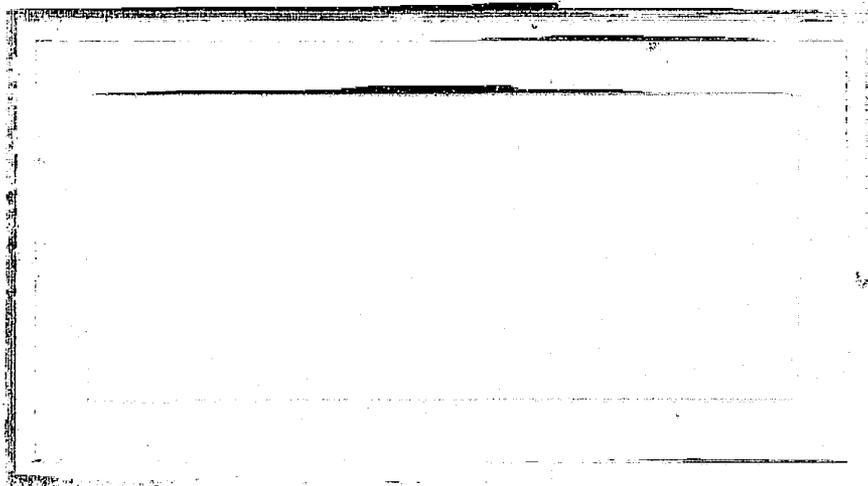


Legislative Budget and Finance Committee

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA



155843

OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE SENATE
100 EAST Hargett Street, Suite 1000, Raleigh, NC 27601
Phone: (919) 733-2500 Fax: (919) 733-2501

155843

SENATORS
CLARENCE D. BELL, CHAIRMAN
PATRICK J. STAPLETON, VICE CHAIRMAN
ROY C. AFFLERBACH
EDWIN G. HOLL
GERALD J. LAVALLE
JOHN E. PETERSON

REPRESENTATIVES
RONALD C. RAYMOND, SECRETARY
DAVID R. WRIGHT, TREASURER
ROBERT W. GODSHALL
WILLIAM R. LLOYD, JR.
TIMOTHY L. PESCI
SAMUEL H. SMITH



Legislative Budget and Finance Committee

A JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE PENNSYLVANIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICES: Room 400 • Finance Building • Harrisburg • Tel: (717) 783-1600 • Facsimile: (717) 787-5487

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 8737 • Harrisburg, PA 17105-8737

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Philip R. Durgin

CHIEF ANALYST
John H. Rowe, Jr.

DROPOUT AND TRUANCY PREVENTION PROGRAMS AND EFFORTS

A REPORT IN RESPONSE TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 386

NCJRS

AUG 28 1995

ACQUISITION

155843

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

April 1995

This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the National Institute of Justice.

Permission to reproduce this copyrighted material has been granted by
Legislative Budget and Finance
Committee (PA)

to the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS).

Further reproduction outside of the NCJRS system requires permission of the copyright owner.

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Summary and Recommendations	v
I. Introduction	1
II. Incidence and Reasons for School Dropout and Truancy	3
Dropout Rates and Reasons for School Dropout.....	3
Incidence and Reasons for Truancy	17
III. Pennsylvania's School Attendance Requirements	21
IV. Federal, State, and Private Funds for Services to At-Risk Youth	26
Federal Funding for School Districts to Serve At-Risk Youth.....	26
Other Federal Funding.....	28
State Funding to Assist School Districts in Serving At-Risk Youth ..	29
Federal and State Funds for At-Risk Students Are Targeted to School Districts With the Highest Dropout Rates.....	30
Private Sector and Community Involvement in Dropout and Truancy Prevention Programs	32
V. Dropout and Truancy Prevention Efforts in Pennsylvania.....	38
School Reform and Restructuring	39
Enabling Schools to Identify At-Risk Youth and Address Their Needs	44
Truancy Prevention	49
Truancy Interventions	53
Programs for Pregnant and Parenting Teens and Students on Probation.....	58
VI. Job Training Partnership Act and School-to-Work Programs.....	63
JTPA-Funded In-School and Summer Youth Programs	65
JTPA-Funded Out-of-School Programs.....	68
School-to-Work and Youth Apprenticeship Programs.....	69

Table of Contents
(Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
VII. Dropout and Truancy Prevention Programs in Other States	72
Dropout and Truancy Prevention Efforts in Selected Other States ...	72
The Federal School Dropout Assistance Program	77
VIII. Appendices	81
A. House Resolution 386	82
B. Cooking the Books on Dropout Rates	86
C. Programs in the Philadelphia School District	87
D. Some Reasons for Truancy	91
E. Pending Bills Relating to Truancy and Dropout Prevention	93
F. Carl Perkins III-A Community-Based Organizations Contracts	95
G. The School District of the City of Allentown (At-Risk Student Programs by Type of School)	96
H. School-Based Mental Health Grant Proposal Awards for 1994-95, by School District	97
I. Description of the Coalition of Essential Schools Program	98
J. Coalition of Essential Schools Learning Schools of Pennsylvania 1993-94	99
K. PA Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP)	100
L. Counties With CASSP or Interagency Treatment Planning Teams	101
M. Components of Erie County's Truancy Intervention Program ...	102
N. FY 1994-95 ELECT Pregnant and Parenting Teen Program Grants	103
O. FY 1994-95 Other Pregnant and Parenting Teen Initiative Grants	104
P. School-Based Probation Projects for 1994	107
Q. Excerpts From Comments and Descriptive Information on Noteworthy Programs as Identified by Juvenile Judges and the Involved Officials in Response to an LB&FC Questionnaire	109

Table of Contents
(Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
VIII. Appendices (Continued)	
R. School Districts Involved in JTPA-Funded Youth Programs	111
S. Recommendations of the Council of Chief State School Officers to Address At-Risk Students	117
T. Dropout Prevention Efforts in Selected Urban School Districts.....	118
U. Components of Florida's Dropout Prevention Programs	121
V. Responses to This Report	123

Summary and Recommendations

House Resolution 1994-386 directed the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study of dropout and truancy prevention programs within the Commonwealth and to provide information on programs that have been successful in other states.

Incidence and Reasons for School Dropout and Truancy

Dropout Rates

Students who do not complete high school face diminished opportunities for success, including poor employment potential and lower earnings if employed. While there are high numbers of youth who drop out of school each year, high school dropout rates have been declining for many years. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 4.5 percent of the students in grades 10 to 12 dropped out of school in 1993 compared to 6.7 percent in 1978. In 1993, 11.0 percent of all persons aged 16 to 24 had not completed high school and were not currently in school. In contrast, throughout the 1970s, about 14-15 percent of persons in this age group were not enrolled and had not completed high school. Since 1972 high school completion rates have also improved for all ethnic groups.

Nationally, dropout rates are quite similar between males and females, but vary considerably by race/ethnicity. In 1993, dropout rates were 7.9 percent for whites, 13.6 percent for blacks, and 27.5 percent for Hispanics. Much of this difference appears to be due to family income. When grouped by income levels, there is no significant difference in dropout rates for whites and blacks. Hispanic dropout rates, however, are higher than those of whites and blacks at all income levels.

