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High School Graduation and Dropout Rates in Nevada

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Leading Indicators and Quality of Life in the Silver State

High School Graduation and Dropout Rates in Nevada

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The causes and consequences of high school dropout rates are multifaceted and of great importance to society, and that is why this problem has been the subject of close scrutiny by educators, researchers, administrators, politicians and laypersons. Experts do not always agree on the nature of this social problem, but they have pinpointed its economic and social costs, identified key risk factors, and outlined most promising policy options for improving high school graduation rates in our society.

Without claiming to offer an exhaustive review, this chapter will examine these national and regional data, describe the various ways to measure high school dropout and graduation rates, and discuss the economic costs of dropping out of school, focusing in particular on the ethnic disparities in graduation and dropout rates. After describing the major factors behind Nevada's poor graduation rates, the authors will outline an ecological approach whereby social workers link school age children with a vast array of stakeholders and community resources

Chapter Highlights

- In 2008, Nevada ranked 51st in the U.S and District of Columbia on the Average Graduation Rate for public high school students.

- In 2009, the average annual income for a high school dropout was $19,540, compared to $27,380 for a high school diploma earner, $36,190 for an associate degree earner, and $46,930 for a bachelor degree holder.

- In 2010, the overall Nevada graduation rate was 70.3%, and in Clark County it was 68.1%, and in Washoe it was 71.9%

- Increasing by half its 2010 graduation rate, the Silver State would have gained $64,844,808 in earnings, $155,366,635 in vehicle and home purchases, 405 new jobs supported, and $53,317,331 in lost revenue.

How to Cite this Report

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that help children cope better with the challenges they face on the way to successful graduation from high school. The chapter concludes with the overview of several policies and practices that have great promise for improving graduation rates in the Silver State.

Economic Impact of Dropouts

In the United States, seven thousand high school students dropout each school day, resulting in 1.2 million students who will not graduate from high school in a timely fashion along with their peers (Alliance for Educational Excellence, 2011a). If this trajectory continues, twelve million students will leave school prematurely by 2017 (Association for Career and Technical Education, 2007). A disproportionate percentage of the school dropouts will be students of color. The United States ranks 21st in high school and 15th in college graduation rates among developed countries for the age group 25-34 (The Alliance for Excellent Education, 2011a). Such poor indicators of educational attainment are associated with various economic, social, and political factors confronting the young people in the United States, and they seriously impede our nation's ability to compete in an increasingly global economy.

The failure to complete high school education is directly linked the person's income, which in turn affects the individual's quality of life. The average annual income for a high school dropout in 2009 was $19,540, compared to $27,380 for a high school diploma earner, $36,190 for an associate degree earner, and $46,930 for a bachelor degree holder. (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2011a). The $7,840 annual income difference between high school dropouts and high school diploma earners is stark, and directly impacts the buying capacity of high school dropouts who continue to face hardships throughout their lifespan. The monetary effect is cumulative, and it adds up to a staggering disparity in quality of life.

Another way of gauging the relationship between educational attainment and earnings is by looking at median weekly earnings (Figure 1). For every individual 25 and older who lacked a high school diploma in 2010, the weekly median earnings was $444, while the person with a high school degree could bring in 41% higher weekly earnings (U.S. Department of Labor, 2011). Someone who attended college but did not receive a degree earned 60% more than high school dropouts. In 2010 Americans with a bachelor or master degree respectfully made 133% or 186% more per week than people who did not finish high school.

Figure 1: 2010 Median Weekly Earnings
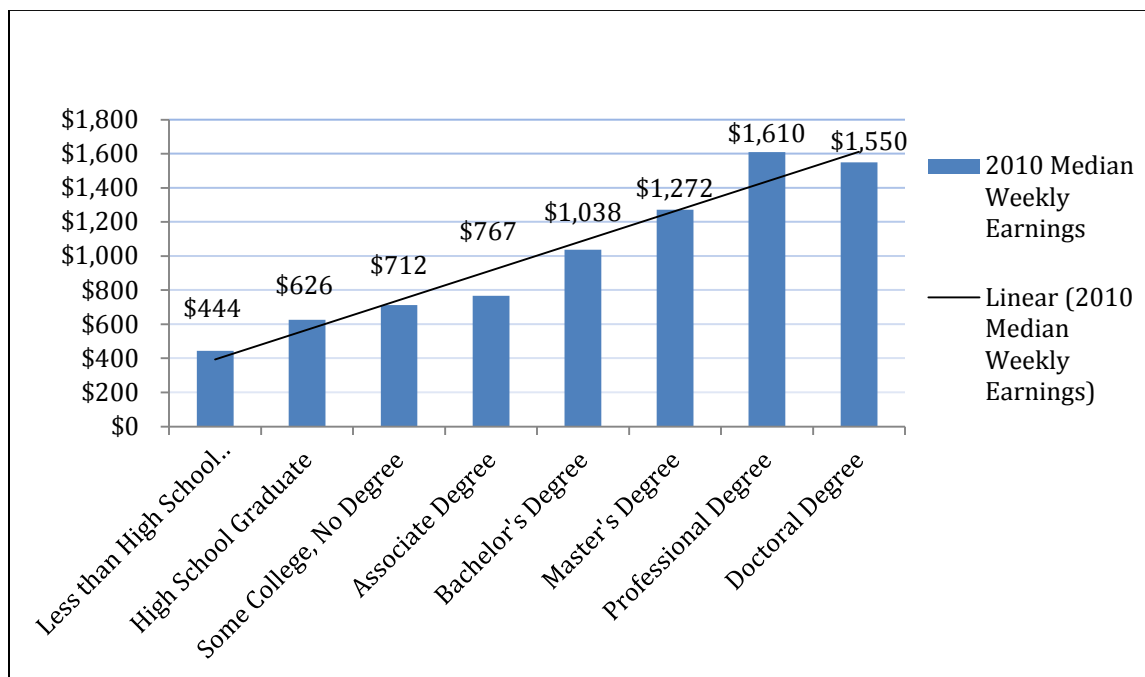
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Compared to more educated individuals, those lacking a high school diploma are more likely to face unemployment, rely on government cash assistance, food stamps, and housing assistance, and to cycle in and out of the prison system. The economic recession has a more devastating impact on high school dropouts than on those who stayed in school all the way through graduation. As Figure 2 shows, the 2010 unemployment rate for high school dropouts was 14.9%, more than twice as high as the unemployment rates for those with an associate's degree (7%), and almost three times higher than those with a bachelor's degree (5.4%). We should bear in mind that high unemployment rates lower local, state, and national tax revenues. The economies suffer when they consists of less-educated workforce, for markets with less skilled populations have difficulties attracting new business investments, providing educated employees to existing businesses, and competing with neighboring economies.

