

# The High School Crisis in the United States and South Carolina: The Problems Related to Dropouts and Recommended Solutions

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By

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## *Introduction*

Bipartisan solutions are within our reach. If our country fails in its responsibility to educate every child, we're likely to fail in many other areas. But if we succeed in educating our youth, many other successes will follow throughout our country and in the lives of our citizens.<sup>1</sup>

President George W. Bush, from the Foreword to the  
*No Child Left Behind* White House "Blueprint" Paper

According to current data,<sup>2 3</sup> a substantial percentage of America's high school students drop out before graduating, and a considerable number of those who do graduate are not adequately prepared for college or work. This dire situation presents serious risks for the U.S. and for the young Americans who are being underserved.<sup>4</sup> Consider the following national data recently compiled by the National Governors Association (NGA):

- For roughly 60 percent of jobs in today's labor market, at least some postsecondary education is needed, and that percentage is expected to increase in the years ahead.
- The median earnings of a high school graduate are 43 percent higher than those of a non-graduate, and those of a college graduate are 62 percent higher than those of a high school graduate.
- Employers and colleges are spending billions of dollars to provide their employees and students with the knowledge and skills they should receive in high school.
- Nationwide, only 71 percent of 9th grade students graduate from high school on time, and worse, only slightly more than 50 percent of African-American and Latino students graduate.
- Although three-quarters of students who do graduate high school go on to college, nearly a third are not college ready and are placed immediately into remedial courses.
- One out of every four students enrolled in a four-year college and nearly half of all community college students fail to return after the first year.
- Only 18 percent of 9th graders will make it through high school, enter college and earn a two- or four-year degree on time.<sup>5</sup>

South Carolina's situation regarding high school graduation rates is considered "worse" than the rest of the country, and in most studies, the state ranks at or near the bottom in terms of graduation rates. Data provided to S.C. Education Oversight Committee in mid-2004 shows this clearly (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. South Carolina’s High School Graduation Rate and Ranking Comparison by Differing Methodologies and Findings**

Source	SC Graduation Rate	SC Rank	US Graduation Rate	Method
Higher Education Information Service (2003)	48.0%	50 of 50	67.3%	Cohort Survival Rate: Graduates who were 9 <sup>th</sup> graders 3 years earlier
United Health Foundation (2004)	48.0%	50 of 50	67.3%	Cohort Survival Rate
Urban Institute (Swanson, 2004)	50.7%	51 of 51	68.0%	Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI) <sup>1</sup>
National Board on Educational Testing and Public Policy (Haney, et al., 2004)	51%	50 of 50	67%	# graduates ÷ 9 <sup>th</sup> grade enrollment 3 years earlier
Manhattan Institute (Greene & Forster, 2003)	57%	49 of 51	70%	Greene method <sup>2</sup>
National Board on Educational Testing and Public Policy (Haney, et al., 2004)	62%	49 of 50	74.4%	# graduates ÷ 8 <sup>th</sup> grade enrollment 4 years earlier
SC Department of Education (2004)	64.0%	NA	NA	# completers ÷ 8 <sup>th</sup> grade membership 4 years earlier
National Center for Educational Statistics (USDE NCES, 2003)	NA	NA	NA	Formula depends on availability of 4 years of dropout information; information for SC not available

Source: Potter, D. (2004, June 15). “High school graduation rate calculations.” S.C. Education Oversight Committee. Columbia, SC: Potter, Table 1. Notation: 2001 data most recently reported nationally. All analyses excepting S.C. Department of Education based on Common Core of Data, National Center for Educational Statistics.

Table Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI): “The likelihood that a 9<sup>th</sup> grader from a particular school system will complete high school with a regular diploma in four years given the conditions prevailing in that school system during the 2000-01 school year” (Swanson, 2004, page 7). With this method the rate is adjusted to

reflect the chances within the school or system that a 9<sup>th</sup> grader will be promoted to 10<sup>th</sup> grade, that a 10<sup>th</sup> grader will be promoted to 11<sup>th</sup> grade, and that an 11<sup>th</sup> grader will be promoted to 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

<sup>2</sup> Greene method: The number of graduates receiving high school diplomas is divided by a numerator based on the 9<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment three years earlier which has been adjusted to reflect the number of students who were classified as 9<sup>th</sup> graders for the first time. The denominator is also adjusted to reflect student mobility in the school.

Further, specific data from the NGA and Achieve, Inc.,<sup>6</sup> validate these numbers in Figure 1 and offer useful comparisons to the national data stated earlier.

- In South Carolina, 49 percent of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students graduate from high school on time, and worse, less than 50 percent of African-Americans and Latinos graduate.
- Twenty-nine percent of students who do graduate from high school on time go on to college, and coincidentally 29 percent are not college ready.
- Twenty-three percent of students enrolled in a four-year college and 55 percent of all community college students fail to return after the first year.
- Only 13 percent of 9<sup>th</sup> graders will make it through high school, enter college or earn a two- or four-year degree on time.<sup>7</sup>

Given these data, one obvious question presents itself: What can be done to improve high school graduation rates and prepare young people for further educational opportunities, if desired, and a satisfying career? The answer to this question is complex, according to experts. Foremost, however, states must reinvent high schools and implement lasting reforms. One such approach is a ten-step “action agenda” that Governor Mark Warner of Virginia, along with other governors, is recommending as a guidebook based on best practices. These steps include the following:

- 1) Create a permanent Education Roundtable or Commission to foster coordination between early childhood, K-12 and higher education.
- 2) Define a rigorous college and work preparatory curriculum for high school graduation.
- 3) Challenge business, education, parent, community and faith-based organizations to support initiatives that improve college awareness.
- 4) Give college and work-readiness assessments in high school.
- 5) Create statewide common course agreements so that college-level work in high school counts towards a postsecondary credential.
- 6) Provide financial incentives for disadvantaged students to take rigorous AP exams and college preparatory and college-level courses.
- 7) Expand college-level learning opportunities in high school to minorities, English language learners, low-income students and youth with disabilities.

- 8) Help get low-performing students back on track by designing literacy and math recovery programs.
- 9) Develop and fund supports to help students pass the high school exit exam.
- 10) Develop statewide pathways to industry certification.<sup>8</sup>

In this paper, several topics associated with the problems of high school graduation and recommended solutions will be offered. These topical discussions are based on an extensive review of recent literature. The aim is to offer an overview of the data and differing views and remedies that seem most prevalent.

