

Three Part Series

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III. Characteristics of Reentry Programs

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Reentry Programs for Out-of-School Youth With Disabilities



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Executive Summary

The dropout crisis that plagues the nation is widely acknowledged by community members, school district officials, and policymakers. A testament to this situation is the large number of dropout reentry programs operating in districts and communities across the nation. These programs aim to give out-of-school youth an opportunity to obtain a high school credential—a critical minimum requirement for success in adult life. High rates of unemployment, poverty, incarceration, and poor health are well-documented problems disproportionately experienced by high school dropouts. When high school dropouts have children, these children are at an increased risk of dropping out of school themselves, and thus the cycle continues. In other words, the lack of a high school diploma keeps certain segments of the population on the margins of society, whereas obtaining a high school diploma opens doors to postsecondary education and gainful employment in the labor market.

The members of society who have traditionally occupied the margins include ethnic/racial minorities and individuals with disabilities. These are populations that also have high rates of school dropout. In 2006-2007, only 60% of African American students, 61% of American Indian/Alaska Native students, and 62% of Hispanic students graduated on time, compared to 80% of White students and 91% of Asian/Pacific Islander students (Stillwell, 2009, Table 2). Graduation rates are even more dismal for African American and Hispanic/Latino students with disabilities—40% and 48%, respectively (U.S. Department of Education, 2009, Table 1-20).

The reasons students drop out of school are multifaceted and include everything from poor relationships with teachers, getting poor grades, becoming pregnant, or needing to get a job. Once youth drop out of school, the overwhelming majority regret their decision. The difficulties they face in trying to obtain work without a high school diploma force many youth to reexamine their chances of leading a satisfying adult life without this credential. While youth who dropped out of school may wish to return to obtain a diploma, they are often reluctant to return

to the same situations that caused them to drop out in the first place. Many students face additional barriers that prevent them from returning, such as parenting or holding down a job.

Reentry programs are different from typical school environments in that they specifically attempt to address the barriers students face in returning to and remaining in school. For example, parenting students are typically provided child care, and working students often have the option of taking self-paced classes or partial-day classes. A common reason students cite for their dropping out of school is that classes were not interesting. Reentry programs address this problem by placing learning in real-world contexts and by providing work experience and service-learning opportunities. Unlike many urban high schools, most reentry programs are small and provide personalized environments that help students connect to others in the school setting. The additional support students receive from teachers and mentors in these close-knit environments is often critical to students' perseverance and success. Most reentry programs also help students who are homeless, substance abusers, or have mental health needs by partnering with community agencies.

Reentry programs are hosted by a variety of schools, colleges, and community-based organizations, and vary in format, content, and course delivery methods. Despite their differences, reentry programs share many common characteristics designed to increase the chances of success for youth who dropped out of high school. A thorough review of the literature revealed six common characteristics of reentry programs, which are as follows: (a) flexible programming, which refers to programs that are provided in nonschool settings and provide alternative timetables, such as shortened school days and evening classes, as well as programs that offer alternative instructional formats and ways to earn credits; (b) options for credit recovery, credit accrual, and dual credits, which refer to programs that give students opportunities to recover credits online and earn credits through alternative means, as well as programs that allow dual enrollment so that students can simultaneously earn high school and college credits; (c) meaningful curricula, which refers to programs

that attempt to engage students through instructional activities that have an obvious purpose for students, such as on-site work experience; (d) additional services and supports, which refers to the provision at school or through referral to community-based resources, of services that help to reduce students' barriers to school success. Such services include on-site child care and community-based mental health counseling; (e) staff involvement, which refers to the role that teachers play in building relationships with students, mentoring them, monitoring their behavior and progress, and providing ongoing support while students transition into postsecondary education or employment; and (f) partnerships, which refers to schools working collaboratively with other institutions of education, community-based organizations, and local businesses to provide students with a wide range of opportunities surrounding their diploma completion.

Partnerships also underlie the delivery of the other program components. For example, flexibility in program locations is often made possible through partnerships with community-based education providers; credit recovery and dual credits are enabled through partnerships with online education providers and community colleges, respectively; meaningful curricula are enhanced through partnerships with local businesses at which students can get hands-on work experience; additional services and supports are made possible through partnerships with social services and other community-based agencies; and staff involvement is often enhanced by partnerships with

In a global economy where the most valuable skill you can sell is your knowledge, a good education is no longer just a pathway to opportunity, it is a pre-requisite.

President Barack Obama
Address to Joint Session of Congress
February 24, 2009

other institutions, such as local colleges or businesses that provide mentors for students.

There is growing awareness that a “one size fits all” approach is not successful at the high school level; the same is true of reentry programs. Students drop out of school for a variety of reasons, and as young adults, they typically have multiple needs that must be addressed in order for them to succeed in school. If students are to be given a real “second chance” at obtaining a high school credential, they must be given a *different* chance, not merely *another* chance.

Content and Purpose

While the paucity of research in the area of reentry precludes descriptions of evidence-based programs, it is possible to describe reentry initiatives that have successfully helped out-of-school youth obtain high school diplomas and alternative credentials. This report is based on a thorough review of reentry programs operating around the country and provides an overview of the six most common characteristics of these programs, as well as specific examples of programs that illustrate these characteristics. Common barriers faced by programs and corresponding solutions are also presented. Information on barriers and solutions was obtained directly from administrators and teachers from the programs described in this report. An alphabetical list of each program, along with its significant program characteristics and contact information, is provided in the Appendix. Information in this report is intended for use by state departments of education, school districts, and community-based organizations interested in redesigning or initiating efforts to help out-of-school youth return to the education system.

Introduction

Research from the National Center for Educational Statistics (2009) indicates that 83% of students who dropped out of school did so because of a school-related reason such as not liking school, missing too many days, getting poor grades, or thinking it would be easier to get a GED certificate (Dalton, Glennie, & Ingels, 2009). Students with disabilities cite their

dislike of school and poor relationships with teachers as two of the most common reasons for dropping out (Institute of Education Sciences, 2005). Dropouts also frequently recall a lack of social and academic support in school (Croninger & Lee, 2001). Of more than 500 dropouts surveyed by Bridgeland, Dilulio, and Morison (2006), only 41% said they had someone they could talk to in school about personal problems. Seventy-five percent of respondents advocated for smaller classes with more individualized instruction, and 70% believed more tutoring, summer school, and extra time with teachers would have improved their chances of graduating.

In Bridgeland et al.'s (2006) study, over 80% of respondents felt that there should be more opportunities in schools for real-world learning such as internships and service-learning projects. The reality is that three-quarters of dropouts never participated in any alternative curriculum, such as job placement assistance, vocational or technical skills training, or dropout prevention (Dalton et al., 2009). Also, youth with emotional disturbance, who have the highest dropout rates and worst adult outcomes of youth in all disability groups, are less likely to take occupationally specific vocational education than students in the general population (51% versus 64%; Wagner & Cameto, 2004).

On a positive note, the rate at which students with disabilities have been graduating from school with high school diplomas has been steadily increasing over time. While 43% of students with disabilities graduated with a regular high school diploma in 1996-1997, this figure had increased to 56% by 2005-2006. In 2005-2006, over 50% of students with disabilities who completed high school had attended postsecondary school since leaving high school up to four years earlier (Newman, Wagner, Cameto, & Knokey, 2009).

Clearly, youth are seeing the need for high school credentials and further qualifications. In 2007, the rate at which out-of-school 18- through 24-year olds had received a high school diploma or GED was the highest it had been in the past three decades (Cataldi, Laird, & KewalRamani, 2009). Consequently, it can be assumed that there is an increasing desire among

our nation's youth to gain credentials that will help them gain meaningful employment and economic independence. Given this situation, it is important to explore the characteristics of the programs that help these youth return to the education system in order to earn such credentials. The following section describes the search methods that were used to obtain information about reentry programs.

Search Methods

The first report reviewed was the American Youth Policy Forum's "Whatever It Takes: How Twelve Communities Are Reconnecting Out-Of-School Youth" (Martin & Halperin, 2006). Several reentry programs were identified from this report, and the Web sites of selected programs were consulted for further information. Next, EBSCOhost was used to access the following electronic databases: ERIC, PsycInfo, Medline, and Academic Search Premier. One or more of the following search terms was used to find articles on reentry programs: special education, disabilities, graduation, diploma, GED, dropout, adult education, transition, out-of-school, alternative school, second chance school, dropout recovery, school reentry, reenrollment, postsecondary, and community college. Articles were returned from the searches in date order and were typically not reviewed if they were published prior to 2002. The search of electronic databases yielded one research study (randomized controlled trial) and several descriptive studies.

Related briefs and reports were also downloaded from organization Web sites, including: Alternative High School Initiative (AHSI), American Association of Community Colleges, American Youth Policy Forum, America's Promise Alliance, Center for American Progress, Center for Labor Market Studies, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, Commonwealth Corporation, Communities In Schools, Economic Mobility Project, Early College High School Initiative, Jobs for the Future, National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, National League of Cities, Office of Multiple Pathways to Graduation, Promising Practices Network, Small Schools Project, U.S. Department of Education, and the Urban Institute.

Reference lists in all relevant articles and reports were used to find additional publications. An Internet search was also conducted to locate reports and news stories about reentry programs.

