

High School Completion Plan for Durham: Dropout Prevention, Intervention, and Student Recovery

Introduction

High School Completion Plan for Durham: Dropout Prevention, Intervention, and Student Recovery is a comprehensive plan for ensuring all students complete high school. In 2005-2006, the High Five Regional Partnership for High School Excellence recognized that dropout prevention (and high school completion) was a comprehensive issue that required collaboration with school districts and their communities. To that end, High Five sponsored a series of Human Services Summits for the five school districts with their community partners to examine the issues preventing high school completion and to generate a regional dropout prevention plan. Each county was asked to create its Dropout Prevention Plan to target issues facing its community. In the fall of 2006, each county plan will be joined with the other district plans to create a regional High Five Dropout Prevention Plan. The *High School Completion Plan for Durham* is the product that resulted from the work of the Durham team.

Process

Over the course of the past year, the Durham team examined data, identified barriers to high school completion, reviewed national reform models in “best practice”, and generated a framework of strategies to promote high school completion.

Background

The vision statement of Durham Public Schools reads: “Durham Public Schools will ensure that students achieve at highest potential regardless of race, gender or social-economic status. Each student will make continuous progress and will be at or above grade level.” At the high school level, the goal is to ensure that all students will graduate from high school ready for the next level of their education or ready to work at a skilled job. The High School Reform Committee had recently established that the best way to measure this goal was to align Durham Public Schools’ initiatives with the three goals already set by the High Five Regional Partnership for High School Excellence.

- By 2013, 100% of students will graduate from high school (as measured by the federal No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress standard).
- By 2009, 90% of graduating students will complete a college tech prep or college university prep course of study.
- By 2009, 80% of graduating students will meet the course requirements for admission to the UNC system.

High School Completion Plan for Durham: Dropout Prevention, Intervention, and Student Recovery

The *High School Completion Plan for Durham* is organized in to five focus areas: (1) Student Trends & Dropout Prevention, (2) Instructional Reform, (3) Student Support Initiatives, (4) Parental & Community Leadership, and (5) Data Quality. Each focus area includes strategies to address specific barriers to high school completion. The strategies include specific action steps, person(s) responsible, timeline, evaluation methods, and resources needed.

Durham Public Schools High School Completion Plan

Focus Area I: Student Trends and Dropout Prevention

Strategy: Create prevention and intervention programs that provide supplemental support for at-risk students

Expected Outcome: Students identified as being at-risk in each school will experience academic gains and behavioral improvements (improved attendance, decrease discipline referrals) and make significant gains in academic proficiency.

Dropout Barriers	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Evaluation Methods & Check Points	Resource Allocation Needed
1. School Attendance	Monitor standardized K-12 attendance procedures	Durham Public Schools Community Agencies Durham Court System/DPS	2006-07	Monthly Attendance Report	In-Kind
School Attendance	Analyze reasons for absences and provide interventions	Durham Public Schools Principals Parents Social Workers	2006-07	Dropout Rate on the NC Annual Dropout Report	In-Kind
School Attendance	Continue social workers' focus on excessive absenteeism and truancy	DPS Social Workers	2006-07	Attendance Rates Truancy Referrals	In-Kind
School Attendance	Sustain marketing campaigns to encourage school attendance (Mind Your Future Campaign, Smooth Start)	Durham Public Schools	Aug 2006 Feb 2007	Billboards Newspapers Newsletters	In-Kind
School Attendance	Review attendance procedures & related data	Durham Public Schools	2006-07	Monthly Attendance Reports, Agendas	In-Kind
School Attendance	Implement a community Truancy Hotline (919) 697-9024	Community Agency Law Enforcement	2006-07	Number of calls Number of students	TBD
School Attendance	Continue Middle School Truancy Court High School Truancy Court	Parents Durham Public Schools Dept. of Juvenile Justice	2006-07	Middle School Attendance Rates # of Students Served	In-Kind