### *NGA National Summit on High Schools*

On February 26 and 27, 2005, the National Governors Association held its first national summit on the status of high schools in America.<sup>9</sup> The summit was prompted by the recognition that high schools in the U.S. are in a state of crisis. Data from Achieve, Inc.,<sup>10</sup> a partner with the NGA to improve the nation's high school systems and performance, indicate that nationally only 68 of every 100 high school freshman will graduate from high school. Of that number, 40 only will enter college, and only 18 will graduate on time.<sup>11</sup>

For comparative purposes, according to Achieve, only 49 of every 100 South Carolina ninth-graders will graduate from high school; of the 49 high school graduates, 29 will enter college immediately; and of the 29 entering college freshmen, only 13 will graduate on time.<sup>12</sup>

The issues addressed by the national summit were several. These included:

- restoring the relevance of a high school diploma;
- increasing the graduation rate;
- closing the achievement gap; and,
- aligning high school, college and workforce expectations.<sup>13</sup>

The NGA believes that new strategies are called for to address these pressing issues. One such strategy is to restore the value of a high school diploma or certificate. This would be accomplished by revising academic standards, improving curricula, and perhaps most importantly, constructing meaningful assessments that link properly to college and workplace expectations and needs. Other strategies encompass the following:

- Redesign the American high school to provide all students with the higher-level knowledge and skills, educational options, and support they must have to succeed.
- Give high school students the excellent teachers and principals they need by ensuring teachers and principals have the necessary knowledge and skills and by offering incentives to attract and retain the best and brightest to the neediest schools and subjects.

- Hold high schools and colleges accountable for student success by setting meaningful benchmarks, intervening in low-performing schools and demanding increased accountability of postsecondary institutions.
- Streamline educational governance so that the K–12 and postsecondary systems work more closely together.<sup>14</sup>

According to the NGA, high school completion not only helps graduates be more productive and earn more, it also allows individuals to pursue higher educational attainment which in turn provides for affluence and career mobility. U.S. Census data cited in a recent report indicates, for example, that the median annual earnings of a high school graduate equal \$30,900 or 43% greater than a non-graduate earning a median income of \$21,600. College graduates, in turn, earn a median income of \$49,900 or 62% higher than those completing high school alone.<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, the NGA believes that high school completion makes for a better citizenry and society as a whole. Proven benefits that are most obvious include, for instance, fewer demands for social services, lower rates of imprisonment, better health, improved parenting skills, etc. Other benefits of high school education include “incremental improvements” such as improvements and reductions in the costs associated with R&D, the dissemination of knowledge, increased specialization in fields of science, and generally the acceleration of innovative and creative processes.<sup>16</sup>

*The Alliance for Excellent Education Progress Report*

Only 70 percent of our nation’s children are managing to graduate from high school, only 25 percent of eighth and twelfth graders read at proficient levels, and 40 percent of the students who make it to college need remedial courses when they get there. These statistics are even worse in our nation’s cities and among our poor and minority students.<sup>17</sup>

Lyndsay Pinkus, *Alliance for Excellent Education Progress Report*

The Alliance for Excellent Education, a national policy and research organization,<sup>18</sup> published a progress report in late 2003 on American high schools and the problems they face—especially with regard to poor graduation rates. Its stated purpose was to “provide a snapshot of the condition of U.S. high schools with those particularly in need of improvement.”<sup>19</sup>

One important observation of the Alliance report, as found in its introductory comments, is that while more federal emphasis is now being placed on education systems nationwide with the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), still not enough federal funding is being given to the states to achieve the goals of NCLB. According to the report, only 2.8% of the federal budget goes to education (FY 2003-04). The report’s conclusion:

“The states’ budget deficits and lack of targeted federal monies only exacerbate the challenges of the nation’s secondary school systems.”<sup>20</sup>

Further, the Alliance report stresses that high schools are failing to meet the fundamental needs of the U.S. economic structure—i.e., businesses and manufacturing concerns. Companies, business associations, and the like are “complaining” that high schools are not producing qualified workers and, equally important, are not preparing enough graduates to succeed in post-secondary institutions. The Alliance report cites a survey of members of the National Association of Manufacturers that found that 78% of respondents “believed that public schools are overall failing to prepare students for the workplace.”<sup>21</sup>

Specifically regarding high schools and graduation rates, the Alliance report states that its research clearly indicates that there is a correlation between dropouts and poverty, incarceration, and welfare. But the Alliance report is quick to point out that the statistics on high school dropout or graduation rates can be “confusing.” This is because of varying data collection methods, differing calculation or analysis processes, and wide-ranging definitions of terms. States, for example, use various systems to calculate or measure dropouts. These methods are typically referred to as longitudinal, completion ratio, or “specialty” methods such as the National Center for Education Statistical Model (see Figure 2).

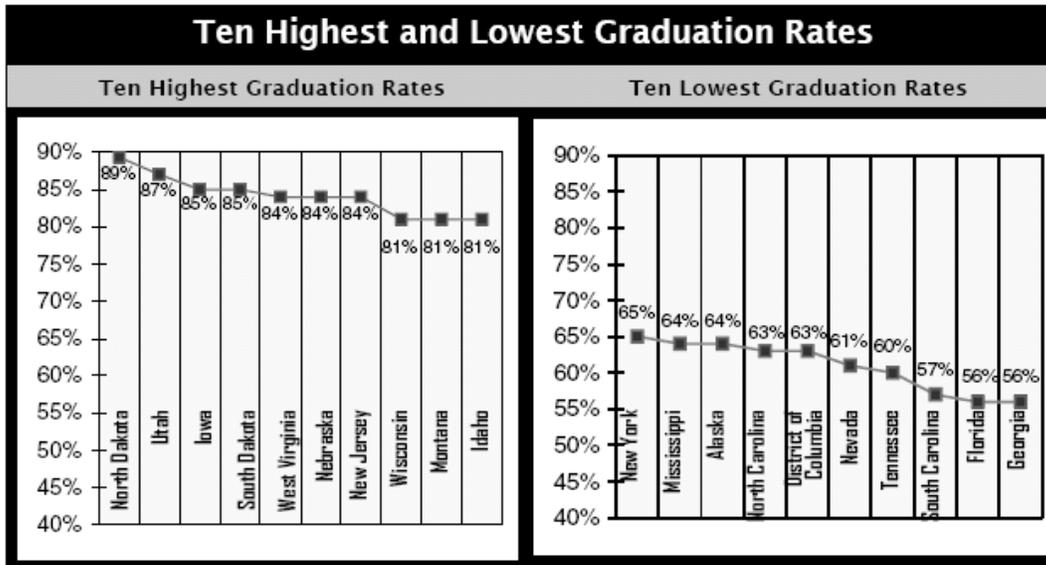
**Figure 2. Graduation Rate Computation Methodologies by State**

