Creating Postsecondary Pathways To Good Jobs For Young High School Dropouts

The Possibilities and the Challenges

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October 2008

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Introduction

T his paper looks at strategies for connecting high school dropouts between the ages of 16 and 24 to pathways to postsecondary credentials that have value in the labor market. We will highlight examples of innovations in policy, program delivery, pedagogy in adult education, youth development and dropout recovery, and postsecondary education. We do this not only to advocate for expanded adoption of these best practices, but to seed thinking about ways these policies and practices, if better integrated and funded, can bring about more robust and successful dropout recovery and postsecondary education to address this challenge.

Without question, many of the millions of youth who have dropped out of school have talent, ability, and aspirations for a better future and can benefit from being connected to a supported pathway to postsecondary credentials. This tremendous pool of talent and potential, if properly supported and channeled, can help close the skills gap in this country and greatly contribute to our nation's productivity and competitiveness. These youth deserve a second chance, but our second-chance strategies must be more robust and focused on delivering to youth the set of postsecondary skills and credentials that will open the door to higher wages and career opportunities. Thus, converting this raw talent into skilled workers with the credentials and mastery for the 21st-century economy will require considerable rethinking of how our secondary, postsecondary, workforce, adult education, youth development, and youth recovery systems work in tandem to build the supports and create the pathways at some scale to bring these youth back into the education and labor market mainstream.

Why invest in building postsecondary pathways for young high school dropouts?

In recent years the crisis over low high school graduation rates has figured prominently in the debates on education reform. However, the issue of dropout recovery has received much less policy and programmatic attention. The fact that 30 percent of young people—and 50 percent of minority youth—leave our public schools without a high school diploma suggests that not only do we need to shore up the K-12 pipeline, but we must also explore aggressive ways to reconnect dropouts to the education infrastructure in ways that will impart the secondary, postsecondary, and occupational skills they will need to succeed in the labor market.[1]

A range of estimates exist on the number of disconnected youth—those out of school, out of work, and in other high-risk situations. A recent GAO report estimates there are between 2.3 million and 5.2 million disconnected youth between the ages of 16 and 24, depending on definition and methodology.[2] In 2004, the National Center for Education Statistics estimated that there were 3.8 million youth between the ages of 16 and 24 who were not enrolled in school and were without a high school diploma.[3] NCES statistics show that on average, just under a half-million youth drop out of grades 9 to 12 each year.[4]

These dropouts are disproportionately concentrated in high-minority and high-poverty districts and communities. In their report, "Locating the Dropout Crisis," Robert Balfanz and Nettie Legters at Johns Hopkins University's Center for Social Organization of Schools found that nearly half of black students and 40 percent of Hispanic students attend public schools where graduation is not the norm. The report estimates that there are nearly 2,000 high schools in this country where fewer than 60 percent of entering freshmen graduate four years later. The study also found that schools with the worst promotion power are concentrated in some of the nation's most populous states—Texas, California, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, New York, and Ohio, among others.[5] This problem extends beyond just the poor urban communities, affecting suburban and rural communities across the country. In past decades our steel mills, assembly lines, and manufacturing plants provided access to good jobs with good wages for high school dropouts. Few such opportunities exist today for those who are uneducated and unskilled.

It is important to look at the education and labor market options for these youth. Jobs for the Future analyzed data from the National Education Longitudinal Study, which tracked the educational progress of 25,000 eighth graders over the period from 1988 to 2000.[6] The JFF study took a closer look at the behavior of youth who dropped out of

high school. The study found high levels of education persistence among this population. Nearly 60 percent of them eventually earned their high school equivalency—49 percent through GEDs and 10 percent through a high school diploma. Controlling for income, minority youth who were dropouts were just as likely to earn their GED as white youth. Income level made a difference in attainment of high school equivalency. Youth from higher income families earned their equivalency at a substantially higher rate of 85 percent compared to those from low-income situations, who earned theirs at a rate of 43 percent. Forty-four percent of GED recipients enrolled in two- or four-year colleges. However, black youth with GEDs enrolled in college at a substantially lower rate than their white and Hispanic counterparts—30 percent compared to 47 percent for both white and Hispanic youth. Interestingly, the study indicated that black youth were much more likely to enroll in industry certificate programs.

The JFF study provides compelling evidence of the willingness and desire on the part of these youth to improve their labor market and educational status. It also provides evidence that with access to alternative options for high school credentialing, a substantial proportion of these youth can achieve the academic skill level to pass the GED and reach the doorstep of postsecondary institutions. An important observation is that during the period of the National Education Longitudinal Study—1988 to 2000—there was significantly higher investment in youth development programs and GED preparation through both the Workforce System and the Welfare system. This fact should be considered when accounting for the relatively high level of educational re-engagement. In recent years, these systems have experienced substantial retrenchment in

funding and serve only a fraction of the need. The JFF findings make the case for the value of increased investments in building alternative pathways to reconnect these youth.

The JFF study also indicates that despite their persistence, the discouraging fact is that very few (10 percent) of those dropouts who earn a high school equivalency and then enroll in a two- or four-year college succeed in earning a postsecondary degree. Researcher Russell Rumsberger evaluated the research on the labor market value of a GED versus a high school diploma.[7] His research suggests that at least some dropouts who earn the equivalent of a high school diploma through examinations such as the GED do not fare as well in the labor market as students who complete a regular diploma. However, he cites two studies showing that while those dropouts who achieved a GED did not earn significantly more than other dropouts immediately after completing school, their earnings did grow at a significantly faster rate over the first six years of post-school work experience, and they were more likely than dropouts to obtain postsecondary education and training.

The population of young dropouts is not monolithic in its reasons for leaving school early, its education attainment, or its support needs. In the 2006 report, "Silent Epidemic", researchers surveyed 457 dropouts across 25 communities. They found that failing in school was cited by only 35 percent as a reason for dropping out of school.[8] A substantial portion of students left school for other-than-academic reasons, including life circumstances such as needing to work, pregnancy and parenting, or caring for other family members.

Recent studies have documented that this population, despite its premature exit from high school, displays substantial resilience, motivation, and aspirations for higher education and a better life. Researchers from JFF concluded after analysis of the National Education Longitudinal Survey data that the commonly held perception of dropouts as lacking in motivation and not sharing mainstream values is incorrect.

The Center for Law and Social Policy found similar results in a 2006 survey of 193 dropouts from 13 communities. When surveyed about their aspirations, 40 percent had postsecondary ambitions and 65 percent had specific occupational areas in mind. These included mechanical engineering, nursing, dental hygiene, business, criminal justice, social work, journalism, mortuary science, forensic science, and early childhood education.[9] Thus, finding ways to not only expand access to postsecondary education and training, but also to support the persistence of these youth to achieve some level of credentialing is key to putting them on track to good jobs and good wages.

Beyond just the need to provide new options for disconnected youth populations, there is an economic imperative to aggressively work to connect these young people to postsecondary skills and credentials. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. economy will produce 15.6 million net new jobs between 2006 and 2016.[10] Nearly half of those jobs will require postsecondary credentials. In fact, jobs requiring postsecondary education will grow by 17 percent—nearly double the rate of 8.8 percent for jobs that will not. Eighty percent of the 30 fastest-growing occupations—including allied health, computer-related, environmental science, and social

and human services—will need a highly skilled and educated labor pool to draw from to remain competitive in a global market. Increasingly, access to family-sustaining wages is predicated on a skill set that reflects postsecondary training and credentials. Quality of life in our communities and the economic viability of our urban core and rural communities require that we rethink how we prepare the population of young people to be assets as we build the regional engines for economic growth.

