



Graduating Great Kids:

Baltimore City's Parent Engagement in Drop-Out Prevention

A Proposed Guiding Framework

Developed by
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Why Do Students Drop Out?

- Life Events
- Fade Outs
- Push Outs
- Failing to Succeed
 - Attendance
 - Behavior
 - Course Failure

* For more information, see *What Your Community Can Do to End Its Dropout Crisis* by Robert Balfanz, Johns Hopkins University

Why is Parent Engagement in Dropout Prevention Important?

Students with involved parents (regardless of family income or background) are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores
- Be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits
- Attend school regularly
- Have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school
- Graduate and go on to postsecondary education

For more information, see *A New Wave of Evidence*; Ann Henderson and Karen Mapp.



Keys To Success: Start Early and Keep It Up!

- ❑ Engagement of parents in the early years (at preschool or kindergarten) builds the foundation for successful parent-school partnerships
- ❑ Waiting to engage parents in high school – at the point at which the student is dropping out – is too late
- ❑ It's even harder to engage parents if they felt alienated and patronized by educators when their children were younger
- ❑ Parent engagement is even more difficult if the parents, themselves, had unsuccessful experiences as students.
- ❑ Middle and high school teachers typically only engage with parents around disciplinary issues.

Framework for Parent Engagement

The “3 A’s” Framework – these 3 priorities are critical to student success AND are heavily influenced by parental action/beliefs:

- **Attendance Every Day**
 - Ensure children go to school regularly
- **Achievement Every Year**
 - Monitor and help children make satisfactory progress each year
- **Attainment Over Time**
 - Set high expectations for children and plan for attaining their long-term goals

Attendance Every Day

Rationale:

- ❑ Children can't learn if they aren't present
- ❑ Parents – especially in the early years – are best positioned to ensure children attend school and to build the expectation around attendance

Connection to School Success:

- ❑ Chronic absence in Kindergarten is associated with lower academic performance in 1st grade among all children and, for poor children, predicts the lowest levels of educational achievement at the end of fifth grade.
- ❑ By 6th grade, missing 20% (or two months of school) is a critical warning sign of school drop-out.
- ❑ By 9th grade, missing 20% of school can be a better predictor of drop-out than 8th grade test scores.

Achievement Every Year

Rationale:

- Grade level achievement is critical to long-term success
- Parents play a critical role in helping their child to make satisfactory progress. Students especially depend upon their parents for ensuring their learning needs are met in and out of school and for monitoring their homework.

Connection to School Success:

- Reading proficiently by the end of 3rd grade is critical to students being able to read to learn in all of their subjects.
- A sixth grader who fails math or English or an unsatisfactory behavior mark or poor attendance has a 75% likelihood of dropping out.
- Freshmen in Chicago public schools who earn a B average or better have an 80% chance of finishing high school with at least a 3.0 GPA

Attainment Over Time

Rationale:

- ❑ Students and their parents need to have shared beliefs and understanding about long-term success and what it takes.
- ❑ Most children depend upon their parents for guidance and encouragement.

Connection to School Success:

- ❑ Chances for success are improved when adults offer children, starting at a young age, with positive expectations and aspirations about what they can do and achieve.
- ❑ In many middle schools, students already face the challenge of tracking to vocational or college bound courses.
- ❑ High school students and their parents especially need a strong understanding of career options and what's required to pursue them (e.g., graduation & college entrance requirements)

The 3 A's: Other Considerations

- The 3 A's Framework also provides for engagement of other stakeholders in the dropout prevention work (e.g., schools, communities)
 - The combined efforts of all stakeholders can make the difference
- Paying attention to the 3 A's is particularly important at points of transitions in a student's academic career (e.g., movement from elementary to middle, and middle to high school)
 - Differentiated strategies by age of children are needed

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Baltimore City Public Schools

To be awarded a diploma,
all student need to earned a
minimum of **21 credits.**

Students must also earn **75
service-learning hours**

English 4 credits
Mathematics 3 credits √ 1 in algebra I √ 1 in geometry √ 1 in algebra II
Science 3 credits √ 1 in 9 th grade science * √ 1 in chemistry √1 in biology
Social Studies 3 credits √ 1 in U.S. history √ 1 in world history √ 1 in American government
Fine Arts 1 credit
Physical Education 1/2 credit
Health 1/2 credit
Technology Education 1 credit
2 credits of foreign language or 2 credits of advanced technology ed. and 3 credits in electives or 4 credits by successfully completing a State-approved career & technology program and 1 credit in an elective

HIGH SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

Students must pass the Maryland High School Assessments (HAS) for english, algebra/data analysis, biology and government.

The student must achieve one of the following:

- (1) pass all four HSA, the passing scores are: algebra/data analysis 412, government 394, biology 400 and English 396
- (2) a minimum score for each test and a combined overall score of at least 1602
- (3) a specific score on an MSDE-approved comparable assessment(s) (Bridge project), or
- (4) a passing score on the four High School Assessments by a combination of (1) and (3).

College Ready

- PSAT/ACT/ SAT tests
- College Application Deadlines
- Scholarships/Financial Aid/FAFSA
- Accuplacer Testing
- Advance Placement courses