Figure 2: 2010 Unemployment
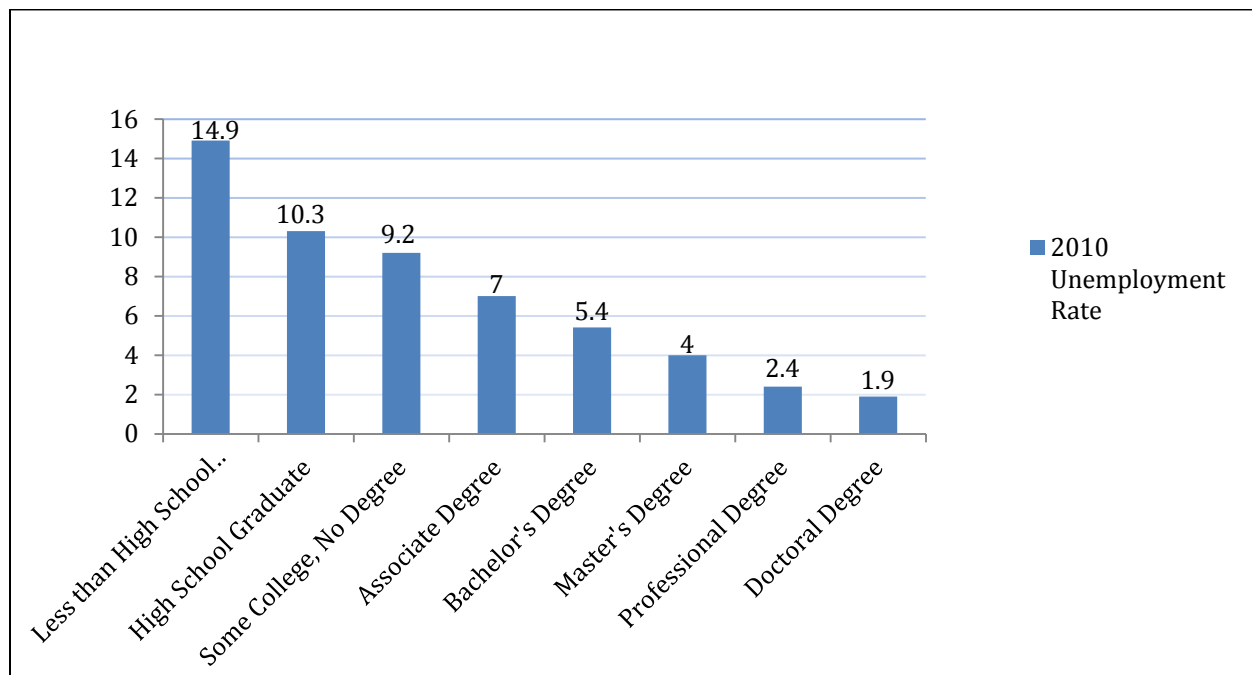
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Reducing dropout by 50% for just one class could increase the nation's gross domestic product by almost 10 billion and support 54,000 new jobs (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2011b). Even more impressive are the gains for recovering one dropout in each of the fifty states (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2011b):

- $554,000 in earnings in one year
- $1,457,000 in vehicle and home purchases
- 3.8 new jobs
- An additional $681,000 in gross national product
- $50,000 in state taxes

Apply this calculus to Nevada that reports 5,545 dropouts from the Class of 2010 (Nevada Department of Education, 2011), and you will see that by increasing in half its graduation rate, the Silver State stands to recover $64,844,808 in earnings, $155,366,635 in vehicle and home purchases, 405 new jobs supported, and $53,317,331 in revenue. These staggering data furnish a context for the following review of dropout and graduation rates among high school students in the United States and Nevada.

Defining and Measuring Graduation and Dropout Rates

There is more than one way to grasp and measure the phenomenon under consideration. The term "graduate" usually refers to a student recipient of a high school diploma (Stillwell & Hoffman, 2008). Conversely, the term "dropout" designates a student who was enrolled at any time during the previous school year but who ceased to

be enrolled at the beginning of the current school year and failed to graduate from school (Stillwell & Hoffman, 2008). These definitions have significant implications for how graduation and dropout rates are reported.

Since a high school graduate is someone who secured a diploma, the rates may vary according to whether a reporting agency recognizes adjusted diplomas, certificates of attendance, and/or general education diplomas as standard diplomas. Reviewing the dropout and graduation rates in Clark County School District (CCSD), Luna (2009) noted that the current calculations did not include adjusted diploma earners, adult education diploma earners, and general education diploma earners in the graduation rate. According to the graduation data furnished by the Nevada Annual Reports of Accountability (Nevada Department of Education, 2011), the graduation rate was 68.1% for CCSD and 71.9% for Washoe County, with the statewide graduation rate standing at 70.3% in the 2009 (See Table 1).

Table 1: Graduation Rates (Class of 2010)

	All Students	Male	Female	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian	Hispanic	Black	White	Pacific Islander	Multi- Race
	# %	# %	# %	# %	# %	# %	# %	# %	# %	# %
State	23,493 70.3 %	11,331 68.1 %	12,162 72.3 %	317 64.1 %	2,339 81.3 %	6,767 60.3 %	2,590 57.6 %	11,480 78.4 %	* *	* *
Carson City	478 86.9 %	227 85.4 %	251 88.2 %	10 61.5 %	16 94.1 %	87 72.0 %	- -	364 91.8 %	* *	* *
Churchill	257 85.3 %	147 84.3 %	110 86.7 %	14 72.2 %	11 100%	35 71.1 %	- -	190 87.8 %	* *	* *
Clark	16,247 68.1 %	7,851 66.3 %	8,396 70.0 %	110 59.5 %	1,944 82.3 %	5,286 59.8 %	2,353 57.6 %	6,554 76.4 %	* *	* *
Douglas	470 87.4 %	212 81.7 %	258 92.7 %	- -	- -	50 77.4 %	- -	399 89.4 %	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Elko	573 86.8 %	285 86.6 %	288 87.0 %	52 76.8 %	- -	117 80.3 %	- -	388 90.5 %	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Eureka	28 92.9 %	16 87.5 %	12 100.0 %	- -	- -	- -	N/A N/A	22 95.5 %	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Humboldt	148 82.9 %	76 85.1 %	72 80.7 %	- -	- -	28 75.8 %	N/A N/A	115 86.8 %	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Lander	118 94.1 %	59 95.0 %	59 93.2 %	- -	N/A N/A	17 100.0 %	N/A N/A	98 93.9 %	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Lincoln	130 63.8 %	68 60.3 %	62 67.7 %	* *	- -	16 43.8 %	13 23.1 %	94 73.4 %	* *	- -

Lyon	530 83.9 %	267 79.2 %	263 88.9 %	30 75.8 %	15 93.8 %	86 80.4 %	- -	394 85.0 %	* *	* *
Mineral	30 81.3 %	15 81.3 %	15 81.3 %	- -	N/A N/A	- -	N/A N/A	22 83.3 %	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Nye	235 88.1 %	121 88.7 %	114 87.5 %	- -	- -	38 87.2 %	- -	180 87.8 %	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Pershing	55 89.1 %	30 93.3 %	25 84.0 %	- -	- -	20 80.0 %	* *	33 93.9 %	* *	* *
Storey	34 83.8 %	15 81.3 %	19 85.7 %	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	- -	N/A N/A	28 87.1 %	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Washoe	3,542 71.9 %	1,665 68.3 %	1,877 75.4 %	58 61.6 %	290 74.7 %	858 56.6 %	131 58.5 %	2,205 80.0 %	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
White Pine	82 75.0 %	39 69.6 %	43 80.4 %	- -	N/A N/A	10 80.0 %	- -	66 73.7 %	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
State Public Schools	192 77.8 %	75 77.1 %	117 78.3 %	* *	19 85.0 %	21 74.1 %	14 65.0 %	143 79.3 %	* *	-5 40.0 %
Data as of: Previous School Year (2009-2010) District totals do not include state or district sponsored charter school data.										
'-' indicates data not presented for groups fewer than 10. '*' indicates that the data was not available. 'N/A' indicates that this population was not present.										

Source: Nevada Department of Education, 2011.

However, high school graduation rates vary depending on the definition and measurement criteria of the reporting agency. Thus high school graduation rates for the same cohort or year of students may be different. For example, the Alliance for Excellent Education (2008) observed a 20% gap between rates reported by the state, the federal government, and an independent source for the 2005-2006 school year in Nevada:

Table 2: 2005-2006 Nevada Graduation Rates

Reporting Entity	Rate
State of Nevada	68%
Federal	56%
Independent Research Entity	47%

Source: Alliance for Excellent Education, 2008

Cumulative Promotion Index
The Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI) is a graduation rate measure. It compares the number of 10th graders in one year to the number of 9th graders in the previous year to estimate the percentage of 9th graders who were promoted. CPI performs the same calculation for the other grades and multiplies the ratios to derive an estimated

graduation rate. The national and state cumulative promotion index rates for the period spanning 2000-2008 (EPE Research Center, 2012) show modest improvements in the national CPI but very low rates for the state of Nevada. In fact, in 2008 Nevada had the lowest CPI graduation rate in the nation.

Table 3: Cumulative Promotion Index 2000-2008

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Nevada	55. 2	54.7	55.4	55.9	54	45.4	47. 3	41. 8	44.3
U.S.	66. 7	68	69.4	69.6	69.9	70.6	69. 2	68. 8	71.7

Source: EPE Research Center, 2012.

Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate

The averaged freshman graduation rate (AFGR) provides an estimate of the percentage of public high school students who graduate on time – that is, 4 years after starting 9th grade – with a regular diploma (Chapman, Laird, Ifill & Kiwal Ramani, 2011). Other high school completers who were awarded alternate credentials such as a certificate of completion or certificate of attendance or GED are not included in the AFGR calculations because they are not considered regular graduates. The decision to use the AFGR hinges on a technical review of alternative estimates (Seastrom et al. 2006a, 2006b as cited in Chapman, Laird, Ifill & Kiwal Ramani, 2011).

During the period spanning 2001-2008, the AGFR steadily declined in Nevada, while the rates fluctuated nationally. The AFGR among public school students in the United States for the class of 2008-2009 was 75.5 percent. For the class of 2008-2009 the AFGR ranged from 56.3% in Nevada to 90.7% in Wisconsin. Sixteen states had rates of 80.0 percent or higher and eight states had rates below 70.0 percent. Thus in 2009, not only did Nevada have the lowest freshman graduation rate in the nation (56.3%), it lagged significantly behind the next seven poorest performing states, which had average graduation rates ranging from 62% and 69%.

Table 4: Averaged Freshman Graduation Rates 2001-2008

	2001-2001	2002-2003	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Nevada	71.9	72.3	57.4	55.8	52.0	51.3
U.S.	72.6	73.9	75.0	74.7	73.9	74.9

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2010.

Status Completion Rate

The status completion rate is the percentage of individuals in a given age group who are not in high school and who have earned a high school diploma or an alternative credential, irrespective of when the credential was earned (Chapman, Laird, & Kewal Ramani, 2010). The national status completion rate indicates the percentage of young people who have left high school and who hold a high school credential. The completion

rate reported by the National Center for Education Statistics is based on Current Population Survey data representing the percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in high school and who have earned a high school diploma or an alternative credential, including a General Education Diploma certificate (Chapman, Laird, Ifill & Kiwal Ramani, 2011).

Bear in mind that the national status completion rates do not exhaust all dropout rates or state level dropout rates. The completion rates are based on different age ranges of young people and thus exclude high school students from its denominators, whereas high school students are included in the denominator of status and state-level dropout rates. That said, in 2009 some 89.9% of 18- through 24-year-olds not enrolled in high school had received a high school diploma or alternative credential (Chapman, Laird, Ifill & Kiwal Ramani, 2011). Since 1980, the rate has been on the upswing, starting at 83.9% in 1980 and rising to 89.8% in 2009.

Table 5: Status Completion Rates

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
U.S.	86.5	86.5	86.6	87.1	86.8	87.6	87.8	89.0	89.9	89.8

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2010.

It is interesting to note that females aged 18-24 who failed to enroll in high school in 2009 had a higher status completion rate (91.2%) than their male counterparts (88.3%). Furthermore, among the young people not enrolled in high school, Asians/Pacific Islanders (95.9%) and Whites (93.8%) had status completion rates of over 90%. Both groups have rates higher than the rates for persons of two or more races (89.2%), Blacks (87.1%), American Indians/Alaska Natives (82.4%), and Hispanics (76.8%). In 2009, some 63.0 % of foreign-born Hispanics aged 18-24 who were not currently enrolled in high school had completed high school (Chapman, Laird, Ifill & Kiwal Ramani, 2011).

Table 6: 2009 National Status Completion Rates

	Rate
U.S.	89.8%
Females	91.2%
Males	83.3%
Asians/Pacific Islanders	95.5%
Black/African Americans	87.1%
American Indians/Alaska Natives	82.4%
White Americans	93.8%
Hispanic Americans	76.8%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2010.

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Event Dropout Rate

The event dropout rate is the proportion of students who drop out in a single year as measured by the number of students who drop out of a given grade divided by the number of students enrolled in that grade at the beginning of that school year (Stillwell et.al., 2008). The National Center for Education Statistics (Chapman, Laird, Ifill & Kewal Ramani, 2011) calculated the 2009 state-level event dropout rates for public high schools students as the percentage of public school students who were enrolled in grades 9-12 at some point during the 2008 - 2009 school year, but who were not enrolled in school in October 2009 and had not earned a high school diploma or completed a state- or district-approved education program.

The 2008-2009 Common Core Data event dropout rates ranged from 1.1% in Wyoming to 11.5% in Illinois. In all, event dropout rates for public high school students in grades 9–12 were lower than 3% in 19 states. Conversely, event dropout rates were higher than 5% in 10 states. Nevada state-level event dropout rate was 5.1% – higher than the national average event dropout rate of 4.0%. In 2006, the averaged freshman graduation rate was 55.8% in Nevada, while the event dropout rate was 7.7% during the same period (Stillwell et al., 2008).

Table 7: Event Dropout Rates 2002-2009

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Nevada	6.1	6.0	5.8	7.7	4.5	5.1	5.1
U.S.	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.9	4.4	4.1	4.1

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2010.

Status Dropout Rate

The status dropout rate refers to the percentage of young adults in the age group 16-24, who are not enrolled in school and who have not completed a high school diploma or obtained a GED (Reimer and Smink, 2005). Nationally, the status dropout rate has shown a downward trend since 1972 (see below):

Table 8: National Status Dropout Rate 2000-2008

|	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
U.S.	10.9	10.7	10.5	9.9	10.3	9.4	9.3	8.7	8.0

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2010.

Ethnic Disparities in High School Graduation and Dropout Rates

Nationally, only 43% of African American students and 42% of Latino students can expect an on-time graduation (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2011a). Orfield, Losen, Wald, &Swanson (2004) note that racial disparities in graduation rates exist at all levels – federal, state, district, and local, and that this disparity tends to be "deep" and "pervasive." This is a long-standing problem that warrants further study. The racial

disparities in graduation rates are reported by the Nevada Department of Education (2012). As the chart below shows, the graduation rates of Hispanic and Black students consistently fall below the rates of American Indian/Alaskan Native, and significantly below the rates of Asian/Pacific Islanders and White students. In the school year 2009 – 2010, the graduation rate for Hispanic students in Nevada was 60.3%, and it was 57.6% for Black students whereas the graduation rate for their White counterparts was 78.4%.

Figure 3: Nevada Reported Graduation Rates by Ethnicity 2002-2010
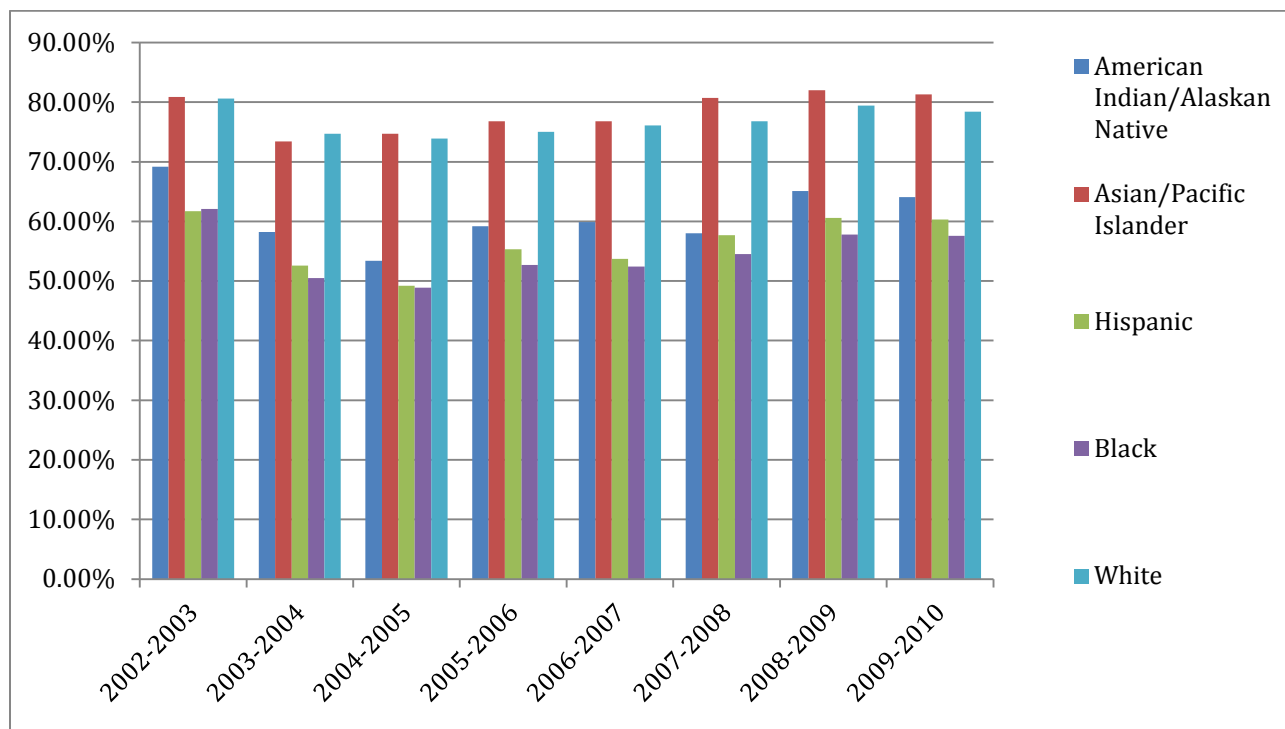
Source: Nevada Department of Education, 2011.