Educational attainment is highly correlated with earnings and employment. In 2006, adults with an associate's degree earned 21 percent more and had an unemployment rate 30 percent lower than those with a high school diploma. Those with a high school diploma earned 42 percent more and had an unemployment rate 36 percent less than those without a high school diploma.[11] The returns on occupational associate's degrees are higher than academic associate's degrees, although these returns vary by occupational field.[12] Occupational certificate and associate's degree holders also generally experience higher returns on education in terms of wages, employment, and earnings than those with similar years of education but no credentials.[13]

But despite these trends, all is not well on the labor supply side. Our education pipeline has serious leakage—for every 10 students that enter ninth grade, only 7 will graduate high school. Four will enroll in college, and only two will complete an associate's degree or higher. Over the course of the last two decades, the United States has lost ground internationally compared to other developed nations on key education indicators. We rank 18th as a nation in the proportion of youth who graduate high school.[14] In
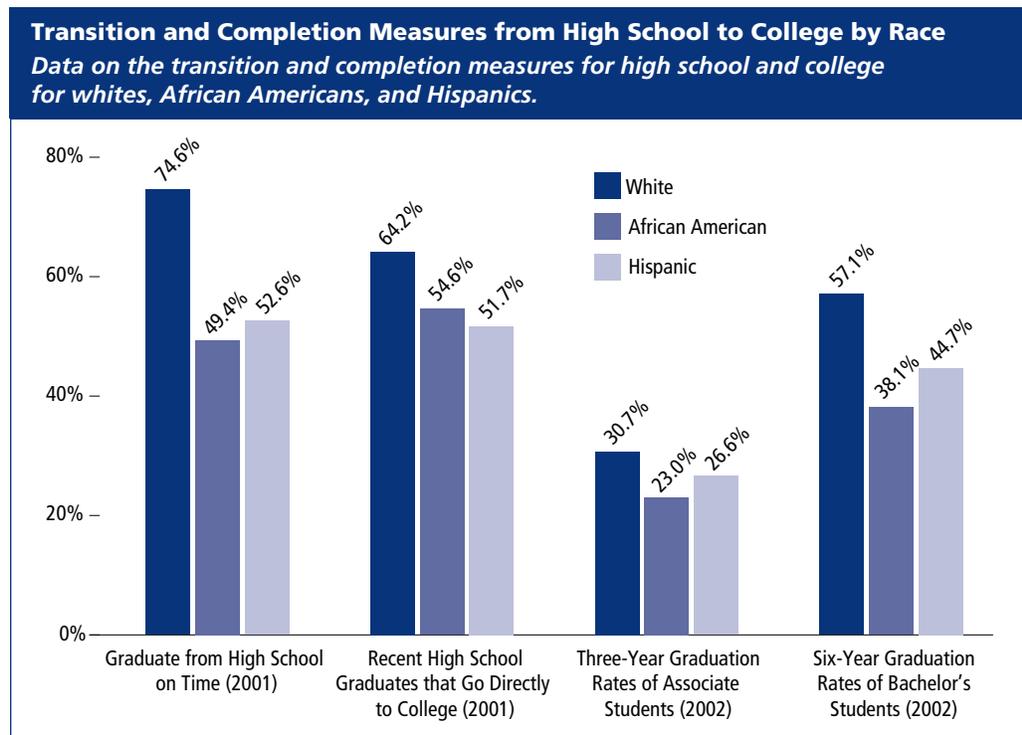
less than a decade, we have slipped from first to seventh in the proportion of the population between ages 25 and 34 with postsecondary degrees. Among developed nations, the United States is one of the few countries where the generation aged 35 to 60 has a higher postsecondary attainment level than those aged 25 to 35.[15] This should be a matter of concern as the skilled workers of the baby boom generation retire. Our investment in preparing new entrants for the workforce has not kept pace with the demands of a knowledge-based economy, or with our international competitors.

Far too many of our youth are falling by the wayside. Disaggregating these statistics by race produces an even more troubling picture for the country.

According to U.S. Census population estimates, between 2000 and 2020 the African-American and Hispanic populations—the segments of the popula-

tion with the lowest level of academic achievement—are projected to grow both in absolute numbers and as a share of the workforce.[17] The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems combined the demographic projections with the trends in education completion. They estimate that by the year 2020, if current education patterns persist, the number of new individuals added to the workforce with a high school diploma or less will greatly outpace the number of workers added with college degrees. NCHEMS estimates that 7 million new high school dropouts will be added, compared with fewer than 5 million with postsecondary credentials.[18] These dropouts will be predominantly minorities from failing school districts in urban and rural communities of high poverty.

There is a dramatic disparity in college matriculation and credentialing for youth of color compared to white youth. This cannot continue to go unattended. With

Transition and Completion Measures from High School to College by Race
Data on the transition and completion measures for high school and college for whites, African Americans, and Hispanics.

Legend: White, African American, Hispanic

Graduate from High School on Time (2001): White 74.6%, African American 49.4%, Hispanic 52.6%

Recent High School Graduates that Go Directly to College (2001): White 64.2%, African American 54.6%, Hispanic 51.7%

Three-Year Graduation Rates of Associate Students (2002): White 30.7%, African American 23.0%, Hispanic 26.6%

Six-Year Graduation Rates of Bachelor's Students (2002): White 57.1%, African American 38.1%, Hispanic 44.7%

Note: Data not available for Native Americans and Asians
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, National Center for Education Management Systems[16]

the distribution of wealth and economic opportunity in this country so inextricably tied to educational attainment, there is a need for dramatic intervention to increase the postsecondary matriculation of minority youth. Simply repairing the K-12 pipeline will not bring about parity or raise our international ranking. We will need to invest in new ways to greatly expand access routes to postsecondary credentialing. In absence of such investments, millions of young people will remain economically non-viable through their prime years in the labor market and their prime years for family formation, thus perpetuating the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

One challenge to overcoming this problem is that there is no organized system for recovery and re-engagement of these youth. The responsibility for high-risk, out-of-school youth has fallen predominantly to providers in the youth development, youth workforce, and adult basic education arenas, which are all underfunded, fragmented, and serve only a small portion of need. These systems, whose missions are overlapping and whose activities should be mutually reinforcing, are most often designed and implemented in local areas with little coordination and little success in bringing the majority of youth served to an adequate level of postsecondary readiness. While youth development programs have demonstrated the ability to draw on the resilience of these young people and generate remarkable transformations in their attitudes, skill levels, civic consciousness, and aspirations, their educational interventions have fallen short of delivering youth to the level of skills and credentials necessary to access the higher wage opportunities in the labor market.

There has been heavy reliance on the GED as the vehicle for education credentialing, yet fewer than 300,000 youth between the ages of 18 and 24 passed the GED in 2006.[19] That is less than 10 percent of the estimated 3.8 million in that age group without a high school diploma. There is a growing consensus both inside and outside the field of youth development that the GED is no longer sufficient by itself for opening up access to high-wage opportunities for these youth. Although 65 percent of people who take the GED test say they plan to go to college, only 30 percent to 35 percent actually attend. And of those who do go, only 5 percent to 10 percent finish one year of college—the "tipping point" for family-supporting wages.[20]

Multiple systems for dropouts, whose missions are overlapping and whose activities should be mutually reinforcing, are most often designed and implemented in local areas with little coordination. While resources are being deployed in most local labor market areas in the adult education, workforce investment, and postsecondary education systems, they are each failing to bring the majority of youth served to any level of postsecondary readiness.