Pennsylvania-specific dropout data is more difficult to interpret because of differences in how the data has been collected from one school district to another and from year to year.¹ With that caveat, Pennsylvania does appear to be following the national trend of improved dropout rates. Pennsylvania Department of Education reports show that the number of students leaving school without a high school diploma has decreased from a high of 24,983 in the 1988-89 school year (3.37 percent of Pennsylvania students enrolled in grades 7 to 12) to 18,326 in 1992-93 (2.46 percent). Dropout rates for the School District of Philadelphia, which accounts for about one-third of all dropouts in the state, also decreased during this time period, from 11.87 percent in 1988-89 to 7.49 percent in 1992-93. These rates, however, only reflect the numbers of students dropping out in a single year--dropout rates are far higher when viewed on a cumulative basis. For example, the School District of

¹Dropout data for Pennsylvania cannot be compared to national data because of methodological and operational differences.

Philadelphia reported a dropout rate of 7.49 percent in 1992-93; however, for a variety of reasons including school dropout, the 12th grade class of 1992 was only 54 percent the size of the 9th grade class in 1989.

Pennsylvania dropout rates also vary by race/ethnicity, with dropout rates being highest for Hispanics (7.3 percent) and blacks (6.1 percent). The white dropout rate during the 1992-93 school year was 1.7 percent but was the largest in number at 10,725.

Although on a statewide basis dropout rates appear to be improving, high dropout rates continue to plague several school districts. We identified 25 school districts, and 79 schools within those districts, as having a "serious" dropout problem. These 79 schools accounted for about 14 percent of the Commonwealth's 1992-93 public secondary school enrollment but about 55 percent of the Commonwealth's 18,326 dropouts. The ten school districts which had the highest dropout rates during the 1992-93 school year are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

**Top Ten PA School Districts With the
Highest Dropout Rates and Numbers***
(1992-93)

<u>School Districts</u>	<u>Dropout Rate</u>	<u>Enrollments Grades 7-12</u>	<u>% of Statewide Enrollment</u>	<u>% of Statewide Dropouts</u>
Lancaster.....	8.39%	4,244	0.57%	1.94%
Harrisburg.....	8.02	3,256	0.44	1.42
Philadelphia.....	7.49	85,034	11.42	34.78
Pittsburgh.....	5.24	17,085	2.29	4.88
Reading.....	4.76	4,760	0.64	1.24
Norristown Area.....	4.77	2,601	0.35	0.68
Chester-Upland.....	4.76	3,215	0.43	0.83
Easton Area.....	4.61	3,035	0.41	0.76
Erie City.....	4.53	5,186	0.70	1.28
York City.....	4.40	2,475	0.33	0.59

*School districts with dropout rates above the state average of 2.46 percent and with more than 50 dropouts per district. There are 25 school districts in this set. (See Table 3.)

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff from the *1992-93 Public Secondary School Dropouts by School: PDE 1994*.

Incidence of Truancy

The Department of Education does not gather data on truancy or report a truancy rate. Information on student absences, however, can provide some perspective, especially in districts with high dropout rates, on the possible extent of truancy. For example, a January 1995 report on the Harrisburg School District found that on any given school day 13 percent of the city's students are absent from school, and 13 percent of the student population are absent for more than a quarter of the school year. Of the total absences, 61 percent were unexcused according to the school district. A 1993 report on the School District of Philadelphia found that the average number of school days missed in elementary schools was 16 days, in middle schools 31 days, and in high schools 41 days. The School District of Philadelphia's efforts to address truancy and other problems within the District are discussed in Chapter II.

Reasons for Truancy and Dropout

Students are truant for a wide variety of reasons. These include *health reasons*, such as mental health; *school reasons*, such as overcrowded, dilapidated schools and uninspiring classes; *cultural reasons*, such as language problems; *economic reasons*, such as lack of funds for transportation or clothing; *family reasons*, such as parental drug or alcohol abuse; *community reasons*, such as gang activity; and *personal reasons*, such as feelings of rejection and failure. Our visits to several dropout and truancy prevention programs confirmed that multiple problems confront many of these children.

Students report that they drop out of school because they dislike school, are failing, have job concerns, or are pregnant. Being overage for one's grade level is the variable most consistently found to correlate with dropping out of school. The National Center for Education Statistics found that dropout rates for students who had repeated more than one grade are four times higher than the rate for students who did not repeat any grades (40.9 versus 9.4 percent). A study of Chicago dropouts found that the two most important factors affecting dropout rates are the number of students who were overage and the number reading below normal level as entering freshmen.

In Pennsylvania, a recent report of the Harrisburg School District found that one in four 7th graders, and one in three 9th graders, are retained at their grade level. In the School District of Philadelphia, nearly half of the 9th graders fail that grade.

One key reason for poor school performance is frequent moves from one school to another. Children who change schools frequently are more likely to repeat a grade, be below grade level in reading and math, and have behavioral problems than children who have never changed school. This can be a particular problem for

urban children because a child who moves only a short distance is more likely to have to change schools in a large urban area than in less densely populated suburban or rural areas. Highly mobile children may be exposed to curriculums that vary greatly across schools and school districts; therefore, if they move from one school to another in the middle of the school year, they may have difficulty catching up in all subjects by the end of the school year.

Dropout and Truancy Prevention Efforts in Pennsylvania

Available Funding

The Successful Students' Partnership Initiative, funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (\$960,750 state and \$589,108 federal in FY 1994-95), is the only Commonwealth program specifically targeted to dropout and truancy prevention. However, school districts, health and social service providers, community groups, and others receive at least \$1.1 billion in state and federal funds from the Departments of Education, Public Welfare, and Labor and Industry for a wide range of services to school age youth, some of whom may be at risk of truancy and school dropout. These programs include drug and alcohol and mental health, pregnant and parenting teens, school-based probation, migrant education, homeless children, and career planning and job training services. Nonprofit foundations, private sector businesses, and local community groups also provide substantial dollars to help fund programs for at-risk youth. Chapter IV provides additional detail on these programs and the amounts and sources of the funds.

For the most part, federal and state funds for at-risk youth are weighted toward school districts with high dropout rates. For example, 46.7 percent of the \$282.7 million in federal Chapter 1 funding for school districts goes to the 25 Pennsylvania school districts with the highest dropout rates. These 25 school districts, which account for 23.5 percent of the state's enrollment for grades 7-12, received 59.3 percent of the total funding for initiatives most pertinent to dropout and truancy prevention. These initiatives included the Pregnant and Parenting Teen Initiative, School-Based Probation, PA Career Program for Youth, and the Successful Students' Partnership Initiative.

The future of federal funds for many of these programs is, however, uncertain. Federal budgetary rescissions under consideration in Congress as of late March 1995 could significantly impact many of Pennsylvania's truancy and dropout related programs, especially the Successful Students' Partnership program and the Student Assistance Program.

Program Evaluations

Our review of the programs and efforts within the Commonwealth to reduce truancy and dropout rates found mixed results. This is due, in part, to the fact that

truancy and school dropout are often symptoms of many different and complex social, health, and educational problems. Also, even when there is a major funding investment, fundamental school reforms to enable at-risk youth to succeed are difficult to accomplish, especially short range. For example, the Annie E. Casey Foundation recently invested \$40 million dollars to assist school districts in four major cities, including Pittsburgh, to implement school reforms which would enable at-risk youth to succeed in school. University of Wisconsin researchers who evaluated this effort concluded that, for the most part, the necessary school reforms were not fully implemented in participating schools. Although the schools increased health and social services for at-risk youth, basic school practices went unchanged. Additional health and social services, while necessary, are not sufficient to change educational outcomes for at-risk youth. Other researchers and the General Accounting Office have reached similar conclusions.