Which Graduation Rate is Your State Using to Report Dropouts?						
Longitudinal	National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Method			Completion Ratio	Dropout Rate	Other Method
Arizona	Alabama	Kentucky	Oklahoma	Illinois	Louisiana	Arkansas
Colorado	Alaska	Maine	Oregon	Massachusetts	New Jersey	Indiana
Florida	California	Maryland	Pennsylvania	Mississippi		New Hampshire
Hawaii	Connecticut	Minnesota	Rhode Island	New Mexico		Hampshire
Michigan	DC	Missouri	South Dakota			North Carolina
New York	Delaware	Montana	Utah			Vermont
South Carolina	Georgia	Nebraska	Virginia			
Tennessee	Idaho	Nevada	West Virginia			
Texas	Iowa	North Dakota	Wisconsin			
Washington	Kansas	Ohio	Wyoming			
Source: Swanson, 2003						

Source: Pinkus, L. (2003, November). *Progress report on American high schools 2003-04*. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education, p. 9.

The Alliance report next refers to the Greene method of determining the number of high school dropouts.<sup>22</sup> The Greene method uses its own data sources averaging 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> grade enrollments for greater accuracy, ignores GEDs, considers population differentiations, and then contrasts these numbers to 12<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment and diplomas awarded.<sup>23</sup> Thus, the major finding based on the Greene method is as such: The high school graduation rate for the U.S. is only 70%; and, for African-Americans and Latinos, it is around 50%.

**Figure 3. The Greene Method Calculation of States with the Highest and Lowest Percentages for High School Graduation**



Source: Pinkus, L. (2003, November). *Progress report on American high schools 2003-04*. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education, p. 10.

Another issue addressed in the Alliance report is student literacy. The report cites data that show that too many students lack skills and abilities to comprehend, analyze and synthesize information (reading or coursework materials). Teenagers are, according to the report findings, “too often unable to make the transition from ‘learning to read’ to ‘reading to learn’.”<sup>24</sup> The consequences of such circumstances as these are student disinterest, poor performance, and disillusionment—all of which can and do lead to high school non-completion. The Alliance report finds that:

In fact, the six million at-risk students in the lowest quartile of reading achievement are *three and half times more likely to drop out of school* than students in the next highest quartile of achievement. They are *twenty times more likely to drop out* than top-performing students.<sup>25</sup>

Teacher quality is another factor in student high school achievement. The Alliance report cites a 2003 study of the U.S. Department of Education that found that 46% of high school teachers were not “highly-qualified.” While the No Child Left Behind requires teachers to be highly-qualified by 2006, most states are seeking various waivers and other permissions to delay or curb this requirement. This is especially true of poor performing high schools in inner cities and rural areas where dropout rates are generally high. Low pay, meager working conditions, and lack of administrative support are contributing factors in these cases to recruit and retain highly-qualified teachers.<sup>26</sup>

The Alliance report also finds that many high school students do not have the requisite skills to be college ready. This situation is due many times to the mere fact that high schools are not providing the college-preparatory coursework which is needed. Lack or nonexistence of pre-college counseling is additionally a problem. The Alliance report cites a study which found that only 32% of high school seniors were college ready. Many of these seniors were minorities, African-Americans and Latinos.<sup>27</sup>

### *The Manhattan Study*

The Manhattan Institute,<sup>28</sup> a non-profit organization which regularly evaluates issues associated with education in the U.S., recently ranked South Carolina's high school graduation rate the worst in the nation as based on 2002 data. Authored by Jay Greene and Marcus Winters, the report—entitled *Public High School Graduation and College Readiness Rates: 1991-2002*—states that 47% of South Carolina students “dropped out before graduating on time in 2002” and, further, that only 29% of South Carolina high students were “qualified” to be admitted to a four-year higher education institution.<sup>29</sup>

These findings are based on the “Greene method” which does not depend on data from National Center for Education Statistics, which the Manhattan report authors feel are fundamentally unreliable, nor does it count those earning GEDs as graduates.<sup>30</sup>

In response to the Manhattan report findings, the S.C. State Department of Education said that—based on its own calculations—the graduation rate for 2002 was 67%.<sup>31</sup> SDE further stated that of those graduating in 2002, “42% were enrolled in four-year colleges the next year.”<sup>32</sup>

The State Department of Education believes it is unfair of the Manhattan report not to consider the graduation requirements of South Carolina since they are more rigorous than many other states. These requirements, for example, would include South Carolina's provisions that necessitate acquiring 24 credit hours and passing an exit exam for graduation.<sup>33</sup>

Still, the SDE acknowledges the 2002 graduation rate (67%) is unacceptable.

Other general findings in the Manhattan report include:

- The national high school graduation rate for all public school students remained flat over the last decade, going from 72% in 1991 to 71% in 2002.
- Nationally, the percentage of all students who left high school with the skills and qualifications necessary to attend college increased from 25% in 1991 to 34% in 2002.
- The state with the highest graduation rate in the nation in 2002 was New Jersey (89%), followed by Iowa, Wisconsin, and North Dakota (each at 85%). The state with the lowest graduation rate in the nation

was South Carolina (53%),<sup>34</sup> followed by Georgia (56%), Tennessee (57%), and Alabama (58%).

- There is a wide disparity in the graduation rates of white and minority students. In the class of 2002, about 78% of white students graduated from high school with a regular diploma, compared to 56% of African-American students and 52% of Hispanic students.
- There is also a large difference among racial and ethnic groups in the percentage of students who leave high school eligible for college admission. About 40% of white students, 23% of African-American students, and 20% of Hispanic students who started public high school graduated college-ready in 2002.<sup>35</sup>

### *The Johns Hopkins University Study*

The Johns Hopkins study concentrates mainly on the problem of high school dropouts and attempts, in a limited way, to identify characteristics or factors associated with the failure to graduate from high schools.