Reentry initiatives reviewed in this report were selected based on their meeting the following criteria:

- Targeted out-of-school youth and young adults
- Focused on high school diploma or GED completion
- Served individuals with disabilities

Very little information was provided on students with disabilities served by reentry programs. If information about the disability status of youth in a program was not readily available, the GreatSchools Inc. Web site (www.greatschools.net) was reviewed to obtain percentages of students with disabilities served. Further information on students with disabilities was obtained directly from principals, directors of programs, and special education teachers. In cases where programs served high proportions of racial minorities, the percentage of minority students was also provided because of the well-documented overrepresentation of minorities in special education (Losen & Orfield,

2002; Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, 2006; U.S. Department of Education, 2007).

Dropout Reentry Programs

While there is a fair-sized body of literature on dropout prevention, there is not much information about the types of programs to which students return in order to obtain a diploma or GED after dropping out of school. It is important to note that the characteristics of reentry programs are often quite different from those of dropout prevention programs. For example, a central feature of dropout prevention involves strengthening connections with families; however, this effort may not be appropriate for older out-of-school youth. Students who drop out in their early high school years typically reenroll in traditional high schools (Berliner, Barrat, Fong, & Shirk, 2008). However, the goal of reentry programs is not only to recover recent nongraduates, but also to recover students who are significantly overage and far from meeting the requirements of a high school diploma (Balfanz, Fox, Bridgeland, & McNaught, 2009). The Texas Dropout Recovery Pilot Program (TDRPP), which reenrolled 1,173 former dropouts in educational programs during 2008-2009, reported that the majority of students were living

Elements of a More Effective Post-High School Education and Training System

As students juggle many responsibilities, education and training in such a system would be provided in a flexible manner with appropriate services to help students stay in school. Programs would be built on appropriate and innovative curricula and pedagogy, and those that are occupationally-focused developed in close collaboration with local employers and other workforce stakeholders.

The President's Council of Economic Advisers (CEA)
Preparing the Workers of Today for the Jobs of Tomorrow, July, 2009

President Barack Obama
Remarks to the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
March 10, 2009

independently and had only marginal relationships with their parents (Arroyo Research Services, 2009). Over 60% of community college students are not dependent on their parents (Horn & Nevill, 2006), and individuals who obtain their GED have typically been out of school for almost seven years (GED Testing Service, 2009).

In order for dropout reentry programs to be effective, they must address the barriers that prevented students from finishing high school. In 2004, for example, 35% of dropouts cited employment-related reasons for leaving school, and 28% of female dropouts cited pregnancy as their reason for leaving (Dalton et al., 2009). Typically, reentry programs address these barriers to attendance with provisions such as on-site child-care facilities, flexible scheduling, and accelerated opportunities for credit accrual. The personal needs of students are addressed through

counseling, mentoring, and individualized academic instruction. In addition, opportunities to participate in vocational training and service-learning projects are common in reentry programs. Another key feature of reentry programs is providing students with the resources and supports they need in order to succeed. The following section outlines the six key characteristics of reentry programs, which are divided into the following categories: (a) flexible programming; (b) options for credit recovery, credit accrual, and dual credits; (c) meaningful curricula; (d) additional services and support; (e) staff involvement; and (f) partnerships.

Key Characteristics of Reentry Programs

Figure 1 displays the six key characteristics of reentry programs and illustrates the interactive role that partnerships play in the other five areas.

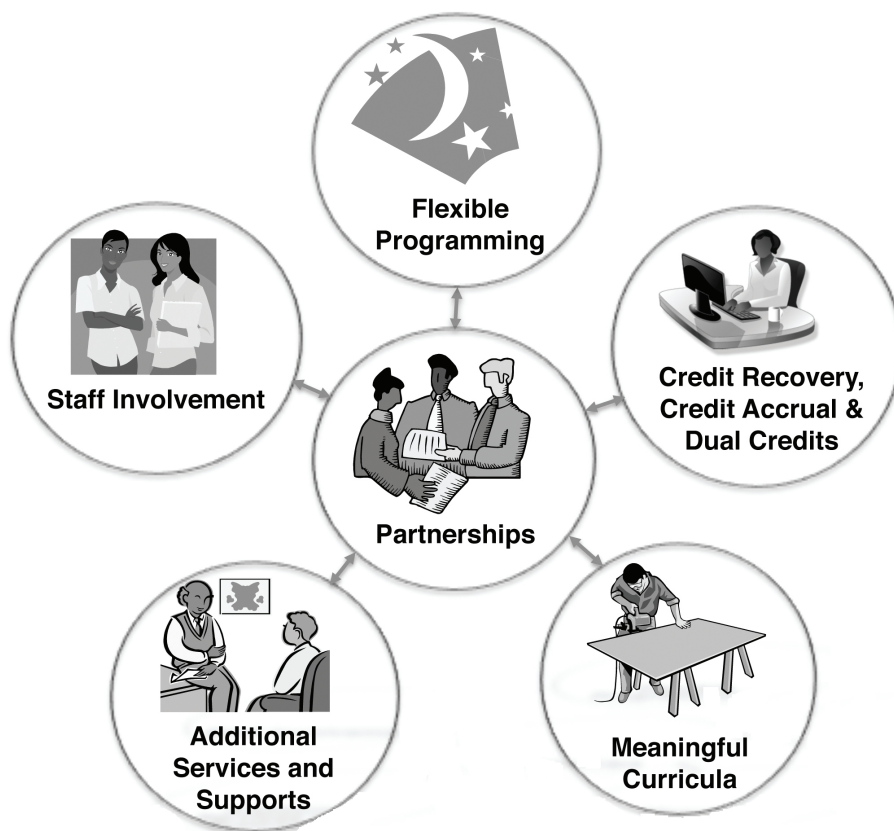


Figure 1. Six characteristics of reentry programs.

Flexible Programming

Many students do not succeed in traditional high school settings due to the restrictive nature of prescribed school hours. For students juggling multiple responsibilities, such as holding down a job or caring for children, rigid school requirements often force them to prioritize immediate needs over the long-term benefits of obtaining a high school diploma. Flexible programming typically involves year-round open-enrollment policies, straightforward admission procedures, location options, and classes offered in the evenings, on Saturdays, or for partial days. Other key features include alternative course delivery modes, such as distance learning and independent study; and alternative modes of course completion, such as self-paced curricula, competency-based programs, and portfolio options. Some flexible programs are geared towards targeted groups, such as those who are pregnant or parenting.

When students have to wait until certain times of the year to reenroll in school, they may lose interest during the waiting period. Schools that allow year-round enrollment increase the likelihood that students will return. Once students are enrolled, they are also more likely to persist in the face of a personal crisis, if they are not required to adhere to rigid attendance requirements.

Other benefits of flexible programming include the following:

- Adjustable schedules and online programs can reduce barriers to school attendance for students who have other commitments, such as working or taking care of family members.
- Programs in community locations are likely to appeal to overage students and students who lack transportation.
- On-site day care and other accommodations for targeted groups can address barriers beyond the academic environment.
- Programs that are individualized (e.g., competency-based) are likely to increase students' sense of motivation.

- A variety of instructional and assessment techniques can accommodate a range of individual learning styles.

Examples of Flexible Programming

In Texas, House Bill 1137 allows public and charter schools to reenroll students ages 21 through 26 who do not have a high school diploma (Texas Education Agency, 2007). As a result of this Bill, there are many programs in Texas that provide flexible programming so that out-of-school adults can return to school. At the Richard Milburn Academies (RMA), classes can be taken for four hours a day, in morning or afternoon sessions, and students often attribute their success to the flexible nature of the program (Richard Milburn Academy, 2010). At RMA, Fort Worth, nearly all the students have jobs and the flexible scheduling allows them to attend school at times that fit with their work schedules. Over 12% of students in the school have disabilities. The students are fully included in general education classes of no more than 15 students, and classes are co-taught by special education and general education teachers. The special education teacher advocates for students, meets with general education teachers on a weekly basis to review each student's needs and progress, and sends weekly progress reports home to parents (D. Hill, personal communication, December 1, 2010).

According to Oregon state legislation, school districts must provide alternative learning options for students who are not succeeding in traditional schools (Jobs for the Future, 2009). As a result, Portland Public Schools (PPS) offer several flexible options for out-of-school youth ages 17 through 21. The Alliance High Schools, for example, provide programs on four campuses, including two night schools for working and parenting students, as well as a school with a technical education focus at which students can participate in job shadowing and internships (District-Operated Alternative Programs, n.d.; Meek ProTech High School, n.d.). Approximately 25% of students at Alliance have IEPs, typically for learning disabilities or behavior disorders. Small class sizes allow for differentiated instruction, which benefits students with and without disabilities. There are many credit options

based on individualized, independent coursework supplemented with teacher tutorials. Credits are also awarded based on proficiency, so that time can be adjusted based on individual learning needs (A.J. Morrison, personal communication, March 25 and April 20, 2010).

Students in Oregon who cannot attend school in person can also enroll in the Insight School, an online public school affiliated with the University of Phoenix, at which students can earn a high school diploma (Insight School of Oregon, 2010). Insight operates in eight states and typically works in conjunction with charter schools, although some school districts contract with Insight to deliver alternative programs. Approximately 10% of students at Insight Schools have disabilities. Insight provides such staff as special education teachers, special education coordinators, and psychologists; and contracts with third-party providers to ensure that students receive the appropriate services. All general education teachers receive copies of students' IEPs and students can interact with teachers through the real-time Elluminate® program (M. Mertz, personal communication, April 6, 2010).

Communities In Schools of Georgia has 21 Performance Learning Centers (PLCs) throughout the state that serve struggling students as well as out-of-school youth. School districts, community organizations, and PLCs work collaboratively to reenroll students. The flexible programming at the Classic City High School PLC in the Clarke County School District allows students to take classes between 10 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. and enroll in one to four courses a quarter. In order to address students' transportation needs, the school partners with the public transit system to provide students with bus passes. The school also provides on-site child care for parenting students (K. Gertz, personal communication, August 31, 2010). The school uses a combination of instructional methods, including computer-based instruction and service-learning (American School Board Journal, 2008). The special education teacher co-teaches with general education teachers in classes where there are students with disabilities and eligible students may also receive resource room services (D. Hunter, personal communication, March 25, 2010).