Our review of programs and efforts in Pennsylvania to reduce truancy and school dropout did, however, identify several programs that appear to be successful in reducing truancy and helping at-risk youth stay in school and complete their education. In particular, programs such as the pregnant and parenting teen initiative known as ELECT, the Instructional Support Teams, and the Student Assistance Program (which all work collaboratively with other human service and school programs) appear to be successful. We also found that the Department of Education is collaborating with other state agencies to support school reforms; to provide educational staff training, development, and support; and to link at-risk youth with serious health and social problems with community human service programs.

An absenteeism prevention program developed by the Community College of Beaver County has also been shown to be successful in reducing truancy among younger students. Several years ago this program was successfully demonstrated at several sites by a consortium of state agencies. An evaluation of this program found, however, that some school districts are reluctant to implement this program because of financial concerns.

Other programs we describe in this report, although they have not been formally evaluated, have been recognized and praised by state and local officials. An example of this is the School-Based Probation initiative. Other programs are based on models and ideas which have been evaluated and shown to improve educational outcomes for at-risk youth. These include the alternative learning schools, such as the York County High School, and others which PDE has assisted school districts to establish.

Most of the initiatives which appear to be having success work with younger youth. One promising effort to help older youth who have dropped out of school or are at risk of dropping out is the York County High School. This program is based on educational models that have been shown to be effective in helping certain at-risk youth succeed in school. The York County High School is supported by a

consortium of school districts, the local Job Training Partnership Act Agency, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. It is an open entry diploma program housed at two locations: a shopping mall and a local neighborhood center. Students can attend classes while holding a job, develop class schedules that are consistent with their family responsibilities, and graduate when high school requirements are met. Students also receive help in obtaining needed social services. They have a great deal of flexibility in establishing a learning pace that meets their individual needs, with their teachers performing the role of a mentor, not a lecturer. In order to graduate from this program, all students must pass competency-based tests.

During the 1993-94 school year, 73 of the 125 students in the 12th grade in the York County High School Program graduated. Graduating students reported that teachers showed a genuine concern that students learn and that they particularly liked the self-paced approach to learning and felt a sense of pride in knowing they received credit for the work they actually produced rather than for "putting in time."

Dropout and Truancy Prevention Programs and Efforts in Other States

Our review of other state dropout and truancy prevention programs found little to suggest that other states have found answers or solutions that are not being tried somewhere in Pennsylvania. The report contains information on the Wisconsin Learnfare program (Pennsylvania's Learnfare demonstration program is pending approval from the federal government) and Florida, Illinois, and New York which have invested extensive state funds for dropout and truancy prevention programs. The results of these programs, at least to date, have been mixed.

In 1988 the U.S. Department of Education began funding 89 school dropout demonstration projects. A preliminary report on these projects addressed the organizational characteristics of dropout prevention programs that appeared to be effective. Twenty-three of the demonstration projects are being more fully evaluated in a report that was to be released in February 1995. The report's release date, however, has been moved to spring 1996.

Recommendations

- 1. The General Assembly should consider amending Act 1987-49 (24 P.S. §6601 et seq.) to require that the Secretary of Education supplement the existing dropout report to the General Assembly with longitudinal dropout information for those school districts reporting high single-year dropout rates. Longitudinal data provides a much clearer picture of a school's dropout situation and is, therefore, valuable for the Legislature, the Department of Education, and school districts when making**

management and policy decisions. Ideally, both single-year and longitudinal dropout information should be collected so that major subgroups, such as special education and vocational education students, can be analyzed separately.

2. The Commonwealth should consider expanding its efforts to address the needs of Hispanic youth, who have the highest dropout rates in the state. To the extent possible, school districts with large numbers of students whose families do not speak English should hire attendance staff who are fluent in the language spoken by the parents or provide interpreter services for these staff.
3. Because students who move frequently from one school to another are more likely to fail at school and have behavioral problems, school districts should, where they do not do so already, use their Instructional Support Teams to assist at-risk youth in making the transition from one school to another.
4. School districts with serious attendance and dropout problems should enhance their IST and SAP teams with the services of professionally trained home and school visitors to better link students who are not in school with these valuable school resources.
5. The Commonwealth should maintain, and if possible expand, its financial support of programs such as Instructional Support Teams, Student Assistance, Successful Students' Partnership, ELECT, School-Based Probation, and Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP). All of these programs appear to be important efforts in reducing truancy and school dropout.
6. The Pennsylvania Department of Education should take the lead in coordinating state and local agencies to better address the problems of truancy and school dropout among those schools with high dropout rates.² Such coordination may be increasingly important because of possible reductions in federal funding and the potential for federal block grants, which will provide states with more discretion over the use of federal funds. Because truancy and school dropout is caused by a wide variety of factors, representatives of the Governor's Office; Departments of Health, Education, Public Welfare, and Labor and Industry; the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency; the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission; pertinent legislative committees; and the private sector should be involved in this effort.

²Such an initiative could conceivably be undertaken by the Children's Cabinet, created by Executive Order 1992-4.

I. Introduction

House Resolution 1994-386 directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to assess the effectiveness of dropout and truancy prevention programs in the Commonwealth as well as viable programs in other states. A copy of the resolution can be found in Appendix A.

Study Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. To describe the various programs and services offered in the Commonwealth and to analyze the effectiveness of these programs.
2. To provide information on the cost of the programs, number of students served, and the funding streams utilized.
3. To provide information on the extent to which non-state funding sources have been used in the Commonwealth.
4. To analyze the most viable programs that have been implemented with success in other states.
5. To make recommendations, if appropriate, for future programs and services.

Scope and Methodology

To identify and describe the various programs and services provided in the Commonwealth, we interviewed officials of the Departments of Education, Health, Public Welfare, and Labor and Industry, and the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and reviewed various budget, fiscal, and program documents. The Pennsylvania State Association of County Commissioners and County Child Welfare programs provided valuable assistance in identifying local child welfare programs specifically designed to address truancy. Similarly, Pennsylvania Partners was instrumental in helping to identify youth programs being funded by local Job Training Partnership Programs.

Much of the information on programs and services comes from our review of state contracts with school districts, community-based organizations, service delivery areas, and program information of other local service agencies. Information on program costs, source of funds, and dropout data was obtained largely from agency program and fiscal reports.

We talked to approximately 50 students from several school districts and visited school-based dropout prevention and truancy programs in Berks County, the Lancaster City School District, the Columbia Borough School District, and the School District of Philadelphia. We also visited the York County High School, the

Lancaster County Academy, the Lancaster/Lebanon Intermediate Unit, Goodwill Industries' School-to-Work program, the Lancaster Area Vocational Technical School, and a program operated by the Spanish-American Civic Association in Lancaster City. Additionally, we met with officials from the Philadelphia School District, the Philadelphia Family Court, and the Philadelphia Departments of Human Services, Housing Authority, Children and Youth Services, MH/MR Children's Services, and Juvenile Justice Services. We spoke via telephone with over 50 school district personnel receiving funds through the Successful Students' Partnership Initiative.

We used dropout data from the National Center for Education Statistics and reviewed program evaluations done at the national level and in other states. We spoke with representatives from academic institutions, private foundations, and education and job training programs as well as the Special Court Judges' Association, the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, and the Pennsylvania Association of Secondary School Principals. We also surveyed juvenile court judges and county juvenile probation officers. Because school districts and communities throughout Pennsylvania are involved in a variety of efforts to serve at-risk youth, it is not possible to highlight all such efforts in this report. We have, however, attempted to focus on providing information about activities in areas with significant problems and activities for which evaluative data were available for review.