One main theme of the report is that the American high school is of great importance to the socio-economic well being of the nation. It posits that high school dropouts bear a correlation—directly or indirectly—to societal ills, including unemployment, crime, poor health, and even “chronic despair.”<sup>36</sup>

Another theme or point that is emphasized in the study is that greater and greater attention is now being given to the problem of high school dropouts. Education experts, policymakers, the media, and the public at-large are becoming increasingly aware of the problem of high school dropouts—its nature, circumstances, and impacts. There is, according to the report, a positive and pro-active response to understand the depth of the high school crisis, generally speaking, and to address it constructively for both the short- and long-term. The report states that while this attention is significant and obviously necessary, it is much belated.

High schools have been the orphans of school improvement efforts, as states and districts have chosen to invest the too few dollars available for low performing schools in schools serving younger children. High schools still receive only 5% of federal funds available for low-performing schools. Policymakers and education decision makers are now realizing that support for preschoolers and elementary school students must be sustained through the secondary grades to keep achievement and attainment gains from fading as students face the academic and social challenges of their middle and high school years.<sup>37</sup>

The Johns Hopkins study states that even with growing attention to the high school crisis, other recent reports show that there is confusion and disagreement as to the scale and scope of dropouts. Researchers and institutions disagree over methodologies to calculate

high school graduation rates. Many non-profit organizations state that federal and state calculations are not accurate and generally underestimate the number of dropouts. This situation, according to the Johns Hopkins report, only complicates matters.<sup>38</sup>

The report states that the solution to this problematic situation is to target the high schools systems—general locales—where the dropout problems most exist. The aim of the John Hopkins report is, therefore, “to determine its extent by identifying the number of schools with severe dropout problems, their areas or regions of concentration, and the composite of associated student demographics.”<sup>39</sup>

The chief findings of the Johns Hopkins study are revealing and are as follows:

- Nearly half of our nation’s African-American students, nearly 40% of Latino students, and only 11% of white students attend high schools in which graduation is not the norm.
- Between 1993 and 2002, the number of high schools with the lowest levels of success in promoting freshmen to senior status on time (a strong correlate of high dropout and low graduation rates) increased by 75%, compared with only an 8% increase in the total number of high schools.
- There are currently between 900 and 1,000 high schools in the country in which graduating is at best a 50/50 proposition. In 2,000 high schools, a typical freshman class shrinks by 40% or more by the time the students reach their senior year. This represents nearly one in five regular or vocational high schools in the U.S. that enroll 300 or more students.
- A majority minority high school is five times more likely to have weak promoting power (promote 50% or fewer freshmen to senior status on time) than a majority white school.
- Poverty appears to be the key correlate of high schools with weak promoting power. Majority minority high schools with more resources (e.g., selective programs, higher per pupil expenditures, suburban location) successfully promote students to senior status at the same rate as majority white schools.
- The majority of high schools with weak promoting power are located in northern and western cities and throughout the southern states.
- High schools with the worst promoting power are concentrated in a sub-set of states. Nearly 80% of the nation’s high schools that produce the highest number of dropouts can be found in just 15 states (Arizona, California, Georgia, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Texas).
- While only 20% of high schools that enroll more than 300 students are located in large and medium-sized cities, 60% of the nation’s

high schools with the lowest levels of promoting power are found in these cities.

- Many cities have high concentrations of high schools with weak promoting power. In half of the nation's largest 100 cities, 50% or more of high school students who attend regular or vocational high schools with more than 300 students attend high schools with weak promoting power. In some cities, students have virtually no other choice but to attend a high school with weak promoting power.
- More than half of African-American students in Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, New York, and Pennsylvania attend high schools in which the majority of students do not graduate on time, if at all. African-American students in these states are up to 10 times more likely to attend a high school with very weak promoting power, high dropout and low graduation rates than white students.
- Five southern states—Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, and Texas—collectively lead the nation in both total number and level of concentration of high schools with weak promoting power.<sup>40</sup>

*The National Center of Educational Statistics Study*

The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES)<sup>41</sup> is the chief federal entity responsible for collecting and analyzing data on education. As stated in its November 2003 report, one important indicator of an educational system's success is the rates at which students drop out of high school. Each year, the NCES conducts a series of surveys of state education agencies, some of which are to determine high school dropout rates. The NCES acknowledges that state and local policies and data collection methods differ widely and, for this reason, caution should be used when making state-to-state comparisons.

The NCES defines a dropout in the following way: An individual who...

- 1) was enrolled in school at some time during the previous school year;
- 2) was not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year;
- 3) has not graduated from high school or completed a state- or district-approved educational program; and,
- 4) does not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions:
  - a) transfer to another public school district, private school, or state- or district approved educational program (including correctional or health facility programs);
  - b) temporary absence due to suspension or school-excused illness; or death.<sup>42</sup>

The NCES simply calculates an annual high school dropout rate by taking the number of dropouts for a school year, as reported by the states, and dividing that number by the students enrolled at the beginning of the school year. The equation is as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Number of October 1}^{\text{st}} \text{ 9}^{\text{th}} \text{—through—12}^{\text{th}} \text{-grade dropouts}}{\text{October 1}^{\text{st}} \text{ 9}^{\text{th}} \text{—through—12}^{\text{th}} \text{-grade enrollment count}}$$

Using this definition and calculation,<sup>43</sup> the NCES found that for the 2000-01 school year, the dropout rate varied from 2.2% for North Dakota to 10.9% for Arizona. Additionally, 26 of the reporting states had dropout ranges from 4.0% to 7.0%. Three states—Iowa, New Jersey, and Wisconsin—joined North Dakota with dropout rates of 3.0% or less. At the other end of the spectrum, two other states, Alaska and Louisiana joined Arizona with high school dropout rates greater than 8.0%.<sup>44</sup> South Carolina’s dropout rate was 3.3%.

