Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

Report to the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation

Report from the North Carolina Committee on Dropout Prevention

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Dropout Prevention Grants
2007 Recipients
Evaluation Report

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Dropout Prevention Grant

Executive Summary

Description

In 2007, the General Assembly of North Carolina approved the allocation of $7,000,000 to fund dropout prevention grants throughout the state. Sixty agencies' proposals were approved, and 58 projects operated throughout the 2008 calendar year. With the dropout rate rising each year from 2004 through 2007, North Carolina's dropout rate fell from 5.24% in 2006-2007 to 4.97% in 2007-2008. More than half of North Carolina's Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) (57%) reported decreases, and every high school grade (9-12) was able to report a reduction in the number of dropouts. With the exception of multiracial students, all races and ethnic groups saw declines in the numbers and percentages of dropouts (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2008).

Grantees for General Assembly of North Carolina's dropout prevention grant included LEAs, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), including non-profit and faith-based agencies; and universities or government agencies. Some grantees used their funding to enhance existing programs; others began new programs. Many grant-funded projects were part of a larger initiative paid for with a variety of resources. School systems, community volunteers, and other agencies provided resources to support programs. These resources ranged from full-time teachers and social workers to one-time guest speakers.

Services Provided

The services provided varied widely. Almost all grantees provided services directly to students. Many programs provided multiple services while some concentrated on academic support or career resources. Academic support was standard,

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although some agencies provided tutoring, while others used computer programs to assist students. Some used both online and personal tutoring. At least one grantee enlisted the help of high school students to tutor middle school students. Other tutors came from local agencies (some professional) and from local colleges and universities.

Mentoring was another service many of the agencies provided. Again, most mentors were adults, although some schools assigned older students to mentor younger students. In some cases, the mentors were also the tutors.

Most grantees also provided some kind of parental involvement or training. Many also provided professional development for staff, either as a means to teach staff how to implement the Dropout Prevention grant program, or to raise awareness of dropout issues and strategies as part of a wider initiative.

Students Served

Grantees reported the number of students served by grant funds. Programs could be classified into three primary types: targeted to specific students or groups, school-wide, and larger than school-wide, although some grants supported both a targeted component and a larger community awareness and professional development component. One of the large programs served more than 12,000 students. The targeted programs varied in intensity from homework help and summer programs to coordination of multiple services, and, in one case, the establishment of an alternative school. The larger programs provided specific resources but were not targeted specifically to students with identified risk factors. Twenty-eight percent of programs served between 100 and 500 students, while 15% of programs were large initiatives that served entire school districts or groups of more than 500 students. Black students were served in higher proportions than the distribution of North Carolina dropouts who were Black. Training is planned to help grantees use objective data to target individual students most likely to dropout.

Outcomes

Some grant recipients had well-articulated SMART goals and objectives, together with relevant baseline data for participants that they compared with post data. They clearly defined their target population in terms of what they hope to change. Some grant recipients had goals and reported academic and behavioral outcomes related to those goals, but reported no baseline or comparison data. Some reported outcomes which were not comparisons of pre-and post-data, but statements about improvement. Many of these programs did provide support for students, and may well have prevented students from dropping out, as their dropout rates declined. However, measuring their impact was difficult. This problem will be addressed both through training and improved reporting instruments so that future outcome statements can be based on measurable pre- and post-data. Standardization of data use and documentation will help make programs replicable. Many of the programs reported objectives that were clear, concise, measurable, and related to the goals. Some of these grantees are waiting for EOG/EOC scores to measure their improvement.

Budgetary Analysis

The budgetary analysis includes 55 of the 58 final grant recipients. NC DPI indicates that a total of $6,471,281 in grant funding was distributed to the 55 recipients. Recipients reported expenditures total $5,058,379, suggesting that $1,412,902 (21.8%) in grant funding remains to be expended. Eight grantees reported that they have nearly exhausted their funds, while 39 grantees report having remaining funds, including 25 agencies with more than $20,000 yet to expend. The other 8 grantees reported over-spending, ranging from $18 to $29,033. Vague timeframes, inconsistent reporting (some may have included cash contributions from other sources), and budgets included in original applications all contributed to problematic budget analysis. Categorizing expenditures was also difficult because of similar inconsistencies in reporting. Moving forward, asking grantees to report expenditures consistently and in a common set of standardized categories will provide a more accurate budget analysis.

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Conclusions

The Dropout Prevention grants have served approximately 30,803 students to date. Many of the programs were fresh startups, and others enhanced programs already in place. Whether programs were new or designed to enhance existing programs, most will leave behind collateral advantages that impact entire communities. For example, some schools and other grantees now have access to online classes which will continue beyond the scope of the program, more volunteers throughout the community are trained, and school staff and communities have more awareness and understanding of the dropout problem.

Many of the programs are effective, and their effectiveness is documented with pre- and post-data to measure it. We have learned that some grantees need help with documenting successes in ways that make programs replicable. Measurable success is important to determine which programs should be replicated. The effective programs with appropriate documentation will be shared and replicated.