For example, the adult education system, which is composed of community-based education providers and community colleges, is one of the largest providers of educational services for dropout youth. In 2003-04, the system served 1,050,131 youth between the ages of 16 and 24 years old. Together these youth represent 39 percent of all adult education students nationally. However, most adult education students drop out after a few months—not long enough to advance
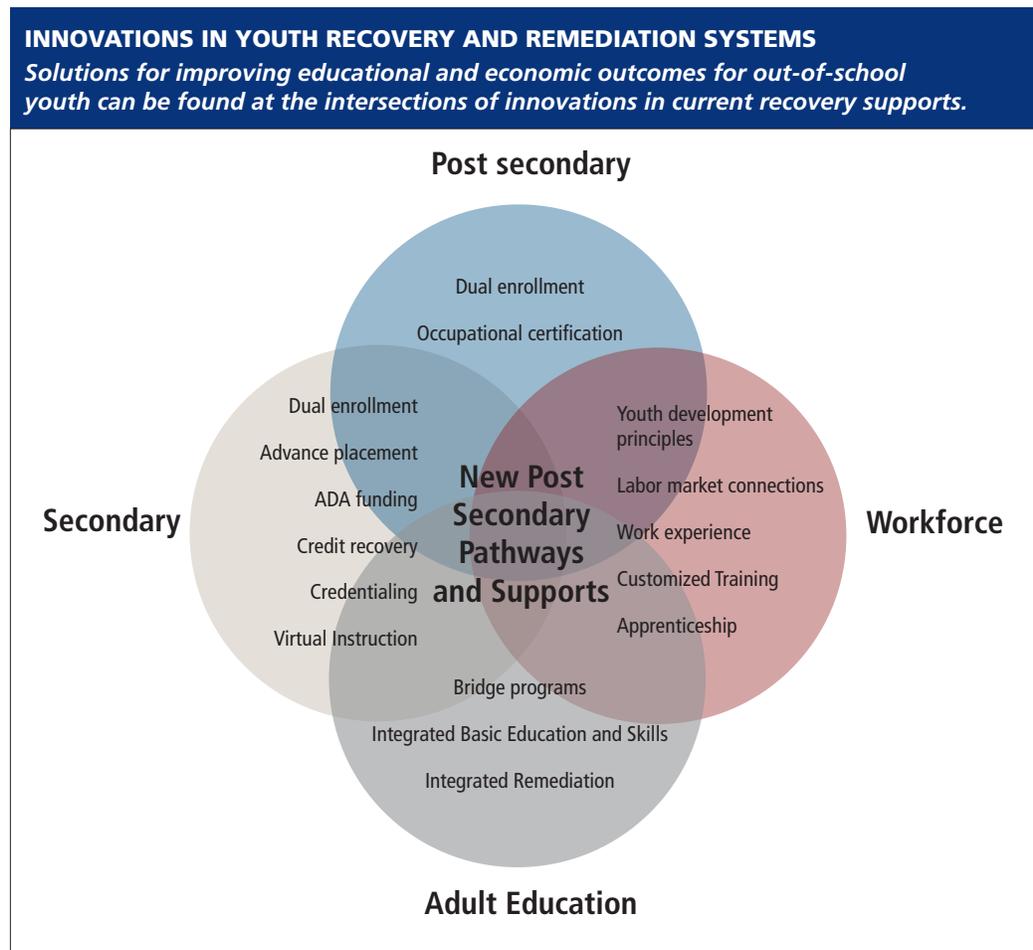
even one grade or English ability level—and most (70 percent or more, depending on the study) do not earn a GED.[21]

In 2006, only 140,704 youth aged 16 to 21 exited the youth and adult program of the Workforce Investment Act system. Less than a quarter (22.6 percent) of those exiting the WIA youth program were high school dropouts.[22] Of the dropouts ages 18 to 21 exiting the WIA youth title, only 23 percent attained a high school diploma or equivalency and only 8 percent entered into postsecondary or advanced training.[23] This level of service comes nowhere near meeting the need. While national numbers of unmet need are hard to come by, a recent report by the Center for an Urban Future on work-

force services in New York City estimated that there were between 160,000 and 200,000 16- to 24-year-olds in the city that were neither working, in school, or part of the WIA system. This was attributed to continuing budget cuts that could serve only 935 out-of-school youth—less than 0.5 percent of the total population in 2006.[24]

Aligning our youth recovery and remediation systems and programs toward postsecondary outcomes

Rethinking how our secondary, postsecondary, workforce, and adult education systems can come together to build an infrastructure to support the

INNOVATIONS IN YOUTH RECOVERY AND REMEDIATION SYSTEMS
Solutions for improving educational and economic outcomes for out-of-school youth can be found at the intersections of innovations in current recovery supports.

Post secondary

Dual enrollment

Occupational certification

Secondary

Dual enrollment

Advance placement

ADA funding

Credit recovery

Credentialing

Virtual Instruction

New Post Secondary Pathways and Supports

Youth development principles

Labor market connections

Work experience

Customized Training

Apprenticeship

Workforce

Bridge programs

Integrated Basic Education and Skills

Integrated Remediation

Adult Education

reattachment of out-of-school youth to high-quality postsecondary pathways is essential to a dropout recovery strategy at scale. In each of these systems there are innovations in program design, curricula, delivery of instruction, technology, and student support strategies, which offer the potential for improving educational and economic outcomes for high school dropouts. Solutions lie at the intersection of these innovations.

Implementing these innovations to significantly increase the attainment of postsecondary credentials by dropouts will require bold action on several fronts:

1. Accelerating learning and time to credential

2. Restructuring the activities of dropout recovery, adult education/English language, and youth development programs to focus on postsecondary readiness and transition

3. Creating postsecondary pathways to occupational credentials and good jobs

4. Creating support structures to promote postsecondary persistence and completion of credentials

Accelerating learning and time to credential

A number of promising innovations emerging from these systems demonstrate that student learning and time to secondary and postsecondary credentials can be accelerated, even for students who have previously not done well in school. These innovations have challenged the sequential structure of our education system and the assumptions about teaching

and learning that underlie that system. Thus, there is considerable opportunity to explore the attainment of academic competencies, the mastery of occupational skills, and the award of postsecondary credentials concurrently. This is an important precept for this population of youth who dropped out of high school and have relatively few venues for the award of secondary credentials.

Probably the most daunting challenge is overcoming the academic deficits of youth who left school prematurely, with various levels of academic mastery and credit accumulation. Much of our remediation programming has become the black hole from which students either never emerge and/or get so discouraged that they don't persist in their studies long enough to attain their secondary or post-secondary credentials. Most youth, due to age or personal circumstance, cannot return to the traditional school environment where credit accrual is based on seat time, or students spending a certain amount of time in a classroom. GED programs generally require basic skills mastery at ninth grade levels or above, which eliminates the majority of youth. Yet, it is important that these youth be connected to educational interventions with a level of rigor that brings them to the academic and job skill sets needed for labor market success.

Fortunately, there have been innovations at the state, district, and college levels that provide more flexibility in the way credit and credentials are awarded and how instruction is delivered. Educators are finding that many of the approaches that have been put in place to accelerate instruction and college access for more advanced students can, in fact, have a dramatic impact on helping educationally at-risk students catch up.

As of 2005, 21 states had statewide virtual high school programs and are making growing investments in providing secondary and postsecondary courses via online technology.[25] There has also been tremendous growth in secondary-postsecondary learning options, which include dual enrollment and early- and middle-college programs. These interventions are beginning to blur what used to be a very solid divide between secondary and postsecondary matriculation. Several states are expanding these efforts specifically to address the graduation rate crisis and expand access to underperforming schools and students. Much of what is happening with the growth of virtual high schools, online instruction, and early and middle colleges can have tremendous value in structuring educational programming in dropout recovery and alternative education programs. For example, "children at-risk" statutes in Wisconsin and Minnesota allow state per-pupil funding to follow qualified students to alternative schools run by community-based non-profit and private non-sectarian agencies that meet specified criteria.[26] While still on the periphery in the dropout recovery arena, several places are finding success adapting these interventions to accelerate the time to high school credentials and increase the postsecondary connections for high school dropouts.