The College Board Advocacy and Policy Center (2011) offers an insight into various graduation and dropout rates in our state, as well as Nevada's national ranking in each measure. Table 9 shows that Nevada was ranked 51st for the Average Graduation Rate for Public High School Students in 2008. Nevada had a 51.3% average graduation rate in 2008 compared to the national graduation rate of 74.9%. Nevada ranked 24th for event dropout rates for African American public school students in grades 9-12 (the Nevada rate was 6.3% compared to 6.7% nationally). Nevada ranked 20th for event dropout rates for Hispanic American public school students in grades 9-12, (the Nevada rate was 6.7% compared to 6.7% nationally). Nevada ranked 15th for event dropout rates for White American public school students in grades 9-12 (the Nevada rate was 2.9% compared to 2.8% nationally). Thus, when you compare the national ratings of these three racial and ethnic groups you will notice wide disparities between Black and Hispanic and White students in Nevada. These data suggest the need for further inquiry into the causes of these disparities and the resources required to ameliorate the

disparate situation.

Table 9: Nevada's National Ranking and Rates

Rank	Description	U.S. Avg	High / State	Low / State	NV
51	Average Graduation Rates for Public High School Students	74.9	89.6% / WI	0.0% / SC	51.3%
51	Average Graduation Rates for Asian American or Pacific Islander Public High School Students	91.4	100.0% / AR	0.0% / SC	0.0%
51	Average Graduation Rates for American Indian or Alaska Native Public High School Students	64.2	100.0% / DC	0.0% / SC	0.0%
51	Average Graduation Rates for African American Public High School Students	61.5	100.0% / NH	0.0% / SC	0.0%
51	Average Graduation Rates for Hispanic Public High School Students	63.5	100.0% / VT	0.0% / SC	0.0%
51	Average Graduation Rates for White Public High School Students	81.0	94.0% / WI	0.0% / SC	0.0%
15	Event Dropout Rates for Public School Students in Grades 9-12	4.1	7.5% / LA	0.0% / VT	5.1%
13	Event Dropout Rates for Asian American or Pacific Islander Public School Students in Grades 9-12	2.4	6.9% / AK	0.0% / VT	3.4%
30	Dropout Rates for American Indian or Alaska Native Public School Students	7.3	12.2% / AK	0.0% / SC	4.9%
24	Event Dropout Rates for African American Public School Students in Grades 9-12	6.7	12.9% / MO	0.0% / VT	6.3%
20	Event Dropout Rates for Hispanic Public School Students Grades 9-12	6	12.1% / CO	0.0% / VT	6.7%
10	Event Dropout Rates for Public School Students in Ninth Grade	3.0	8.9% / LA	0.0% / VT	4.6%
14	Event Dropout Rates for Public School Students in 10th Grade	3.6	6.6% / LA	0.0% / VT	4.7%
23	Event Dropout Rates for Public School Students in 11th Grade	4.0	9.0% / AK	0.0% / VT	4.2%
12	Event Dropout Rates for Public School Students in 12th Grade	6.1	11.0% / CA	0.0% / VT	7.5%
15	Event Dropout Rates for White Public School Students in Grades 9 – 12	2.8	5.9% / HI	0.0% / MD	3.9%

* Indicator data not available for all states
Source: College Board Advocacy and Policy Center (2011)

Causes of High Dropout Rates

Researchers have identified a number of factors associated with high school dropout rates. Hammond, Linton, Smink, and Drew (2007) list over 20 risk factors, including chronic or mental illness, early marriage, low occupational aspirations, need for autonomy, sexual involvement, pressures to seek employment, change in educational services or placement, school dissatisfaction, having siblings that dropped out, and substance abuse. Each of these factors represents a point of intervention that can be targeted to reduce risk associated with high school dropouts in Nevada.

Reimer and Smink (2005) divide the dropout risk factors into alterable variables and status variables. Status variables include such factors as age, gender, socioeconomic background, ethnicity, native language, region, mobility, ability, disability, parental employment, school size and type, and family structure. The alterable variables include grades, behavior, absenteeism, school policies, school climate, parenting, sense of belonging, attitudes toward school, retention, educational support in home, and stressful life events (Reimer & Smink, 2005).

While Reimer and Smink utilize the artificial classifications of status variable and alterable variable, it is important to note that stakeholders such as policy makers, district and school administrators, social workers and teachers can utilize each of these variables to decrease dropout rates. Legislation, programs, and initiatives abound, with Reimer and Smink urging attention to the following intervention strategies:

- Address the needs of particular populations, including English language learners, students with special needs, and families living in poverty

- Give consideration to gender-specific instruction, class size, and transitions between grade levels and schools

- Understand the complex interplay between policies, programs, climate, culture, students, and communities in schools

Reimer and Smink's work belongs to a large body of research examining the dropout phenomenon. A host of studies have identified additional risk factors, contextual variables, and interactions associated with dropout. Drawing on the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth database, Suh and Suh (2007) identified 16 dropout indicators: low socioeconomic status, suspensions, student expectations, an enrichment risk index, absenteeism, family composition, a physical environment index, sexual experience, dual headed households, peers, urbanicity, region, perception toward teachers, number of school altercations, and bullying. Brown and Rodriguez (2009) listed multiple factors affecting high dropout rates, including low academic expectations, menial curriculum, lack of caring, gendered and racialized stereotypes, and overburdened staff.

Neild, Balfanz, and Herzog (2007) found that poor attendance, poor behavior, or failing

grades in Math or English in sixth grade reduced the probability of on-time graduation to 10%. Neild, Balfanz, and Herzog spelled out three big challenges facing educators and policymakers who grapple with the high school graduation crisis (p. 28):

1. Figuring out which signals to look for and when to look for them
2. Developing a set of structures and practices within schools that enable educators to review data and pinpoint those students who are sending signals
3. Determining the help students need on the basis of the signals they send and their responses to previous interventions

Graduation rates in our state will improve if Nevada policy makers and educators respond to these challenges by integrating policies, programs, and personnel in response to known risk factors in the nation and in Nevada specifically. The Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER, 2008), with support from a Nevada-based nonprofit organization, conducted focus groups to determine the causes of dropout in Clark County, Nevada. The focus groups were comprised of former Clark County students of African American and Latino descent, between the ages of 18-21. The following questions were asked:

1. What do you think is the most important reason students do not complete high school in Clark County? What's the next most important reason?
2. Why did you not complete high school?
3. Did you ever receive services for special education?
4. Did anyone ever recommend that you be retained a grade?
5. What would you have needed to stay in school?
6. If you could make changes that would help kids who are having a hard time in school, what would they be?
7. What was school like for your parents? Other family members?

Among the causes of high school dropout respondents cited student-teacher interactions, class and school size, parental work hours, pregnancy, grading practices, immigration policy, social milieu, peer pressure, lack of transportation, and proficiency exams. Moreover, several respondents noted there were "multiple reasons," or a "mixture of things," that resulted in their dropping out of school. These research findings suggest Nevada's dropout problem will require systemic changes to mitigate dropout and improve graduation rates.