Dropout Prevention Grant

Description

In 2007, the General Assembly of North Carolina approved Session Law 2007-323, establishing the Committee on Dropout Prevention and allocating $7,000,000 to fund dropout prevention grants. The legislation indicated that there had been 22,180 dropouts from North Carolina schools in the 2005-2006 year, noting that this was the highest count of dropouts since 1999-2000. In fall 2007, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NC DPI) solicited grant proposals and received more than 300 proposals from faith-based and community-based organizations, schools and school districts, governmental entities, and colleges and universities. Subsequently, 60 grant awards were announced in December 2007, and these projects operated throughout the 2008 calendar year. This report is the first report to the Committee on Dropout Prevention of the evaluation of these initial 60 grant projects, with findings and recommendations for the Committee's consideration.

After rising from 2004 through 2007, North Carolina's dropout rate fell from 5.24% in 2006-2007 to 4.97% in 2007-2008. More than half of North Carolina's Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) (57%) reported decreases, and every high school grade (9-12) was able to report a reduction in the number of dropouts. With the exception of multiracial students, all races and ethnic groups saw declines in the numbers and percentages of dropouts (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2008). The improvement in the dropout count, with 1,066 fewer dropouts in 2007-2008 than in 2006-2007, coincides in part with implementation of the dropout prevention grant projects. Although it is not possible to attribute causal relationship between the funding of these initial dropout prevention grants and the reduction in dropout numbers, nevertheless, the S. L. 2007-323, the subsequent S.L. 2008-0107, the Committee on

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Dropout Prevention, and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction have increased awareness and understanding of dropout prevention in North Carolina. The expectation is developing that something can be done — indeed, must be done — to reduce the number of students dropping out of school. This report is the first in a series of evaluation reports that will document the best practices emerging from the dropout prevention grant program.

The Dropout Prevention Grant was initially awarded to 60 LEAs, schools, local agencies, and non-profit organizations to provide innovative programs and initiatives that target students who are at risk of dropping out. Two programs were discontinued and reverted their funds. This report is based on the 58 remaining programs, and the 55 January 31, 2009 reports received by DPI by February 18, 2009. The following sections discuss who the grantees were, and the services they provided to students, staff, and parents.

Grantees

Thirty-four of the 60 grants were made to schools or LEAs; 22 awards were to Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), including non-profit and faith-based agencies; and 4 awards were to universities or government agencies. Of these, one LEA and one NGO reverted funds. (See Appendix A for a complete list of organizations receiving awards.) Most grantees worked in corroboration with other agencies to provide a wider variety of services than grantees could provide alone. They solicited familiar institutions as partners such as Scouting, 4H, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, YMCAs and YWCAs, as well as local churches and organizations ranging from the National Pan-Hellenic Council to the North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism and Community Services. Additionally, local agencies such as police departments were solicited for single lectures, and grantees that included career information often enlisted the services of local businesses for lectures or job shadowing.

Goals and objectives

Grantees were asked to write goals and objectives. Most goals related ultimately to reducing the dropout rate, although some programs served students too young to be able to measure the outcome of such a goal directly. These grantees usually chose appropriate goals for their projects. At least one grantee's program targeted children ages 4-8. Many targeted middle school children. In these cases, goals were more likely to include academic assistance and reinforcing behavior that may help these students remain in school until they graduate. Most objectives were related to goals and included measurable benchmarks. A few stated program goals tended to confuse objectives with strategies, and not all were SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound); many of these programs nonetheless had positive outcomes. Some were difficult to measure because of the vague objectives or a lack of reported baseline data, but these problems are being addressed to ensure all programs will, in the future, have SMART goals with measurable objectives and appropriate strategies.

Program Descriptions

Grantees were asked to describe their programs, which were to include "best practices." Many programs included practices that research has shown to be effective toward addressing those factors found to be more common in dropouts than in those who graduate. Many grantees chose programs which research has shown can help students who are at risk academically and behaviorally which may cause them to leave school early.

Services Provided

The services provided varied widely. Almost all grantees provided services directly to students. Many provided some kind of parental involvement or training. Many also provided professional development for staff, either as a means to teach staff how to implement the Dropout Prevention grant program, or to raise awareness of dropout issues and strategies as part of a wider initiative.

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Services to Students

Grantees were given autonomy to provide services they believed would best suit their students. Many programs provided multiple services while some concentrated on academic support or career resources required to graduate.

Coordination of existing services from multiple agencies such as health, mental health, social work, parent education, and after-school programming was an important component of several research-based programs. These programs tended to target students with more severe needs such as truancy, chronic absenteeism, and court involvement. The programs provided rapid intervention and wrap-around services, often on the school site, with the goal of keeping students in school.

Academic support was standard, although some agencies provided tutoring, while others used computer programs to assist students. This included use of computer programs such as NovaNet for course recovery, which was used by students who needed to recover courses required to graduate. Some used both online and personal tutoring. At least one grantee enlisted the help of high school students to tutor middle school students. Other tutors came from local agencies (some professional) and from local colleges and universities.

Mentoring was another service many of the agencies provided. Again, most mentors were adults, although some schools assigned older students to mentor younger students. In some cases, the mentors were also the tutors.