The NCES study also made findings as related to race or ethnicity. Predictably, the NCES’s general finding was that dropout rates for Caucasians were lower than that for minorities, i.e., African-Americans, Latinos, and Indian/Alaska Natives. For example, more than 22.2% of American Indians dropped out of high school in Arizona, Minnesota, and South Dakota for the school year 2000-01. Twelve states reported varying dropout rates for minorities of 16.3% to 42.9%. In South Carolina, the percentage of enrollment base for 9-12<sup>th</sup> grade dropout rates for African-Americans was extremely high at 40.3%.<sup>45</sup>

#### *The North Central Regional Educational Laboratory*

The North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL)<sup>46</sup> is a non-profit organization which studies educational policy issues. Of significance, the NCREL has identified five “key elements that address the reduction or prevention of high school dropouts.” These include:

- 1) Small school size, which supports more positive teacher-student relationships.
- 2) Small class size, enabling teachers to provide a challenging curriculum for all students.
- 3) Intellectual habits of mind that mark the school as an intellectual community.
- 4) Portfolio assessments that allow students to demonstrate their learning in multiple and complex ways.
- 5) Staff members chosen for their commitment to the school's mission and beliefs about teaching and learning.<sup>47</sup>

NCREL believes that the remedies to dropouts, as enumerated above, are linked to reasons or “causations” why students drop out of high school in the first place. In an NCREL analysis, the NCREL discusses these and offers prevention solutions under the following headings: truancy as an indicator, engaging schools, school change, alternative schooling, dropout tracking systems, and parents’ role in preventing dropouts.<sup>48</sup>

First, NCREL states that a main contributor to dropouts, one which has been long been known to experts and observers alike, is truancy. Daily absenteeism in some locales can exceed 30% according to NCREL's review of recent data. Further, it is known that absenteeism from school often leads to drug use, crime and violence. Of importance also is the fact that habitual absenteeism from school unsurprisingly puts a student behind in his or her studies, and such a disadvantage supports the popular notion that "dropping out becomes a more attractive alternative than trying to catch up."<sup>49</sup> Citing several studies, NCREL states unequivocally that truancy is a major predictor of high school dropouts.

NCREL believes that parental involvement and intervention coupled with scientifically supported "external" truancy prevention programs are the logical answers to truancy and dropouts. Research shows that programs that provide tailored services to truants to deal with personal and social problems are generally successful. Programs which "genuinely" address student troubles can make a difference by offering "focused" emotional support and behavioral guidance. NCREL believes further that "coordinated" efforts are best in improving truancy, especially programs that—for example—involve not only schools and parents but social service agencies, community service providers and, on occasion, appropriate law enforcement or judicial intervention programs.<sup>50</sup>

A second approach to dropout prevention discussed by NCREL is the pro-active effort of schools and classrooms (teachers and school administrators) to make them "engaging and useful." The tactic is, as expressed in the simplest of terms, one of individual support and motivation to learn. High school students who are at risk of dropping out are targeted and these students receive extra attention in performing adequately in classroom work. Additionally, one-on-one counseling for personal or social problems is provided to deal with any pronounced attitudinal and behavioral difficulties.

Another or third approach gaining increasing attention to prevent dropouts in high school is professional development for teachers and educators "to establish positive and caring relations with students." According to NCREL, there is overwhelming evidence that many students do not think teachers care about them or whether they graduate or not. The traditional focus or slant has been too often "disciplinary actions" and other reactionary measures taken by teachers "to deal with problematic students." Many researchers believe that school suspension and other "punishments" result often in students dropping out instead of reforming or generating positive changes in behavior.<sup>51</sup>

Akin to this, schools are re-designing their teaching systems and environments to make them more appealing and interesting to youth. Curricula changes and team-oriented teaching techniques are being used in some high schools to motivate at-risk students. Montessori school designs are also, for example, becoming slowly recognized to be of particular value in public school systems for reducing and preventing dropouts.

A fourth approach discussed by NCREL is alternative schools. Alternative schools are, for both short- and long-term intervention of troubled students, not entirely new, but if re-designed as based on modern research and experience can prove highly successful and allow—with greater probability—for at-risk students to graduate from high school. Here,

the emphasis is solely on specialized attention and curricula for achievement and success. Specialized and innovative programs are also provided, as needed, to students who expect to transition back to regular high school settings.<sup>52</sup>

Finally, or relating to a fifth approach, NCREL's research attests to the fact that "dropout tracking systems" are very useful and can detect early on any at-risk factors that may lead to non-completion of high school. The advantage here is obvious. Early detection of any signs of dropping out of school permits teachers and school administrators to intervene quickly. This quick intervention is important since research clearly shows that the sooner troubled or poor performing students are identified, the more likely their problems can be remedied. Data for such tracking systems would include on-going review of grades, school attendance, disciplinary situations or actions, and testing or achievement scores at key grade intervals. Demographic data would also be correlated for systemic and longitudinal study purposes.<sup>53</sup>

### *School Improvement Research Series*

A report of interest in the general discussion of high school dropouts and prevention is one prepared entitled *Reducing the Dropout Rate*, authored by E. Gregory Woods for the School Improvement Research Series (SIRS).<sup>54</sup> This SIRS report examines briefly the problems of dropouts (viz., their rates, consequences, and key risk factors), but more importantly, provides a comprehensive review of the literature pertaining to dropout prevention.

Before examining the SIRS discussion on dropout prevention, a few words on some essential findings by SIRS on the problems associated with high school dropouts are notable.

The SIRS report makes a strong point as to socio-economic problems caused by high school non-completion. The report, for example, points out that with increasing dropouts, gainful employment opportunities are fewer. High tech and other "progressive" jobs require literacy and often specialized skills—even lifelong learning. Dropouts often meet minimum literacy standards, have no specialized skills, and do not understand the importance of (nor appreciate) lifelong learning. Based on SIRS research, other consequences of dropping out of high school include:

- The rate of engagement in high-risk behaviors such as premature sexual activity, early pregnancy, delinquency, crime, violence, alcohol and drug abuse, and suicide has been found to be significantly higher among dropouts.
- Dropouts are more likely than other citizens to draw on welfare and other social programs throughout their lives.
- Income differences between dropouts and other citizens can be expected to widen as the economy evolves, "pitting Americans with less education against computerized machines and people in low-wage nations."

- A growth of unskilled laborers in low-wage jobs will increase the trend toward developing a large American underclass which "some analysts argue...threatens the continuing existence of a democratic way of life." <sup>55</sup>

One other noteworthy finding in the SIRS report deals with its discussion of the risk factors of dropouts. The report states that four categories of risk factors exist: those that are school-related, student-related, community-related, and family-related. The predominate school-related risk factor (i.e., "predictor") is poor academic performance. Data indicate that students who repeat one or more grades are more likely to drop out of high school. Student-related risk factors are fairly straightforward. These factors include drug usage, teen pregnancy, and crime or "legal problems." Community-related risk factors are largely associated with lack of community-sponsored activities for youth and disinterest in community leaders to provide safe, crime free neighborhoods. Finally, family-related risk factors are generally considered to be key causes for dropping out of school. Poverty, of course, is an integral part of failure in school. Other risk factors are single-parenthood, parents who are themselves dropouts, and parents who speak little or no English (mainly Latinos).