At the Horizonte Instruction and Training Center in Salt Lake City, Utah, classes are held in a variety of community locations, including Adult Probation and Parole and Rehabilitation Centers, and Salt Lake Community College. The year-round school has open-enrollment and classes are offered in mornings, afternoons, evenings, and on Saturdays, with Saturday classes serving adult immigrant and refugee students who are learning English (M. Holmdahl, personal communication, October 14, 2010). Over half of the students who attend Horizonte are Hispanic. There are three special education teachers based at different locations and students with disabilities are matched to the sites accordingly (J. Andersen, personal communication, March 25, 2010).

The Youth Connection Charter School (YCCS) has 22 community-based campuses around Chicago which serve 3,500 former dropouts. Fifteen percent of YCCS students receive special education services. There are a total of 45 special education teachers who are hired directly by YCCS and provide services in a variety of placements (e.g., regular classroom, resource room, and Level 3 settings for students with high needs). Other service providers, such as speech/language pathologists, social workers, psychologists, and nurses, are provided by the Chicago Public Schools (R. Novak, personal communication, March 25, 2010). The schools include Pathway Schools, which provide students with career-based opportunities; and Credit Recovery Schools, which allow for portfolio-based course completion (Youth Connection Charter School, 2010). Some schools offer programming around a specific theme, and some offer dual enrollment in high school and community college programs. There are also evening programs for working students and targeted programs for gang-involved, pregnant, and parenting youth (Weisz, 2009). Ninety-six percent of students who attend the YCCS are minorities.

Diploma Plus schools in Indiana obtained waivers from the State Board of Education to provide greater flexibility for students and schools. Schedules are flexible so that schools can tailor their programs to students' instructional needs. Course titles and the construction of courses are also flexible, allowing for course combinations that match the integrated

curriculum. There is also flexibility in modes of content delivery, with the use of alternative instructional media replacing the use of textbooks (AHSI Policy Perspective & State Policy Examples, 2008). Diploma Plus at Arlington High School provides an alternative competency-based route to a high school diploma. Ninety-two percent of the students at the school are African American (Indiana Department of Education, n.d.), and 10–15% of students have disabilities. Upon admission, the coordinator of the Diploma Plus program interviews students to find out if they previously received special education services. A dedicated teacher monitors the progress of all students with IEPs and collaborates with general education teachers to ensure that students receive appropriate supports and accommodations. Students who are cognitively unable to make progress towards a diploma may be referred back to their regular district school for placement in a more restrictive setting (C. Barnett, personal communication, April 8, 2010).

Table 1 shows some common barriers experienced by programs that offer flexible programming, as well as solutions that have been implemented by specific programs, school districts, and state departments of education.

Options for Credit Recovery, Credit Accrual, and Dual Credits

Students who drop out of high school typically do not have enough credits to obtain a high school diploma. High school transcript data from 2005 showed that for each academic year, high school dropouts



accrued fewer course credits in English, mathematics, and science than did on-time graduates. During the 2000-2001 academic year, 10th-grade dropouts accrued only 59% of the credits accrued by on-time graduates. At this rate of credit accrual, it would have taken these students over six and a half years to accrue the average number of credits accrued by on-time graduates prior to graduating (Hampden-Thomson, Warkentien, & Daniel, 2009). Online credit-recovery programs are a popular option for credit recovery. Many reentry programs also provide opportunities for students to earn credits for community service or work experience/internships with local businesses. Some programs allow students to earn credits for life skills classes and other nonacademic classes. Dual credits are enabled through partnerships with local colleges and increase the likelihood that students will pursue postsecondary education. This option enables students who are overage to obtain a high school diploma in a timely fashion and make progress towards an associate's degree. Students also benefit from school-college partnerships by being able to use free resources on the college campus, such as free shuttle services, counseling services, tutoring services, and computer labs. The many options increase the likelihood that students will find a good program match for their particular credit needs.

Other benefits of credit recovery and credit accrual options include:

- Students who are significantly overage can earn credits without having to fulfill time-consuming course and/or seat-time requirements.
- Students can take online courses from any location with Internet access without having to attend school.
- Students can earn credits while contributing to the local community through service-learning.
- Students can earn credits while developing employment skills through hands-on work experience.
- Students can earn industry qualifications that increase their chances of gaining employment.

Table 1

Flexible Programming Challenges and Solutions

Challenges	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New program offerings in the district require administrator and teacher “buy in.” • Previous negative school experiences may cause students to fear failure and may contribute to low levels of perseverance. • Program may not be a good fit for student. • Students who dropped out may not be aware of their reenrollment options. • Even with location options, students may not be able to attend site due to issues related to transportation, child care, or employment. • Students may not have reading levels needed to pursue independent study. • Although reentry program may allow year-round enrollment, students who “drop in” without required documents may be turned away. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District level staff must communicate the benefits of programs, such as helping to lower dropout rates and increase graduation rates, and helping schools meet their adequate yearly progress (AYP) goals. • Prior to students’ enrollment, meet with students to determine their needs and identify programs with appropriate supports; provide counseling, mentoring, and advocacy services. • Maintain a list of other reentry programs and key people within the school district; provide students with information on alternative educational options. • Advertise programs through newspapers, cable TV stations, and press releases; host resource fairs; recruit students at community centers and teen hangouts; mail information to parents; designate staff members to contact local high schools to obtain lists of dropouts and inform them of their reenrollment options. • Provide options that do not entail being physically present, such as online GED/diploma programs or independent study with occasional in-person meetings. • Implement a testing process to determine if independent study is appropriate; dually enroll students in independent study and onsite reading program, or, if independent study is not appropriate, refer students to another program. • Create clear enrollment procedures for school personnel to follow; provide front office staff and counselors to facilitate open entry.

Table 1

Flexible Programming Challenges and Solutions (continued)

Challenges	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some states do not allow districts to count attendance for students who do not attend physical facilities (e.g., those who reenroll in online programs). • States may have restrictive regulations related to instructional minutes and teacher certification requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States such as Florida,¹ Texas,² and Washington³ have passed legislation to ensure that school funding models support online education. • Several states fund districts based on Average Daily Membership (ADM) whereby the daily count includes students who are not physically present.⁴ • Obtain waivers that provide greater flexibility with regards to high school instructional minutes requirements, the high school calendar, and the need for instructors (e.g., at colleges) to have k-12 teacher certification.

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¹The 2010 Florida Statutes, Chapter 1002, Sec. 1002.37(3). Available: http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/initiatives/childcarestandards/documents/Statutes/FS_Chapter_1002.pdf

²S.B. No.1788, Sec. 30A.054(c). Available: <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/tlodocs/80R/billtext/pdf/SB01788F.pdf#navpanes=0>

³Substitute Senate Bill 5410, Chapter 542, Laws of 2009, Sec. 7(1). Available: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2009-10/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Law%202009/5410-S.SL.pdf>

⁴<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/download/pdf/ADM1-14-11.pdf>

Examples of Options for Credit Recovery, Credit Accrual, and Dual Credits

Increasing numbers of school districts are providing online credit-recovery options so that youth who are short on credits can graduate on time. In January 2010, the Houston Independent School District (HISD) in Texas launched the self-paced Online Credit-Recovery Initiative that resulted in computer labs, known as “Grad Labs” being established at 46 school campuses in the district (Houston Independent School District [HISD], 2010a). The initiative is designed for students who failed three or more courses in a previous semester, students with excessive absences, and students who have repeated grades. Students who have dropped out attend the labs in the evenings and on Saturdays (C. Morris, personal communication, October 22, 2010). In the first six weeks of implementation, 2,738 HISD students enrolled in the program (Radcliffe, 2010). More than 400 students graduated that May (HISD, 2010b). Eighty-nine percent of students in the HISD are minorities (61% Hispanic and 28% African American; HISD 2010c). Modifications are made for special education students on a student-by-student basis. In addition to modifications made in traditional courses, modifications in the Grad Labs may include reducing the length and/or number of assignments due, and accepting oral discussions in place of online discussion boards (M. Grubb, personal communication, November 30, 2010).

Volusia County Schools in Florida offer online options at all of the district’s high schools, alternative schools, dropout reentry programs, and community learning centers. Students who are unable to attend school during regular school hours can attend Volusia Virtual School, on either a full- or part-time basis. Two Storefront Schools, specifically geared toward students who have dropped out, have been in operation since 1992. Students take online courses at the Storefront for half a day and spend the other half of the day working or engaging in community service. Students earn credits for participating in these activities, allowing for accelerated diploma completion. The curriculum is performance-based and individualized, enabling students with disabilities to progress at their

own pace. There are many embedded features of the online programs, such as text-to-speech and graphic organizers, that also benefit students with disabilities (C. Downing, personal communication, December 1, 2010). In addition to accommodations outlined on students’ IEPs, such as having tests read to them and receiving extended time to complete tests, teachers provide alternative instructional materials for students on an as-needed basis (K. Feltner, personal communication, April 5, 2010).

In order to accelerate diploma completion for students who are behind on credits, the 21 Performance Learning Centers (PLCs) operated by Communities In Schools of Georgia, have a blanket waiver from the state’s normal seat-time requirements that limit students to one course credit per semester. Students who attend PLCs can advance to the next course level any time performance is attained. This waiver allows students who are behind in credits to move more quickly through their required courses than they would through traditional methods of credit accrual (AHSI Policy Perspective & State Policy Examples, 2008).