Other types of services provided included summer camps (with academic instruction as well as outdoor sports and educational activities), summer classroom settings with academic instruction and orientation, service learning projects, pregnancy prevention, job placement and career days, field trips (to educational settings such as museums, to college and high school campuses, and to recreational settings), and lessons on attitudes and making good choices. Among the unique activities offered were white-water rafting, flying, and working with a NASA specialist to build and

launch rockets. Services took place during and after school, on weekends, and in the summer.

Services to Staff

Many of the agencies provided professional staff development. Some was provided to supplement or train staff for the programs implemented for the students, and some took place as a main component of the program itself. For example, one LEA hosted a large professional development conference in October, with the Executive Director of the National Dropout Prevention Center presenting. They hosted another conference for administrators and classroom teachers to learn and share ideas, which featured a presentation on Grading Practices that Increase Student Motivation and Success. A third conference in September catered to school counselors. These conferences comprised more than half their program in terms of spending. Although the conferences did not include students directly, attendees were able to return to their schools with new ideas and new attitudes. Another dropout prevention program featured extensive staff training on how to work with "boys of color." Most staff professional development, however, was used to teach staff how to administer the dropout prevention programs proposed.

Services to Parents

Grantees understood the importance of providing parents and guardians the opportunity to participate in their programs. Nearly all of the programs involved the students' parents, to varying degrees. Many grantees made concerted efforts to communicate with families through progress reports, frequent telephone calls home, e-mail, etc. Many offered workshops for parents to teach them parenting skills conducive to their child's success, or how to help their child choose and apply to colleges. Some grantees offered transportation, childcare, and incentives such as dinner or door prizes at their events. Some encouraged parents to attend field trips and orientations with their children. Others made some parent activities mandatory. Other events involving parents included celebrations, or family nights, in which students performed or were recognized for success and parents were invited to join in the celebrations.

Outcomes

Grantees reported the number of students served by grant funds. Programs could be classified into three primary types: targeted to specific students or groups, school-wide, and larger than school-wide, although some grants supported both a targeted component and a larger community awareness and professional development component. One of the large programs served more than 12,000 students. The targeted programs varied in intensity from homework help and summer programs to coordination of multiple services, and, in one case, the establishment of an alternative school. The larger programs provided specific resources but were not targeted specifically to students with identified risk factors. As Figure One shows, the majority of the students served were in the programs that served large programs, although this represents a very small percentage of the grant-funded programs. These programs generally did not provide services targeted to individual student needs, but rather included career resources or school-wide initiatives. More than half of the programs served fewer than 100 students, although this represents about 6% of all students served. Twenty-eight percent of programs served between 100 and 500 students, while 15% of programs were large initiatives that served entire school districts or groups of more than 500 students, as illustrated by Figures One and Two. Reporting outcomes separately for these different kinds of programs is important, because the majority of the programs were targeted small programs, and the outcomes from the large programs would overwhelm them. The largest program, serving 12,497 students, provides an online career resource which includes mentoring.

Figure One: Program Types

	Fewer than 100 students served	100 to 500 students served	500 to 5000 students served	More than 5000 students served	Total
Number of programs	30	16	8	1	55
Number of students	1544	3356	13,406	12,497	30,803
Total dollars in proposed budget	$2,979,469	$2,270,189	$898,833	$150,000	$6,298,492
Cost per student	$1,930	$676	$67	$12	$204

**Figure Two: Distribution of Students Served by Program Size
N = 30,803 Students, 55 Programs**
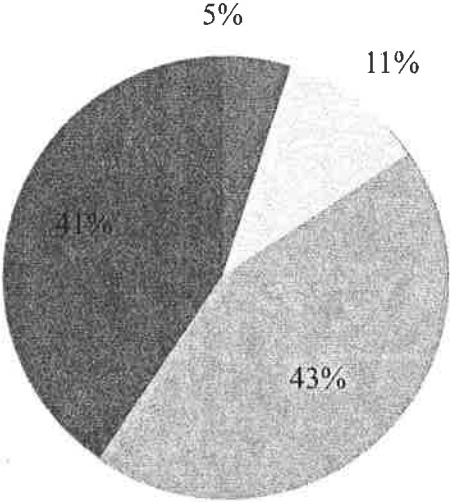
- 30 Programs Served Fewer Than 100 Students
- 16 Programs Served 100-500 Students
- 8 Programs Served 500-5000
- 1 Programs Served More Than 5000 Students

Students Served

Figure Three: Gender

Gender	Fewer than 100 students served (N = 1544 students)	100 to 500 students served (N = 3356 students)	500 to 5000 students served (N = 13,406 students)	More than 5000 students served (N = 12,497)	Total (N = 30,803 students)	2007-2008 Dropouts
Female	46%	37%	50%	49%	48%	40%
Male	54%	63%	50%	51%	52%	60%

More males than females were served in programs that targeted specific students in small or medium groups. The larger programs often offered a service to all students in a school or district, so their services would be expected to reflect the population as a whole.