The SIRS literature review on dropout prevention is again informative. It is also extensive in that it is drawn from 26 references, 12 of which are studies. The SIRS findings are categorized into five areas: organization and administration, school climate, service delivery and instruction, instructional content (curriculum), and teacher/staff culture.

With regard to organization and administration, the SIRS report finds that the way a high school is "set up and administered" is important to reducing or preventing dropouts. Citing several studies and reviews, the report states that size and location of schools are crucial in many instances. As discussed earlier in this paper, small classes and low student/teacher ratios are extremely productive approaches as well. Also the SIRS report confirms that alternative schools provide at-risk students with friendly and motivational environments that meet the complex needs of many. Other organizational/administrative components that have met with success in preventing dropouts include: school-based management,<sup>56</sup> a focus on instructional leadership by principals, flexible programming and scheduling, community and business collaborations, early intervention efforts, and transition programs.<sup>57</sup>

The SIRS report cites several sources that believe that attention to "school climate" makes a difference. High schools that are safe and "orderly" help at-risk students to feel secure and, equally important, provide much needed structure that gives purposefulness to those who especially need stability and "goal-orientation." Cultural sensitivity training for teachers and school administrators also allows for a favorable school climate, one where teachers are in tune with minority needs and desires.<sup>58</sup>

Specialized service delivery or instruction is another well-established dropout prevention tool or approach according to the literature. The SIRS report finds that instruction for at-

risk students should be customized or “student centered.” No one instructional program will serve the needs of all students. Therefore, research indicates that a variety of instructional methods should be taken, each suiting the individual needs of potential high school dropouts. Tutoring or mentoring programs have a solid record of success with at-risk students. Tying instruction to well-explained and clear learning objectives is also effective. Additionally, summer school sessions, night school, and the provision of day care services are elements that are often successful with some students with special needs.<sup>59</sup>

The right curricula are also important elements in dropout prevention. According to the SIRS report early childhood education (4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grades) and prep coursework pays off in the long run when children enter high school. Further, various bilingual educational techniques can be beneficial to those who speak English as a second language. Other successful instructional content or curricula include: concentrated reading and writing activities and materials, test-taking development/skill-building, self-esteem building programs, social skills training, and parenting skill courses.<sup>60</sup>

Lastly, the SIRS report states that its research shows that at-risk students perform much better in school situations or environments where a culture of collegiality exists among teachers, staff, and students. Such a culture provides a sense of caring and engenders a feeling of belonging, especially with high school students who, in traditional school situations, would be considered typically high-risk or “trouble-makers.” Research shows that teachers and school administrators who work deliberately and continuously on creating and maintaining a positive, mutually respectful atmosphere in a high school setting can significantly lower dropout rates.

#### *The Annie E. Casey Foundation Report*

The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a philanthropic organization whose mission is “to help build better futures for millions of disadvantaged children who are at-risk of poor educational, economic, social, and health outcomes.”<sup>61</sup> The Foundation prepared a report in 2003 on high school dropouts stating that immediate attention is called for by educators, policy makers, and the public to reduce the growing number of high school dropouts. The Foundation report outlines five strategies to reduce the increasing dropout rates. These include the following:

- Make it harder for students to drop out of school
- Address the underlying causes of dropping out.
- Address the needs of the groups at highest risk of dropping out.
- Strengthen school readiness.
- Strengthen the skills and understanding of the adults who affect teens’ motivation and ability to stay in school.<sup>62</sup>

1) *Make it harder from students to drop out of school.* The Foundation report points to one comprehensive study where researchers collected and analyzed data on 10,000-plus students. Researchers concluded that dropping out was “easy” and often due to the

perception that teachers did not care about them and offered no resistance. In other cases, circumstances were simply out of control to the extent that dropping out was the most expeditious way to deal with the situation. Here, no one objected to the student's choice to simply not return to school.

The Foundation report offers several suggestions “to make it hard to quit school.” One suggestion is to eliminate policies that allow or “encourage” dropping out. Researchers believe there is sufficient evidence that too many high schools directly or indirectly are supportive of “push-out” policies. Such policies allow teachers to avoid the extra, concerted effort to try “to save students from failure.” The Foundation believes this mindset should be changed, and teachers should actively work to prevent dropouts. Other suggestions to make it harder for students to drop out include:

- Strengthen accountability for keeping young people on track. One strategy for reducing the dropout rate is to make the issue part of administrators' performance evaluations.
- Offer students the assistance and opportunities they need to stay in school. When students are failing academically, alienated from school emotionally, or on the verge of dropping out, they need access to services that can help them and their families deal with personal and academic problems.
- Stress the full participation of youth. Over the last decade, the emphasis in the field of youth development has shifted from assuring that young people are problem-free to assuring that they are fully prepared. Now it is recognized that fully prepared is not enough. Young people need to be *fully participating*. Some dropout prevention efforts are expanding opportunities for service learning.
- Gear dropout prevention efforts to the age and profile of the student. Several models hold promise, including alternative middle schools; alternative high schools for students with motivation or academic potential; GED programs; or restructured schools and classrooms.
- Base policy and program design on solid evidence about why young people drop out of school in a particular locality. Many factors affect the likelihood that teens will drop out of school. Economic stress, grade retention, misbehavior, frequent moves, teen pregnancy, low self-esteem, and high absenteeism are all associated with higher dropout rates, but different factors are at work in different places.
- Strengthen students' understanding of the connection between education and job opportunities. Some dropout prevention programs combine intensive, individualized basic skills development with work-related projects.<sup>63</sup>

2) *Address the underlying causes of dropping out.* The Foundation report discusses several causes linked to dropouts and recommends solutions that have “been proven to

work.” Research shows that students from low-income families are three times more likely to drop out. The remedy here is to foster awareness of this fact and make additional resources available to children living in poverty. Similarly, schools should address the social and emotional problems connected to those students suffering from poverty. Counseling, health services, tutoring, and other programs have demonstrated success according to widely-accepted research. Additionally, students and their families should be aided by social service agencies to create more stable living arrangements or, in some cases, adequate housing. Books, eyeglasses, and school supplies—for example—should also be provided to those students living in poverty.<sup>64</sup>