There are several approaches that are currently being employed with success with the out-of-school population. These educational strategies are being deployed in the youth recovery programs, the adult education programs, and in many of the "bridge" programs at the college level. They are highly supportive and most often delivered as part of more comprehensive program interventions. The approaches include:

Credit recovery: Credit recovery strategies "recover" credit for a course that a student was previously unsuccessful in earning. Credit is awarded based on demonstrated competency on the content standards of the course, rather than seat time. Credit recovery programs, in general, have a primary focus on helping students who are over age and behind catch up and earn their high school diploma. The Young Adult Bureau Centers (supportive learning environments where youth concentrate only on the credit portfolio needed for graduation) and the Transfer High Schools (small, academically rigorous, full-time high schools designed to re-engage students who are over age and under credited, or have dropped out of high school) established by the New York City Department of Education's Office of Multiple Pathways, draw heavily on the flexibility that credit recovery affords them in customizing the education programming for youth and facilitating their connection to postsecondary education.

Competency-based approaches: The award of a high school diploma based on attainment of the skill proficiency equivalent of a high school graduate is an even more flexible alternative to help dropouts attain a high school diploma than the more traditional credit-based approach. The following two examples illustrate this approach:

- Vermont's High School Completion Program allows out-of-school youth ages 16 to 21 to work with the State's Adult Education and Literacy Program (Learning Works) and their high school to develop an individual graduation education plan that defines clear learning objectives as well as the scope and rigor of alternative educational

services. These services are provided primarily by the statewide Learning Works system, but can also be contracted for by Learning Works to a wide range of providers including public/independent high schools, public or private postsecondary institutions, community-based organizations, youth employment programs, work experience programs, teen parent education programs, parent/child centers, homeless programs, technical training programs, or other organizations and institutions that meet the needs of the individual student and general criteria established by the Commissioner of Education. Successful students get a diploma from their local high school and can participate in the graduation ceremony if they choose. This is a big motivator for many HSCP students. About 20 percent of HSCP students are enrolled in college-credit-bearing classes as part of their program. Learning Works may recruit out-of-school youth directly, and also works with local high schools to identify eligible youth and to develop the students' individual graduation plans. As well as providing direct instruction, Learning Works provides student guidance and support, contracts for services, and manages student records while the state-designated local high school, which determines graduation requirements, reviews completed student work and awards the diploma. The cost of these services (about $8,400, which is 30 percent less than the average high school tuition) is reimbursed to the Adult Education Program from the same State Education Fund that supports the K-12 system.[27] Since these funds follow the student, the system can grow and is not limited to a fixed annual budget.

- Diploma Plus is another competency-based approach for out-of-school youth and youth at risk of dropping out. Currently operating in 18 locations, its academic component emphasizes contextual learning and portfolio development in which students apply their growing knowledge and skills to real world projects. In the final stage of the program (the Plus Phase), students are presented with challenging transitional experiences in which they encounter an adult world of responsibility while remaining in a supportive high school program. In the Plus Phase, students must complete several major projects, a structured internship, and one or more credit-level college courses to earn a high school diploma.[28]

Dual enrollment: One way school systems have developed to expose students to postsecondary-level work, add rigor and intensity to the educational experience, and accelerate time to postsecondary credential is through dual enrollment programs (also called concurrent enrollment and dual credit programs). Such programs allow students to work simultaneously toward a high school diploma and postsecondary educational credits, although these credits are not always transferable to credit-bearing programs. The Gateway to College program in Portland, Oregon, which is now being replicated in 20 sites, has proven to be a viable option for students in dropout recovery programs. Every year in Portland, 345 alternative education students have the opportunity to complete their high school diploma while taking college classes. To be eligible, students must function at least at an eighth grade level and have enough credits to achieve a high school diploma by age 21.[29] These dual enrollment programs are funded

by elementary and secondary education funds that follow the students.

Early- and middle-college programs: These programs are located on or near the campus of a postsecondary educational institution. Both types of programs supplement students' high school course offerings by enrolling students in college courses for both secondary and postsecondary credit. Middle college high schools graduate students with a high school diploma and some postsecondary credit; early college high schools encourage students to remain for a fifth year to graduate with both a high school diploma and an associate's degree. These approaches have been adapted to provide the dual enrollment option for low-income and limited English proficient students, as well as other students who otherwise would most likely not go to college. Again, while predominantly a model to expose, prepare, and acclimate low-income and non-traditional high school students to the college environment, the concept is highly adaptable to young dropouts.[30] Olive Harvey Community College and Truman Community College, both part of the City Colleges of Chicago, offer Middle College High Schools specifically directed at the retrieval of high school dropouts. Located on college campuses, these programs offer dropouts the opportunity to earn a high school diploma and college credits in a supportive environment and explore careers, participate in internships, and prepare for college transition.[31]

Providing remediation with academic or occupational instruction: One such approach integrates remediation with occupational training, rather than requiring students to complete remediation before starting for-credit

occupational training. This reduces time to credential and accelerates learning by customizing academic content to the student's occupational objectives. Washington state's highly successful I-BEST program is a prime example of this integrated approach. I-BEST pairs Adult Basic Education/English as a Second Language instructors with professional/technical instructors in the classroom to co-teach half of the time, and teach the same students contextualized basic skills and job training the other half of the time. While increasing basic skills is essential to getting ready for college-level work, students do not gather college momentum until they transition into college-level courses. There is evidence in the programs studied that I-BEST helps students build first-year momentum for earning college credits and thereby increases their preparation and the possibilities for going even further. The percentage of I-BEST students who earn their first 15 college credits is substantially higher than in cases where basic-skills students attempt college coursework in other ways (53 percent versus 11 percent for ESL, and 61 percent versus 26 percent for ABE/GED students). This credit-earning momentum is critical for providing a solid start on a college-level pathway and maybe a "tipping point" to college success as tested in the achievement initiative and found in other research. Furthermore, I-BEST students are able to maintain momentum by completing 30 or more credits at a higher rate than ABE/GED students enrolled in college courses in other ways (32 percent for I-BEST students compared to 11 percent for other students).[32]

Bridge programs: A number of community colleges have developed strategies for intensifying and accelerating remedia-

tion so that students more quickly gain the knowledge and competencies needed for entry to credit-bearing courses. Some occupational "bridge" programs are short, intensive remedial courses that contextualize reading, writing, math, and/or English instruction to prepare students for entry into specific postsecondary occupational training programs or entry-level employment. Adult education/ESL bridge programs help students who have reading and math skills below the ninth grade level build academic and English-language skills within the context of exploring postsecondary options and careers. They are designed to help students move expeditiously toward their educational and career goals. Other bridge programs help build adult education/ESL or college remediation academic and English-language skills within the context of exploring a variety of postsecondary options and careers. Students move into postsecondary education after completing the bridge program.

College-based remediation and orientation: Some programs have found that delivering the remediation and orientation on college campuses can promote transition to college and demystify college processes. For example, Community College of Denver's College Connection provides an intensive eight-week summer remediation for GED graduates who are planning to enroll in fall college classes and who test into developmental math, reading, or English. Keys to the success of this course are that the career exploration component links college work to a specific career goal; the course is taught by college developmental education faculty who understand what knowledge and competencies students must master and how they will be measured; the instructors are sensitive to the instructional and

social characteristics of the students; and the benefits are immediate to students, such as exempting them from classes that they "hated" in high school and GED preparation.[33] The College Connection model will be replicated at eight Colorado community colleges over the next two years with funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education's Ready for College initiative. This federal program focuses on increasing the number of 18- to 24-year-olds who complete a GED and go on to postsecondary education.