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Figure Four: Race

Race	Fewer than 100 students served (N = 1544 students)	100 to 500 students served (N = 3356 students)	500 to 5000 students served (N = 13,406 students)	More than 5000 students served (N = 12,497)	Total (N = 30,803 students)	2007-2008 Dropouts
American Indian	3%	2%	1%	10%	5%	2%
Asian	0%	0%	1%	7%	3%	1%
Black	49%	43%	32%	60%	46%	36%
Hispanic	17%	9%	13%	0%	7%	10%
Multiracial	5%	4%	2%	0%	2%	2%
White	23%	42%	51%	16%	34%	48%
Other	3%	0%	0%	7%	3%	0%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Black students were served in higher proportions than the distribution of North Carolina dropouts who were Black. For a point of reference, 30% of all grade 9-12 students were Black and 58% were White. Training is planned to help grantees use objective data to target individual students most likely to dropout.

Figure Five. 2007-2008 Grade 9-12 Dropout Events by Race

Am. Indian
2%

Asian
1%

Black
36%

White
49%

Hispanic
10%

Multi
2%
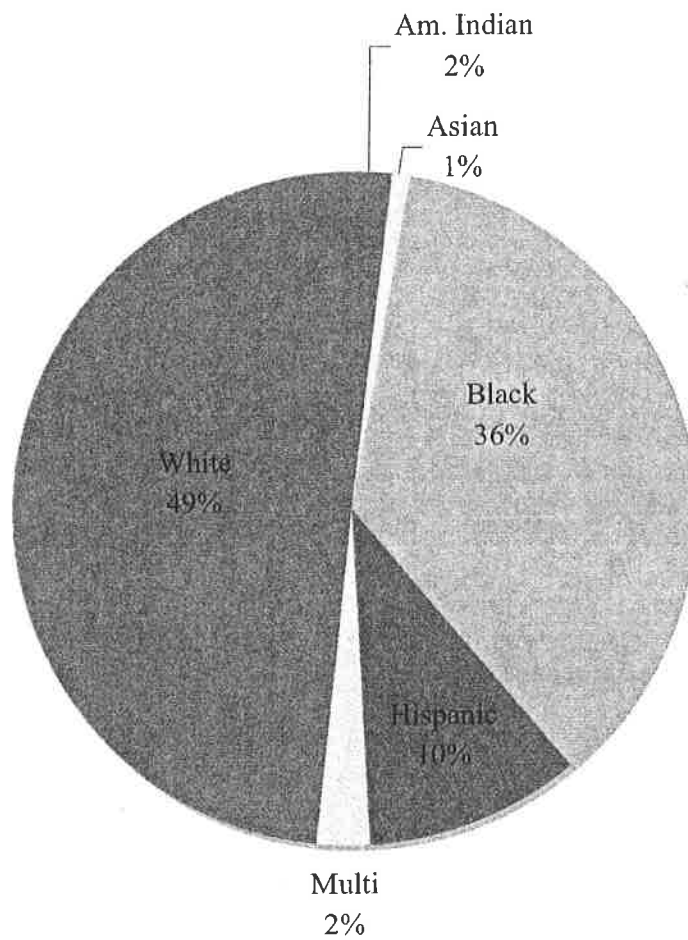
Figure Six: Percent of Students Served by Grade Level

Grade	Fewer than 100 students served (N = 1544 students)	100 to 500 students served (N = 3356 students)	500 to 5000 students served (N = 13,406 students)	More than 5000 students served (N = 12,497)	Total (N = 30,803 students)
K	0%	6%	2%	0%	1%
1st	0%	2%	1%	0%	1%
2nd	0%	2%	2%	0%	1%
3rd	0%	3%	2%	0%	1%
4th	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%
5th	3%	2%	7%	0%	3%
6th	12%	19%	10%	0%	7%
7th	13%	10%	9%	5%	8%
8th	18%	11%	11%	41%	23%
9th	32%	26%	27%	40%	33%
10th	13%	8%	9%	8%	9%
11th	5%	5%	9%	5%	7%
12th	2%	5%	9%	0%	5%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

The majority of students served were in 8th or 9th grade. This makes sense, as the transition to high school is frequently problematic and is where data can clearly identify which students are less likely to graduate. As previously noted, some programs served

pre-school children, or served parents or staff as the primary clients. This is consistent with research on the lasting benefits of early childhood education.

Pregnancy or Parenting Responsibilities

The majority of the programs (about 90%) had no students leave school due to pregnancy or parenting responsibilities. A total of 41 students left due to pregnancy or parenting responsibilities. Some programs specifically mentioned that they served pregnant or parenting teens who stayed in school as a result of the services provided.

Program Information

The data in the following sections were obtained from the answers to open-ended questions in the DPI reporting form for the 01/31/2009 report based on the legislative requirements. The data were categorized and coded and the most common answers are reported below.

Coordination to Enhance Effectiveness of Existing Programs

In answer to the question "Describe how the program or initiative was coordinated to enhance the effectiveness of existing programs, initiatives, or services in the community," reports detailed a number of ways of coordinating and a variety of synergistic effects. Some of the common ways that the grant-funded programs reported enhancing the effectiveness of existing programs are shown in Figure Seven.

