

It is important that teachers build rapport with their students; establish a harmonious or sympathetic connection with students. In the classroom students need to feel like they belong, and that they are important and valued. Teachers need to extend students a warm and friendly invitation to join the "learning community." Teacher behaviors that help develop rapport include

a sense of humor, being accessible outside of class, facilitating class discussion, showing interest in students, calling students by name, and relating course material in everyday terms and examples. The teacher may also smile a lot; students will think that she likes them and her job. Students respond to positive rapport through increased enjoyment of the teacher and subject matter, motivation to attend class, and motivation to pay more attention in class (Buskist & Bryan, n.d.).

A wired teacher is one who makes the classroom an emotionally charged environment. She is enthusiastic about teaching and passionate about the subject matter. A teacher knows she is wired when students approach her with questions, comments, and personal remarks; when students smile or laugh during class, ask advice about something, or say that they liked a class session (Buskist & Bryan, n.d.).

A wired teacher is more than a person; he/she is a personified force that actualizes human potential to the fullest. During the presentation of this paper, a sketch was shown of a teacher with arms stretched high and wide, a smile that consumed the better portion of the face, and hair that stood up like antennas; it looked like a person electrically charged and ready to teach any student with as much as a pulse of life in his body.

Results from a Special Initiative

While the emphasis so far has been on school dropout, college dropout is also a challenge in America. It has been reported that only 60 percent of college students are obtaining their degrees; or a mere 38 percent of African Americans are graduating from college. Some of the reasons for low graduation rates included lack of academic preparedness, poor economic preparedness, and certain psychosocial variables -- transitioning to college from high school can be anxiety provoking. The latter includes such factors as separation from familiar environments,

primary support network, and areas of expertise; these can create a significant disruption in the lives of new college students. Intervention aimed at ameliorating psychosocial distresses would especially be beneficial in assisting African American college students to succeed academically. What happens to students after they arrive on campus has a greater influence on academic and social self-concepts than does the kind of institution students attend (Henderson & Kritsonis, 2007). It has also been observed that older students and students who delay entry into higher education are more likely to drop out before graduating. These matters as well as other family characteristics are particularly significant factors in explaining student drop out in long programs (Lassibille & Gomez, 2008).

One college professor is endeavoring to make teaching and learning a true adventure. Numerous teaching strategies aimed at making learning authentic and relevant, establishing functional rapport, embedding essential competencies in instructional material, influencing self-determination to accentuate achievement, and employing methods of motivation are brought together in a “groovy student and harmonizing professor” framework (Gentry, 2007). Notable results have been observed in terms of class attendance, purchase and use of the textbook, completion of all course assignments, participation in field-based experiences, and overall grade achievement. Equally noticeable are the enhanced demeanor that the candidates have about the teaching profession and the feelings that they exude as persons. Perhaps nothing can be more rewarding to a professor than to have former students wave from a distance on campus, or while teaching in a classroom, to have students get your attention from the doorway and display a wave or make a warm greeting, or to have students call your name so fondly while walking down the corridor. Recent work from the framework has led to the development of a list of things that

both students and teachers can do to be effective in the college environment; they are provided in Table 1.

Table 1

How to Produce a Quality Teacher Educator

The Things that Groovy Students Learn and Do (They CARE)

- Show **Commitment** in their teacher preparation program
 - Attend all classes and complete all course requirements
 - Study hard and smart; find a good study place, allow ample study time, study ahead of time*
- Seek the highest level of **Achievement** in course requirements
 - Set academic goals for each test and for the final course grade*
 - Read smart and wisely; scan the material, read it, review what you have read*
- Become a **Responsive** teacher educator
 - Learn school policies and be a good citizen in the classroom and on campus
 - Know the instructor's rules and procedures, adapt to the instructor, do your homework, participate in class*
- Show **Enthusiasm** in all engagements and relationships
 - Believe in yourself; have a positive attitude and see yourself succeeding*
 - Be an active learner; listen, think, and respond to class presentations and discussions

The Things that Harmonizing Professors Do

- Aim to teach students as well as the subject
 - Consider both ability and attitude – skill and will – of teacher candidates (Gebhard, 2007)
 - Transform knowledge into effective student understanding
 - Resolve that every student comes to college to earn a quality education
 - Assist with the cognitive and affective (whole) development of students
 - Demonstrate that they are partners with students in the pursuit of an education
 - Show leadership, scholarship, and compassion in working with students
 - Be a good professional role model for students
 - Maintain high expectations, value personal response, and provide authentic experiences
 - Continually work to enhance students' motivation and capacity to learn
-

* Reference: Student Planner. (2007 - 2008). Dayton, OH: Woodburn Press.