3) *Address the needs of the groups at highest risk of dropping out.* The Casey Foundation believes that special focus should be given to keep African-American and Latinos in high school. African-Americans are twice as likely to drop out of school as Caucasians. Equally so, Hispanics or Latinos are twice as likely to quit school as African-American students. The Foundation report recommends that schools “depoliticize” immigration and language issues from Latinos, properly fund schools with large minority populations, change school policies to reflect ethnic school makeup, and improve curricula, enhance and focus teaching methods to meet special needs, and reduce classroom size. Other recommendations include:

- Provide incentives and opportunities for students in high-poverty neighborhoods to succeed. In these neighborhoods, education reform is not sufficient. They must be augmented with social-capital and economic-development initiatives that look at the whole community and the incentives, rewards, and opportunities it offers
- Focus intensively on dropout prevention for high school students with disabilities and other special needs. Given high dropout rates for students with disabilities and other special needs, special education programs and policies designed for high school students need to be re-examined.<sup>65</sup>

4) *Strengthen school readiness.* The Foundation report states that increasing evidence demonstrates that school-readiness programs to improve academic achievement and reduce dropouts are effective if executed early in childhood development. Research shows that since economic status affects educational achievement, then it is important to address family income issues and human service needs in middle school or, in other cases, earlier grade levels. Emphasis is particularly important with regard to improving children’s access to health services, starting with prenatal care.

Expansion of access to quality early education enhancement programs is also significant in improving graduation rates. The Foundation report cites one longitudinal study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* which examined some 1,000 school children from low-income families in the Chicago area. The study findings showed plainly that those disadvantaged students from poor families who participated in special programs (e.g., child-parent counseling) had higher educational attainment up to the age 20.<sup>66</sup>

5) *Strengthen the skills and understanding of the adults who affect teens' motivation and ability to stay in school.* The Foundation report found that research shows that youngsters who have positive and secure relationships with a parent, a teacher, or some other responsible adult are more likely to stay in school and perform better. Mentoring programs likewise are valuable ways to ensure school completion by instilling emotional stability and the desire to succeed. The Foundation report recommends the following actions:

- Expand access to parent education and family support programs geared to the challenges of raising adolescents.
- Use a variety of media and formats to offer more and better information to the parents of teens. As researchers gather new findings and generate new knowledge about parenting adolescents, better ways of disseminating the information are needed.
- Work with schools of education to recruit and prepare teachers who are motivated and able to teach students who have a history of failure.
- Provide ongoing staff development to teachers who work with at-risk youth. Key characteristics of successful dropout prevention programs appear to be strong, sustained commitment on the part of teachers and strong leadership on the part of administrators. To maintain this level of commitment as well as expand knowledge and skills, school staffs need ongoing support.
- Involve teachers and parents in the planning of dropout prevention programs. Schools are often structured in ways that do not meet teens' learning needs, and restructuring efforts can increase their holding power.<sup>67</sup>

### *Conclusion*

High school dropout and graduation rates are serious problems facing the nation and, in particular, South Carolina. In a recent op-ed, Bill Gates, chairman of Microsoft, said that:

Our high schools are obsolete...High school dropouts have it worst of all. Only 40 percent have jobs. They are nearly four times more likely to be arrested than their friends who stayed in high school. And they die young because of years of poor healthcare, unsafe living conditions and violence.<sup>68</sup>

In this paper, the magnitude of the high school crisis pertaining to dropouts has been discussed as based on research from several reputable sources. Prevention solutions have additionally been reviewed. Currently, several national efforts are underway to deal with the reduction of dropout rates and their associated socio-economic consequences. In South Carolina, Governor Mark Sanford has established—by executive order—a task force to study and recommend solutions to the high school crisis.<sup>69</sup> The State

Superintendent of Education Inez Tenenbaum has also established a special commission to look at the problem of high school dropouts and come up with initiatives that will reduce this growing, persistent problem facing South Carolina.<sup>70</sup>

Hopefully, this paper and the many efforts to address the high school crisis taken by elected officials, educators, researchers, and others will make a real and lasting difference and reverse the failure of many students to graduate and live truly productive lives.

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Retrieved April 28, 2005 from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/reports/no-child-left-behind.html>.

<sup>2</sup> No commonly agreed upon measure for collecting high school graduation rates exists. This applies also to dropout rates. However, there are a number of reputable methodologies that do exist which vary mainly by data collection techniques and processes. Some of these will be referred in this paper.

<sup>3</sup> “The calculation of dropout rates varies according to how the concept is defined. Studies show that a variety of definitions are used (Hammack, 1986; MacMillan, Balow, Widaman, Borthwick-Duffy, & Hendrick, 1990, Thurlow, Johnson, & Sinclair, 2002). Areas contributing to definitional confusion include:

- Variation in grade levels or age of students who can be classified as dropouts. For example, some figures include only tenth through twelfth grades, whereas others include data from ninth through twelfth grades.
- Variation in the length of time that a student is required to miss school before they are considered a dropout (ranges from 15 to 45 days of unexcused absence).
- Variation in the length of the accounting period during which dropout is calculated.
- Exclusion of some groups of students from the calculation of dropout rates (e.g., those who receive special education services).
- Variation in defining which programs count toward enrollment. Some calculations include students enrolled in GED programs, night school, or other alternative programs, and some only include those enrolled in traditional day schools.”

“In addition, clerical problems and accounting procedures for students as they transfer in and out of programs add to the difficulty of obtaining an accurate picture of the dropout rate. The lack of effective communication and tracking procedures between public and private schools, and within school districts and across districts, leads to misidentification and inaccurate calculations. For students with emotional/behavioral disabilities who change schools often, accurate documentation of exit and entrance into schools over time may be especially challenging (Sinclair, Christenson, Thurlow, & Evelo, 1994).”

“To complicate matters, dropout rates do not simply or directly translate to an accurate graduation rate. Multiple methods and definitions can result in what appears to be conflicting information. For example, it is possible to have a low rate of dropout based on event or status calculations, and to have a low rate of graduation as well. The formula and parameters (e.g., age, grade, accountability period) used to determine the rate must be carefully considered and explained.”