Figure Seven: Coordination to Enhance Effectiveness of Existing Programs, Initiatives, or Community Services

	Fewer than 100 students served (N = 30 programs)	100 to 500 students served (N = 16 programs)	500 to 5000 students served (N = 8 programs)	More than 5000 students served (N = 1 program)	Total N = (55 programs)
Started new programs or added services that supported old programs	77%	44%	88%	100%	67%
Increased transportation for after-school activities	0%	6%	0%	0%	2%
Provided computer technology or online classes used beyond the scope of the program	3%	6%	13%	0%	5%
Professional development opportunities for staff of existing programs	17%	38%	25%	100%	24%
Multi-agency coordination	77%	75%	63%	100%	73%
Trained volunteers	0%	6%	13%	0%	4%
Changed school culture	7%	6%	13%	0%	7%
Changed school policies	3%	6%	25%	0%	7%

Percentages may add up to more than 100% due to programs reporting two or more of these.

Resource Support

In response to the question "What, if any, resources were used in conjunction with the grant funds?" projects reported a variety of other resources and funds used to support these grant-funded initiatives. Many grant-funded projects were part of a larger initiative paid for with a variety of resources. School systems, community volunteers, and other agencies provided resources to support these programs. These resources ranged from full-time teachers and social workers to one-time guest speakers.

For example, several school districts reported using low wealth funds to provide extra attendance counselors and program staff. Responses were coded and analyzed. Figure Eight shows the types of resources frequently reported and the percentage of programs reporting these.

Figure Eight: Resources Used in Conjunction with Grant Funds

	Fewer than 100 students served (N = 30 programs)	100 to 500 students served (N = 16 programs)	500 to 5000 students served (N = 8 programs)	More than 5000 students served (N = 1 program)	Total N = (55 programs)
Staff and volunteers	67%	63%	50%	0%	62%
Facilities	37%	38%	0%	0%	31%
Services	43%	38%	25%	0%	38%
Equipment	23%	31%	13%	0%	24%
Funds	50%	50%	63%	0%	51%
Program Fees Charged to Participants	3%	6%	0%	0%	4%

Percentages may add up to more than 100% due to programs reporting two or more of these.

Sustainability

Grant recipients responded to the question: "How will you sustain the program after the funding cycle ends and the grant funds are expended?" Most—although not all—grantees intend to sustain their programs and already have plans in place for sustainability. Some have already applied for new grants; others have identified grants to apply for. Some are looking for new grants and others will raise money through local fund-raisers. Some grantees chose programs that require few new resources to continue,

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such as those who purchased commercial programs or those whose programs primarily use volunteers. Most grantees intend to continue their programs seamlessly. Figure Nine shows the percentage of programs reporting each activity for sustaining the program. Many programs reported planning more than one method of sustaining their program.

Figure Nine: Plans for Sustaining the Program

	Fewer than 100 students served (N = 30 programs)	100 to 500 students served (N = 16 programs)	500 to 5000 students served (N = 8 programs)	More than 5000 students served (N = 1 program)	Total N = (55 programs)
Not likely to sustain; no plans	4%	15%	0%	0%	6%
Have secured additional grants	15%	15%	0%	0%	13%
Have applied for additional grants	4%	15%	0%	0%	6%
Have identified grants to apply for	4%	8%	29%	0%	9%
Plan to apply for additional grants, but haven't identified any	33%	23%	29%	100%	30%
Program is in place and will continue. Effective practices learned will continue. School district will take over funding.	63%	69%	100%	100%	70%
Have had local fund-raisers	11%	8%	14%	0%	11%
Plan to have local fund-raisers	15%	15%	0%	0%	13%

	Fewer than 100 students served (N = 30 programs)	100 to 500 students served (N = 16 programs)	500 to 5000 students served (N = 8 programs)	More than 5000 students served (N = 1 program)	Total N = (55 programs)
Collaboration with community agencies	33%	23%	29%	0%	30%

Percentages will add up to more than 100% due to programs reporting two or more of these.

Impact on Participants

Some grant recipients had well-articulated SMART goals and objectives, together with relevant baseline data for participants that they compared with post data. They clearly defined their target population in terms of what they hope to change. For example, one grantee used research-based best practices that supported students to decrease behaviors associated with dropping out, such as absences from school, course failures, and suspensions. Their objectives were written around these, they reported baseline data on these measures for students they served, and compared baseline to post-program outcomes. One of their objectives was that 100% of the participants who had 10 or more absences the previous year would improve their school attendance when compared with the previous year. They reported the number of students and their attendance before and during the program, and that 81% of them had improved their attendance rates.

Some grant recipients had goals and reported academic and behavioral outcomes related to those goals, but reported no baseline or comparison data. Some reported outcomes which were not comparisons of pre-and post-data, but statements about improvement. Many of these programs did provide support for students, and may well have prevented students from dropping out. However, measuring their impact was difficult. This problem will be addressed both through training and improved reporting instruments so that future outcome statements can be based on measurable pre- and post-data. Many of the programs reported objectives that were clear, concise,

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measurable, and related to the goals. Some of these grantees are waiting for EOG/EOC scores to measure their improvement.