An assessment was made to determine the effectiveness of the groovy student and harmonizing professor framework at reducing intra-semester dropout. Data were gathered and analyzed on nine classes taught by the professor in 2006-2007. Table 2 provides the retention rate for the classes. At the university, class roles are purged to eliminate students who preregistered for courses but did not show for class or otherwise made adjustments to their course schedule; in short, course roles are validated. The retention rate was calculated from this point. The results showed that four of the nine classes had a 100 percent retention rate. The overall attendance rate for the nine classes was 96.82 percent.

Table 2

Class Retention Rate for College Students
The Groovy Student and Harmonizing Professor Initiative 2006-2007

Class	Initial Enrollment	Ending Enrollment	Retention Percent
311-F06	33	33	100.00
432-F06	18	18	100.00
504-F06	9	9	100.00
311-S07	29	29	100.00
500-S07	18	17	94.44
304-S07	20	18	90.00
500-Su07	14	13*	92.85
311-Su07	16	15	93.75
Overall	157	152	96.82

Notes: (1) Initial enrollment is the point at which the University purges all classes for official enrollment
(2) 100% of graduate students earned grade “B” or better in the courses
(3) 99.12% of undergraduate students earned grade “C” or better in the courses
*Student withdrew; course was not required and getting to class was a hardship

These results only show student retention from early in the semester to the end of the semester; not retention from freshman year to graduation. However, it amounts to approximately one-eighth of the four-year career and has possible implications for the entire college experience. In essence, if students can be acclimated to stay the course for one semester, the knowledge and skills acquired therein may very well make them better prepared to fulfill the requirements for graduation.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the presenter wanted the session attendees to leave with something that they could use in school or at work, as the case may be. So, to put researched evidence on school dropout and the initiative of the professor in perspective, effort was put forth to develop a list of things that both students and teachers can do to reduce school dropout. A handout was prepared to embody the essence of how a live student and a wired teacher can best work together as two. Table 3 contains ten (10) very specific and poignant measures that students can take and ten (10) suggested steps that teachers can take to reduce school dropout.

Table 3

How Students and Teachers can Reduce School Dropout

Ten (10) Things that Students Can Do to Reduce School Dropout

- Find a reason to attend school; find something or someone to like at school
- Make attending school a habit; get up, getting ready for school
- View school as your vocation; going to school is what you do
- Decide on a certain grade for each assignment; then, set out to earn it
- Pledge to be at the top of your class; especially, for the subjects you like most
- Postpone the gratification of sexual relationships; let the heart grow fonder with time
- Obey school rules and regulations; be a good citizen
- Learn good study and test taking skills; make test-taking as easy as text messaging
- Just say “no” to drugs and other risky behaviors; make yourself feel proud to say no
- Reward yourself for school accomplishments; a movie, favorite food, anything wholesome

Ten (10) Things that Teachers Can Do Reduce School Dropout

- Get to know every student as a learner and a person; tactfully, accept only their best
- Be a true academician – teach every class well; students love a “smart” teacher
- Learn conflict resolution strategies; don’t let one rotten act spoil a whole class
- Attend professional development workshops; stay on top of your game
- Use appropriate instructional strategies and technologies; one size doesn’t fit all
- Seek and maintain family involvement; parents know best the other side of their children
- Accept it as a challenge to teach at-risk students; they simply are diamonds in the rough
- Respect all students and show that you care; they will return the same to you in fourfold
- Recognize and reward students’ efforts; never let a good performance go unnoticed
- If all else fails, smile a lot; students will think you like them and your job (Buskist, W. & Bryan, K.S. (n.d.).

Summary and Implications

It has been said that the longest journey begins with one step. The prevention of school dropout is definitely a long, but absolutely necessary journey that American schools must take.

