Webinar: WHEN DROP OUTS RETURN TO SCHOOL

Presenters: Vanessa Barrat and BethAnn Berliner

Date: January 27, 2017
Welcome!

Ernie Silva
Executive Director of External Affairs
RAPSA / SIATech Schools

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When Dropouts Return to School

Vanessa Barrat
BethAnn Berliner

January 27, 2017
The Problem

- Most recent numbers show over 2.5 million young adults aged 16 to 24 were not enrolled in school or had not received a high school diploma.

- Dropouts are more likely than graduates to experience negative outcomes: unemployment, underemployment, poverty, health problems, and incarceration.

- To raise high school graduation rates, dropout prevention has been gaining momentum.
Reenrollees

Little research has focused on students who drop out and return to high school

- Solving the dropout challenge includes supporting those students who give themselves a second chance at graduating from high school
Learn about:

- Reenrollees by the numbers: quantitative findings
  - The magnitude of reenrollment and characteristics of reenrollees
  - Their education outcomes

- Challenges and suggestions from the field: qualitative findings
  - Push and pull factors for dropping out and reenrolling
  - Challenges districts face when dropouts return
  - Ideas to strengthen policy and practice to improve graduation rates
Dropouts who Return to High School

Reenrollees by the numbers
District- and Statewide Studies

- San Bernardino City Unified School District
  Followed the enrollment histories of all district first time 9th graders in 2001/02 over 5 years (about 4,000 students)

- Utah
  Followed the statewide cohort of students expected to graduate from Utah public schools in 2011 six years after entering high school (about 40,000 students)
Definition of Dropouts

Dropouts are defined according to guidelines established by the National Governors Association (2005):

- High school students who officially withdrew from school but were not known to have been in an education program that led to a high school diploma or its equivalent.
- High school students who did not formally withdraw from school but were under the compulsory school attendance age and stopped attending school and could not be located.
- High school students who reported transferring to another district without having their transcripts sent to the receiving district and were not known to be in an education program that led to a high school diploma or equivalent.
District- and Statewide Enrollment Records

District- and statewide data systems:

- Administrative longitudinal enrollment records that allow following students geographically and through time.
- For each enrollment record, an exit code identifies the reason for leaving the school.
  - Students with an exit code of Dropout, Withdrawn or Unknown were classified as dropouts.
  - Students with a subsequent enrollment record after a dropout event were classified as reenrollees.
Magnitude of the Reenrollment of Dropouts

Utah

- Standard Graduates: 75%
- Dropouts: 19%
- Others: 7%
- Permanent dropouts: 78%
- Re-enrollees: 22%
Reenrollment Rates by Years in High School

- Reenrollment rates decreased with years in high school
  - Mounting pressures of credit deficiencies building over time
  - Students aging out
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of reenrollments</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,469</td>
<td>87.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or more</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,682</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reenrollment Rates by Student Characteristics

Dropout rates:
- 36
- 26
- 34
- 30

Reenrollment rates:
- Race/ethnicity
  - White: 22
  - Hispanic: 22
  - Asian: 14
  - Pacific Islander: 14
  - American Indian/Alaska Native: 23
  - Black: 18
Reenrollment Rates by Student Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dropout rates</th>
<th>Reenrollment rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English learner status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>English proficient: 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>English learner: 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age upon entering high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>14 or younger: 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>15 or older: 18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reenrollment Rates by Student Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dropout rates</th>
<th>Reenrollment rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eligible for the federal school lunch program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with disabilities</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General education students</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reenrollment Rates by Student Characteristics

- Hispanic, Black, ELL, and male students were less likely to re-enroll, resulting in higher rates of permanent exits.

- Students eligible for free or reduced price lunch and students with disabilities students were more likely to re-enroll, resulting in higher rates of temporary enrollment interruptions.
What are the Academic Outcomes before Dropping Out?

Utah

Before dropping out, both re-enrollees and permanent dropouts were not on-track to graduate.
What are the Academic Outcomes before Dropping Out?

San Bernardino

- Before dropping out, both reenrollees and permanent dropouts were not on-track to graduate.
- Before dropping out, reenrollees earned, on average, more course credits than permanent dropouts.
What are the Academic Outcomes after Reenrollment?

Average number of credits accumulated over 4 years by students who dropped out and re-enrolled

Utah

- Most reenrollees did not earn enough credits to graduate
What are the Graduation Outcomes for Reenrollees?

San Bernardino School District:
- 18% graduated with a high school diploma
- 5% still enrolled as of 2005/06
- 1% expelled
- 21% transferred to another district with transcripts received
- 55% dropped out

Utah:
- Graduates 25.6%
- Other completers 2.1%
- Continuing students 5.9%
- Cohort dropouts 66%

Dropping out was not necessarily a permanent outcome: 1/5th to 1/4th of the reenrollees graduated from high school
What are the Graduation Outcomes for Reenrollees?

- **Utah**
  - Two additional years increased the graduation rate of reenrollees to 30 percent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Four-year high school completion outcomes</th>
<th>Six-year high school completion outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other completers</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing students</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort dropouts</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>59.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of students
Key Points

- Dropping out is not a final outcome: many dropouts re-enrolled into the district or state schools.
- Students were late in credits when they dropped out and struggled to catch up upon reenrolling.
- Most reenrollees did not graduate but about 1 in 4 did.
- Extending the analysis in Utah up to 6 years of high school, 30 percent of Utah reenrollees had graduated.
Questions about the presentation?
Discussion about Data Access and Use

Do you track dropouts who reenroll?
- If so, what do you use to track and support them and what additional information would you need?

Do you have access to past and current school records?
- If so, what information do you use to support reenrollees to graduation and what additional information would you need?

What are the challenges to accessing and using data?
Voices from the Field

Challenges, perspectives, and suggestions about reengagement

- Reenrollees
- Educators
Data Sources

- San Bernardino City Unified School District - research study
- Utah Dropout Prevention Alliance - statewide school support
- Washoe County School District - districtwide student voice and reengagement support
Why Students Drop Out?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Push out</th>
<th>Pull out</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic struggles</td>
<td>“Toxic experiences”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boredom at school</td>
<td>Need to make money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited ways to make up credits</td>
<td>Mental health challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A diploma seemed out of reach</td>
<td>Low expectations from family and peers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Why Dropouts Return to School?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Push in</th>
<th>Pull in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under/unemployment</td>
<td>Caring school staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience and wanting a better future</td>
<td>Counseling and academic supports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive adults</td>
<td>Easy reenrollment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation and public assistance requirements</td>
<td>Alternative school and program options</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key issues:

1. Interventions: Traditional high schools often lacked credit recovery and wraparound interventions.

2. Capacity: Alternative school and program options were few and the demand was unmet.
School and District Leader Perspectives

Key issues:

3. Funding: State per-pupil funds were tied to enrollment and attendance rates.

4. Accountability: Repeated dropout events and poor attendance adversely affected school accountability outcomes.
What’s Still Needed? Policy and Practice Suggestions

Targeting additional funds to follow reenrollees to the schools where they return
What’s Still Needed? Policy and Practice Suggestions

Increasing options for recovering/earning credits
What’s Still Needed?
Policy and Practice Suggestions

Using data to flag reenrollees
What’s Still Needed?
Policy and Practice Suggestions

Building alternative accountability approaches
What’s Still Needed? Policy and Practice Suggestions

Case-managing returning students
Questions about the presentation?
Discussion

What policy and practice challenges do you experience in your reengagement efforts?

What’s working?

What still needs to improve?
For more information...

RELWest@wested.org

Vanessa: vbarrat@wasted.org
BethAnn: bberlin@wested.org

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