Another group of grant recipients did not target students, but rather had whole-school or larger programs, such as professional development for teachers in literacy development strategies across the curriculum, support for a restructured school day with more time built in for remediation and enrichment, or outreach to develop community awareness of dropout issues and providing career resources. Many of these large-scale programs work well toward providing much-needed services to many students.

Many programs reported that they would not have academic data until the Spring 2009 administration of EOG/EOC tests.

Models

Some of the grantees used research-based and or commercially packaged programs that are well defined and described. Commercially packaged programs included *Why Try*, Read 180, STRIDES, Boys of Color, AVID, *Check & Connect*, and many others. The programs using research-based or commercially packaged programs are replicable. If agencies using them had SMART goals and reported outcomes compared with relevant baseline data, their effectiveness can be determined. Effective programs of this nature should be shared with North Carolina schools.

One example of an effective program that could be a model was conducted by Edenton-Chowan. This grantee used *Check & Connect* — a research-based program partially funded by the U.S. Department of Education in which students with excessive absences, tardies, or poor grades are assigned a mentor. Their goal was to decrease their dropout rate, and their objectives were specific and addressed factors shown to correlate to dropping out. They targeted students for participation based on the very factors they hoped to correct, and not on demographic characteristics. Students' levels of engagement in school (such as attendance, grades, and suspensions) were "checked"

regularly and used to guide the mentors' efforts to increase and maintain students' "connection" with school. Because their objectives and benchmarks were clear and measurable, they were able to measure the success of their program, which was substantial.

Budgetary Analysis

The following budgetary analyses were conducted on 55 grant recipients and do not include:

- Two recipients that reverted funds, and

- Three recipients that had not submitted their 01/31/2009 evaluation reports by 02/18/2009.

For the 55 grants recipients submitting 01/31/2009 evaluation reports, the NC DPI indicates that a total of $6,471,281 in grant funding was distributed. The time frame for reporting was not specific, and therefore, we can't accurately compare "Proposed" budgets totals, which were $6,298,492, to the amount distributed. Additionally, some grantees combined their local funds with what they reported, so we were not able to tell what part of their budget was grant-funded.

Seven recipients that reported proposed budgets exceeding the amounts indicated by NC DPI may have included matching cash contributions. Or, these recipients may have submitted proposed budgets in their original applications that were greater than the $150,000 ceiling for the grant program, and these original budgets are being reported on the 01/31/2009 evaluation report. Further, either or both of these explanations could be true for any of the other recipients, but it is not possible to identify reasons why the recipients' report of their proposed budgets do not match to the awarded amounts indicated by NC DPI.

Total Expenditures

For the 55 grant recipients submitting reports by 02/18/2009:

- All 55 reported expenditures, totaling $5,058,379. Compared to the $6,471,281 that NC DPI indicated was awarded to these recipients, this would suggest that $1,412,902 (21.8%) in grant funding remains to be expended; however, this figure could include matching cash contributions. If that is the case, then the amount of grant funding yet to be expended would be greater. It is not possible to determine with complete accuracy how much of the grant funding has been expended and how much remains to be expended.

- Eight of the recipients reported that they had fully, or nearly so, exhausted their budget award, with four indicating they had $0 remaining in the grant budget, and the other four indicating they had $1 to $549 remaining to spend in their budgets.

- Thirty-nine of the recipients reported that funds remained in their budgets yet to be expended, ranging from $1,211 to $96,685. Of these 39 recipients, 25 reported that they had more than $20,000 yet to expend.

- The remaining eight recipients reported that they had expended amounts that exceeded their grant award, ranging from $18 to $29,033. Some of these recipients may have been reporting both grant funds and local funds.

Expenditures by Category Type

EDSTAR categorized expenditures for the 55 recipients submitting reports, creating 12 categories into which line item expenditures were grouped. Moving forward, asking grantees to report expenditures in a common set of standardized categories will provide a more accurate picture of budget expenditures. EDSTAR's regrouping into categories presents a reasonable summary description of the purpose

for which grant recipients intended to use their funds and the approximate percentages of these expenditures by category.

Figure Ten: Total Expenditures for 55 Grant Recipients by Budgetary Categories

Category	Expenditure	Percentage of Grand Total
Personnel	$2,633,775	52.07%
Equipment	$549,236	10.86%
Professional Development	$537,074	10.62%
Program Food and Supplies	$437,275	8.64%
Participant Activities	$229,780	4.54%
Other	$202,650	4.01%
Curriculum	$150,925	2.98%
Transportation of Students	$104,694	2.07%
Travel	$70,372	1.39%
Indirect/Overhead	$59,189	1.17%
Student Incentives	$49,995	0.99%
Facilities	$33,413	0.66%
	$5,058,378*	100%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding effects.