The report does not address, except in a tangential manner, the issues of disruptive youth, the special education system for mentally or physically disabled students, school violence, or the quality of the Commonwealth's vocational education programs. While we acknowledge these issues can impact on truancy and dropout rates, each would be a major study in its own right.

Acknowledgments

We greatly appreciate the cooperation we received from the Secretaries and staff of the PA Departments of Education, Health, Labor and Industry, and Public Welfare. We especially acknowledge the support we received from the Department of Education's Office of Basic Education. We also appreciate the excellent support and advice we received from the many local school districts, intermediate units, JTPA agencies, County Child Welfare, mental health, drug and alcohol, and juvenile probation agencies we contacted during this study.

Important Note

This report was developed by Legislative Budget and Finance Committee staff. The release of this report should not be construed as indicating that the Committee's members endorse all of the report's findings and recommendations.

Any questions or comments regarding the contents of this report should be directed to Philip R. Durgin, Executive Director, Legislative Budget and Finance Committee, P.O. Box 8737, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105-8737.

II. Incidence and Reasons for School Dropout and Truancy

Students who do not complete high school face diminished opportunities for success, including poor employment potential and lower earnings if employed. According to U.S. Census Bureau data, in October 1993 youth ages 16-24 who had not completed high school had a 20.4 percent jobless rate compared to a 12.1 percent jobless rate for those who had completed high school and a 5.6 percent rate for college graduates. Moreover, average annual earnings for males who had completed high school were 27 percent higher than for males who had not completed high school.

Dropout Rates and Reasons for School Dropout

Nationally, high school dropout rates have been declining for the past two decades. Even though dropout rates have declined, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) emphasized that the dropout problem continues, and important subgroup differences persist. The "event" dropout rate--the proportion of U.S. students aged 15 through 24 years old in grades 10 through 12 who drop out in a single year without completing high school--declined from 6.7 percent in 1978 to 4.5 percent in 1993. This means that nationally approximately 381,000 students dropped out of school in 1993.

The percentage of "status" dropouts has also generally declined over the last two decades. The status rate is the proportion of the population who have not completed high school and are not currently enrolled in school. Status rates are useful because they show the extent of the dropout problem in the population. In 1993, approximately 3.4 million persons in the United States ages 16 through 24 had not completed high school and were not currently enrolled in school. This represents about 11 percent of all persons in this age group. In contrast, throughout the 1970s, about 14 to 15 percent of persons in this age group were not enrolled and had not completed high school. These dropout rates, which are developed by the NCES, count students who obtain a General Equivalency Degree (GED) as having completed high school and consider persons enrolled in a GED program as being in school.

Nationally, dropout rates are quite similar between males and females, but the rates do vary by race/ethnicity. In 1993, status dropout rates were 7.9 percent for whites, 13.6 percent for blacks, and 27.5 percent for Hispanics. Much of this difference appears due to family income, with a nearly tenfold difference between the dropout rates of students from families with low as compared to high incomes. The status dropout rates were the same for whites and blacks with similar income levels, but Hispanic dropout rates were higher than the rates for whites and blacks at all income levels. For those who speak limited English or none at all, the outlook is

especially bleak--with dropout rates over 60 percent. The NCES noted that the high status dropout rates for Hispanics may be due to substantial numbers of Hispanic immigrants who come without completing high school and who may never have enrolled in the U.S. school system.

The NCES also collects statistics on high school completion and graduation rates. Nationally, the high school completion rate, defined as the percentage of all persons ages 21 and 22 who have completed high school by receiving a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, was 86 percent in 1993. This rate has gradually improved over the last 20 years, from approximately 82 percent in 1972 to 86 percent in 1993. Completion rates for whites rose from 85.4 to 89.8 percent during this period; for blacks, from 74.2 to 83.8 percent; and for Hispanics, from 55 to 63 percent. These trends in the completion rates show larger increases for blacks than for whites, narrowing the difference between the two groups.

The most common reasons students report for dropping out of school are dislike for school, failing in school, job concerns, and pregnancy. Exhibit 1 shows that other reasons for school dropouts include the student not being able to keep up with school work, school suspensions and expulsions, and the need to care for a family member. A small percentage of students also report they do not feel safe at school or that they left due to a drug or alcohol problem. About 12 percent of those who drop out have a learning disability or some other type of disability.¹

Several studies demonstrate that youth who drop out of school are not in grades appropriate for their age and have previously failed in school. For example, a study of Montgomery County, MD, Schools² cites eight key factors related to dropout:

1. Poor attendance
2. Loss of credit for courses
3. Receiving failing grades the previous year
4. Being older than other students in the same grade
5. Having moved often from one school to another
6. Having been suspended in the prior school year
7. Having ever received free or reduced priced school meals
8. Currently receiving special education services

The study found that being older than grade age increased the dropout risk more than any other single factor. Other key factors impacting dropout were attendance, loss of credit, and failing grades.

¹The term disability includes learning disabilities, mental retardation, speech impairment, serious emotional impairment, and other health impairments lasting more than six months.

²The dropout rate for Montgomery County was 1.8 percent for the 1992-93 school year, among the lowest rates in school systems nationally and also in the Washington, D.C., area. The dropout rate in Maryland was 5.2 percent.

Exhibit 1

Reasons for School Dropout

	<u>Percent of Total</u>
<u>School-Related:</u>	
Did Not Like School	42.9%
Was Failing School.....	38.7
Could Not Keep Up With Schoolwork	31.3
Felt I Didn't Belong.....	24.2
Could Not Get Along With Teachers	22.8
Was Suspended/Expelled From School.....	15.5
Could Not Get Along With Students	14.5
Changed School and Did Not Like New School.....	10.6
Did Not Feel Safe at School	6.0
<u>Job-Related:</u>	
Found a Job	28.5
Could Not Work and Go to School at Same Time	22.8
<u>Family-Related:</u>	
Was Pregnant.....	26.8
Became Parent	14.7
Got Married.....	12.1
Had to Care for Family Member.....	11.9
Had to Support Family	11.2
Wanted to Have Family	7.5
<u>Other:</u>	
Wanted to Travel.....	8.1
Friends Dropped Out	8.0
Had a Drug and/or Alcohol Problem.....	4.4

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 Second Follow-Up Survey, 1992, unpublished data.

The NCES also reports that the dropout rate for students who had repeated more than one grade was four times the rate for students who did not repeat any grades (40.9 versus 9.4 percent). An earlier study of Chicago dropouts found that the most important factors determining the dropout rate at individual high schools were the number of students who were overage for their grade or reading below normal level as entering freshmen. A 1991 study of Fall River, Massachusetts, youth found that half of the youth who dropped out in the 7th, 8th, or 9th grade had repeated at least one grade before the 4th grade, and all youth who dropped out in the 8th grade had been retained at least once prior to leaving school.

School failure and school dropout are also correlated with mobility. According to a 1994 U.S. General Accounting Office study, children who change schools frequently are more likely to be low achievers and repeat a grade. Of the nation's third-graders who have changed schools frequently, 41 percent are low achievers--that is, below grade level in reading--compared with 26 percent of third-graders who have never changed schools. Results are similar for math. Overall, third-graders who have changed schools frequently are two-and-a-half times more likely to repeat a grade than third-graders who have never changed schools (20 versus 8 percent). These findings are similar for children from all family income levels.