Dropout Barriers	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Evaluation Methods & Check Points	Resource Allocation Needed
School Attendance	Continue recognition at Administrative Staff meetings for schools with attendance rates	Durham Public Schools	2006-07	Agendas Attendance Report	In-Kind
School Attendance	Generate a list of at-risk students for each middle and high school using the following criteria (AAA): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unexcused absences in excess of 10 in the previous school year 2. Retained more than one time 3. Administrative placements 4. More than three out-of-school suspensions 5. Students transitioning back from an alternative program 	Durham Public Schools System of Care	2006-07	Monthly checks with counselors	In-Kind
School Attendance	Implement Child & Family Teams in 7 schools	Durham Public Schools Counselors System of Care	2006-07 Monthly	Monitoring Reports	CFST Grant
School Attendance	Adhere to the Compulsory Attendance procedures & documentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 3 day contact <input type="checkbox"/> 6 day and 10 day letters <input type="checkbox"/> Home visits <input type="checkbox"/> Principal confer with parents <input type="checkbox"/> Court Referral forms 	Principals Social Workers Counselors	Monthly	District Attorney Packets for principals Monthly Attendance Reports	In-Kind
School Attendance	Use Social Worker to increase student attendance during the first ten days of school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate incentives to improve attendance (Corporate business partners, discount cards)	Durham Public Schools Social Workers	First 10 days of school	Attendance Report	In-Kind

Dropout Barriers	Actions Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Evaluation Methods & Check Points	Resource Allocation Needed
2. Behavior & Suspensions	Improve school climate through Positive Behavior Support (PBS)	Durham Public School Families Students	2006-07	Reduced # of suspensions Reduced # of referrals Improve school climate surveys Implement PBS in all schools	In-Kind
Behavior & Suspensions	Examine reasons for student suspensions	Support Services School PBS Team PBS Coaches	2006-07	Discipline Referrals	In-Kind
Behavior & Suspensions	Continue system-wide use of the School Assistance Program (SAP), and Student Success Plans (SSP), or Personalized Education Plans (PEP)	Elementary Principals Middle School Principals High School Principals	2006-07	SAP Referrals Student Success Plans Personal Education Plans	In-Kind
Behavior & Suspensions	Develop discipline plans in schools that include alternatives to suspension Track past discipline behaviors of students	Student Services PBS Coaches Principals Research Development & Accountability (RD&A)	2006-07	Discipline Referrals	In-Kind
Behavior & Suspensions	Provide strong aligned academic intervention & support for students at-risk of school failure	Curriculum & Instruction, AVID Staff, System of Care, (Counselors & Community Agencies) Community in Schools (CIS), Faith Community, Public Library, Research Development & Accountability (RDA)	2006-07	Student Success Plans	Plans/cost under development
Behavior & Suspensions	Institutionalize school suspension exit and re-entry plan for multiple short term suspensions	Principal Counselors Social Workers	2006-07	School Suspension Rates	In-Kind

Dropout Barriers	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Evaluation Method and Check Points	Resource Allocation Needed
Behavior & Suspensions	Support students with alternatives to out-of-school placement	Middle & High School programs at Dearborn Ave. and Lakeview School	2006-07	Increase participation in alternative schools	Plans/cost under development
Behavior & Suspensions	Continue implementation and expansion of Positive Behavior Support (PBS in all schools)	Durham Public Schools Parents PBS Coaches	2006-07	Reduce # of discipline referrals, suspensions Increase staff/family interaction Increase staff/student interaction	In-Kind
Behavior & Suspensions	Provide training for K-12 schools in Peer Mediation	Durham Public Schools Parents	2006-07	Enrollment in courses Discipline , Referrals	In-Kind
Behavior & Suspensions	Continue and expand the Accountable Alignment for Achievement (AAA)	Durham Public Schools Child & Family Support Teams, Parents	2006-07	# Families served	In-Kind
Behavior & Suspensions	Establish a system that includes treatment providers, school officials, and community workers within juvenile justice system to form a partnership to eliminate substance abuse, alcohol and drug related offenses committed by juveniles	Community Agencies DJJP/Court System Parents	2006-07	TBD	Under Development
Behavior & Suspensions	Continue the GANG Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) in grades 4 and 6	Durham Public Schools Police Department Sheriff Department	2006-07	# Student completing training	In-Kind from Law Enforcement Agencies

Focus Area II: Instructional Reform

Strategy: Provide learning resources and supports for student needs.