Expenditures by Budget Transfers

An analysis of the individual budgets for the 55 recipients submitting reports revealed that many of them reported line item expenditures greater than what they indicated were the allocations for these line items in the original proposed budget. Essentially, in these instances, the projects transferred funds among one or more line items such that the expended amount exceeded the proposed amount in one or more line items, or may have supplemented these line items with matching cash

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contributions. In most cases, the difference between the expended and proposed amounts was relatively small. However, some projects had significant transfers.

Conclusions

The Dropout Prevention grants have served approximately 30,803 students so far. Many of the programs were fresh startups, and others enhanced programs already in place. Whether programs were new or designed to enhance existing programs, most will leave behind collateral advantages that impact entire communities. For example, some schools and other grantees now have access to online classes which will continue beyond the scope of the program, more volunteers throughout the community are trained, and school staff and communities have more awareness and understanding of the dropout problem.

Many of the programs are effective, and their effectiveness is documented with pre- and post-data to measure it. We have learned that some grantees need help with documenting successes in ways that make programs replicable. Measurable success is important to determine which programs should be replicated. The effective programs with appropriate documentation will be shared and replicated.

Recommendations

Program Planning and Description

Recommended by EDSTAR: The Committee should consider requiring grant recipients to produce a logic model that describes the conceptual and programmatic relationship of major components of their program—inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes. Adopted by The Committee on Dropout Prevention on Feb 23, 2008.

Measurable Outcomes

Recommended by EDSTAR: The Committee should consider requiring grant recipients to develop SMART goals and objectives that identify clearly measurable outcomes associated with their project. Measurable outcomes should be stated for their

impact on producing change in people, whether these are students, staff, parents, pre-K children, administrators, etc. Adopted by The Committee on Dropout Prevention on Feb 23, 2008.

Reporting

Recommended by EDSTAR:: The committee should improve the standardization of data collection for both program and financial data. Adopted by The Committee on Dropout Prevention on Feb 23, 2008.

Budgetary Expenditures

Recommended by EDSTAR:: The Committee should consider requiring grant recipients to adopt a standardized set of categories for grouping budget line items. Further, the Committee should consider developing a set of policies that guide how budget transfers may be requested and approved, including a standardized format for submitting such budget transfer requests. Adopted by The Committee on Dropout Prevention on Feb 23, 2008.

Who Drops Out

In 2008, EDSTAR collaborated with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to analyze data for 2006-2007 students who dropped out before enrolling in grade ten. End-of-Grade and End-of-Course data were combined with suspension, attendance, course enrollment, and retention data. Analyses were conducted to determine which factors predicted who would drop out. We found four factors that occurred at a significantly higher rate among students who dropped out than among those who did not. Although only 6% of ninth grade students dropped out overall, students who dropped out were significantly more likely to have problems in the following areas: mathematics, attendance, ninth grade retention, and suspensions. Using data, we can find the students who have demonstrated problems in one or more of these areas and provide intervention that specifically addresses these issues. Those who are failing can be tutored; school staff and other agencies and programs can work with the other students to provide ways to alter their behavior to make them less likely

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to misbehave or be absent. Dropout prevention programs that addressed these issues and targeted students appropriately may have contributed to the considerable decline in the North Carolina dropout rate.

References

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. (2008). Dropout Report 2007-2008. Retrieved February 11, 2009, from http://dpi.state.nc.us/docs/research/dropout/reports/2008/0708report.pdf

Appendix A

Organizations Funded in 2007-2008

County	Organization	Type
Alamance	Alamance Burlington School System	LEA
Anson	Anson County Schools	LEA
Avery	Avery County Schools	LEA
Beaufort	Beaufort County Schools	LEA
Buncombe	Buncombe County	LEA
Buncombe	Western Region Education Service Alliance	NGO
Buncombe	YWCA of Asheville and Western North Carolina	NGO
Burke	Burke County Public Schools	LEA
Caldwell	Caldwell County Schools	LEA
Carteret	Carteret County Public Schools	LEA
Catawba	Hickory Public Schools (Hickory is in Catawba County)	LEA
Chatham	Chatham County Schools	LEA
Chowan	Edenton-Chowan Schools	LEA
Clay	Clay County Schools	LEA
Cleveland	Cleveland County Schools	LEA
Cleveland	Communities in Schools of Cleveland County	NGO
Columbus	Columbus County Schools	LEA
Durham	Durham Public Schools	LEA
Durham	North Carolina Central University Foundation	NGO
Forsyth	Carter G. Woodson School of Challenge	NGO
Forsyth	Housing Authority of the City of Winston-Salem	Universities or

County	Organization	Type
		gov't
Forsyth	YWCA Of Winston-Salem	NGO
Gaston	Gaston County Schools	LEA
Graham	Graham County Schools	LEA
Guilford	Centro de Acción Latino (CAL)	NGO
Guilford	Communities In Schools of High Point, Inc.	NGO
Guilford	God's Grace Ministries: Operation Homework	NGO
Guilford	NC A&T State University	Universities or gov't
Guilford	NARIOP-New Light Missionary Baptist Church Intergenerational Outreach Suspension Program	NGO
Harnett	Harnett County Schools	LEA
Hertford	Hertford County Public Schools	LEA
Hertford	Hertford County Public Schools	LEA
Hoke	Hoke County Schools	LEA
Iredell	Iredell-Statesville Schools	LEA
Lenoir	NC Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention	Universities or gov't
McDowell	McDowell County Schools	LEA
Mecklenburg	Communities In Schools of Charlotte Mecklenburg, Inc.	NGO
Mecklenburg	Cross Country for Youth	NGO
Mecklenburg	The Urban Restoration	NGO
Mitchell	Mitchell High School	LEA
Moore	Northern Moore Family Resource Center	NGO
Moore	Youth Resource Center/Millennium Outreach Center, Inc	NGO
New Hanover	DREAMS Center for Arts Education (DREAMS of	NGO

