

FROM: National Dropout Prevention Center / Network
WEB: <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effstrat,htm>
DA: 2/22/06
RE: Considerations for Improving Student Success

We have identified 15 effective strategies that have the most positive impact on the dropout rate. These strategies have been implemented successfully at all education levels and environments throughout the nation. There are resources, model programs and an overview of each area on the WEBSITE listed at the start of this article.

School and Community Perspective

- **Systemic Renewal**

A continuing process of evaluating goals and objectives related to school policies, practices, and organizational structures as they impact a diverse group of learner.

- **School-Community Collaboration**

When all groups in a community provide collective support to the school, a strong infrastructure is sustains a caring supportive environment where youth can thrive and achieve.

- **Safe Learning Environments**

A comprehensive violence prevention plan, including conflict resolution, must deal with potential violence as well as crisis management. A safe learning environment provides daily experiences, at all grade levels, that enhance positive social attitudes and effective interpersonal skills in all students.

Early Interventions

- **Family Engagement**

Research consistently finds that family engagement has a direct, positive effect on children's achievement and is the most accurate predictor of a student's success in school.

- **Early Childhood Education**

Birth-to-five interventions demonstrate that providing a child additional enrichment can enhance brain development. The most effective way to reduce the number of children who will ultimately drop out is to provide the best possible classroom instruction from the beginning of their school experience through the primary grades.

- **Early Literacy Development**

Early interventions to help low-achieving students improve their reading and writing skills establish the necessary foundation for effective learning in all other subjects.

Basic Core Strategies

- **Mentoring/Tutoring**

Mentoring is a one-to-one caring, supportive relationship between a mentor and a mentee that is based on trust. Tutoring, also a one-to-one activity, focuses on academics and is an effective practice when addressing specific needs such as reading, writing, or math competencies.

- **Service-Learning**

Service-learning connects meaningful community service experiences with academic learning. This teaching/learning method promotes personal and social growth, career development, and civic responsibility and can be a powerful vehicle for effective school reform at all grade levels.

- **Alternative Schooling**

Alternative schooling provides potential dropouts a variety of options that can lead to graduation, with programs paying special attention to the student's individual social needs and academic requirements for a high school diploma.

- **After-School Opportunities**

Many schools provide after-school and summer enhancement programs that eliminate information loss and inspire interest in a variety of areas. Such experiences are especially important for students at risk of school failure because they fill the afternoon "gap time" with constructive and engaging activities.

Making the Most of Instruction

- **Professional Development**

Teachers who work with youth at high risk of academic failure need to feel supported and have an avenue by which they can continue to develop skills, techniques, and learn about innovative strategies.

- **Active Learning**

Active learning embraces teaching and learning strategies that engage and involve students in the learning process. Students find new and creative ways to solve problems, achieve success, and become lifelong learners when educators show them that there are different ways to learn.

- **Educational Technology**

Technology offers some of the best opportunities for delivering instruction to engage students in authentic learning, addressing multiple intelligences, and adapting to students' learning styles.

- **Individualized Instruction**

Each student has unique interests and past learning experiences. An individualized instructional program for each student allows for flexibility in teaching methods and motivational strategies to consider these individual differences.

- **Career and Technical Education (CTE)**

A quality CTE program and a related guidance program are essential for all students. School-to-work programs recognize that youth need specific skills to prepare them to measure up to the larger demands of today's workplace.

updated 3/15/04