Expected Outcome: There will be a significant increase in student achievement for students who are experiencing academic failure.

Dropout Barriers	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Evaluation Methods & Check Points	Resource Allocation Needed
3. Compulsory Attendance Age	Advocate to the state to review and raise the compulsory attendance age	Board of County Commissioners City Council Durham Public Schools Community Agencies	2006-07	Change in compulsory attendance age	None
4. Structure of the High School	Evaluate current school restructuring efforts and use evidence of effectiveness to improve existing programs and develop new programs (Freshman Academy, City of Medicine & etc.)	Research, Development & Accountability (Durham Public Schools)	2006-07	Evaluation of programs	In-Kind
Structure of the High School	Expand the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Program	Durham Public Schools	2006-07	# of AVID sections EOC scores Increase AP and Honors courses PSAT/AP Potential Report	Durham Public Schools \$90,000
Structure of the High School	Develop Professional Learning Communities (data analysis, lesson planning, mandatory tutorials, parent conferences, progress reports)	School faculty and staff	2006-07	PLC Groups	Durham Public Schools Budget
Structure of the High School	Identify strategies to promote personalization	Middle and High Schools, Staff, Counselors, AVID tutors, Community Mentors	2006-07	Improved Attendance	In-Kind

Dropout Barriers	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Evaluation Methods & Check Points	Resource Allocation Needed
Structure of the High School	Expand non-traditional programming (Advanced Academic Department, Early College HS, Middle College HS, City of Medicine Academy, Holton School)	Durham Public Schools Community college University	2006-07	Number of non-traditional programs Increase graduation rates	Under Development
Structure of the High School	Align Vocational/Technical Education with Office of Workforce Development	Office of Workforce Development Durham Public Schools	2006-07	# Internships & Partnerships w/ business & other community agencies	Under Development
Structure of the High School	Continue to offer rigorous Career Pathways for high school students	Durham Public Schools	2006-07	Enrollment in Honors & AP Courses	In-Kind
Structure of the High School	Implement ninth grade math course to yield more academic gains for students	Curriculum & Instruction /Durham Public Schools	2006-07	EOC Scores	In-Kind
Structure of the High School	Monitor mid-year promotions for over age students who qualify Develop support systems for students	Parents Principals Counselors	2006-07	Promotion Rates	In-Kind
Structure of the High School	Create an incentive system for summer employment for students to stay in school with incremental increases in salary for each additional year of participation	Office of Economic & Employment Development Durham Co. Workforce Development Durham Public Schools	2006-07	Summer Employment Rates	Under Development
Structure of the High School	Re-enroll after dropout Mid-Year promotions	Durham Public Schools	2006-07	# students re-enrolled # students promoted	Under Development
Structure of the High School	Provide opportunities for increased student success: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue the block schedule 2. Provide opportunities for double doses in needed areas in remediation 3. Utilize class time in the block schedule for direct intervention in areas of need 4. Suggest tutoring services when needed 	Durham Public Schools High School Principals Teachers Counselors	2006-07	EOC Scores Semester checks of students who are failing 2 or more courses	In-Kind