County	Organization	Type
	Wilmington, Inc.)	
New Hanover	John T. Hoggard High School	LEA
New Hanover	New Hanover County Schools	LEA
Orange	Communities in Schools of Orange County	NGO
Orange	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Universities or gov't
Pasquotank	Education Foundation for Elizabeth City	NGO
Pitt	Pitt County Schools	LEA
Pitt	Wellcome Middle School (Pitt)	LEA
Pitt and Edgecombe	Building Hope Community Life Center	NGO
Polk	Polk County Schools	LEA
Randolph	Randolph County Schools	LEA
Stokes	South Stokes High School	LEA
Swain	Swain County Public Schools	LEA
Wake	Athens Drive High School	LEA
Wake	Futures for Kids	NGO
Wake	Harriet Webster Task Force for Student Success, Inc.	NGO
Wake	Wake Forest-Rolesville Middle School	LEA
Wilkes	Communities in Schools of Wilkes County	NGO

Appendix B: DPI January 31 Report Template

NORTH CAROLINA COMMITTEE ON
DROPOUT PREVENTION

As legislated by the North Carolina General Assembly, the North Carolina Committee on Dropout Prevention shall evaluate the impact of the dropout prevention grants awarded under S.L. 2007-323 and under this section. *The Committee requests that each grantee provide the following information on the implementation of your grant to the Department of Public Instruction by January 31, 2009.*

CONTACT INFORMATION

Type of Organization (check one):   LEA   School   Non-profit   Organization   Agency

Grantee Name _____
Contact Person _____
Title/Position _____
Address _____
City _____ Zip _____
Phone (___) _____ E-mail _____
_____

STUDENT INFORMATION

Description	Number Served		
Total number of students served by your program or initiative to date (actual students, not number of times a student has attended program sessions):	1000		
Number of students served by gender	Female:895		
	Male:1216		
Number of students served by ethnicity	American Indian: Asian: Black: Hispanic: Multiracial: White: Other (please specify):		
Number of students served by grade level	K: 1: 2: 3: 4:	5: 6: 7: 8:	9. 10: 11: 12:
If applicable, the number of students served who left school due to pregnancy or parenting responsibilities:			
School(s) Attended by Program Participants	School Name	School District Name	

PROGRAM (Information may be single-spaced. You may adjust the size of the boxes as needed. However, this section is limited to one page.)

Describe how the program or initiative was coordinated to enhance the effectiveness of existing programs, initiatives, or services in the community.

What, if any, resources were used in conjunction with the grant funds?

How will you sustain the program after the funding cycle ends and grant funds are expended?

Describe the impact of program on dropout prevention. Include attendance, test scores, persistence and graduation rates.

Can this program serve as a model for achieving successful academic progress for at-risk students?

BUDGET		
How were grant funds used? (Add lines as needed)		
	Proposed	*Actual Expenditures-to-Date*
(Item)	*(Amount)*	*(Amount)*

I _____ (please print), Program Director, verify that grant funds were used for the purposes appropriated by the General Assembly and complied with applicable laws, regulations, and terms and conditions of the grant documents.   Additionally, I verify that all information submitted on this report is accurate and true, to the best of my knowledge.

_____
(Signature)

Return this form to: Debora Sydnor
Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps Section
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
6342 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-6342

or

fax   (919) 807-3677

Sample Logic Model

Program Title: After-School Program

Situation Statement: In FY 2008-2009, 100 youth will be served in the grant-funded program. The After-School program is a tutoring and mentoring program designed to help students pass 9th Grade Algebra. The program will serve 9th graders who scored Level I or II on their 8th grade EOG Math test.

Figure 1: Logic Model

Inputs

- Grant funds
- School and grant-funded program Personnel
- Staff and volunteer screening
- Training
- EOG Math scores
- Collaborations

Activities

- Planning
- Monitoring
- Training
- Contracting
- Service Delivery
- Researched-based activities
- Reporting
- Student participation

Outputs

- Number of youth served
- Demographics of youth served
- Researched-based activities shown increase math skills
- Number of Volunteers

Outcomes

- Algebra 1 pass rates of students served
- Improved competencies and social skills
- Improved school performance and behaviors
- Course grades and End-of-Course results

Planned Activities

- Grant and school appropriation for program
- Recruit staff and train
- Identify participants using 8th grade math EOG scores
- Recruit identified participants
- Deliver the service

Effects of Planned Activities

- Number of 9th grade repeaters reduced
- Algebra 1 pass rate increases