This presentation has given a global picture of the problem and focused particularly on the steps that two, the student and the teacher, can take to positively impact the problem. Students often have the ability to succeed in school but may need to be convinced that they can be successful.

Teachers need to be empowered to orchestrate classroom climates conducive to meeting the demands of the whole child. If students and teachers do not actively seek to reduce school dropout, they may unwittingly contribute to it.

Things happen when students and teachers rise up and exercise autonomy in reaching their declared destiny. When a student takes to his learning and demonstrates that he is live, he will say to the teacher bring on the English and Social Studies; bring on the math and science, too -- such that at the end of the day, the teacher and student will bid each other good bye, but the student will proclaim, tomorrow, I shall return.

When students say tomorrow I shall return, that will be the day when learning is fun and teaching is like “apple pie;” then, that will be the day when parents see their children grow into glorious adulthood and society will be made the recipient of remarkable citizens. When students say tomorrow I shall return, that will be the day when school dropout shall be no more. And, in retrospect, the impetus for this monumental attainment could well be a live student and a wired teacher.

References

- Azzam, A.M. (2007). Why students drop out. *Educational Leadership*, 64(7), 91-93.
- Buskist, W. & Bryan, K.S. (n.d.). *Rapport-building: Creating positive emotional contexts for enhancing teaching and learning*. Auburn, AL: Auburn University. Retrieved November 6, 2007, from <http://www.psychologicalscience.org/teaching/tips/tips0301.html>.
- Focus Adolescent Services. (n.d.). *Youth who drop out*. Retrieved November 7, 2007, from <http://www.focusas.com/Dropouts.html>.
- 4-H in Virginia*. (n.d.). Retrieved November 6, 2007, from

<http://www.ext.vt.edu/resources/4h/about.html>.

Gentry, R. (2007, September). *It takes 2 to produce a quality teacher: A groovy student and a harmonizing professor*. Paper presented at the annual Reaching Out to Mississippi Education in Action (ROMEIA) conference, Cleveland, MS. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED498729).

Henderson, II, F.T. & Kritsonis, W.A. (2007). Graduation rates at Historically Black Colleges and Universities: A review of the literature. *Doctoral Forum National Journal for Publishing and Mentoring Doctoral Student Research*, 4(1), 1-11. Retrieved January 17, 2008, from the ERIC database.

Laird, J., DeBell, M., Kienzl, G., & Chapman, C. (2007). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2005 (NCES 2007-059)*. U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved November 26, 2007, from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>.

Lassibille, G. & Gomez, L.N. (2008). Why do higher education students drop out? Evidence from Spain. *Education Economics*, 16(1), 89-105. Retrieved January 17, 2008, from ERIC database (EJ780873).

NEA on dropout prevention: Make high school graduation a national priority. (n.d.). Retrieved October 22, 2007, from <http://www.nea.org/lac/dropout/dropoutposition.html>.

Orfield, G. (2006). Losing our future: Minority youth left out. In G. Orfield (Ed.), *Dropouts in America: Confronting the graduation rate crisis* (pp. 1-11). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Rumberger, R.W. (2006a). Why students drop out of school. In G. Orfield (Ed.), *Dropouts in*

- America: Confronting the graduation rate crisis* (pp. 131-155). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Rumberger, R.W. (2006b). What can be done to reduce the dropout rate? In G. Orfield (Ed.), *Dropouts in America: Confronting the graduation rate crisis* (pp. 243-254). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Turner, T. (n.d.). *It takes two lyrics*. Retrieved June 13, 2007, from <http://www.seeklyrics.com/lyrics/Tina-Turner/It-Takes-Two.html>.
- U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). *School dropout prevention program*. Retrieved October 19, 2007, from <http://www.ed.gov/programs/dropout/dropoutprogram.html>.
- Wereschagin, M. (September 11, 2007). Pittsburgh study: Teachers key in affecting pupils' success. *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*. Retrieved November 7, 2007, from http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/tribune-review/pittsburgh/pring_526792.html.
- Wikipedia. (n.d.). Retrieved November 7, 2007, from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2_\(number\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2_(number)).
- Woods, E.G. (n.d.). *Reducing the dropout rate*. Retrieved November 7, 2007, from <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/9/c017.hml>.