In addition to programs that provide accelerated routes to credit recovery and credit accrual, many programs help students get a head start on college degrees while completing their high school diploma. Gateway to College is a national network of school-college partnerships that enables students to dually earn high school and college credits. It is highlighted in the shaded box on the following page as a promising practice.



The Gateway to College Early College High School at Riverside City College in California is a public charter school located on the campus of Riverside City College (RCC). Students who have dropped out of school may enroll in the School-to-Career Pathways program in which they can take career and technical education courses at the college and earn dual credits towards their high school diploma and an occupational certificate or associate's degree (J. Marks, personal communication, April 8, 2010). Sixty-five percent of students at the Early College High School are minorities and approximately 10% of students qualify for special education services. Students indicate on their application form whether they ever had an IEP, 504 plan, or participated in a special education program. Students are also asked to provide the name of their previous IEP counselor or contact person and attach a copy of their last IEP or 504 plan (Prospective Gateway to College Applicant, 2010). An IEP meeting is typically held when students are accepted into the program. Students then receive services from both special education providers at the high school and from Student Disability Services on the college campus (J. Marks, personal communication, April 8, 2010).

Table 2 shows some common barriers experienced by programs that offer credit recovery, credit accrual, and dual credit options, as well as solutions that have been implemented by programs, school districts, and state departments of education.

Meaningful Curricula

Individuals who dropped out of school have subsequently reported that classes in school seemed boring and irrelevant (Bridgeland et al., 2006). Indeed, when the connection between classroom instruction and real life is not apparent, it is not surprising that students do not recognize the importance of staying in school. Some programs provide mentors and instructors from local businesses to help students learn from first-hand sources the relevance of classroom learning to the world of work. Many reentry programs embed career exploration such as job shadowing and internships into the curriculum and soft skills needed for employment are sometimes also infused. Opportunities for on-the-job training not only give students exposure to work practices and related employment skills, they also help students make connections between classroom learning and the world of work. Engaging students in local

Promising Practice: Gateway to College at Portland Community College

There are 30 colleges in 16 states that have Gateway to College (GtC) programs enabling students ages 16 through 21 to complete high school diploma requirements at community and technical colleges while simultaneously earning college credits toward an associate's degree (Gateway to College, 2009-2010). Students in the Portland Public Schools in Oregon can attend night school and co-enroll at Portland Community College (PCC)—home of the first Gateway to College program. Portland Community College offers a variety of entry points based on students' academic standing and credit needs (Portland Community College, 2000-2010). Students in the Gateway to College program earn an average of 74 college credits by the time they complete their high school diploma, which is about two-thirds of the credits needed for an associate's degree. Over 70% of graduates continue their college education after completing the program (Portland Community College Foundation, 2007). Approximately 8%-10% of students in the GtC program have disabilities. Upon admission to the program, staff from the Gateway program contacts students' former school districts to determine how to best meet students' needs. Staff also helps to connect students with disabilities to PCC's Disability Services for supports they may need in the college environment (P. Blumenthal, personal communication, April 1, 2010).

Table 2

Credit Recovery, Credit Accrual, and Dual Credits Challenges and Solutions

Challenges	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who are highly mobile may enroll in a school with a different credit recovery program. • Students enrolled in online classes may have weak independent work skills. • Students taking online classes may feel isolated due to the lack of personal contact with teachers and classmates. • Students may lose Internet access due to computer problems or service disconnection. • Students may have skill deficits (e.g., not reading at grade level, poor math skills). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a uniform credit recovery program across the district (e.g., use same credit recovery software in every high school and reentry program). • Use web-based programs so that students can take courses from any location with Internet access. • Provide access to staff via instant messenger, Skype, email, and telephone; provide specific times for students to come on site for face-to-face assistance. • Provide orientation to teach students the ins and outs of learning online. • Limit how many classes students can take at one time to help students manage time effectively. • Provide mentors to provide support for individual students throughout their enrollment; develop and follow a plan that will help students stay on track. • Provide online homerooms (e.g., through Elluminate®) where students can interact with teachers and classmates. • Provide teacher-staffed computer labs in community locations (where students can not only use computers, but also receive one-on-one assistance with work). • Use courses with embedded language support. • Provide small class sizes; differentiated instruction; developmental math and reading classes; one-on-one tutoring. • Emphasize the necessity for students to put forth effort and study outside school; teach students how to exercise discipline and work hard to reach their goals.

Table 2

Credit Recovery, Credit Accrual, and Dual Credits Challenges and Solutions (continued)

Challenges	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In dual enrollment courses, there may be limitations on college courses that are eligible for k-12 funding. • School districts may be unwilling to partner with college programs to reenroll students in GED programs because of accountability requirements under No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 [Part A, Subpart 1, Sec 1111(2)(C)(vi)].² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue legislation such as that enacted in North Carolina¹ that allows colleges to get reimbursed for students who take developmental education courses. • Enact legislation such as Washington State’s Bill 1418³ that encourages school districts, community and technical colleges, and community-based organizations to participate in interlocal agreements to help out-of-school youth obtain high school credentials.

Contributors: C. Morris, Houston ISD, TX; H. Carpenter, Des Moines Area Community College, IA; A. Mason, Open Meadow, Portland, OR; T. Eis, Learning by Design Virtual Charter School, KS; B. Kruse, EV Online Learning, WA; N. Rauda-Trout, LA Conservation Corps Schools, CA; G. Dignan, King County, WA.

¹<http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2007/Bills/House/PDF/H2436v6.pdf>

²<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/107-110.pdf>

³<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/summary.aspx?bill=1418>

. . . this is an area where we are being outpaced by other nations. It’s not that their kids are any smarter than ours—it’s that they are being smarter about how to educate their children. They’re spending less time teaching things that don’t matter, and more time teaching things that do. They’re preparing their students not only for high school or college, but for a career. We are not.

President Barack Obama
Remarks to the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
March 10, 2009

businesses benefits both the students who gain valuable job skills as well as the businesses who can train potential employees. In the case of community service projects, students gain a sense of civic responsibility and the entire neighborhood can benefit from the transformation brought about by students' work.

Examples of Meaningful Curricula

At Rosemary Anderson High, a school run by the nonprofit Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center (POIC) in Oregon, 85% of students are former dropouts (Shieldfilms.com, 2010). In addition, 76% of students are minorities (54% African American and 22% Hispanic) and approximately 22% of students receive special education services (C. Hodges, personal communication, April 12, 2010). A partnership with Reality Check Coaching provides opportunities for students to participate in monthly group training sessions to develop personal goals focused on postsecondary education or apprenticeships (Obritschkewitsch, 2009). Students work toward their high school diploma while participating in job shadowing and paid internships with local businesses. POIC staff conducts pre-placement screenings so that students can be placed in settings that are good matches for both the student and the employer. When students have disabilities, caseworkers share information pertinent to placement decisions. Employers are informed on how to best work with students, and employers can also interview students prior to the commencement of the internship (C. Bueker, personal communication, April 20, 2010). Students can also receive barista training and catering experience at the "COFY" (Career Opportunities for Youth) kiosk operated by POIC.

Garza Independence High School in Austin, Texas, provides many opportunities for students who have completed at least two years of high school to earn a high school diploma and engage in work experience and job shadowing (Garza High School, n.d.). Students complete internships with local nonprofit organizations in the areas of sustainable agriculture, recreation, health care, and alcohol awareness. Job shadowing experiences are matched to students' career interests and include placements at a

local vet, cosmetology school, and an auto body and repair shop. Students interested in criminal justice can shadow the county sheriff for a day, and students interested in pursuing careers that require college degrees can sit in on college classes (J. Gebauer, personal communication, April 12, 2010). The special education coordinator reviews expectations with students who have disabilities. The school-to-career specialist at Garza may also accompany students with disabilities to their work sites (J. Gebauer, personal communication, April 19, 2010). Students can also take a multicredit course in horticulture in which they take care of herb and vegetable beds and grow fruits and vegetables on the school campus. Each week, students sell their produce at a local farmer's market (Garza Horticulture, n.d.a). Students take related academic courses, such as Agribusiness Management and Marketing (Garza Horticulture, n.d.b).

In a program at the Baltimore City Career Academy in Maryland, each student has a career plan based on personal career interests. Speakers from relevant professions are brought in to help students understand the connections between classroom learning and the world of work. Academics, work experience, and soft skills needed for employment are addressed through an integrated curriculum. Students can work towards a high school diploma or GED and receive on-site training in local high-growth occupations such as construction, health care, education, port-related, hospitality and tourism, science and technology, business and finance, and "green" jobs (C. Greene Gordy, personal communication, April 14, 2010). Most of the students at the Academy (92%) are African American (C. Greene Gordy, personal communication, March 29, 2010).

Service-learning is an effective way to engage students in meaningful learning experiences while also revitalizing the local community. A specific aim of Excel Academy in the Uvalde Consolidated ISD in Texas is to reengage former dropouts by developing their sense of connection to school. Toward that end, all students participate in extracurricular activities such as student council and volunteer work. They also engage in meaningful projects in the community, such

as serving as translators for monolingual, Spanish-speaking elderly patients at a local health clinic, tutoring elementary-aged students in an after-school reading program, and doing painting projects in the city park. Most students arrive at Excel having had a host of negative school experiences that caused them to perceive school as a hostile environment. Excel helps students realize that they can make a valuable contribution to their school and community, which increases their sense of self-efficacy and motivation to succeed in school. Students with disabilities are assisted through “academic families,” headed by teachers who monitor small groups of students, as well as monthly parent meetings (J. Gatica, personal communication, August 5, 2010).