Reports also illuminate an intriguing relationship between urbanicity and dropout. In a comprehensive report on public school graduates and dropouts, the Institute of Education Sciences observed that dropout rates were highest in large cities (Stillwell & Hoffman, 2008). Similarly, the Schott Foundation for Public Education (2008) notes the graduation crisis is most pervasive in large metropolitan areas. In the case of the western region of the United States, the event dropout rate for grades nine through twelve in large cities was almost triple the national average, while the averaged freshman graduation rate was 22.4% points lower than the national average (Stillwell & Hoffman, 2008). These data suggests that more resources should be allocated to urban

areas in order to decrease disparity in graduation rates between urban students and their sub-urban and rural counterparts.

Studies also suggest a relationship between district size and dropout rates. According to the Institute of Educational Sciences, during the 2005-06 school year, averaged freshman graduation rates were highest in districts whose enrollment did not exceed 1,000 students. Districts enrolling 50,000 or more students had the highest dropout rates in the West (Stillwell & Hoffman, 2008). These findings do not bode well for jurisdictions like Clark County School District and Washoe County School District, whose total student enrollment in the current school year is 309,749 and 62,324 students, respectively (Nevada Department of Education, 2011). Targeted resource allocation is needed in these two school districts to take into account their relatively high population counts.

The booming populations in Clark and Washoe counties will have a strong impact on the future high school dropout and graduation rates in state of Nevada. Both metropolitan counties have become more ethnically diverse, and Nevada has become a "majority-minority" state within our youth population insomuch as non-white and Hispanic youth age 17 and under account for more than 50% of the population. Presently, ethnic minorities make up 53.3% of the state's youth population (O'Hare, 2011). As the population in the Silver State increases and becomes more ethnically diverse, we are likely to see the dropout rates of these youth contributing disproportionately to the state's overall dropout rate.

Table 10: Children ages 17 and under living in Nevada by racial composition and Hispanic origin.

Nevada		
Total	100.0%	
Asian/Pacific Islander	6.8%	
Black (African American)	8.3%	
Native American, Eskimo, or Aleut	1.3%	
White	46.7%	
Hispanic (all races)	36.9%	

Data Source: Nevada State Demographer (2009)

Socioeconomic background has also been implicated in the dropout phenomenon. Residence in poor neighborhoods, membership in female-headed and low educational attainment households are factors associated with dropout (Hammond et al., 2007). Statistics also confirms the relationship between dropout and socioeconomic status. Students from low-income families have a higher event dropout rate than students from middle-income and high-income families (Reimer & Smink, 2005). Startlingly, the event dropout rate for low-income families is six times greater than the event dropout rate for high-income families (Reimer & Smink, 2005). As Table 11 shows, 17.6% of children in Nevada lived below the poverty level in 2008 (U.S. Census, 2009). The rate of children living below poverty ranged from 10.9% in Elko to 29.3% in Nye. Clark County had 17.6% of youth ages 17 and under living in poverty in 2008 and Washoe County had a youth poverty rate of 18.4%.

Table 11: The Percent of Children in Poverty in Nevada

Nevada	17.6%
Carson City	19.5%
Churchill	18.2%
Clark	17.6%
Douglas	13.9%
Elko	10.9%
Esmeralda	19.7%
Eureka	12.2%
Humboldt	15.3%
Lander	12.9%
Lincoln	18.7%
Lyon	15.0%
Mineral	29.3%
Nye	23.3%
Pershing	21.9%
Storey	13.6%
Washoe	18.4%
White Pine	15.8%

 Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division, Small Area Estimates Branch. (2009)

Given the close relationship between socioeconomic status and dropout rates, we can expect poorer Nevadan districts to fair more poorly than wealthier districts. One case in point is Clark County School District's Prime Six region. In a report calling for the expansion of educational opportunities, researchers noted that this region has a disproportionate number of students who qualify for free or reduced lunches and that such students tend to underperform on reading and math assessments (Terriquez, Flashman, Schuler-Brown, 2009). One hundred percent of the student population in the Prime Six Region was receiving free or reduced lunches while the district average was 47% (Terriquez, Flashman, Schuler-Brown, 2009). Such a "concentration of poverty" increased the challenges teachers face while attempting to meet the students' academic needs (Terriquez, Flashman, Schuler-Brown, 2009).

According to Patterson, Hale, and Stessman (2007), a mismatch between school culture, instruction, and students' home culture tends to increase dropout rates in urban settings. Van Dorn, Bowen, and Blau (2006) examined the impact of racial and ethnic diversity, consolidated inequality, and individual, school, and family factors on dropout. The authors found that when individual, family, school, and neighborhood characteristics were controlled for, White students were more likely to dropout than African American students. Almost all the risk factors identified in these national and state surveys play a role in Nevada's poor graduation trends. In addition to these well known factors, there are several region-specific reasons that affect the state's high school dropout rates:

- Availability of service industry jobs with limited entry level skills that tend to attract young people, especially those from poor families

- A substantial number of unskilled service positions that do not require investment in education

- The low housing cost that for a long time attracted to Nevada people with limited skills and education (the housing prices in Nevada went up dramatically beginning in 2004)

- Sizeable populations of Mexican Americans and Native Hawaiians who have developed community services and support systems for new immigrants

Mitigating Dropout Rates

The alarming consequences of high dropout rates underscore the crisis in America's high schools. President Barack Obama and members of Congress work on policies and regulations that promise to help improve high school graduation rates, increase student's chances of entering college, finding a high-skilled position in the labor force, and engaging in entrepreneurial pursuits. Teachers, parents, administrators, social workers, community scholars and advocates look to amend existing policies. The National Dropout Prevention Center Network has identified 15 effective strategies for mitigating dropout (Schargel & Smink, 2001):

1. Systemic Renewal
2. School-community Collaboration
3. Safe Learning Environments
4. Family Engagement
5. Early Childhood Education
6. Early Literacy Development
7. Mentoring/Tutoring
8. Service Learning
9. Alternative Schooling
10. After-school Opportunities
11. Professional development
12. Active Learning
13. Educational Technology
14. Career and Technical Education
15. Individualized Instruction

According to Hammond et al. (2007), effective programs utilize a "combination of personal assets and skill building, academic support, family outreach, and environmental/organizational change." Suh and Suh (2007) note that targeting truancy and peer groups may mitigate dropout at greater rates than targeting other factors, such as school expectations or health and wellness. Still others argue for eliminating institutional practices that breed alienation and discrimination (Fine, 1991; Aviles, Guerrero, Howarth, & Thomas, 1999), increase parental involvement (Lee & Ip, 2003), and improve school culture (Smyth & Hattam, 2002).

The CBER (2008) study asked Nevadan students to list the resources or identify strategies that would help peers and/or themselves stay in school. These are the key factors mentioned by Nevada students:

- Reduction in class size
- Trade courses
- Counseling services
- Additional clubs, extracurricular activities, and breaks during the school day
- Youth development programs and recreation centers
- Peer mentoring and tutoring
- Elimination of proficiency exams
- Passionate teachers, "hands on" teaching, and engaging coursework

The Institute of Education Sciences (Dynarski, Clarke, Cobb, Finn, Rumberger, & Smink, 2008) offered the following recommendations to mitigate dropout:

- Utilize data systems that support a realistic diagnosis of the number of students who drop out and that help identify individual students at high risk of dropping out
- Assign adult advocates to students at risk of dropping out

- Provide academic support and enrichment to improve academic performance
- Implement programs to improve students' classroom behavior and social skills
- Personalize the learning environment and instructional process
- Provide rigorous and relevant instruction to better engage students in learning and provide the skills needed to graduate and to serve them after they leave school

Given the complex nature of the dropout phenomenon and numerous factors impacting graduation rates, it is imperative to explore solutions that involve all the stakeholders – students, parents, teachers, counselors, nurses, social workers, administrators, policy makers and philanthropists. A comprehensive approach to the problem must be ecological, and it must rely on a mixed method systemic renewal strategy. This systemic approach addresses dropout as a problem informed by multiple factors on the individual, family, community, peer group, and school levels. In addition to these systems, the ecological approach should take into account the welfare, juvenile justice, mental health, workforce, and political systems. A comprehensive approach to improving graduation rates will likely include responding to immigration, economic, housing, health, and urban policies insofar as those impact school cultures and community dynamics.