Dropout Barriers	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Evaluation Methods & Check Points	Resource Allocation Needed
Structure of the High School	Utilize self-paced, computer assisted programs to assist students who have fallen behind to earn credits towards graduation Use computer labs on non-traditional schedules to maximize this resource for students	High school credit recovery coordinators Counselors Principals	2006-07	Data on # of students who successfully pass and receive credit for coursework on-line	In-Kind
Structure of High School	Monitor mid-year promotions for over age students who qualify	Durham Public Schools Counselors PBS Coaches Faculty Social Workers Parents	2006-07	Promotion Rates	In-Kind
Structure of the High School	Develop and implement a summer program that focuses on academic skills, self-discipline, character development, career exploration, study skills, and goal-setting for rising ninth graders	High School Principals	Summer 2007	Participation in summer programs Increase % of students promoted to 10 th grade	Under Development
Structure of the High School	Create an incentive system for summer employment for students to stay in school with incremental increases in salary for each additional year of participation	Office of Economic & Employment Development Durham Co. Workforce Development Durham Public Schools	Summer 2007	Summer employment rates	Under Development

Dropout Barriers	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsibilities	Timeline	Evaluation Methods & Check Points	Resource Allocation Needed
Structure of the High School	Develop, implement, and monitor Personal Education Plans at all secondary level schools for students at-risk of not passing the competencies and students who need academic enrichment	Durham Public Schools SAP Chairs Counselors Selected Faculty	2006-07	Quarterly checks on student progress through SIMS	In-Kind

Focus Area III: Student Support Initiatives

Strategy: Provide student services in support of students.

Expected Outcome: There will be significant increase in student achievement for students who are in need of student supports.

Dropout Barriers	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Evaluation Methods & Check Points	Resource Allocation Needed
5. Student Recovery	Offer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention opportunities • Credit recovery opportunities that will prepare students for the next grade including Ed Options, etc. 	Curriculum & Instruction Student Service	2006-07	Increase credits Graduation rates Promotion Rates	State Remediation Funds
Student Recovery	Use of flexible high school programs (Middle College, Early College, City of Medicine, etc.)	Durham Public Schools	2006-07	Number of Programs	DPS Budget
Student Recovery	Provide longer summer school/remediation/credit recovery opportunities that will prepare students for the next grade level To sustain and provide in-school support for students below grade level	Durham Public Schools	2006-07	Program evaluation of summer program Increase credits Graduation rates Promotion rates	State Remediation Funds
Student Recovery	Sponsor Transition Forums to encourage students who have dropped out of school to return to school Provide transitional/case management services to students who are returning from dropping out or alternative setting to the home school	Durham Public Schools Counselors	2006-07	# Students re-enrolling in high school Graduation rates	In-Kind
Student Recovery	Initiate dropout recovery efforts for all students who drop out during the previous school year, and initiate regular reporting on students who drop out during the current school year (Ed OPTION, Student Success Plan, AVID)	Durham Public Schools	2006-07	Goal per HS to decrease number of students reported as dropouts Monitor quarterly checkpoints	In-Kind

Dropout Barriers	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Evaluation Methods & Check Points	Resource Allocation Needed
Student Recovery	Re-engage students with vocational education and occupational opportunities	Workforce Development, Durham Public Schools' Business/community, CDCs, and Counselors	2006-07	# Students re-enrolled & graduating with Industry Certification	In-Kind CTE Budget
Student Recovery	Encourage community sponsors for the before/after school and summer programs to include an academic component	Durham Partnership for Children DSS DACCA Community Learning Centers Faith Community	2006-07	Increase # of community programs with academic components	In-Kind

Focus Area IV: Parental and Community Leadership

Strategy: Strengthen the connection between the home and the school and community to support academic success and high school completion for students at-risk of dropping out of school.

Expected Outcomes: There will be increased parental involvement in the educational process, leading to an increase in student attendance, a decrease in the number of suspensions, and a reduction in the number of students leaving school prior to graduation.