The GAO reports that the mobility of children is often a reflection of underlying family issues, such as shortages of affordable housing, changes in marital status, or unemployment. High numbers of mobile children can interfere with teachers' ability to organize and deliver instruction. Teachers may find it difficult to assess the needs of such new children, determine their past educational experiences, and provide instructional tasks that build on these experiences. These tasks may be especially difficult when many new children enter the classroom throughout the year, often with no advance notice, and children may be exposed to curriculums that vary greatly across schools and districts.

This type of problem is reportedly more likely to arise in an urban rather than a suburban or rural school district. When an inner city child changes schools, the child may move only a short distance yet move into a new school attendance area. In contrast, a child in a larger, less densely populated school attendance area, such as a suburban or rural school district, may move several miles and still attend the same school. According to the GAO, these students who change schools frequently are also less likely to receive services for which they might qualify through federal programs. The GAO concluded:

... unless policymakers focus greater attention on the needs of children who have changed schools frequently--often low-income, inner city, migrant, and limited English proficient--these children may continue to be low achieving in math and reading, as well as repeat a grade. Local school districts generally provide little additional help to assist mobile children.

The importance of educational continuity and appropriate student placement appears to be receiving renewed attention in several school districts. For example, the Annie E. Casey Foundation has provided funds to the Department of Public Welfare and the Philadelphia Children and Youth Agency to revise its system for placing children out-of-home so the child can continue in the same school while in foster care placement. In Allegheny County, the Intermediate Unit provides transitional education services for youth in foster care and other county placements. The Harrisburg School District is developing automated systems to provide for more timely transfer of student records to eliminate delays in student placement and interruptions in a student's learning process. It has adopted a policy that requires records to be transferred between schools within the school district within one day.

Dropout Rates in Pennsylvania

In 1987 the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed legislation requiring the Secretary of Education to prepare a report each year on the number of students leaving school without graduating, their grade level when they withdraw, their age at the time of withdrawal, their reasons for withdrawal, and their status after leaving school.

Differences in how the data has been collected from year to year make it difficult to draw conclusions from this information, but the reports appear to indicate that the number of Pennsylvania public secondary school students who leave school without a high school diploma has been decreasing in recent years. The reports show that the number of dropouts has decreased from a high of 24,983 in the 1988-89 school year (3.37 percent of Pennsylvania students enrolled in grades 7 to 12) to 18,326 in 1992-93 (2.46 percent). Dropout rates for the Philadelphia School District, which accounts for about one-third of all dropouts in the state, also decreased during this time period, from 11.87 percent in the 1988-89 school year to 7.49 percent in 1992-93. The PDE reports show that:

- Ninety percent of the dropouts in Pennsylvania in 1992-93 were age 17 or older, and thus were no longer required to comply with state mandatory school attendance laws.³
- Even though 90 percent of those who dropped out of school were 17 and older, only 20 percent were in the 12th grade when they left school. Students begin dropping out of school in large numbers after the 8th grade.
- White students accounted for 10,725 (58.5 percent) of the total 18,326 dropouts in Pennsylvania in 1992-93. The dropout rate, however, was highest among Hispanics (7.3), blacks (6.1), and American Indians/Alaskan Natives

³The Public School Code of 1949, as amended, generally requires Pennsylvania children to attend school from the time they enter school, which can be up to but no later than age 8, until age 17.

(5.0). Asian/Pacific Islanders and whites (non-Hispanic) had the lowest dropout rates, 2.2 and 1.7 percent respectively.

- Between December 1992 and December 1993, 1,670 special education students dropped out of school in Pennsylvania, and 335 left because they reached maximum age. An additional 8,215 special education students moved and the reporting schools did not know if these students were continuing their education.⁴

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) defines a dropout as "a student who, for any reason other than death, leaves school before graduation without transferring to another school." PDE dropout statistics, therefore, count as dropouts persons who are enrolled in a GED program, the federal Job Corps, or programs such as Vision Quest.

Whether students who enroll in GED programs or who follow other nontraditional paths are considered dropouts is important because a substantial portion of dropouts eventually do complete their high school education. One NCES study found that 46 percent of the persons that did not graduate with their high school class had earned a high school diploma, or the equivalent, four years later.

Pennsylvania Department of Education reports show that during the 1986-87 school year 7 percent of those who left traditional high schools entered a GED or other educational program. By 1989-90, this had increased to 11 percent, and by 1992-93, 21 percent of reported dropouts were entering such programs. Other PDE reports also show that between January 1, 1994, and September 30, 1994, 6,375 youth ages 21 and younger had obtained GEDs. Another 1,594 persons ages 22 through 24 also obtained a GED.

The increase in GED program participation may, at least in part, be due to the availability of these programs through the federal Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and the federal Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) program. The federal JOBS program created as part of the federal Family Support Act of 1988 requires participation in education and training for certain persons who have not completed high school and are receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) benefits.

Dropout Rates Can Be Misleading

Pennsylvania's dropout rate information, while useful, should be viewed with caution. As noted above, the rates do not include students in GED or alternative education programs, and school districts vary in how they report dropout informa-

⁴This information is taken from a PDE Bureau of Special Education report.

tion from vocational education programs.⁵ More importantly, however, the Department of Education reports reflect only the percentage of students who drop out in a single given year (i.e., the event rate). The U.S. Department of Education requires all states to gather event rate dropout data, and Pennsylvania is complying with that requirement. The cumulative effect of these annual rates, however, would be more meaningful and would result in much higher dropout rates.

For example, as part of a study funded by the Henry C. Frick Educational Commission, eight school districts in Allegheny County were asked to compute dropout rates for their 1990 graduating class. The districts worked backwards to find the difference between the ninth grade enrollment for 1986 and the 12th grade enrollment (or graduating number for 1990) four years later.⁶ As shown in Table 2, the cumulative dropout rates differ greatly from the rates reported in the Department of Education's dropout report. In fairness, we should note that this problem also exists in other states (see Appendix B).

Table 2

**Comparison of Study and
PA Department of Education Dropout Rates**

	Study Longitudinal Dropout Rates	PA Department of Education Dropout Rates			
	1989-90	1989-90	1988-89	1987-88	1986-87
School District 1	8.80%	0.84%	0.83%	0.69%	0.56%
School District 2	4.35	0.88	0.99	0.50	1.58
School District 3	7.99	1.01	1.31	1.72	2.08
School District 4	20.59	2.62	2.26	1.94	1.69
School District 5	16.04	2.65	3.24	2.04	1.31
School District 6	7.04	1.93	1.60	2.05	1.63
School District 7	7.83	0.78	1.02	1.43	1.17
School District 8	26.64	3.75	3.21	3.97	3.50
Average	12.41%	1.81%	1.81%	1.79%	1.69%

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff from information provided by the Allegheny Intermediate Unit.

⁵The NCES data cited in this study reports dropout statistics on grades 10-12 and ages 16-24 while PDE reports data on grades 7-12 and to a maximum age of 21.

⁶Entrants to the class were added to the group; students leaving the class to attend another educational institutions were subtracted from the class. The number of students dropping out of school was totaled separately. This number was then divided by the number of students eligible to graduate.

In addition to not providing a full picture of the dropout problem, Pennsylvania's method of reporting the dropout rates can result in local educational agencies having a disadvantage when competing against other states for federal funds based on the numbers of youth who are not enrolled in educational programs.