The College Connection design is an adaptation of the college's successful FastStart@CCD program, which provides intensive accelerated remediation for college students who test into multiple levels of developmental coursework. FastStart students meet as a cohort, completing two levels of remedial coursework in combined reading and writing courses or two levels of remedial math in one semester instead of two. At the same time, students enroll in a one-credit college orientation course in which they explore career and college major options and develop an education plan.[34] A follow-up study of FastStart students showed they were more successful in completing remedial courses, completed these classes more quickly, and persisted in their education at higher rates after completing the program than students in a comparison group.[35]

Restructuring the activities of our dropout recovery, remediation, and youth development programs

An important first step in increasing transitions to postsecondary education for dropouts is to make college matriculation a central goal of youth employment,

alternative education, and adult education programs. Each program's mission involves outreach to high-risk youth and putting them back on a positive path. This concept is not new. Many of the highly effective programs and systems have been at the forefront of experimentation with various ways to increase postsecondary access. At the height of funding, the communities that received the Youth Opportunity Grant through the Workforce Investment Act paid particular attention to making postsecondary connections. A CLASP survey of 22 of the 36 funded communities revealed that 95 percent of them had established formal connections with community colleges to provide special programming on campus for the high-risk youth enrolled in the Youth Opportunity Program.[36]

Two good examples are the YouthBuild and Conservation Corps programs, whose education components have evolved substantially. These programs provide out-of-school youth with a highly supported experience of work, community service, and leadership development. Many of these programs are establishing more formal education linkages. Youth-Build Louisville, for example, is recognized by the Jefferson County Public Schools as an alternative E-School site with online instruction supported by the adult education office. The program serves a predominantly dropout population, provides hands-on construction experience, and partners with Jefferson County Community College and the Jefferson Community and Technical College to provide a "seamless transition" from GED preparation to college and employment. Graduates earn Ameri-Corps Education Awards, which provide funds that can be used for further education or training.[37]

The Marin County Conservation Corp is developing an organic farm and garden project at the Indian Valley Campus of the College of Marin, where corps members will be engaged in all aspects of operation of a five-acre plot of land. Concurrently, they will be enrolled as full-time matriculated students. College work study will underwrite the work experience.[38]

Essential to increasing the postsecondary matriculation of young dropouts is orienting dropouts to the possibility of going to college. Since most dropouts are likely to come from low-income families in which they may be the first to pursue postsecondary education, they will need special outreach and encouragement to even think about college as an option. Additionally, they will need information about financial aid opportunities and more rigorous preparation for meeting the challenges of postsecondary education.

Some programs serve as example of this approach. In Baltimore, the College Bound Foundation placed staff in the Youth Opportunity centers to help with SAT preparation and college guidance. Many of the alternative youth programs access the services by partnering with the TRIO outreach programs (Upward Bound, Educational Opportunity Centers, Student Support Services, and several other programs). TRIO programs are funded under the Higher Education Act to provide college exposure, campus visits, and counseling and support for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Los Angeles created Community College Centers at each of its neighborhood youth centers and partnered with UCLA to provide summer college immersion activities.

Creating postsecondary pathways to occupational credentials and good jobs

Helping dropouts think about post-secondary education and prepare for its rigors is only part of the challenge. Helping students succeed and stay long enough to attain an industry-recognized postsecondary credential that translates into increased earnings in the job market is just as important. While there is some economic benefit to attending college,* students who attain a certificate or associate's degree generally experience higher returns on education than those with similar years of education but no credential. This is especially the case for young women under 24 who earn an occupational associate's degree.[39] Research from Washington state identified a one-year occupational credential and 45 credits as the "tipping point" for substantially increased earnings. The study showed that compared to students who earned fewer than 10 college credits, those who took at least one year's worth of college-credit courses and earned a credential had an average annual earnings advantage of $7,000 for students who started in ESL; $8,500 for those who started in ABE or GED preparation; and $2,700 and $1,700 for those entering with a GED or high school diploma, respectively.[40]

Yet, most non-traditional first-time students never reach this milestone.** Postsecondary transcripts of 12th graders who enrolled in postsecondary education between 1992 and 2000 showed that 61 percent of students who first attended a public two-year institution completed at least one remedial course at the postsecondary level.[41] Students with GEDs are even more likely to participate in remedial classes than students with a high school degree.[42] Students requiring multiple semesters of remediation before they can begin taking credit-bearing courses are less likely to complete remediation and less likely to persist in postsecondary education to attain a credential. [43]

Thus, many dropouts will be able to successfully matriculate in the more traditional college setting, with good academic preparation and transition support. But a far greater number could benefit from a more supportive and occupationally focused intervention. A number of promising program models are emerging from the adult learning and alternative education fields that create clear pathways to postsecondary occupational credentials and advancement in the labor market. Two labor market-driven approaches that prepare students for employment and help employers gain skilled workers are particularly relevant:

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*   Even without attaining a credential, women who took any type of classes in community colleges had 10 percent higher outcomes than those without any postsecondary education. Men who took classes had 6 percent higher outcomes than those without any postsecondary education. Young women under 24 in occupational programs received 37 percent higher economic returns than those without postsecondary education. While in the short run young men with occupational post-secondary certificates or associate's degrees did no better than high school graduates, in the long run they did better.

** As defined by the National Center for Education Statistics, non-traditional students are those who have any of the following characteristics: does not enter postsecondary education in the same calendar year that he or she finished high school; attends part-time for at least part of the academic year; works full-time (35 hours or more per week) while enrolled; is considered financially independent for purposes of determining eligibility for financial aid; has dependents other than a spouse (usually children, but sometimes others); is a single parent (either not married or married but separated and has dependents); or does not have a high school diploma (completed high school with a GED or other high school completion certificate or did not finish high school).

Career pathways is the framework increasingly being deployed in states, local districts, and postsecondary institutions to ease transitions between different levels and types of education and to align program content with industry requirements. The Workforce Strategy Center defines career pathways as "a series of connected education and training programs and support services that enable individuals to secure employment within a specific industry or occupational sector, and to advance over time to successively higher levels of education and employment in that sector. Each step on a career pathway is designed explicitly to prepare the participant for the next level of employment and education."[44] Students may start with non-credit technical modules that result in an employer-recognized competency-based certificate and then move on to credit-bearing courses that result in an educational degree or other credential. Career pathways programs are targeted at jobs in industries important in the local economy.

The apprenticeship is a labor market-driven approach that combines hands-on and on-the-job learning with related classroom-based instruction. Although entry into an apprenticeship usually requires a high school diploma or GED, some programs allow apprentices to earn a GED while in the program. In some occupations, short-term pre-apprenticeship programs provide a bridge to registered apprenticeships for those who don't meet entry requirements. Upon program completion (typically three to five years), apprentices gain journeyman status in the occupation, applicable state and local licenses, and in some cases an associate's degree.

Both of these approaches involve close partnerships between employers and educational providers to target skills and occupations in demand in the labor market and link the education provided to improved labor market outcomes. Both approaches also include program design features and instructional practices that show promise for increasing student success in postsecondary education and the labor market. The common elements of successful interventions across adult learning, dropout recovery, and postsecondary systems incorporate the following curricula and teaching innovations to support student learning and strengthen connections to employers and local labor market requirements:

- *Contextual learning* Tailoring academic content to occupational goals helps students understand the relevance of what they are learning and how it ties to their life and career goals. Examples of contextual learning include adult education/ESL "bridge programs" and programs such as I-BEST. These integrate remediation and occupational instruction to help students who have English language or basic skills deficiencies build academic and English-language skills within the context of exploring postsecondary options and careers.