Social workers have a long history of using a problem solving approach in addressing the needs of their clients. Combining community organization and clinical skills, school social workers are employed in the various school districts in Nevada, providing a wide array of social work services to benefit students in grades K – 12 (Shaffer, 2007). They receive referrals from teachers, nurses, audiologists, counselors and deans. The social workers assess children's needs, link the children and their parents to the necessary financial and social service agencies, and thus help meet the child and families needs so the students can return to school ready to learn. Please refer to this extensive list of community service agencies, **cns-CommunityResources.pdf** and other child and family services included in the community resources section located at the end of this chapter.

Nevada faces long odds, however, because of the poor ratio of school social workers to the number of students enrolled. This ratio varies depending on school district, the fluctuating state funding, and the success of grant and fund-raising efforts each year. Currently, there is on average one social worker for every 23 schools in the Clark County School District. The shortage of social workers is often discussed by teachers, administrators, social workers, and community advocates in the Silver State, yet much needs to be done to improve the situation in ways that can mitigate the appalling dropout rates in Nevada.

The School Social Workers Association of America (2009) has amassed comprehensive data regarding the roles and responsibilities of school social workers that provide direct service interventions and address the immediate concerns of at-risk students. These school social workers provide bio-psychosocial assessments of students, individual therapy/counseling, family therapy, small group therapy, crisis intervention services, mediation, and serve as liaisons to the home, school and community. Their prevention,

intervention and crisis response actions aim to address the following matters:

- Coping with Stress
- Family Issues
- Divorce
- Domestic Violence
- Financial
- Parenting
- Grief/Loss Issues
- Medical Issues
- Mental Health Issues
- Parent Education
- Physical/Educational Neglect
- Physical/Sexual/Emotional Abuse
- Pregnancy
- Psychiatric Issues
- Relationship Concerns
- School-Related Concerns
- Absences and truancy
- Academic Achievement
- Bullying
- Dropout Prevention
- Harassment
- Misbehavior
- School Avoidance
- Special Education
- Tardiness
- Underachievement
- Sexuality Issues
- Substance Abuse

In addition to direct services school social workers provide indirect service interventions by working with school, district and community personnel to facilitate district and school-wide reform. Their responsibilities may include case management, advocacy, referrals, parent education, multidisciplinary team coordination, group facilitation, grant writing, research and evaluation. School social workers provide prevention, intervention and community/agency responses to address macro and systemic level concerns that impact the lives of at-risk students such as:

- Community Collaboration
- Community Outreach
- Interdisciplinary Team Problem Solving
- Policy and Supplemental Program Development
- Public Relations

- School Improvement Planning
- Special Education
- Case Management
- Consultation
- Process Coordination
- Bio-psychosocial Assessment
- Functional Behavioral Assessments
- Mobilizing school and community resources to enable the child to learn as effectively as possible in his or her educational program.
- Positive Behavioral Intervention Plans
- Staff Development for Educators
- Teacher/Administrator Consultation

As school districts and at-risk schools implement dropout prevention policies, they should strive to integrate all the aforementioned elements. A mixed method systemic renewal strategy is recommended as a way to ensure that services reflect the rights, responsibilities, and cultures of at-risk students and their families. Systemic renewal is the "continuing process of evaluating goals and objectives related to school policies, practices, and organizational structures as they impact a diverse group of learners" (National Dropout Prevention Center/Network, 2012).

One example of a mixed method systemic renewal strategy is an equity-culture audit, an approach designed to assess the existing culture at a district or school level and evaluate its strengths and weaknesses with respect to ensuring its respective students academic success (Cleveland, Powell, Saddler, & Tyler, 2009). Equity and culture audits compile such indicators as learning environment, discipline, classroom management, leadership, coordination, collaboration, as well as instructional equity, cultural competence, equitable access to the curriculum, and relationships.

The data from audits are designed to assist districts and schools in making decisions about next steps as they relate to school culture and academic achievement, as well as long-range comprehensive school improvement planning. Equity-culture audits are effective mechanisms for reviewing and implementing a school improvement plan based on school culture with specific actions and recommendations (Saddler, Thompson, Cleveland, & Tyler, 2009). This investigatory process allows a team of educators to visit a school or school district and evaluate how well the system is performing based on a set of specific audit criteria. The audits can also serve as essential components of district-school improvement efforts by providing comprehensive benchmarking (Cleveland, Chambers, Mains, Powell, Keppel, Tyler, & Wood, 2011).

Policy Recommendations to Improve Dropout and Graduation Rates

Any effective program to improve graduation rates must begin with a systematic assessment of the factors contributing to dropout in a given school system. Without identification and a systemic strategic response, America's global footing in a competitive and interdependent world will weaken, and our youth will increasingly drop out of high school and become lost to generational cycles of poverty, incarceration, and

illiteracy. There are dozens if not hundreds of policy recommendations available to educators and advocates, but given the space and scope constraints this chapter will focus only on a few of the promising strategies to combat low school graduation rates in Nevada.

The College Board Advocacy and Policy Center (2010), in conjunction with the National Conference of State Legislators, identified dropout prevention and recovery strategies in its "College Completion Agenda State Policy Guide." The policy guide recommended that legislators take action to address dropout by:

- Conducting a policy audit to examine existing policies on attendance, discipline, grading, retention, promotion, and alternative routes to diplomas
- Establishing a statewide taskforce to build political will while developing dropout strategies
- Analyzing existing data collection procedures to accurately identify predictors of dropout while informing stakeholders
- Considering how state policy and funding can support data sharing across youth-serving entities

In 2005, WestEd and the Center for Education Policy Studies (CEPS) at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, offered the following recommendations:

- Enact policy that ensures education is a state priority
- Establish policy that supports a comprehensive focus on teacher preparation, induction, and professional development that includes strategies for teaching English learners.
- Create policy that ensures use of consistent germane data to inform and monitor improvement efforts
- Institute policy that establishes a statewide high school initiative
- Develop policy that supports a comprehensive focus on early childhood
- Establish policy that ensure that requisite support and resources are provided to effect reform

There have also been proposals to address the challenges in particular Nevada school districts, including the Clark County School District, the nation's fifth largest school district. In 2011, the district commissioned a study on educational and operational efficiency designed to identify strategies for improving student achievement (Gibson Consulting Group, 2011). The recommendations from the study include the following:

- Develop an enterprise data management framework to support data integrity, consistency, and data-driven decision making throughout the district.

- Standardize and enhance student assessment instruments so that a district-level analysis can be performed, comparisons can be made across schools, and individual students moving to different schools will be assessed in the same way.

- Increase the capacity of the district's program evaluation unit to support the collection and analysis of program and intervention data so that the district can measure its academic return on investment in specific programs at the student, class, grade, school, performance zone, and district-levels.

- Implement cross-functional teams to better coordinate academic programming and decision making

These recommendations underscore the importance of ecological approaches, the need for systemic renewal strategies, and the role school social workers can play as members of a cross-functional team.

Several other notable efforts are currently underway that promise to improve dropout rates in Nevada. In March 2010, Governor Jim Gibbons signed an executive order establishing the Nevada Education Reform Blue Ribbon Task Force. The Nevada Education Blue Ribbon Taskforce has crafted "Nevada Promise," an education reform agenda for Nevada, which calls for the following:

- Structural reforms to the K-12 public education governance system
- Legislative action, including development of a comprehensive evaluation rubric and revised evaluation system
- Administrative action that includes adoption of Common Core Standards, an enhanced expanded statewide longitudinal data system, and improvement in student performance through collaboration between stakeholders

More information on Nevada Promise can be found at
http://www.nevadaspromise.org/pdfs/np-final-report.pdf.

Consonant with WestEd's recommendation to establish a statewide high school initiative, Nevada Public Education Foundation launched "Ready for Life" in 2005. Ready for Life is a statewide movement to connect youth to employment or education by age 25. To back up this movement, in 2011 Nevada Public Education Foundation proposed the "Nevada Compact" that articulates these goals for Nevadan students:

- All students graduate from high school (including 10% increase by 2013).
- All students have access to and are prepared for success in college or post-secondary training.
- All students have access to pathways to sustainable jobs and careers.

Another notable initiative is the Fellows Academy. The Fellows Academy is a statewide dropout prevention program coordinated by Communities in Schools-Nevada. The Academy utilizes interagency case management teams to engage school site staff at all levels in the process of evaluating and meeting the needs of students, while providing community support.