Table 3 shows some common barriers experienced by programs that provide meaningful curricula, as well as solutions that have been implemented by programs.

Additional Services and Support

The barriers to reentry for students who dropped out of school range from practical issues such as needing an alarm to wake up, to more debilitating issues such as having a drug problem. Students who experience such barriers typically need support to help them reenter and remain in school. Support may be in the form of transportation, child care, or an adult mentor. In order to provide counseling, help with substance abuse, medical, and dental services, reentry programs often partner with community-based organizations and social service agencies. These agencies may provide services for the entire family. Specialized services may also be provided to meet the needs of youth with specific needs (e.g., parenting, homeless, gang-involved). Case workers are sometimes provided to coordinate service delivery. Oftentimes, classes in areas such as parenting, life skills, conflict resolution, and employment skills, are incorporated into the curriculum.

Barriers toward attendance and program completion can be minimized for students through the provision of additional services and support. Other benefits of additional services and supports include the following:

- Students can get support from counselors during their transition back to school as well as during their transition into the workplace or postsecondary education.
- The provision of services can be tailored to youth with specific needs (e.g., substance abusers).
- Students can get tutoring and individualized support in areas of academic weakness.
- Students can learn additional skills needed for the workplace (e.g., anger management, appropriate etiquette and dress).

Examples of Additional Services and Support

Students aged 16 through 18 years of age who have dropped out of school in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) can earn their high school diploma and obtain career technical education through independent study programs at Alternative Education and Work Centers (AEWC). Independent study allows for flexible scheduling so that students can seek or maintain employment while earning their diplomas. Potential students are assessed to determine whether independent study is appropriate given students’ academic, emotional, and behavioral skill levels; students with reading levels below the site’s standard may be dually enrolled in a reading lab to increase their chances of succeeding in independent study. AEWCs operate at 26 sites, including Community Adult Schools, Occupational Centers, Skills Centers, and Employment Preparation Centers. The centers operate on a client-centered basis, and provide individualized educational and career technical training plans. Students with disabilities receive support services from the local district’s special education team. In order to reduce social and emotional barriers that impact students’ learning, a team of psychiatric social workers (PSWs) provide learning support services at school sites, and also work to strengthen collaboration between home, school, and the community. Home-based assessments and family counseling are provided for the whole family. PSWs also provide mental health consultation to teachers, administrators, and staff, and collaborate with community agencies and organizations (S. Saunders, personal communication, November 18, 2010).

Table 3

Meaningful Curricula

Challenges	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students may have special needs/disabilities that put them at a disadvantage in job placements. • Students' low academic levels may limit workplace opportunities. • Students may have arrest records that make it difficult to obtain job placements. • Students may be unfamiliar with appropriate workforce behaviors. • Students may not be able to get to job sites due to lack of reliable transportation. • Students may have responsibilities involving children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with special education coordinators, guidance counselors, and other service providers to find out what accommodations students need in the workplace; share students' needs with employers. • Provide tutoring and "remedial" basic education courses to increase students' employability. • Work with Offender Workforce Development Programs or similar programs that help ex-offenders conduct job searches. • Provide classes in work readiness and soft skills needed in the workplace; integrate expectations, such as punctuality and appropriate teacher-student interactions, into classroom learning; have professionals teach industry-specific classes. • Find placements at job sites on public transportation routes. • In programs with work experience, try to find companies that offer subsidized child care; check whether the state employment agency offers child-care assistance for students who qualify through the Workforce Investment Act.

Contributors: J. Gebauer, Garza Independence High School, TX; D. Katbah, Pima County Community Services, AZ; A. Wildrick, San Diego Workforce Partnership, CA; P. Leong Kappel, Milwaukee Area Technical College, WI.

In addition to academic classes and paid on-the-job training, the three charter high schools operated by the Los Angeles Conservation Corps provide counseling, mentoring, and job search coaching services for students who were unsuccessful in traditional schools. Nearly all the students who attend LA Conservation Corps schools are minorities (Hispanic and African American). Transitional housing and life skills classes are provided for students who are homeless. Case managers help students achieve the personal, educational, and occupational goals outlined on their Individualized Service Plans. They also provide support for students for up to 12 months after they leave the program (LA Conservation Corps, n.d.). There is an Individualized Education Program (IEP) specialist who oversees services for students with disabilities at all three schools. Teachers at each of the schools not only ensure that the services and accommodations on students' IEPs are provided, but also provide extra support for students with disabilities in the form of extra tutoring and help completing homework (J. Picos, personal communication, April 1, 2010).

Partnerships between schools and community agencies are an effective way to provide youth with a range of services. Reenrolled students at EDCO Youth Alternative in Boston, Massachusetts, can work towards their high school diploma and receive social services through a variety of local providers. To receive EDCO services, students must have dropped out of school or be at risk of dropping out, and also be living below the federal poverty level with one or more identified barriers to success in high school (e.g., court involvement, pregnancy/parenting). Counselors from Wediko Children's Services provide students with conflict resolution and crisis management services.



College preparation and career counseling are provided by TERI College Planning and the Boston Private Industry Council (PIC), respectively (A. Trivedi, personal communication, October 13, 2010).

Youth Opportunities (YO!) Baltimore partners with Baltimore City Public Schools, the Maryland State Department of Labor Licensing and Regulations, and the Maryland State Department of Education to enroll young adults in community-based diploma programs, and reenroll overage and undercredited students in an alternative high school, the YO! Academy. Students who are close to meeting diploma requirements can enroll in an online credit recovery program and transfer credits to Baltimore Community College in order to complete their high school diploma. Students with disabilities who are unable to reach academic skill levels needed for a high school credential are referred for vocational services at Sinai Hospital's vocational services program (E. Dorsey, personal communication, March 26, 2010). Through this program, youth with disabilities receive job-readiness skills, direct employment, and case management (Sinai Hospital, n.d.). Adult basic literacy, pre-GED, GED/ diploma preparation, as well as on-site clinical counseling, are also provided at two YO! Centers. Staff at the centers connect youth to a wide range of additional community resources and services, and provide support for postsecondary education and training and opportunities for paid internship placements (Harris, 2006). At the Westside YO! Center there are computer labs, online classrooms, a library, fitness center, lounge with video games, and a digital recording studio (P. Waddell, personal communication, October 14, 2010). Almost all YO! participants are African American.

Table 4 shows some common barriers experienced by programs that provide additional services and supports, as well as solutions that have been implemented by programs.

Staff Involvement

Most students who drop out of high school failed to develop significant relationships with adults at school (Muller, 2001). School staff provides the human connection to the school setting and close student-teacher relationships can help to increase

Table 4

Additional Services and Supports

Challenges	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have needs that cannot be met within the program, even with the provision of additional services and supports. • Students may enter program with undiagnosed learning disabilities and staff may already be at capacity with regards to service provision. • Program staff may not be aware of available community resources to which students can be referred. • Although services may address students' needs, their barriers to success may involve family-related issues. • Despite the delivery of a range of services, students may still not remain in school. • Service delivery may be fragmented and delivered in a piecemeal fashion rather than as a system targeting such areas as school success, mental health, community engagement, and employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer students to a different program with supports that are a more appropriate match for students' needs. • Recruit college students to provide additional one-on-one tutoring for students who need extra support. • Use resources such as United Way's 2-1-1 referral hotline to get information on local services. • Maintain current information on a range of community resources, including names of key contact people. • Support families in helping their children complete school through collaboration with neighborhood Family Resource Centers; provide social workers with experience in working with high-risk youth and their families to address issues that negatively impact student success. • Convene a Youth Council (e.g., using AmeriCorps volunteers) to solicit feedback and identify needs from the student perspective. • Tighten collaboration between cities, counties, school districts, and community-based organizations to share financial support for software to facilitate service coordination and results accountability.

Contributors: J. Daugherty, Gateway to College, Portland Community College, OR; P. Waddell, YO! Baltimore, MD; S. Saunders, Alternative Education and Work Center (AEWC) Programs, CA; F. Linelle Clark Brown, Austin ISD, TX.

students' sense of belonging to school (Daniels & Arapostathis, 2005; Lee & Burkam, 2003). Successful reentry programs typically have low teacher-student ratios which facilitate the creation of personalized environments in which staff can focus on building relationships with students and being actively engaged in their lives. Involvement in students' lives may entail listening to their needs, conducting academic assessments to ensure students are placed in appropriate classes or programs, collaborating with them to establish their educational goals, providing them with individualized academic support, connecting them to community resources, establishing relationships with their family members, and working with other teachers and professionals to address their barriers to success. Involved staff pay attention to students' academic and credit needs as well as their day-to-day social and emotional needs. They are also accessible to students both in school and after school. Many schools provide teams of administrators, counselors, and teachers to monitor students' progress and help address their problems. Close monitoring of students' progress enables staff to intervene before students' problems escalate to the point of interfering with their success in school.



Mentors can provide encouragement to students and motivate them to graduate from school, and provide ongoing support for students as they transition out of school. A recent study, based on data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, found that having an adult mentor was associated with students' greater performance in high school and likelihood of pursuing postsecondary education (Erickson, McDonald, & Elder, 2009). Students not only benefit academically from the individualized support they receive, they also benefit from having someone they can turn to and talk to in times of need. The increased sense of support and belonging that students get from having caring adults in their lives is particularly important for students who got "lost in the crowd" and felt that teachers did not care about them in their previous high schools.