- *Modularized curriculum* Career pathways can be structured as a sequence of compressed modules or mini-courses that enable the learner to move in steps toward increased skills, marketable credentials, and better labor market outcomes. In some cases, modules are tied to entry-level skill requirements of jobs and different

levels of industry-recognized credentials. For example, Maricopa Community College in Arizona worked with local health care providers to develop a sequence of four credit-bearing certificates that lead to an associate's degree in health information technology.[45] Portland Community College offers a 12 credit to 44 credit Machine Manufacturing Technology program that includes modules leading to an Employment Skills Training Certificate, which qualifies students for entry-level employment. The program also provides links to advanced certificates and degrees.[46]

- *Intensive instruction* Compressed and concentrated modules—including short, intensive, remedial "bridge" courses—accelerate learning, which in turn reduces the time required to complete courses and attain a marketable credential. Arkansas' Career Pathways initiative, for example, compressed two semesters of remedial reading, writing, and math into one semester. It also integrated basic health-career concepts into the Fast Track curriculum to help students move more quickly to allied health courses. Fast Track students were four times more likely to complete the remedial courses than students in traditional developmental education classes.[47] Other forms of intensive instruction include models such as I-BEST, which provide remediation concurrently with occupational training, and a variety of accelerated developmental education approaches.

- *Flexible scheduling* and delivery modes In addition to breaking down learning into manageable modules or "chunks," some programs employ other flexible instructional delivery modes such as

distance learning and flexible scheduling—for example providing instruction in concentrated blocks on weekends—to help students meet school, work, and family responsibilities.

- *Learning communities* Students in "learning communities" or "student cohorts" take linked courses together to provide mutual support and encouragement. Creating learning communities can also help students gain a deeper understanding of the interrelationship of content they are studying and promote more interaction with their teachers.[48] A recent study of a learning community program for freshmen at Kingsborough Community College in New York found that students in the learning community program felt more integrated in school and engaged in their coursework. They moved through developmental requirements more quickly, passed more courses, and earned more credits during their first semester than other students. However, the evidence is mixed about whether the program increased persistence in college. While initially the program did not change students' reenrollment rate, after two years slightly more students who went through the program were still in college than other students.[49]

- *Wrap-around supports* Wrap-around support services such as academic advisement, tutoring, career guidance, assistance in navigating financial aid systems, intensive case management, child care, transportation, and other services have been shown to support student persistence and success. A national study of student success services found that these services positively affect student grades, credits

earned, and persistence in education.[50] In addition, follow-up services such as cohort counseling can help colleges stay in touch with students to support their career planning and return to school for additional education. Often, support services are provided through a collaboration of employers, workforce development agencies, educational institutions, and other community organizations.

- *Tangible rewards for learning* Tangible and immediate rewards for learning help motivate students to do well and persist in their studies. In career pathways programs, the curriculum is designed in conjunction with employers so that each step in the pathway increases skills and improves the learner's career and earning opportunities. In some cases, workers receive small pay increases upon completion of certain modules or milestones. Other examples of rewards for learning include performance-based scholarships through which students receive payments for persistence and good grades. For example, Delgado Community College and Louisiana Technical College-West Jefferson awarded students $1,000 for each of two semesters, or $2,000 total if they maintained at least half-time enrollment and a 2.0 (or C) grade point average. Early findings show that these incentives had a significant positive effect on students' academic achievement and rates of retention. Program participants were more likely than those in a comparison group to enroll in college full time. They also passed more courses, earned more course credits, and had higher rates of registration and full-time attendance in college. [51]

- *Internships and work experiences* Internships and work experiences provide opportunities for practical on-the-job learning and student exposure to the work environment and career opportunities. They are especially important for many inner-city and minority youth who lack access to such opportunities through other means. The apprenticeship model includes the added benefit of providing financial resources that allow students to meet their own and their families' daily living needs. It also establishes a formal employer-employee relationship and financial coverage under labor market systems such as unemployment insurance.

- *Mentors* Youth benefit from sustained interaction with caring and supportive adults and opportunities for one-on-one instruction and tutoring. Successful youth employment and apprenticeship programs provide community and work-based mentors who offer guidance and encouragement to further the character and competence of the younger person, forming a personal bond over time.[52] A meta-analysis of evaluations of mentoring programs for youth found that disadvantaged youth were more likely to benefit from such programs than less disadvantaged youth, but that program quality varied and had an effect on program effectiveness.[53]

The aforementioned elements can be brought together effectively in different ways to address the needs of students and employers. For instance:

- In Oregon, the career pathways systemic framework serves as the basis for educational reforms to ease transitions

for all students across the educational continuum. Oregon's community colleges are implementing pathways approaches in four transition arenas to provide a fast track to skills attainment, higher pay in high-demand occupations, and professional and technical certificates and degrees. These transition points include: secondary to postsecondary education; pre-college (ABE/GED/ESL/DE) "bridges" to credit-bearing postsecondary courses; flexible entry into and exit from modularized degree and certificate programs; and community colleges to the university system. Within this framework, academic, student support, remedial, adult education, and workforce development offices work collaboratively with employers to design pathways that provide seamless articulation across educational institutions for courses, credentials, certificates, and degrees. These partnerships are also required to develop web-based visual roadmaps that depict the coursework, competencies, skill requirements, and credentials needed for related occupations in an industry sector to help students navigate their pathway to better jobs and increased earnings. These roadmaps also identify the different pathways to success within a career, the multiple entry and exit points, and potential lateral and vertical movement within an occupation or career cluster linked to occupational labor market data. [54]

Washington state is beginning a partnership venture between the two-year college and workforce development systems. It will combine the state's highly successful I-BEST model, which integrates basic education and vocational skills training, with services traditionally funded by WIA Title I. The new model deepens the focus on resources and structures for learner support within the framework of a career pathways program for 16- to 24-year-old out-of-school youth. The workforce development and community and technical college systems are supporting three pilot projects to develop service approaches. These will enable dropouts to complete at least the entry-level step of a well-defined pathway to professional technical credentials and the attainment of requisite skills to move on to the next level of certification or instruction without repeating courses. The program design builds on the I-BEST model that pairs ABE/ESL instructors with professional/technical instructors in credit-bearing occupational classes to tailor remediation to course requirements. Learning is accelerated through this approach, and the time it takes for the student to attain at least a one-year occupational certificate is reduced. I-BEST is being complemented with job placement, follow-up, and student success services that will be provided by the workforce system. Student success services include case management; wrap-around services such as child care, transportation, and counseling; and support for tuition, books, and other costs of enrolled students who do not qualify for or are unable to get other financial aid. [55]

- The Baltimore Career Academy is an alternative learning center administered by the Mayor's Office of Employment Development and the Baltimore City Workforce Investment Board. It is part of the network of approved options by the Baltimore City Public Schools' Alternative

Options Program for over-age and under-credit youth, including dropouts. The Career Academy provides two routes to high school credential through GED instruction or traditional diploma via accelerated credit recovery. Certified Baltimore City Public Schools teachers provide the instruction, including GED instruction, while accessing approved online curriculum. The Career Academy provides a supportive learning environment, with individualized student plans and opportunities for internships and occupationally specific training both on- and off-site. Through the Career Academy's arrangement with the Woodstock Job Corp Center, students have access to occupational skills certification. Anne Arundel Community College provides on-site training in business technology as part of another arrangement. The Career Academy is a Diploma Plus model where students are working on obtaining their high school diploma while enrolling in the Baltimore City Community College's Early College Enrollment program.[56]