The Fellows Academy model is a student-centered, systems-focused approach that provides team-based case management and service coordination addressing specific factors implicated in student's history. These indicators, or risk factors, are based on the National Dropout Prevention Center's (NDPC) meta-analysis of over 3,600 individual studies on dropout prevention, which conclusively identifies the risk factors that increase the likelihood that students will drop out (Hammond et al., 2007). Presented at the 2008 NDPC National Conference, the Fellows Academy model was recognized by the Center's leadership as the best application of this approach to date in the nation. During the 2010-2011 school year, students enrolled in the fully scaled Fellows Academy program made the following improvements (Communities in Schools, 2012):

- 100% of participants decreased their number of out-of-school suspensions and truancies
- 92% of participants increased their grade point average (gpa)
- 85% of participants decreased their number of in-school suspensions
  72% of participants decreased their number of absences and 72% decreased their number of tardies

As the fifth largest in the country, Clark County School District's performance weighs heavily upon the welfare of the State of Nevada. Various initiatives designed to improve graduation rates in the district are underway. For example, CCSD Superintendent Dwight Jones has devised a strategic plan to improve student performance. "A Look Ahead, Phase I: Preliminary Reforms Report" as this endeavor was called, outlined several reforms aimed to ensure that students are "ready by exit" on their graduation date. Many of these reforms in "a Look Ahead" are showing early signs of success. Additionally, on January 28, 2012, more than 300 volunteers participated in the second "Reclaim Your Future: It's Not Too Late to Graduate" door-to-door campaign to encourage credit deficient and absentee seniors to return to school. The Reclaim Your Future program offers adult mentors from the business community who can guide high school seniors toward on-time graduation. Mentors encourage students to graduate and will promote future education and career focus. And the Nevada Growth Model was implemented in response to the NV Legislature's 2009 Assembly Bill 14 which called for improving the measurement of students' achievement in each year as compared to their peers, rather than by tracking testing outcomes. More information about these and other promising practices can be found on the CCSD website at http://www.ccsd.net.

Conclusion

American youth dropping out of school is a serious social problem that results in poor economic, social, and political outcomes for individuals, families, communities and society. The high dropout rate in states like Nevada is a blight on the landscape of the American educational system, sapping the nation's economic strength and leaving in its wake an underclass. The causes and consequences of high school dropout are numerous, difficult to measure, and hard to ameliorate, yet collecting reliable data on high school dropout and graduation rates is a vital tool step toward improving the quality of life in the Silver State.

As the present report shows, residents without a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate face drastically reduced lifetime earnings and are likely to become a drag on the national and local economy. Researchers have documented the association between the lack of a high school diploma and higher crime rates, lower college readiness rates, higher unemployment and underemployment rates, higher substance abuse rates, and higher rates of involvement with child welfare and criminal justice systems. No one is left unaffected by the unacceptably dire high school graduation rates, and thus we must work together to address and solve this major social problem.

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Community Resources

Early Childhood Services sponsored Resource List
The attached 61-page document includes an extensive list of local, state and national resources for early childhood education, children and adolescents in the school system, as well as a variety of services for families, veterans and seniors. Please view this document updated as of January 2011 and contact the various organizations for assistance or referral information.
cns-CommunityResources.pdf

Academy for Individualized Study High School (AIS)
Independent Study – Concurrent Enrollment
Concurrent enrollment enables high school students to meet graduation requirements by participating in additional Independent Study classes after traditional school hours. Seniors who have credit deficiencies can earn credit for graduation while they remain enrolled at their home zoned high school. Weekly test sites are available at various locations throughout the greater Las Vegas area. For additional information, including fees, call 702.799.8636 or visit the AIS website at: http://schools.ccsd.net/ais/.

Independent Study – Full-Time Enrollment
Students who cannot, or choose not to, attend a comprehensive school may enroll in Independent Study. Independent Study is a competency-based program. Students work on coursework in accordance with their individual educational plan. Students work at home and report to a designated school site once a week on a specified school day to meet with a teacher for 2 hours, receive instructions, turn in work and take required tests. Credit is issued once a student completes all course requirements. For additional information, including fees, call 702.799.8636 or visit the AIS website at: http://schools.ccsd.net/ais/.

Credit-By-Exam – External Credit
Credit-By-Exam provides an opportunity for the student to progress at the student's own learning pace. Credits for specific courses are awarded based on demonstrated competence through an examination process. Credit-By-Exam is available only to enrolled high school students for classes they are not currently enrolled in, nor have previously taken. All Credit-By-Exams require the approval of the student's counselor and principal. (Please note: Credit-By-Exam is not available for every course.) For additional information, including fees, call 702.799.8636 or visit the AIS website at: http://schools.ccsd.net/ais/.

Adult Education is an educational program designed to serve out of school youth 17 years and older who wish to earn a high school diploma. The Adult Education Program may award an adult standard diploma to a person who (a) withdrew from high school before his/her graduation and was not eligible to graduate with his/her class; (b) has earned a total of 20½ credits of which 13 are credits for required courses and 7½ are credits of elective courses; (c) has passed the Nevada Proficiency examinations; (d) is 17 years of age or older at the time of the award; and (e) has established residency in the

Adult Education Program. For additional information contact Adult Education at 702-799-8655 or Desert Rose High School at702-799-6240.

Apprenticeship Programs offer an "earn while you learn" training opportunity. Apprentices are employees who are paid to learn a trade, and the training includes on the job experience as well as related classroom instruction. For more information, call the Nevada Apprenticeship Council at 702-486-2738, or visit the website www.laborcommissioner.com . Additional information is available at the Nevada State Apprenticeship Council 555 E. Washington, #4100 Las Vegas, NV 89101. Tel. 702-486-2738**.**

Burk Academic Preparatory Center is a credit retrieval program for high school students who are considered at risk of dropping out of school, or who have already dropped out. Students can take classes that will lead them toward a standard high school diploma or an Adult Standard Diploma. Burk is located at 4560 W. Harmon Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89103 799-8150, on the corner of Harmon and Cameron, just north of The Orleans Hotel. For information regarding registration procedures please call 702-799-8150.

Catholic Charities
Today the agency encompasses many diverse programs which provide a wide range of social services designed to help people—from infants to seniors. Catholic Charities strives toward the goal of each individual gaining self-sufficiency, independence, and dignity. Catholic Charities has only one focus: to give help and hope to people in need, regardless of race, religion or creed.
http://catholiccharities.com/

Central Neighborhood Family Services Center
121 S. Martin Luther King Blvd
Las Vegas, NV 89107
(702) 455-7200   **Serving zip codes:** 89101, 89102, 89104, 89106, 89107

Clark County School District offers a variety of alternative high school education services, including (a) continuation school, (b) correctional education, (c) home school, (d) Indian education (e) Juvenile Court School, (f) Young Adult Program, (g) college preparation course work, (h) programs for expelled students, (i) curricular resource support K-12, (j) evening high school program, (k) program for low achievers, and (l) pregnant teen program. CCSD offices are located at 2832 East Flamingo, Las Vegas, NV 89121. Tel. 702-799-5011.

Clark County School District: Title I Hope: Homeless Outreach Program for Education
http://ccsd.net/district/directory/title-i-hope-homeless-outreach-program-for-education

East Neighborhood Family Services Center
4180 S. Pecos Rd.

Las Vegas, NV 89121
(702) 486-7500 Serving zip codes: 89109, 89110, 89119, 89120, 89121, 89142

FEAT, Families for Effective Autism
Treatment of Southern Nevada
www.featsonv.org
Provides information on treatment resources, IEP process. Information provided by
parents. 702-368-3328 help@featsonv.org

Home School – Full-Time Exemption
A student may be excused from compulsory attendance at a public school when written
evidence is provided to the school district that a student will receive equivalent
instruction. Based on a parent's request and submitted application, Clark County School
District provides an exemption letter to the parent prior to a student's withdrawal from
school. For additional information call 702.799.8630 extension 316 or visit the state
website at: http://nde.doe.nv.gov/SD_Homeschooling.htm.