Examples of Staff Involvement

The Youth Employment Institute (YEI) is an alternative high school in Portland, Oregon, where students can get GED preparation as well as employment training. Upon enrollment in the program, students meet with a case manager and together they develop a written plan outlining students' goals and strategies for accomplishing them. Case managers use a relationship-based approach to connect with youth. They also coordinate supplemental activities to meet students' individual needs, including additional instruction, recreational events, and access to additional resources and services (Portland Public Schools, 2010). About 20% of students at YEI receive special education services, mainly for learning disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and mental health issues. A special education teacher works with identified students to help them achieve their individual goals (R. Parker, personal communication, March 26, 2010).

The Austin Independent School District (AISD) in Texas has several programs that utilize the resources of involved adults. Each of the district's 121 campuses has a task force that intervenes when students experience attendance, academic, or behavioral

problems. Task force members include principals, counselors, nurses, dropout prevention specialists, regular classroom teachers, and special education teachers. Students' problems are addressed through various levels of intervention ranging from conferences with students and parents, to referrals to mental health and social services. Approximately 70% of students in the Austin ISD are minorities (59% Hispanic and 9% African American; F. L. Clark Brown, personal communication, October 21, 2010). Former dropouts who have completed at least two years of high school can attend Garza Independence High School at which all staff is trained in a solution-focused intervention model that helps students draw on their strengths (Garza High School, n.d.a).

The Pima County One Stop program in Tucson, Arizona, provides employability workshops, career and technical training, work experience, internships, and individual sessions with an assigned Workforce Development Specialist. One-third of the participants are required to be out-of-school youth. In addition to workforce preparation, youth receive basic education and tutoring, and students with severe disabilities can receive services through vocational rehabilitation providers. The program also contracts with a local provider that specializes in serving youth and adults with disabilities (D. Katbah, personal communication, March 26, 2010). The Youth Council of the local Workforce Investment Board, which includes representatives from community-based organizations, juvenile justice, vocational training, education, housing, Job Corps, as well as parents and youth, assists in procuring appropriate youth service providers, guiding workforce development efforts, and improving the employability of participants. A case management team stays in contact with youth for a minimum of one year after they exit the program (D. Katbah, personal communication, October, 19, 2010).

Mound Street Academies in Ohio operate three career-based intervention programs for students aged 16 through 22 who have dropped out of school. Approximately 75% of students are African American, and 22% qualify for special education services. All three Academies—Technology, Trades and Military

Careers; Health Careers; and Information Technology Careers—combine computer-based academic instruction with work-based learning to help students earn a high school diploma and gain a career focus (A. Beane, personal communication, July 21, 2010). Close student-teacher relationships are enabled by the small class sizes, low student to teacher ratios, and the fact that students receive most of their instruction in self-contained classes with the same teacher. Teachers are able to get to know students personally and provide support in all areas of students' lives. Outside of the classroom, teachers interact with students through job site visits and home visits. They also regularly contact students' parents/guardians, and if students are absent from school, teachers call home that day. In addition to teachers' close level of involvement in students' lives, students also receive support from on-site mental health and social work personnel and are referred to community-based services when necessary. Student surveys also indicate that compared to their previous schools, students experience an enhanced sense of safety at the Academies (J. Hemstra, personal communication, July 15, 2010).

Table 5 shows some common barriers experienced by programs that provide involved staff, as well as solutions that have been implemented by programs, school districts, and community-based organizations.

Partnerships

Reconnecting out-of-school youth with education typically requires the coordination of multiple agencies and organizations. Schools, community colleges,

Clearly, collaboration between training providers and employers is important for ensuring that the skills students acquire are those employers need.

President's Council of Economic Advisers

Preparing the Workers of Today for the Jobs of Tomorrow, July, 2009

Table 5

Staff Involvement

Challenges	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all teachers are willing to “go the extra step” for students; teachers in reentry programs must have particular skills and dispositions (e.g., be able to build relationships with students, have high expectations for them, and be able to motivate them). • Students may not appear to be making progress or may stop attending school, despite staff support. • District may not have the capacity to support extra staff responsibilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen teachers who apply for positions in reentry programs using an instrument such as the Haberman Star Teacher Interview that assesses teacher qualities in areas such as value placed on student learning and ability to relate to students of all backgrounds. • Document the strategies that enable a student to make progress; understand student’s performance in terms of individual growth from his/her personal baseline. • Provide dedicated staff members to follow-up with students who are not in school; find out why students are not in school and provide academic supports or refer students to social services, as appropriate. • Call and mail letters to students who stop attending to encourage them to return. • Use community partners to help offset some staff responsibilities (e.g., collaborate with a local college so that college students can tutor students and provide additional support).

Contributors: C. Morris, Houston ISD, TX; T. Cook, Dorchester County Adult Education, SC; F. Linelle Clark Brown, Austin ISD, TX; P. Waddell, YO! Baltimore, MD.

businesses, and community-based organizations have come to realize that the problem is too big for any one entity to tackle alone. In addition, partnerships allow students to receive opportunities and services that increase the likelihood of their success. Many school reentry initiatives have partnerships with local employers to help students gain hands-on work experience. These partnerships help the schools, which benefit from business resources; the businesses that can

train future employees; and the students who gain work skills that will help them obtain future employment. Local businesses may also participate in informational seminars and resource fairs to help students learn about the role of particular businesses in the community, as well as obtain information on opportunities in the local workforce. Partnerships with local colleges are also common. These partnerships allow students to gain exposure to the college environment, take college

classes while working on their high school diploma, and transition smoothly into postsecondary education. Exposure to the college environment is particularly important for students who are unfamiliar with the culture of education and/or do not have parents who attended college. Partnerships with adult education providers can be used to provide alternate settings at which students can earn a high school credential, often an appealing option to overage students who do not want to return to high school. In addition to business and college partnerships, partnerships with social services and community-based organizations provide students with additional services and access to resources that can help to address their barriers to school success. In many cases, multiple organizations and agencies work together to deliver a coordinated and complementary set of services for returning students. The sheer number of partnerships in operation around the country allows for only a very brief overview of partnerships in this report.

Partnerships With Colleges

The Dropout Prevention and Recovery Program in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) has a network of 45 continuation high schools, 56 community day schools, an independent study school, 18 adult schools, 6 education career centers, and an Alternative Education Work Center (AEWC) program (Los Angeles Unified School District, n.d.). There is a formal district-to-district partnership between the LAUSD and the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD), which enables every LAUSD student to take at least one college transfer or career/technical course before leaving high school (Los Angeles Community College District, 2008). Low-performing juniors attend Harbor College Drafting Engineering classes in the last two periods of their high school day, and by the time they achieve their high school diploma, most students have accumulated one full year of college credit. Because students who are returning to school after dropping out must be able to maintain good attendance in order to stay in the program, learning coaches attend classes with cohorts and counsel students who are late or absent. In addition to calling absent students to help explore

solutions to their attendance problems, they also assist students in accessing additional services and supports (J. Sparks, personal communication, October 15, 2010).

Partnerships With Community-Based Organizations

The High School Completion Program (HSCP) in Vermont is delivered through a partnership between local high schools and Learning Works, the statewide adult education and literacy system. Any young adult aged 16 through 22 who does not have a high school diploma can participate in the program if they score at or above Level 4 of the National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS; M. Ide, personal communication, April 9, 2010). Up to 25% of HSCP students statewide have been diagnosed with learning disabilities (Vermont Adult Learning, 2009). Students can be coenrolled in their district high school, enabling students with disabilities to receive special education services from providers within their district (M. Ide, personal communication, April 9, 2010). Graduation education plans, which are signed agreements between the student, the high school, and the Learning Works provider, are developed for each student. Plans outline students' personal learning goals and the organization responsible for the delivery of specified services. Services are provided by local high schools, adult education and literacy providers, colleges, and community agencies that offer services such as parent/child centers, technical training programs, and youth employment programs. There are many entry points to the program; a homeless or pregnant student may enter via a program for homeless youth or pregnant teens. These community organizations are then contracted to deliver education services as part of the student's education plan. After students meet their graduation requirements, the school district awards their high school diploma (Vermont Department of Education, 2009).

Partnerships With Social Services

The nonprofit Alternative Schools Network (ASN) and its member schools work with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to provide education, employment, and support services for reenrolled students in 22 community-based high schools in Chicago. There are several community service agencies that are members of the ASN and provide direct services such as case management, literacy instruction, mental health counseling, and parent support groups, for youth and their families. Ada S. McKinley Community Services, for example, is a community-based organization that operates two schools for students who have had irregular attendance in traditional programs or have dropped out altogether. The schools provide a range of social, therapeutic, and recreational support services, as well as tutoring, mentoring, counseling, and family support services. Older students can participate in summer internship programs in one of the agency's child-care programs. All ASN schools have school-based mentors who help coordinate services with caseworkers from the city's Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). The DCFS also funds the Career Education and Development Program which includes career education workshops and work experiences with local businesses (Alternative Schools Network, 2004).

Table 6 shows some common barriers experienced by programs involved in partnerships, as well as solutions that have been implemented by programs, school districts, and community-based organizations.



Conclusion and Recommendations

This review of reentry programs reveals that the following six characteristics are common to most reentry programs operating around the country: flexible programming; credit recovery, credit accrual, and dual credits; meaningful curricula; additional services and supports; staff involvement; and partnerships. While each of these program characteristics is important in its own right, partnerships do not function independently, but rather support each of the other program components. However, it should not be assumed that a reentry program that adopts all six characteristics outlined in this report will be successful by virtue of incorporating these characteristics. It is more important to match the needs of out-of-school youth in the local district to the design of the reentry program.