- In Dayton, Ohio, the Improved Solutions for Urban Systems' charter school enrolls dropouts and near-dropouts who work toward a high school diploma while being trained in high-demand fields. Their academic curriculum is closely aligned with hands-on training. Students earn their high school diploma and an industry-recognized credential in construction, manufacturing, health care, or computer technology. All students receive on-the-job training from trained professionals. The learning environment is small and personalized and the program partners with the National

Center for Construction and Manufacturing and the Kettering College of Medical Arts, among others, for the industry certifications.[57]

Creating postsecondary pathways to occupational credentials and good jobs is fraught with alignment issues. Aligning the content of dropout recovery programs with postsecondary entry requirements is difficult because there is no single standard for postsecondary readiness. This makes sense given the diversity of postsecondary programs. Programs use different assessments because of different program goals and because the federal government approves different assessment instruments for different federal programs.[58]

One of the biggest alignment challenges in connecting young dropouts to postsecondary education and good jobs is improving the integration of non-credit and credit courses so that students can move more easily from the non-credit to the credit side. While postsecondary credentials awarded upon completion of credit-bearing courses result in better long-term economic outcomes, non-credit postsecondary courses can provide a point of entry to college for students who are not ready to enroll in a credit program because of lack of interest or academic or economic reasons. Non-credit customized training can also help youth gain the skills needed for job entry and employer-recognized industry certification in some occupational fields. In fact, many of the linkages between dropout recovery programs and postsecondary education have been made with the non-credit side of postsecondary institutions. This is because the administration of these programs is often more flexible and responsive to employer and student

needs than the for-credit programs. Programs can be mounted more quickly and enrollment procedures can be simplified.

However, separate organizational structures for credit and non-credit programs in community colleges, and the varied goals and outcomes of non-credit courses, serve as barriers to transitioning from non-credit to credit courses and accessing jobs that require postsecondary credentials. In addition, the financing of a non-credit education can serve as a barrier for enrollment by low-income youth. Only 10 states provide funding for non-credit workforce programs based on contact hours. Of these, only Maryland, Oregon, and Texas provide funding at the same full-time equivalent rate as credit courses. As a result, without special funding, the cost of participation in non-credit training is borne by students through higher tuition rates without the assistance of federal aid and most states' financial aid, which is not available for non-credit courses except under special circumstances.[59]

Creating support structures to promote postsecondary persistence and completion of credentials

Non-traditional postsecondary students, such as dropouts, typically need help in navigating the financial aid system and dealing with logistical challenges such as scheduling classes; balancing competing work, family, and academic responsibilities; and dealing with transportation and child-care issues. For example, dropouts should be made aware that changes to federal financial aid rules included in the recent reauthorization of the Higher Education Act allow individuals who lack high school credentials to prove their readiness for college and qualify for fed-

eral financial aid by successfully completing six credits in lieu of taking an "ability to benefit" test. Some dropouts may have special needs that result from having been involved in the criminal justice system or being a single parent. Proactive case management that includes career counseling, educational advisement, and referrals to support services available through the Workforce Investment Act, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and other programs is thus a key student support service.

Kentucky uses Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or TANF, resources to provide intensive case management and support services to low-income parents enrolled at the state's community and technical colleges through the Ready to Work initiative. At each college, RtW coordinators provide or facilitate student access to work-study jobs—which allow RtW students to earn up to $2,500 annually while in school—and peer support groups, such as those formed by providing initial college readiness classes in cohorts. In addition, coordinators help students access assessment, tutoring, mentoring, career counseling, financial aid, job development, job placement, child care, transportation, and post-placement services. RtW students have consistently achieved higher GPAs and program retention rates than the average Kentucky community college student.

A June 2004 Kentucky Legislative Research Commission Report also found that TANF recipients engaged in Vocational Educational Training and Job Skills Education—the two TANF work activities under which RtW students are reported—had the highest increases in earnings and in steady work of any TANF activity in the state. The longer the participation in educational activities,

the bigger the wage increase.[60] Building on this experience, the state has implemented the Work and Learn program to help adult education students nearing completion of the GED successfully finish and transition into postsecondary education and training.

Unfortunately, most postsecondary institutions currently have neither the professional capacity nor funding to provide case management, tutoring-intensive academic advisement services, and other supports needed by these students. Youth-serving organizations often have the capacity to provide needed support and flexible learning options, but they are woefully under-funded and not well connected to postsecondary institutions. Expanding the case management and support services of the youth system to assure successful transition and first-year matriculation in the postsecondary environment may well improve the outcomes for both systems.

While federal and state postsecondary financial assistance programs typically do not provide the necessary supports for student success, some states serve as exceptions. For example, Washington state provides financial assistance and student support services for low-income students seeking postsecondary credentials at the associate's degree level or below through its $23 million Opportunity Grant Program. Unlike most state financial aid programs, students attending less than half time are eligible. Opportunity grants cover tuition and fees (up to the cost of community colleges) at community colleges, private career schools, and approved apprenticeship programs, as well as providing an additional $1,000 annually for books, tools, and supplies. Public colleges receive $1,500 per full-time equivalent enrollments in the program that can be used to provide individualized student success services.

Recommendations

Building postsecondary pathways to good jobs for young dropouts will require stretching the paradigms of our secondary, postsecondary, workforce, and adult education systems, as well as greater collaboration among these systems. There are many examples of cutting-edge programs that have been successful in preparing out-of-school youth for postsecondary transitions. However, there is no single best way of bringing about needed changes within and across systems to increase the preponderance of these policies and practices. And no single funding stream exists that is likely to be sufficient to address this challenge at the necessary scale. However, many reform efforts are underway throughout the country on which to build: secondary/postsecondary and career pathways system alignment initiatives; early and middle colleges; dual enrollment options; and local youth program/community college partnerships.

As states and communities engage in high school reform efforts and explore ways to better align with their postsecondary systems, they should extend the lens to encompass the challenges of dropout recovery and reengagement. New graduation rate measures require states and districts to account for all youth entering ninth grade and deliver them to graduation. They will need to consider multiple pathways to graduation and beyond, non-traditional learning environments, and innovative vehicles for student support. States will also need to consider the role of non-credit postsecondary education, which often serves as a gateway to postsecondary education for young dropouts. They will have to look at ways to promote the development of non-degree forms of validation for non-credit learning and articulation between non-credit and credit programs to create pathways to postsecondary credentials.

Aligning systems and programming across funding streams, building partnerships, and creating new pathways are complex endeavors. This is a time where leadership and forward thinking on the part of the federal government, governors, school administrators, college officials, workforce leaders, and employers could dramatically alter the landscape of how we prepare our youth for the skilled opportunities of the future. This is the challenge and the opportunity.

We offer the following recommendations for action

The new administration and Congress should elevate the dropout crisis and the youth recovery challenge to a high priority and direct all the relevant federal departments to work in tandem to support state and local efforts in bridging delivery systems and funding streams to connect all youth to postsecondary and labor market success.

Congress and the administration should align federal elementary and secondary education, adult education, job training, and higher education policies. Doing so would better integrate efforts and create pathways to postsecondary educational credentials that are increasingly the door to the middle class and stable employment in jobs that pay family-sustaining wages.

- Through Workforce Investment Act reauthorization, ESL and GED-oriented adult education programs should be refocused on promoting transitions to postsecondary education and training. Workforce investment programs currently emphaize rapid labor market attachment should be refocused on developing supportive education and training pathways from low-wage to high-skilled jobs.

- Through legislative and administrative changes in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Workforce Investment Act, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and the Higher Education Act, federal program accountability systems should be aligned, and measures reflecting successful engagement of dropouts in postsecondary education should be included. These systems should provide incentives to reward service and education providers for achievement of critical momentum points or benchmarks of progress toward postsecondary credentials and stable employment by dropouts and other youth facing barriers to success.