Dropout Barrier	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Evaluation Methods & Check Points	Resource Allocation Needed
6. Family Support and Engagement	Promote Network of Care to share the community resources and referrals available for students, parents, and schools that are accessible in schools and other public agencies	Community Agencies Parents System of Care	2006-07	Network of Care usage	System of Care & Initiative Funds
Family Support and Engagement	Promote directory of community resources and referrals for students, parents, and schools that are accessible in schools and other public agencies.	Community Agencies DPS System of Care Council El Centro	2006-07	Directory use	System of Care & Initiative Funds
Family Support and Engagement	Offer workshops for parents through community agencies that address issues such as parenting, job interviewing skills, developing resumes, etc.	Community Agencies Parents Community Education Greater Durham Chambers of Commerce Workforce Development Career & Technical Education (CTE)	2006-07	Record of number of Parent Participation in each event	In-Kind
Family Support and Engagement	Create Parent University	DPS University Closing the Gap Committee	2006-07	Evaluation Forms	Under Development
Family Support and Engagement	Maintain a family-friendly climate schools: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Facilitate the sharing of information about academic areas of concern with families and encourage collaborative solutions 2. Encourage school-wide events 3. Encourage the participation of a diverse group of parents in leadership roles at the school and district level 	School Parents	2006-07	Customer Satisfaction Survey, Parent Participation log for events, SBDM, PTA, Title I, Leadership forums	In-Kind

Dropout Barriers	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Evaluation Methods & Checkpoints	Resource Allocation Needed
Family Support and Engagement	Provide meaningful, relevant information and resources for students and parents regarding the academic, co-curricular and extra-curricular programs at schools and in the community including PTA, tours, conferences, etc.	Community Agencies Parents DPS & School Websites Media Advance Academics	2006-07	Customer Satisfaction Survey Parent Participation Log	In-Kind
7. Business/Industry Engagement	Create business partnerships that provide students with opportunities to extend learning through mentoring, internships, community services, service learning, apprenticeships, internships, Future for Kids	Durham Public Schools Businesses Community Agencies Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce Workforce Development	2006-07	# Internships # Students participating	Under Development
Business/Industry Engagement	Parent Employment & Education: Collaborate and expose parents to high growth industries & occupations	Parents Workforce Development Board DSS	2006-07	# Parents participating	Under Development
8. Cultural Differences/Languages	Provide district-wide training for teachers and administrators in Cultural Awareness	Professional Growth & Development University Partners Community Partners	2006-07	# Teachers trained	Professional Development Budget
Cultural Differences/Languages	Provide English as a Second Language (ESL) support district-wide, including Parent Literacy Program	ESL Department, Community Education, Faith Community, El Centro	2006-07	Increased # families enrolled in Parent Literacy Programs	In-Kind
Cultural Differences/Languages	Provide district-wide training for teacher and administrators in working with students who live in poverty	Durham Public Schools DSS Community Collaborative University Partners Community Partners	2006-07	#Teachers trained	In-Kind Professional Development

Dropout Barriers	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Evaluation Methods & Checkpoints	Resource Allocation Needed
Cultural Difference/Languages	Provide additional academic support through summer school programs that are financially accessible for all students: School Year Plus, Summer School Programs for English Language Learners, and ECP Students	Middle & High School Principals ESL Director, SYP Director, Student Services	2006-07	Increase # students earning credits & are promoted Increase % students reading on grade level Increase School Readiness of LEP	State Remediation Funds
9. No Hope/No Vision for Their Future	Continue to provide families and students who are homeless or in transitional living situations, with services under the McKinney-Vento Act	Durham Public Schools Homeless Liaison Community Agencies Parents	2006-07	Agency Record/ # of DPS families assisted	Federal Title I, McKinney-Vento Funds, and Local Funds
No Hope/No Vision for Their Future	Investigate and continue to seek funding through community agencies to provide families in poverty with proper housing, funds for heating, and other living assistance	Community Agencies Social Workers Wellness Centers Nurses	2006-07	# of Families receiving additional support	Under Development
No Hope/No Vision for Their Future	Provide scholarship opportunities for students to ensure funding for post-secondary educational opportunities by working with business & industry	Business & Industry Universities Counselors Workforce Development	2006-07	# of Scholarships	Under Development
No Hope/No Vision for Their Future	Provide for mid-year promotions for qualifying over age students with support systems for high school students Follow up with students on second semester supports	Durham Public Schools: Middle & High School Principals Counselors	2006-07	# of Promotions	In-Kind
No Hope/No Vision for Their Future	Offer job training programs through community agencies for adult members of families who are living in poverty	Community Agencies Workforce Development	2006-07	# of Participants in programs	Under Development