“NCLB requires states to define graduation rates in a rigorous and standardized manner (e.g., the percentage of ninth graders who graduate from high school four years later). Furthermore, alternative graduation certificates, such as the General Education Development (GED) program, cannot be counted as equivalent to graduating from high school. Graduation rates must be reported annually to the U.S. Department of Education. In addition, those rates must steadily increase each year, reaching proficient levels by spring 2014. NCLB defines “graduation rate” as the percentage of students, measured from the beginning of high school, who graduated with a regular diploma in the standard number of years (Joftus & Maddox-Dolan, 2003). Variation from this definition must be explained in state accountability plans.”

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“A focus on measuring graduation rates is conceptually linked to recent increased emphasis on the importance of promoting student engagement to enhance school completion. However, due to lack of standardized definitions and methods for computing dropout rates and graduation rates, interpretation must be carefully considered. Until a standard procedure is established and used across districts, states, and national reporting agencies, reports of dropout and graduation rates can be interpreted accurately only when accompanied by explanations of how the numbers were derived.” Lehr, A. et al. (2004, May). *Essential tools—Increasing rates of school completion: Moving from research to practice*. Part 1: How are dropouts rates measured? What are associated issues? Minneapolis, MN: National Center on Secondary Education and Transition. Retrieved April 27, 2005 from

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<sup>4</sup> National Governors Association and Achieve, Inc. (2005, February 26). *Briefing packet*. 2005 National Education Summit on High Schools. Washington, DC: Authors, p. 7. Retrieved March 1, 2005 from [http://www.achieve.org/dstore.nsf/Lookup/Achievebriefingbook2005/\\$file/Achievebriefingbook2005.pdf](http://www.achieve.org/dstore.nsf/Lookup/Achievebriefingbook2005/$file/Achievebriefingbook2005.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.achieve.org/>.

<sup>7</sup> Retrieved March 1, 2005 from

[http://www.achieve.org/dstore.nsf/Lookup/SouthCarolinadata/\\$file/SouthCarolinadata.pdf](http://www.achieve.org/dstore.nsf/Lookup/SouthCarolinadata/$file/SouthCarolinadata.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Retrieved March 2, 2005 from <http://www.nga.org/cda/files/04CHAIRMANTOPTEN.pdf>. Also see <http://www.nga.org/cda/files/0502actionagenda.pdf> for full report on “action agenda.”

<sup>9</sup> See [http://www.nga.org/center/divisions/1,1188,C\\_ISSUE\\_BRIEF^D\\_8021,00.html](http://www.nga.org/center/divisions/1,1188,C_ISSUE_BRIEF^D_8021,00.html).

<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.achieve.org/>. “Created by the nation's governors and business leaders, Achieve, Inc. is a bi-partisan, non-profit organization. It helps states prepare all young people for postsecondary education, work and citizenship by raising academic standards and achievement in America's schools.”

<sup>11</sup> Retrieved March 1, 2005 from

[http://www.achieve.org/dstore.nsf/Lookup/nationaldata/\\$file/nationaldata.pdf](http://www.achieve.org/dstore.nsf/Lookup/nationaldata/$file/nationaldata.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> Retrieved March 1, 2005 from “How does your state stack up.” South Carolina. <http://www.achieve.org/>.

<sup>13</sup> Retrieved March 1, 2005 from

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>17</sup> Pinkus, L. (2003, November). *Progress report on American high schools 2003-04*. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education, p. 5. Retrieved March 3, 2005 from

<http://www.all4ed.org/publications/ProgressReportOnAmericanHS.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> See <http://www.all4ed.org/about/index.html>.

<sup>19</sup> Op. cit., Pinkus, Preface.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>22</sup> This methodology is discussed in this paper under the Manhattan study.

<sup>23</sup> Op. cit., Pinkus, p. 10.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>28</sup> See description of Institute at [http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/about\\_mi.htm](http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/about_mi.htm).

<sup>29</sup> See full Manhattan report at [http://www.manhattan-institute.org/pdf/ewp\\_08.pdf](http://www.manhattan-institute.org/pdf/ewp_08.pdf). Additionally, see Slade, D. (2005, February 15). “Report calls South Carolina’s graduation rate worst in nation.” *Post and Courier*. Charleston, SC. Retrieved February 15, 2005 from

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<sup>30</sup> Retrieved February 28, 2005 from [http://www.manhattan-institute.org/pdf/ewp\\_08.pdf](http://www.manhattan-institute.org/pdf/ewp_08.pdf); see pp. 2-7.

<sup>31</sup> This percentage (67% for year 2002) contrasts also with the SDE figure cited in Figure 1 (64% for year 2004).

<sup>32</sup> Op. cit., Slade, (2005, February 15).

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- <sup>33</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>34</sup> Compare to other analyses: e.g. 57% per the Greene methodology (2003, Greene & Forester; Manhattan Institute); 64% per the S.C. Department of Education (2004). See Figure 1 of this paper.
- <sup>35</sup> See executive summary of Manhattan report at [http://www.manhattan-institute.org/pdf/ewp\\_08.pdf](http://www.manhattan-institute.org/pdf/ewp_08.pdf).
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- <sup>37</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 3.
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid., Executive Summary.
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- <sup>44</sup> Op. cit., Young, p. 2.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid., Appendix A-1.
- <sup>46</sup> See <http://www.ncrel.org/>.
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- <sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 1.
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 2.
- <sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 3.
- <sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 4.
- <sup>53</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>54</sup> Woods, E.G. (n/d). *Reducing the dropout rate*. School Improvement Research Series. Retrieved March 8, 2005 from <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/9/c017.html>.
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 2.
- <sup>56</sup> Educational systems evolving from largely centralized structures to more decentralized ones.
- <sup>57</sup> Op. cit., Woods, p. 4.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 5.
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>60</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>61</sup> See <http://www.aecf.org/about/history.htm>.
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- <sup>63</sup> Ibid., pp. 2-4.
- <sup>64</sup> Ibid., pp. 5-6.
- <sup>65</sup> Ibid., pp. 7-8.
- <sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 9.
- <sup>67</sup> Ibid., pp. 9-10.
- <sup>68</sup> Gates, B. (2005, March 5). "Time for a redesign of outdated high schools." *The State*. Columbia, SC: Author, p. A11.
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