School Districts and Schools With Serious Dropout Problems

We analyzed the Department of Education's dropout data to identify those school districts with the most serious dropout problems. We identified 25 school districts, and 79 schools within those districts, as having a serious dropout problem.⁷ In 1992-93 these 79 schools accounted for about 14 percent of the Commonwealth's enrollment but 10,035 (54.7 percent) of the 18,326 dropouts. The 25 school districts and their reported dropout rates are shown in Table 3. Our analysis of this dropout data found:

- The two school districts with the highest dropout rates are mid-sized cities, Lancaster (8.4 percent of public school students in grades 7-12) and Harrisburg (8.0 percent). Philadelphia, which has the third highest dropout rate at 7.5 percent, accounted for 34.8 percent of the state's 1992-93 dropouts. Several school districts in primarily rural areas, such as Connellsville Area (Fayette County) and East Stroudsburg Area (Monroe County), also have relatively high dropout rates, although the actual number of dropouts in these districts is relatively small.
- Of the ten school districts with the highest dropout rates, six have a majority of black and Hispanic students, and two others have close to a majority of black and Hispanic students.⁸ Although poverty statistics are not available on a school district basis, these school districts are typically located in counties with high proportions of children living in poverty. (See Tables 4 and 5.)
- Many school districts with high dropout rates are in counties that have high proportions of children who speak a language other than English at home. These counties include Lancaster, Philadelphia, Mifflin, Lehigh, and Berks (see Table 6).

Hispanic students accounted for 13 percent of the total number of dropouts in the 25 school districts with the highest dropout rates. We found that, although Pennsylvania ranks 15th in the nation in the number of school age children who

⁷Schools in school districts which account for at least 50 dropouts and have dropout rates above the state average rate of 2.46. Within such school districts, only those schools with rates above 2.46 are included in this analysis. For example, only 34 of the 130 schools with students in grades 7-12 in Philadelphia in 1992-93 had dropout rates which exceeded 2.46.

⁸All school districts in Pennsylvania with high proportions of black and Hispanic students do not have high dropout rates. For example, Farrell Area, Aliquippa, and Duquesne City School Districts which have a majority of blacks and Hispanics, have dropout rates well below the state average.

Table 3

PA School Districts With the Highest Dropout Rates and Numbers*

(1992-93)

County	School District	Dropout Rate ^a	Enrollments Grades 7-12	Dropout Total Grades 7-12	% of Statewide Enrollment	% of Statewide Dropouts
Lancaster	Lancaster	8.39%	4,244	356	0.57%	1.94%
Dauphin.....	Harrisburg City	8.02	3,256	261	0.44	1.42
Philadelphia	Philadelphia City	7.49	85,034	6,373	11.42	34.78
Allegheny.....	Pittsburgh	5.24	17,085	895	2.29	4.88
Berks	Reading	4.76	4,760	227	0.64	1.24
Montgomery	Norristown Area	4.77	2,601	124	0.35	0.68
Delaware	Chester-Upland	4.76	3,215	153	0.43	0.83
Northampton.....	Easton Area	4.61	3,035	140	0.41	0.76
Erie	Erie City	4.53	5,186	235	0.70	1.28
York	York City	4.40	2,475	109	0.33	0.59
Lackawanna	Scranton City	3.99	3,855	154	0.52	0.84
Lehigh.....	Allentown City	3.79	5,755	218	0.77	1.19
Northumberland .	Shikellamy	3.45	1,595	55	0.21	0.30
Blair.....	Altoona Area	3.38	4,473	151	0.60	0.82
Lycoming	Williamsport Area	3.07	3,130	96	0.42	0.52
Fayette.....	Connellsville Area	3.02	2,815	85	0.38	0.46
Allegheny.....	Woodland Hills	2.86	2,869	82	0.39	0.45
Luzerne.....	Wyoming Valley West	2.67	2,247	60	0.30	0.33
Northampton.....	Northampton Area	2.70	2,634	71	0.35	0.39
Monroe.....	East Stroudsburg Area	2.69	1,895	51	0.25	0.28
Northampton.....	Bethlehem Area	2.70	5,590	151	0.75	0.82
Mifflin.....	Mifflin County	2.62	2,786	73	0.37	0.40
Crawford.....	Crawford Central	2.56	2,147	55	0.29	0.30
Cumberland.....	Carlisle Area	2.50	2,276	57	0.31	0.31
Delaware	William Penn	<u>2.49</u>	<u>2,047</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>0.27</u>	<u>0.28</u>
	25 School Districts	4.06%	177,005	10,283	23.77%	56.11%
State Total.....		2.46%	744,653	18,326	100.00%	100.00%

*School districts with dropout rates above the state average of 2.46 percent and with more than 50 dropouts per district. There are 25 school districts in this set.

^aPercent of public school students in grades 7-12 who dropped out of school during the 1992-93 school year.

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff from the 1992-93 Public Secondary School Dropouts by School: PDE 1994.

Table 4

**Selected School Districts' Public
Secondary School Enrollment by Ethnic Group***
1993-94

<u>School Districts by Dropout Rates in 1992-93</u>	<u>White (Non- Hispanic)</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>	<u>Black (Non- Hispanic)</u>	<u>American Indian/ Alaskan</u>	<u>Asian/ Pacific Islander</u>
Lancaster.....	40.52%	36.81%	18.95%	0.02%	3.69%
Harrisburg City.....	10.83	12.22	73.14	0.00	3.81
Philadelphia City.....	22.18	9.78	62.90	0.10	5.03
Pittsburgh.....	49.17	0.29	49.18	0.07	1.29
Reading.....	43.31	39.11	15.92	0.02	1.64
Norristown Area.....	56.42	3.61	36.28	0.29	3.39
Chester-Upland.....	4.72	5.55	89.69	0.00	0.03
Easton Area.....	80.97	4.23	12.32	0.03	2.45
Erie City.....	65.36	6.34	27.20	0.10	1.00
York City.....	41.44	18.24	37.52	0.16	2.64
Scranton City.....	92.10	1.32	4.34	0.18	2.05
Allentown City.....	56.29	30.84	10.12	0.03	2.71
Shikellamy.....	97.17	1.95	0.50	0.06	0.31
Altoona Area.....	96.59	0.30	2.52	0.02	0.58
Williamsport Area.....	88.61	0.22	10.41	0.16	0.60
Connellsville Area.....	97.54	0.07	2.21	0.00	0.18
Woodland Hills.....	71.92	0.45	26.76	0.00	0.87
Wyoming Valley West..	98.18	0.43	0.56	0.39	0.43
Northampton Area.....	97.86	0.94	0.34	0.08	0.79
East Stroudsburg Area	85.79	4.74	8.11	0.54	0.83
Bethlehem Area.....	71.26	21.82	5.14	0.04	1.75
Mifflin County.....	98.37	0.18	0.71	0.18	0.57
Crawford Central.....	93.19	0.49	4.95	0.18	1.19
Carlisle Area.....	92.14	0.69	5.07	0.09	2.02
William Penn.....	<u>39.55</u>	<u>1.18</u>	<u>57.70</u>	<u>0.10</u>	<u>1.48</u>
Statewide Summary	82.24%	2.93%	12.91%	0.11%	1.81%

*American Indian/Alaskan - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America.

Asian/Pacific Islander - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or Pacific Islands.

Black (Non-Hispanic) - A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

Hispanic - A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin.

White (Non-Hispanic) - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff from information from the *Public School Summary of Enrollments, 1993-94*, PDE-1994.