Because there are no empirical studies assessing the effectiveness of the program characteristics, most interventions have been adopted based on common sense approaches. If students dropped out because they could not attend school due to the need to get a job or take care of their children, a logical response is to provide the option of a more flexible schedule. However, while this may be a necessary measure for some students, it may not meet the needs of students who dropped out after years of failing courses and becoming disengaged. For these students, the program characteristics that may have the biggest draw might be the role of involved staff to reconnect them to the school environment and the meaningful curriculum, through which they can experience success while participating in activities that seem relevant to their lives. In other words, when designing a new reentry program, program characteristics should be selected based on their particular benefits to students in a particular district so that a unique reentry program can be created to meet the needs of out-of-school youth in that district.

The following section describes recommendations in the areas of research, practice, and policy, based on this review of reentry programs.

Table 6

Partnerships

Challenges	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who attend college campuses may not be aware of free resources available to them. • Partnerships with colleges may enable students to attend college campus for classes, but students may not be able to use campus services such as child care if they are not full-time college students. • Partnerships that enable students to take courses on college campuses may not allow colleges to receive reimbursement for students under the age of 21 who enroll in developmental education courses. • Partnerships involving shared delivery of courses leading to diploma may require multiple affiliation agreements between education providers. • School districts may be unwilling to partner with college programs to reenroll dropouts in GED programs because of accountability requirements under No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 [Part A, Subpart 1, Sec 1111(2)(C)(vi)].² • Despite the passage of state laws that enable adult education programs or other entities to provide services that may be counted for credit toward a high school diploma (e.g., VT's Act 176)⁵, school districts may not change their diploma requirements (e.g., seat time requirements) so as to take advantage of these partnerships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with students to inform them of free college resources such as shuttle services, counseling services, student disability services, women's resource centers, multicultural resource centers tutoring, access to writing centers, and computer labs. • Partner with local day-care centers/contribute to cost of low-cost child care; partner with Family Literacy programs so that eligible students can use day-care services provided by those programs. • Explore more flexible legislation that would include developmental courses in computing the budget FTE for colleges (see for example, North Carolina's HB2436, S. 8.18. G.S. 115D-5).¹ • Develop statewide affiliation agreements that will apply to all participating entities (e.g., high schools and community colleges). • Explore legislation that would encourage school districts, colleges, and community-based organizations to participate in interlocal agreements to help out-of-school youth complete high school graduation requirements (see for example, Washington State's Bill 1418³ and Wisconsin Statute 118.15⁴). • Advertise the successes of school districts that developed flexible and innovative approaches to partnering with adult education providers to help students complete their diploma requirements.

Table 6

Partnerships (continued)

Challenges	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships with job sites may not be appropriate for students with disabilities or other special needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with special education coordinators, guidance counselors, and other service providers to find out what accommodations students need in the workplace; meet with supervisors at work sites to inform them of students' needs.

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¹ <http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2007/Bills/House/PDF/H2436v6.pdf>

² <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/107-110.pdf>

³ <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/WSLdocs/2009-10/Pdf/Bills/House%20Bills/1418-S.pdf>

⁴ <http://nxt.legis.state.wi.us/nxt/gateway.dll?f=templates&fn=default.htm&d=stats&jd=118.15>

⁵ http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_adulted/hscp/educ_ael_hscp_guidelines.pdf

Research Recommendations

The success of reentry programs is primarily based on anecdotal reports. However, in order to ensure the growth and sustainability of future reentry initiatives, it is imperative that empirical research is conducted. Longitudinal data must therefore be collected so that student outcomes can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of specific program features. Only through the collection of data and rigorous evaluation of programs, will it be possible to identify successful program models and best practices in the area of reentry. In order to further our understanding of reentry programs, future research should attempt to answer the following questions:

- What is the relative weight of each reentry program characteristic?
- What are the short- and long-term outcomes of students who attended reentry programs?

- What are the outcomes for students with disabilities and how do they compare with outcomes for students without disabilities?
- Is there a significant difference between rural and urban areas regarding reentry program implementation?

Practice Recommendations

This review of reentry programs has led to seven basic recommendations for SEAs, LEAs, and CBOs wishing to redesign reentry programs or initiate new reentry programs. These recommendations are as follows:

- Contact students as soon as they drop out to obtain information on the reasons they dropped out and the conditions under which they will return to school, emphasizing opportunities for youth to remain in school until the age of 21+.

- Tailor program offerings and services to the reasons students dropped out.
- In addition to students' academic needs, determine students' social and emotional needs, as well as their needs with regards to accommodations, support services, and related services.
- After students return to school, implement systematic methods of data collection regarding the services students receive, the academic progress they make, behavioral and life skills changes, the credentials they earn, and their postschool outcomes.
- Assign teachers to reentry programs based on their having an interest in, and aptitude for, working with "at-risk" populations.
- Develop partnerships with local colleges, businesses, and community-based organizations to facilitate the coordinated delivery of programs and services.
- Use data to conduct regular evaluations of program success and to make programmatic decisions.
- Create multiple pathways to diploma completion for youth with disabilities.
- Provide opportunities for credit accrual that include credit recovery programs, credit for performance, and credit for work experience and service-learning.
- Incorporate preparation for postsecondary education and/or careers into the curriculum.
- Develop partnerships in the local community to develop dropout recovery plans, and to streamline program and service delivery.

Policy Recommendations

Consistent, long-term funding is critical for the sustainability of reentry programs. Currently, state funding streams and accountability measures do not encourage dropout recovery. States should provide incentives to school districts to encourage dropout recovery efforts for all youth, including youth with disabilities, such as allowing funding to be used for educating "older" youth (e.g., those over the age of 21) and allowing state and local per-pupil funding to flow to students in alternative settings, including charter schools, community and technical colleges, and community-based organizations. Six basic policy recommendations are presented as follows:

- Restructure states' school funding formulas to support dropout recovery.
- Incorporate dropout recovery into schools' overall school improvement plans to increase graduation rates and other transition outcomes for youth with disabilities.

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Appendix

Significant Features of Reentry Programs

Program	Significant Features	Contact Information
Alliance High Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The schools provide a good example of flexible programming because they are located on four different campuses, with two of the schools operating in the evenings. • Credit accrual is enabled by the options to do independent coursework with supplemental teacher tutorials; and earn proficiency based credit. • The schools also highlight a meaningful curriculum as the program with a technical education focus enables students to participate in job shadowing and internships. 	Alliance High Schools, Portland, OR Principal, A. J. Morrison ajm@pps.k12.or.us Phone: 503-916-5747
Alternative Education and Work Centers (AEWC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These centers provide a good example of flexible programming as the education and vocational training schedules are individualized and students can participate in independent study programs. • The meaningful curriculum is evident in the technical education programs that provide career training for 6-12 months. • Additional services and supports are provided by psychiatric social workers who work at each site to ensure that students' social and emotional needs are met. 	Los Angeles Unified School District, CA Division Of Adult And Career Education Alternative Education and Work Center Programs Coordinator, Swanzi Saunders Swanzi.saunders@lausd.net Phone: 213-241-3154
Alternative Schools Network (ASN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This network of community-based high schools in Chicago is a good example of partnerships with social service agencies as students can receive services through community services agencies that are members of the network, or through the city's Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). 	Alternative Schools Network (ASN), IL www.asnchicago.org/ Executive Director, Jack Wuest jwuest@asnchicago.net
Austin Independent School District (AISD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AISD provides a good example of staff involvement, as all schools have a task force that intervenes when students experience attendance, academic, or behavioral problems. Task force members provide various levels of interventions for students, ranging from conferences to referrals to community-based agencies. 	Austin Independent School District, TX http://www.austinisd.org/academics/support/index.phtml Dropout Prevention & Truancy Coordinator, Dr. Linelle Clark-Brown linelle.clark-brown@austinisd.org Phone: 512- 414-0201

Significant Features of Reentry Programs (continued)

Program	Significant Features	Contact Information
Baltimore City Career Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This school provides a good example of meaningful curricula as each student has a career plan based on personal career interests; academics, work experience, and soft skills needed for employment are addressed through an integrated curriculum. • Partnerships have been developed with a variety of local high-growth industries at which students can get on-site job training. 	Baltimore City Career Academy, MD Principal, Callie Greene Gordy cgreene@oedworks.com Phone: 410-396-7454
Classic City High School Performance Learning Center (PLC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The schools provide a good example of flexible programming because they offer classes from 10:00 am until 7:30 pm and students can take a variable number of classes each quarter. • The schools' flexible programming also allows for credit accrual as students can participate in computer-based instruction and service-learning. PLCs also have a blanket waiver from the state's normal seat-time requirements and students can advance to the next course level any time performance is attained. Students can also earn dual credits through dual enrollment at Athens Technical College. 	Classic City High School Performance Learning Center, GA http://www.clarke.k12.ga.us/plc.cfm Principal, Kelly Girtz girtzk@clarke.k12.ga.us Phone: 706-353-2323
Diploma Plus at Arlington High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diploma Plus schools in Indiana obtained waivers from the state to be able to change course titles, reconfigure courses, offer flexible schedules, and use alternative instructional media. In addition to these examples of flexible programming, Arlington High School offers a competency-based diploma program. 	Diploma Plus at Arlington High School, IN http://www.422.ips.k12.in.us/index.php?id=10150 Academic Dean - Diploma Plus, Chris Barnett Phone: 317-226-2345 ext. 2335
The Dropout Prevention and Recovery Program in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This district provides a good example of college partnerships as every LAUSD student can take at least one college transfer or career/technical course through the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) before leaving high school. 	The Dropout Prevention and Recovery Program, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) http://myfuturemydecision.org/ Director of Pupil Services, Debra Duardo debra.duardo@lausd.net Phone: 213-241-4967
EDCO Youth Alternative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This school provides a variety of additional services and supports through partnerships with local providers which enable students to receive services related to conflict resolution, crisis management, college preparation, and career counseling. 	EDCO Youth Alternative, MA http://www.edcoyouthalternative.com/ Contact: Ajay Trivedi ajay.edco@gmail.com Phone: 617-262-9562