Independent Study Program is designed for students unable to attend a
comprehensive high school. Independent Study is a competency-based program. Credit
is issued once the student completes all requirements for the course. The student will
attend weekly classes and complete an accelerated schedule that will let them earn
credits at their own pace. Classes may be taken at the Independent Study office or other
available satellite sites. The program is located at 2701 East St. Louis Ave., Las Vegas,
NV 89104. For questions or appointments call702-799-8636, ext. 325.

Jeffrey Academy Center is the credit retrieval program designed for students who
are credit deficient or who have experienced high absenteeism in their home high
school. Credit retrieval students may apply for admission with the registrar's office, and
if admitted, will be asked to sign a behavior contract indicating that they agree to abide
by school rules. For additional information, please call 702-799-8375. JAC is located at
602 W. Brooks Ave, NLV.

Martin Luther King Center
2424 Martin Luther King
North Las Vegas, NV 89030
(702) 455-0740   Serving zip codes: 89030, 89031, 89032, 89033, 89115, 89130,
89131, 89143, 89156

**Nevada State Certificate of High School Equivalency is an alternative degree
earning program.** In the absence of a high school diploma, the General Education
Development Test is used as a measure of an individual's basic competencies in the
areas of English (writing and literature), social studies, science and mathematics. For
further information contact the testing center at 702-799-8630, ext. 341.

Nevada Adult Education includes several divisions: Adult Basic Education/English
as a Second Language, Adult High School Diploma Programs, and General Educational
Development. The purpose of this program is to provide educational services that help

Nevada adults aged 17 and alder who have less than a high school diploma. Programs are available in 15 school districts. If you would like more information, please dial 775-687-9167 or go to www.literacynet.org/nvadulted/home.html .

Nevada Adult Education, Carson City School District, Post Office Box 603, Carson City, Nevada 89702. Tel. 775-283-1350.

Nevada Adult Education, Churchill County School District, 590 South Maine Street, Fallon, Nevada 89406. Tel. 775-423-1191.

Nevada Adult Education, Douglas County School District, Post Office Box 1888, Minden, Nevada 89423. Tel. 775-782-7179.

Nevada Adult Education, Elko County School District, Post Office Box 1012, Elko, Nevada 89803. Tel. 775-738-5196.

Nevada Adult Education, Humboldt County School District, 310 East Fourth Street, Winnemucca, Nevada 89445. Tel. 775-623-8100.

Nevada Adult Education, Lander County School District, Post Office Box 1360, Battle Mountain, Nevada 89820. Tel. 775-635-2349 (a.m.) and 775-635-2021 (p.m.).

Nevada Adult Education, Lincoln County School District, Post Office Box 118, Panaca, Nevada 89042. Tel. 775-728-4471.

Nevada Adult Education, Lyon County School District, 1300 Hwy. 95A, Fernley, NV 89408. Tel. 775-575-3340.

Nevada Adult Education, Mineral County School District, Post Office Box 938, Hawthorne, Nevada 89415. Tel. 775-945-3332.

Nevada Adult Education, Nye County School District, 484 S. West Street, Pahrump, Nevada 89048. Tel 775-751-6822.

Nevada Adult Education, Pershing County School District, Post Office Box 389, Lovelock, Nevada 89419. Tel. 775-273-4994.

Nevada Adult Education, Coal Canyon High School, Pershing County School District, Post Office Box 389, Lovelock, Nevada 89419. Tel. 775-273-1300 (ext. 311).

Nevada Adult Education, Washoe High School, Washoe County School District, 777 West Second Street, Reno, Nevada 89503. Tel. 775-333-5150/5122.

Nevada Adult Education, Director State & Federal Programs, Washoe County School District, PO Box 30425. Reno, NV 89520-0254. Tel. 775-348-0332.

Nevada Adult Education, Nova Center, White Pine County School District, 700 Aultman

Ave., Ely, NV 89301. Tel. 775-289-2999.

Nevada Adult Education, Adult Education, White Pine County School District, 1135 Avenue C, Ely, Nevada 8930. Tel. 775-289-4851.

New Horizon Academy is a special place of learning that offers nontraditional teaching programs and methods for students. NHA has a program for bright students with processing or focusing issues. Founded and licensed in 1974, NHA is Nevada's only nonprofit, private school specifically designed to assist students with learning differences. School's motto is that all children can learn, but not in the same way, on the same day. The academy is located at **6701 West Charleston, Las Vegas, NV, 89146. Tel. 702-876-1181. More information is available on the web at** http://www.NHALV.ORG **.**

 North Neighborhood Family Services Center
4538 W. Craig Rd. #290
North Las Vegas, NV 89032
(702) 486-5610

Odyssey Charter School is a technology-based public institution (K-12th grade), sponsored by the Clark County School District and funded by the State of Nevada. Having received its charter approval in 1999, Odyssey Charter School began to offer students and parents an alternative to the traditional setting for education. Odyssey Charter School does not charge tuition. Its enrollment is open to all students residing in Clark County. The school is located at **2251 S. Jones, Las Vegas, NV 89146. Tel. 702-312-3244.**

Peterson Center is a technology rich educational setting for high school students of all grades considered at-risk of not graduating on time. The curriculum is focused on project based learning and individualized learning plans. The school is not designed as a school for students with discipline problems, but as an alternative for students who will be more successful with small classes and a small school environment. For additional information call 702-799-6610. The address for Peterson Center is 10250 W. Centennial Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89149.

South Neighborhood Family Services Center
522 E. Lake Mead Pkwy.
Henderson, NV 89015
(702) 455-7900   Serving zip codes: 89005, 89011, 89012, 89014, 89015, 89122, 89123, 89052

Southern Nevada Centers for Independent Living (SNCIL)
Providing services designed to empower people with disabilities.
http://www.sncil.org/

Southern Nevada Housing Authority: Offers Public Housing, Housing Choice Vouchers, Affordable Housing. http://www.snvrha.org/

State Approved Alternatives to Compulsory School Attendance allows Nevada students who are 17 or younger to be excused from attending school with parent permission. The program has two options. Option 1 offers parents a chance to request that their child be excused from compulsory attendance because of employment. To receive a work exemption, the student must be between the ages of 14 and 17, have completed 8th grade, have an offer of employment, and provide employer information. Work exemptions are processed in person through the Independent Study/Credit-by-Exam/Home Schooling office located at 2701 E. St. Louis, Door E., Las Vegas, NV 89104. Please call 799-8636, ext. 330, if you have additional questions. Option 2 I designed for students who are at least 16 years of age and who are allowed, with parental permission, to pursue the General Education Development Test (GED) in lieu of attending high school. Students and parents may be counseled on a walk-in or an appointment basis at 2701 E. St. Louis, Door A, Las Vegas, NV 89104. Please call, 799-8630, ext. 341, for additional information.

Sunset Cowan Campus is an evening school for students who need a more individualized program, work during the day hours, need evening hours for health reasons, and/or need low-cost day care for their young children SHS offers the second year ninth grader or second or third year senior a new smaller environment in which success is possible. SHS is located at 5300 Russell Road, Las Vegas, NV 89122. Tel. 702-799-6370.

Sunset Morris Academy Center is an alternative educational setting for high school students who are considered at-risk of dropping out of school, or who have already dropped out and are under 18 years old and on target to graduate in the current school year. The school is not designed as a discipline program, but as an educational alternative to the comprehensive high schools. Interested students can be referred to 702-799-8880. This campus is located at 3801 E. Washington, Las Vegas, NV 89110.

Virtual High Distance Education is a program of the Clark County School District that provides students educational opportunities through interactive online courses, televised instruction, and DVDs/videotapes. Students can take these courses from any location, as long as they have access to the necessary technology. All classes are curriculum based and meet or exceed the standards established by the Nevada Department of Education. Information about this program is available at www.ccsdde.net . Virtual High School is located at 3050 E. Flamingo Road, Las Vegas, NV, 89121. You can also call at 702-855-8435.

West Neighborhood Family Services Center
6171 W. Charleston Bldg. 7, 8 & 15
Las Vegas, NV 89146
(702) 486-0000   Serving zip codes: 89103, 89108, 89113, 89117, 89118, 89128, 89129, 89134, 89135, 89138, 89139, 89141, 89144, 89145, 89146, 89147, 89148, 89149

WDC - Women's Development Center

Women's Development Center has been providing quality housing services to low income residents of Clark County for more than two decades. www.wdclv.org