Table 5

**Percent of Children in Poverty in
Counties With School Districts With
the Highest Dropout Rates and Numbers**

<u>County</u>	<u>Percent of 5-17 Year Olds Below 1989 Poverty Level</u>
Philadelphia	29.2%
Fayette	28.2
Crawford	20.3
Blair	19.0
Mifflin	18.3
Erie.....	15.9
Allegheny	15.7
Luzerne	15.0
Dauphin	14.4
Lycoming.....	14.4
Lackawanna	13.5
Northumberland.....	13.3
Lancaster	10.6
Berks	10.1
Delaware.....	9.6
Lehigh	9.6
Northampton	9.3
Monroe	7.6
York.....	7.6
Cumberland.....	4.5
Montgomery.....	3.6
State.....	14.5%

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff from information obtained from the 1990 Census Data: "Income and Poverty Status in 1989: 1990."

Table 6

**Percent of 5-17 Year Olds Who Speak a Language
Other Than English at Home for Counties With
School Districts With the Highest Dropout Rates and Numbers**

<u>County</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Lancaster.....	16.47%
Philadelphia.....	13.91
Mifflin.....	12.05
Lehigh.....	12.00
Berks.....	10.58
Northampton.....	9.78
Crawford.....	7.49
Dauphin.....	7.16
Montgomery.....	6.72
Delaware.....	6.70
Monroe.....	6.38
Cumberland.....	5.23
York.....	4.71
Allegheny.....	4.66
Northumberland.....	3.79
Erie.....	3.77
Lycoming.....	3.53
Luzerne.....	3.52
Blair.....	3.34
Lackawanna.....	3.23
Fayette.....	2.49
State Median.....	3.81%

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff from information obtained from the 1990 Census of Population and Housing: Summary Tape File 3.

have limited English proficiency, we are the only state among these 15 that does not provide state funds for services to such students. The Department of Education developed a budget request for the Governor in 1993-94 seeking an additional \$900,000 to support a Latino component in the Commonwealth's Successful Students' Partnership initiative, but the request was not included in the Governor's budget request to the Legislature.⁹

The School District of Philadelphia¹⁰

The extent of the challenges faced by some school districts with the most serious dropout problems is illustrated by the Philadelphia School District. The School District of Philadelphia serves over 200,000 students in 250 schools, and, as such, faces special challenges that may require a different approach than what might be successful in the Commonwealth's other school districts. Declining budgets, deteriorating buildings, increasing numbers of students with special needs, the exodus of middle class families, and increased violence, vandalism, health care needs, and teenage pregnancy have placed particular strains on the District. The District's dropout rate is reported to have declined from 12 percent in 1987-88 to 7 percent in 1993-94. Cumulative rates are much higher, with the 12th grade class of 1992 being only 54 percent the size of the 9th grade class in 1989, according to a Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth report.

The School District of Philadelphia has been involved in a school desegregation case since 1971. A February 4, 1994, decision by Commonwealth Court Judge Doris A. Smith found that the district failed or refused "to provide an equal educational opportunity and quality education to children attending racially isolated minority schools." In a March 25, 1994, order, Judge Smith created a seven-member School District of Philadelphia Educational Team. This Team collected and analyzed information and submitted a report to Judge Smith in September 1994.

The Team found many fundamental problems within Philadelphia's public school system, including an overall attitude of helplessness and resignation. The Team noted that more than 25 percent of all high school students in the District are absent on any given day, nearly half of the 9th graders in the city's public schools fail that grade, and that a minimum of 30 percent of the District's students drop out annually.

The report includes 40 recommendations to effect fundamental change in the City's public education system, including several recommendations directly and

⁹Pennsylvania does receive \$4 million in federal migrant education funding that serves about 10,000 students in 208 school districts. Services include, for example, assisting migrant youth to enroll in school and assessing language and educational proficiency.

¹⁰Appendix C describes a variety of dropout and truancy prevention programs in Philadelphia.

indirectly addressing truants and school dropouts.¹¹ For example, the report recommended that the District develop a comprehensive school-to-work transition system and that the District submit reports to the Court on student dropout, attrition, and retention rates for middle and high schools. Additionally, the report recommended that the District evaluate its special education programs, that the District develop programs such as alternative schools for severely and persistently disruptive students, that court-appointed probation officers be located at all at-risk schools, and that the District begin establishing full-day kindergarten and pre-kindergarten programs by September 1995.

Judge Smith subsequently held hearings on the plan and issued an order in November 1994 establishing specific requirements for the School District of Philadelphia. One of these requirements was for the District to develop a plan by February 15, 1995, for how it will: make full-day kindergarten classes available for all eligible children by September 1996; remove persistently or habitually disruptive and violent students from the schools; work with the Juvenile Court to assign probation officers to individual schools where necessary; create alternative schools in each region; and assign sufficient home and school visitors to schools with the highest rates of absenteeism, truancy and dropout.

The District submitted its plan to the court on February 15, 1995. The plan notes that the Philadelphia School Superintendent issued the district's *Children Achieving Action Design* (CAAD) on February 6. *Children Achieving* is a long-term strategic plan for improving the district's performance through systemwide school restructuring. The goal of *Children Achieving* is to create a performance-driven school system in which a large proportion of students achieve at high levels. Two key components of the plan are to allow greater local decision-making through clustering schools (a school cluster might consist of 4-6 elementary schools, 2-3 middle schools, and a high school) and allowing greater authority at the school level over personnel, budget, professional development, instructional strategies and curriculum, scheduling, and student and teacher assignments. The plan also calls for full-day kindergarten in high poverty, racially isolated schools by September 1995, with full-day kindergarten for all eligible children by September 1996, and six alternative schools by September 1995.

The School District designed the concepts in the *Children Achieving* plan to complement the court-ordered plan it submitted to Judge Smith on February 15. That plan is an extensive, detailed document addressing many issues that directly and indirectly relate to truancy and dropout (e.g., the creation of a Children and Families Authority to provide coordinated services for children from birth through age five). It also includes the following provisions directly relating to truancy and dropout prevention:

¹¹Additional information and recommendations concerning Philadelphia's truancy problem can be found in the 1993 report entitled *Empty Desks, Empty Futures* by the Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth.

- The district will use attendance and dropout rates to assess the performance of schools and the school district.
- The district will create Family Resource Networks to perform a variety of functions, including "dropout prevention and recruitment of out-of-school youth."
- The district will seek to increase the involvement of employers, colleges, and unions to show students the benefits of staying in school. In connection with this initiative, the district will create Next Step Centers to provide information and counseling about post-secondary education and training activities.
- The district will undertake initiatives (such as establishing two pregnancy prevention programs and creating quality child care programs) to prevent pregnant and parenting teens from dropping out.

As of mid-March 1995, Judge Smith had not issued any rulings concerning the Philadelphia School District's plan.

Incidence and Reasons for Truancy

According to the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts, in CY 1994 the district justice system imposed fines for truancy on 14,056 defendants. Data for Philadelphia and the City of Pittsburgh, however, are not included in the Court's information. According to a report funded by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), the Philadelphia Family Court which handles truancy cases has seen an increase in such cases in recent years. In 1991, the Philadelphia Family Court processed 352 dependency petitions for truancy for youth who were nondelinquent. In 1991, there were eight adult cases handled by the Family Court which resulted in fines; however, it is unclear whether all of these were truancy cases only. In Pittsburgh, 488 citations for truancy were issued during the 1993-94 school year, according to a spokesperson for the Pittsburgh City School District.

The Department of Education does not gather data available on truancy or report a truancy rate. Available information on student absences can provide some perspective on the extent of truancy. For example, a January 1995 report on the Harrisburg School District found that on any given school day 13 percent of the city's students are absent from school, and 13 percent of the student population was absent for more than a quarter of the school year. Of the total absences, 61 percent were unexcused according to the school district. The report also found that over the past several years, one in four 7th graders, and one in three 9th graders, had been retained at their grade level.