Significant Features of Reentry Programs (continued)

Program	Significant Features	Contact Information
The EV Online Learning Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This initiative is a good example of a partnership with a for-profit online education provider that enables students to take online classes in community locations to complete their diploma requirements. 	EV Online Learning Program, East Valley School District, WA http://www.evonlinelearning.org/evonlinelearning/site/default.asp Principal of Washington Academy of Arts and Technology, Barbara Cruse cruseb@evsd.org Phone: 509-924-1830
Excel Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This school provides a good example of a meaningful curriculum as students are provided opportunities to provide useful services in the community. • The flexible programming also allows for credit recovery as students over 18 years of age can attend a night school and take self-paced online classes. • Staff involvement is evidenced by the role that teachers play as “academic parents” and their continued support for students after they graduate. • Additional services and supports are apparent in the provision of child-care services and transportation to and from school; counseling and health care services are provided at school and through local agencies. 	Excel Academy, Uvalde Consolidated Independent School District, TX Director CTE, Juan Gatica gaticaj@ucisd.net Phone: 830-279-1588
Gateway to College Early College High School at Riverside City College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This dual credit program provides a good example of a meaningful curriculum as students take career and technical education courses at the college and earn dual credits towards their high school diploma and an occupational certificate or associate’s degree. • The school also provides a good example of staff involvement as students with disabilities can receive services both from special education providers in the high school and from Student Disability Services on the college campus. 	Gateway to College Early College High School at Riverside City College, CA http://www.rcc.edu/services/workforce/gateway.cfm Director, Riverside City College, Jill Marks Phone: (951) 222-8934 or (951) 222-8931
Garza Independence High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This school provides a good example of meaningful curricula as students can participate in work experiences, job shadowing, and internships. • The school has developed partnerships with a wide range of local nonprofit organizations, businesses, trade schools, and colleges at which students can get experiences matched to their career/postsecondary interests. • There is also strong staff involvement as the special education coordinator prepares students for their work placements and the school-to-career specialist accompanies students, as needed, to their work sites. 	Garza Independence High School, Austin, TX http://archive.austinisd.org/schools/details.phtml?id=024&lang= School-to-Career Specialist, Jutta Gebauer jgebauer@austinisd.org Phone: 512-414-8622

Significant Features of Reentry Programs (continued)

Program	Significant Features	Contact Information
High School Completion Program (HSCP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This statewide program provides an excellent example of partnerships between high schools and adult education providers as students can complete a variety of competencies through services provided by adult education providers and receive their diploma from their local high school. 	High School Completion Program (HSCP), VT http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_adulted/hscp.html Center Coordinator for Vermont Adult Learning, Frank Gerdeman fgerdeman@vtadulthoodlearning.org
Horizonte Instruction and Training Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The center provides several good examples of flexible programming. In addition to offering classes in different community locations, the school is open year-round and has open enrollment; classes are also offered in mornings, afternoons, evenings, and on Saturdays. 	Horizonte Instruction and Training Center, Salt Lake City, UT http://www.slc.k12.ut.us/schools/high/horizonte.html Phone: 801-578-8574
Houston Independent School District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This district serves as an excellent example of staff involvement as teachers who are hired for the credit recovery labs are carefully screened at both the district and school levels to ensure they will be able to develop relationships with students and motivate them to graduate. The school also serves as an excellent example of a credit recovery program as all high schools have computer labs with Apex Learning® software, which can be used during the day for currently enrolled students who are creditdeficient, and during the evenings and on Saturdays by students returning to school after dropping out. 	Houston Independent School District, TX Manager – Houston ISD Virtual School Department, Mark Grubb MGRUBB@houstonisd.org Phone: 713-957-7715
Insight School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This online school is a good example of flexible programming as students can take classes from any location with Internet access. Teachers interact with students through the real-time Elluminate® program, which provides a good example of staff involvement. 	Insight Schools http://www.insightschools.net/ Phone: 877-254-6744
Los Angeles Conservation Corps Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These schools provide a good example of additional services and supports as case managers provide support for students up to 12 months after graduating and students with specific needs, such as those who are homeless, can receive transitional housing and life skills classes. 	Los Angeles Conservation Corps Schools, CA http://www.lacorps.org/education.php Youth Opportunities High School Executive Director of LA Education Corps, Noel Rauda-Trout nraudatrout@lacorps.org Phone: 323-249-7845

Significant Features of Reentry Programs (continued)

Program	Significant Features	Contact Information
Mound Street Academies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The small class sizes and low student to teacher ratios in these schools allow for a high level of staff involvement. The schools also provide a good example of flexible programming as the curriculum is self-paced, and students doing work experience only attend school for 15 hours per week. • The schools also provide a good example of meaningful curricula as they incorporate work-based learning and focus on helping students establish career goals and acquire skills needed for the workforce. • The schools also provide an excellent example of credit accrual and dual credit as students can earn credit for job training and personal development classes. Students can also take courses at Sinclair Community College and receive both college and high school credits. • Additional services and supports are provided from on-site mental health professionals and social workers, and students are also referred to community-based services. 	<p>Mound Street Academies, OH http://www.moundstreet.k12.oh.us/ Superintendent, Anne M. Beane abeane@moundstreet.k12.oh.us Phone: 937-223-3041</p>
Pima County One Stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This One Stop provides a good example of staff involvement. In addition to providing a variety of services to students, a case management team stays in contact with youth for a minimum of one year after they exit the program. 	<p>Pima County One Stop program, AZ http://www.pima.gov/ced/CS/OneStop/EducaTraining.html Program Manager, Pima County Community Services, Employment & Training/ONESTOP, Dana Katbah dana.katbah@pima.gov Phone: 520-798-0535</p>
Portland Community College Gateway to College (GtC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The national GtC network provides an excellent example of dual credits that can be earned by students through dual high school/college enrollment. • The GtC program at Portland Community College also provides a good example of flexible programming as students in the Portland Public Schools can attend night school and co-enroll in GtC. • Staff involvement is also demonstrated by the role staff plays in finding out what services students need, connecting them with disability services on campus, and informing students of other college services from which they could benefit. 	<p>Portland Community College Gateway to College, OR http://www.pcc.edu/prepare/head-start/prep/gateway/ Outreach and Intake Specialist, Jana Daugherty Jana.daugherty15@pcc.edu Phone: 503-788-6213</p>

Significant Features of Reentry Programs (continued)

Program	Significant Features	Contact Information
Richard Milburn Academies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The schools provide a good example of flexible programming because they offer classes for four hours a day, in morning or afternoon sessions. Staff involvement is demonstrated through on-site counseling and tutorial services, bilingual staff members, and special education teachers who “go the extra step” to meet students’ needs both in and outside the classroom. 	Richard Milburn Academy, Fort Worth, TX http://www.milburnschools.org/articles/rma_fort_worth_tx Phone: 817-731-7627
Rosemary Anderson High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This school provides a good example of meaningful curricula and partnerships as students work toward their high school diploma while participating in job shadowing and paid internships with local businesses. Staff involvement is also apparent from the thoroughness of preplacement screenings and the collaboration between teachers, caseworkers, and employers to ensure that work placements meet the needs of both the student and the business. 	Rosemary Anderson High, Portland, OR Special Projects Coordinator, Cord Bueker cbueker@poicrahs.org Phone: 503-797-7237
Volusia County Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These schools are a good example of credit recovery and accrual as students can take online courses at any of the school’s computer labs or the virtual school, and students who have dropped out can get credit for work experience and community service. 	Volusia County Schools, FL Online Learning Coord., Carol Downing cdowning@volusia.k12.fl.us Phone: 386-255-6475 x3837
Youth Connection Charter School (YCCS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The schools are a good example of flexible programming as some offer evening programs, programs for targeted youth (e.g., parenting), and portfolio-based course completion, and some offer dual credit. 	Youth Connection Charter School, Chicago, IL http://www.yccs.us/ Phone: 312-328-0799
Youth Employment Institute (YEI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This school provides a good example of staff involvement as case managers are highly involved in students lives; they meet with each student upon their admission to the program; they provide additional instruction, and connect students with community-based resources. 	Youth Employment Institute (YEI), OR http://www.yei.org/ Program Manager, Rebecca Parker rparker@yei.org Phone: 503-280-1058 x144
The Youth Opportunities (YO!) Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A partnership involving state departments, a school district, community college, and community-based organization allows for flexible programming and dual credits as students can attend programs in different locations, and can enroll in an online credit recovery program and transfer credits to Baltimore Community College. Additional services and supports are provided through on-site clinical counseling and by staff who help students access community resources, postsecondary education, training, and paid internships. 	The Youth Opportunities (YO!) Program, Baltimore, MD http://www.yobaltimore.org/ Director, Ernest Dorsey edorsey@oedworks.com Phone: 410-396-6722

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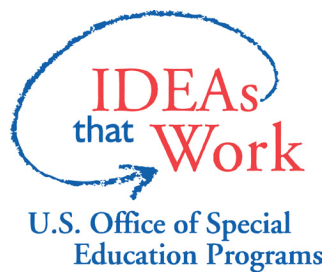
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