- Through legislative and administrative changes in state plan requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Workforce Investment Act, the Adult Education

and Family Literacy Act, the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, and the Higher Education Act, the federal government should require states to be more explicit about how coordination and articulation will occur across systems to align structures, supports, and services to support the re-engagement and successful matriculation of the dropout population in pathways to postsecondary and labor market success.

Substantially increased federal resources should be directed to assist states and localities to bring together secondary, postsecondary, and workforce systems, along with employers, to build the institutional capacity of secondary and postsecondary institutions and community-based organizations. The goal of this collaboration should be to embrace and expand reforms needed to better address the needs of out-of-school youth. Resources are needed to:

- Fully fund three new discretionary grant programs created under the recently reauthorized Higher Education Act that can: support business workforce partnerships with colleges to strengthen ties between for-credit course offerings and business workforce needs; the development bridge programs to contextualize the content of developmental education coursework to the students occupational field of study programs; and the piloting of Student Success Grants attached to every Pell Grant to assure that students receive the services they need to stay in college.

- Enhance state and local data management capacity to track education outcomes, labor market outcomes, and credit accumulation in various learning

modalities across secondary, adult, and postsecondary education, as well as workforce training services over time.

- Develop the curricular frameworks, vehicles for competency-based credentialing, and articulation agreements for portability of credits.

- Build the delivery infrastructure, including education and virtual learning technology, and alternative community-based and work-based learning environments.

- Engage business and industry in the creation of pipelines to good jobs, including greatly expanded access to internships, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training opportunities.

- Strengthen student support structures such as academic advisement, tutoring, career guidance, and case management.

Federal and state governments, together with foundations, should invest in greatly expanding the research and knowledge development agenda around alternative approaches that accelerate learning, expedite time to credential, and substantially contribute to the accumulation of secondary, postsecondary, and industry credentials for out-of-school youth. They should support research on effective practices, incubate and pilot projects of promising practice, facilitate the exchange and dissemination of this information, and

provide technical support and incentives to extend the reach of effective practices to the dropout population.

Finally, federal and state financial aid policies must be changed to increase access and more fully cover college costs and living expenses for low-income students so that they can sustain their participation in education and training. And states need to make older youth and other non-traditional students eligible for state financial aid programs, including those attending postsecondary education and training part time.
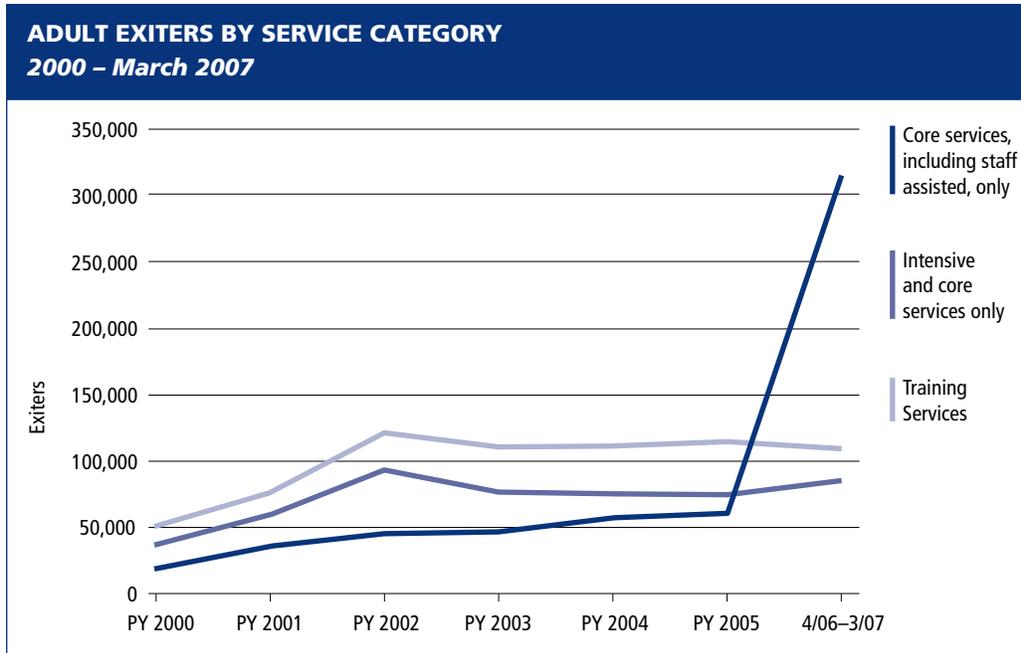
The federal government should:

- Fully fund increases in the maximum Pell Grant recently authorized under the Higher Education Act to help all stuents keep up with the rising cost of college and ensure that low-income youth are not saddled with unreasonable debt or forxed to work so many hours while attending school that it negatively impacts their grades, persistence, and completion; and

- Increase the maximum Pell Grant for the lowest-income students—those with a negative expected family contribution (determined on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid) to receive additional Pell Grant funds for each negative dollar of calculated expected family contribution up to a maximum of $750.

APPENDIX A: Core, Intensive, and Training Services under WIA

CORE	INTENSIVE	TRAINING
• Eligibility determinations	• Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools	• Occupational skills training, including training for non-traditional employment
• Outreach, intake	• In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals	• On-the-job training
• Initial assessment		
• Job search and placement assistance, career counseling		• Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs
• Employment statistics information	• Development of an individual employment plan, to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals	
• Job vacancy listings		• Training programs operated by the private sector
• Information on job skills necessary to obtain jobs		
• Information on local occupations on earnings		• Skill upgrading and retraining
	• Group counseling	• Entrepreneurial training
• Performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services	• Individual counseling and career planning.	• Job readiness training
	• Case management for participants seeking training services	• Adult education and literacy activities provided in combination with training services listed above
• Information and referral to supportive services, including child care and transportation, available in the local area	• Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct, to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training	• Customized training by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training
• Information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation		
• Assistance in establishing eligibility for financial aid programs for education and training		
• Follow-up services		

APPENDIX B: Types of Services Received by Adult Exiters

The following table illustrates the number of individuals exiting each service category from Program Year 2000 to 2006 (date from 2006 reflects the period between April 2006 to March 2007, which is the most recent period for which data is available).

ADULT EXITERS BY SERVICE CATEGORY
2000 – March 2007

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Evelyn Ganzglass is Director of Workforce Development at the Center for Law and Social Policy and a recognized expert on U.S. workforce policies and practices. Ms. Ganzglass has devoted her 30-year career to strengthening connections among workforce development, education, economic development, and social services policies to help low-income families with poverty. In addition to workforce development, Ms. Ganzglass' areas of expertise include youth development and employment, adult literacy, vocational education, and outcome-based accountability. Prior to joining CLASP, she led the Education Development Center's Global Workforce in Transition project, which provides workforce and economic development assistance to U.S. Agency for International Development missions and countries worldwide. Before that, she oversaw Employment and Social Services Policy Studies for the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and served in numerous positions in the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration.

Linda Harris is the current Director of Youth Policy at the Center for Law and Social Policy in Washington, DC. She has more than 25 years of experience in the youth development and workforce development arena—in research, delivery, administration, and policy at the local and national level. Her work focuses on ways communities, systems, and resources can come together to create solutions at scale for "disconnected" and disadvantaged adolescents and youth in high poverty communities. She is co-chairing the Campaign for Youth, an alliance of national organizations, and also facilitated the recent start-up of the "Communities Collaborating to Reconnect Youth" Network. Ms. Harris has provided consulting and technical support to several communities across the country on design and implementation of workforce programs for youth and adults. She is a native of Baltimore with a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Morgan State University and a Master of Science from Carnegie-Mellon University in urban and public affairs.

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