Dropout Barriers	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Evaluation Methods & Checkpoints	Resource Allocation Needed
No Hope/No Vision for Their Future	Recruit community volunteers to create mentor/mentee programs for students at-risk of failure	Durham Public Schools Community Agencies Faith Community Communities in Schools	2006-07	Number of participates in program	In-Kind
10. School and Community Connection	Provide information to parents (College Fair, High School Options Fair, Magnet School Fair), Transitions to Opportunities Fair, Parent University)	Department within Durham Public Schools	2006-07	Number of programs; number of participants	In-Kind
School and Community Connection	Expand the partnership with community agencies such as Mental Health, DSS, and the Health Dept. to provide services for students and their families	Durham Public Schools Community Agencies System of Care	2006-07	Record of number of Parent Participation in each Event	In-Kind
School and Community Connection	Work collaboratively with community agencies such as Mental Health, DSS, and the Health Dept. to implement the Child and Family Support Team Program in (7) designated schools	Durham Public Schools Community Agencies System of Care	2006-07	Record of Child and Family Team yearly program report	In-Kind
School and Community Connection	Expand community engagement with Durham County and Durham City for tutoring services at elementary and secondary at-risk students	DPS, Parents, Community Involvement Liaison, City of Durham, Durham County, Communities in Schools, Durham Congregations in Action, Literacy Council, Closing the Achievement Gap, Durham Public Library, Faith-Based Organizations	2006-07	Increase the number of students promoted to the next grade	In-Kind
School and Community Connection	Provide a variety of resources & supports through System of Care intervention model at the secondary level to assist students & their families in managing the problems that are interfering with attendance, achievement, and character education	Community Agencies System of Care	2006-07	Records from Community Agencies that indicate # of DPS families assisted	In-Kind
Schools and Community	Create Community Learning Centers with faith, community, and Durham Housing Authority	Faith Community, Durham Housing Authority	2006-07 Fall	Student Participation & Student Academic Growth	Plan Under Development

Dropout Barriers	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Evaluation Methods & Check Points	Resource Allocation Needed
11. Community Poverty	Continue to work with community agencies to mobilize appropriate support for students and their families (System of Care) Continue to provide families and students who are homeless or in transitional living situations, with services under the McKinney-Vento Act	Durham Public Schools Community Agencies Office of Economic I Employment Development	2006-07	# Students in SOC Teams or receiving agency support	System of Care & Initiative Funds In-Kind
Community Poverty	Expand workforce development for parents Provide access to information about public assistance	Office of Economic & Employment Development DSS Judiciary	2006 and ongoing	# employed	Under Development
Community Poverty	Increase access to before/after school programs	Community Education	2006-07	# of families in poverty using before and after school programs	Under Development

Focus Area V: Data Quality

Strategy: To provide access to quantitative data to school and community leaders to ensure accurate information for decision making

Expected Outcome: There will be an increase in data sources and accessibility (benchmark data, attendance data, dropout data, etc.).

Dropout Barrier	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Evaluation Methods & Check Points	Resource Allocation Needed
12. Data Collection and Reporting	Conduct staff development sessions for administrators related to interpreting student data and using this data to improve school instructional programs	Durham Public Schools	2006-07	Enrollment in courses	In-Kind
Data Collection and Reporting	Track students within the district to ensure proper information regarding enrollment/dropout status	Durham Public Schools System of Care	2006-07	Attendance Rates Dropout Rate on the NC Annual Dropout Report	In-Kind