Similarly, a report prepared for the PCCD by Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth found that on any given school day in Philadelphia during the 1991-92 school year, 12.7 percent of the District's students were absent from school. The average number of school days missed in elementary schools was 16 days, in middle schools 31 days, and in high schools 41 days. According to the report, school attendance patterns in other urban districts are similar to those in Philadelphia.

Reasons for Truancy

The school, juvenile court, child welfare, and district justice officials we spoke with during this project generally agreed that truancy should be viewed not so much as a problem in itself, but rather as a symptom of one or more underlying problems.

This view is shared by educational researchers and the International Association of Pupil Personnel Workers (IAPP). As shown in Appendix D, IAPP has identified many reasons for truancy, such as *health reasons*, including mental health; *school reasons*, including inappropriate programming causing students to be in classes that are either well beyond or well below their ability; *cultural reasons*, including language problems; *economic reasons*, including lack of funds for transportation to school; *family reasons*, such as parental drug or alcohol abuse; *community reasons* such as gang activity; and *personal reasons* such as feelings of rejection and failure.

The reasons for truancy identified by professional school attendance staff are similar to those identified by a Philadelphia School District Attendance Advisory/Work Group. The Philadelphia Advisory Group, which consists of parents, students, and representatives from the school district and community, identified the following reasons for truancy:

homelessness	jobs/working late	no money for transportation
boredom	poor physical plant	lack of clothes for school
understaffing	irresponsible parenting	poor relationships with teachers/ staff
peer pressure	history of suspension	absence of child care for working parents
family problems	competing choices	threat of violence in school/ community
lack of motivation	poor school climate	poor attendance leading to poorer attendance
domestic violence	retention in grade	lateness/lock out procedures
poor weather	education not valued	expulsion
fear of failure	crime more profitable	
health issues	inappropriate program	
safety/gangs	large impersonal schools	
absence of goals	attitude of teachers/staff	
basic skills lacking	unchallenging curriculum	

Our interviews and field visits confirmed that chronic truants often face multiple and complex health and social problems. For example, we visited a Lancaster County truancy intervention program in which 38 percent of the children were identified as having special education needs or receiving special education services. Forty-five percent of the students in these programs had a parent or caretaker known to be either actively involved or have a history of being involved in illicit drug use/alcohol abuse.

Multiple social, health, and learning problems were also common among truants in Berks County. According to the truancy specialists involved with Berks County's child welfare programs:

- 55 percent of the children served in these programs have social/emotional problems,
- 34 percent of the parents and 9 percent of the students have drug and alcohol problems,
- 20 percent are in families with marital problems,
- 19 percent have housing problems,
- 13 percent have learning disabilities,
- 3 percent are mentally retarded,
- 15 percent have medical problems other than mental health or drug and alcohol problems,
- 14 percent have identified or suspected physical abuse and 11 percent identified or suspected sexual abuse, and
- 10 percent have transportation problems.

Many of the children served in the programs we visited come from single parent families. In the Berks County program, 70 percent of the children are from single parent families, and 17 percent of the children with two parents live in families with one natural parent and one stepparent.

Officials we spoke to at a Somerset County truancy intervention program carried out by the local child welfare and juvenile court staff told us of similar multiple problems, including parental and child drug and alcohol abuse; poor school performance resulting in the child falling behind and giving up; sexual, physical, and emotional abuse; parents or children with mental health problems; domestic violence; and poor parental supervision. The officials also told us that sometimes youth who receive in-school suspension become truant because they believe they have been labeled and therefore do not have a chance in school.

During our field visits we met several youth with similar problems, including a young girl whose family did not speak English and who had been hospitalized and

continued to experience serious mental health problems; a young, mentally retarded man who was the prime caretaker for his mother who was mentally retarded, and his elderly grandmother who was seriously ill; and several young Hispanic children whose mother did not speak English, were living in an impoverished neighborhood and, though they enjoyed school, had been out of school for many days because they were infested with lice. We also visited the home of a youth who did not want to go to school due to constantly being suspended because of hyperactivity. We were later informed that only after the child's mother provided for a medical evaluation did the school district take steps to arrange for special educational programming for this child, who was diagnosed as having an Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder.

III. Pennsylvania's School Attendance Requirements

The Public School Code of 1949, as amended, generally requires Pennsylvania children to attend school from the time they enter school, which cannot be later than age 8, until age 17.¹ This requirement can be met by attending a public school, a religious school, or a home education program. There are also several exceptions to the compulsory education laws.²

Attendance and Excusal Policies

State regulations require school boards to adopt policies concerning attendance, excusal, and related issues. These policies vary from district to district. For example, we found that 17 of the 34 school districts participating in the Commonwealth's Successful Student Partnership Initiative fail students after a certain number of absences (ranging from 19 to 36). In some cases, the school may make an exception to this policy when the student can show cause for the absences, such as an extended illness.

State statutes and regulations do, however, contain some provisions concerning attendance that pertain to all the districts. For example, principals, teachers, and boards of school directors may excuse children for nonattendance during temporary periods if a licensed practitioner certifies that mental, physical, or other urgent reasons prevent the child from attending school. With the approval of the Secretary of Education, a school district may also excuse a child from attending school for an extended period upon the recommendation of the school physician and a psychiatrist or school psychologist. This excusal is to be re-evaluated every three months.

Additionally, some students are "excepted" from attending school by the school district. For example, in the 1993-94 school year, the School District of Philadelphia had excepted over 1,000 students from compulsory school attendance because they were in correctional settings or because they were known to be hospitalized or physically or mentally incapacitated.

Students may also be legally out-of-school if they have been suspended or expelled.³ We reviewed the school district policies on suspensions for 34 school

¹For bills pending in the General Assembly which would amend the Public School Code of 1949 or other statutes in areas affecting school attendance, see Appendix E.

²The exemptions are: children 16 years of age or older who are employed on a regular basis; children 15 years of age or older who are engaged in farm work or domestic service; and children who are 14 years of age or older, who are engaged in farm work or domestic service, and who have completed the highest grade in the elementary school of the district in which they reside.

³ Expelled students under age 17 must still be provided with an education. This can be accomplished by attending another school, by tutorial or correspondence study, or by another approved educational program. If the student's parent or guardian is unable to provide for required education within 30 days, the school district then has responsibility to make provision for the student's education.

districts. All of these policies allow school districts to suspend or expel students for possession or use of drugs; 30 allow students who possess or use cigarettes on school property or at school-sponsored activities to be suspended or expelled. Of the 34 school district policies we reviewed, 21 allow the school principal to suspend students for being late for school or for being truant. Ten of the 34 school districts have only out-of-school suspensions; 1 specified that all suspensions are to be in-school.

We reviewed data provided by the Student Assistance Program for the 1993-94 school year to obtain a sense of the extent to which in-school and out-of-school suspensions are used by school districts. During the 1993-94 school year, SAP teams made 4,784 referrals for students with out-of-school suspensions and 4,536 for students with in-school suspensions.

Additionally, some youth who are not in school during traditional school hours participate in alternative schools for problem students. For example, the alternative school operated by the Erie School District operates between 3:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. The Allentown School District's "Off Site" program for disruptive students, and to a lesser extent, for students with habitual attendance problems, operates Monday through Thursday from 3:15 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. In the Harrisburg School District, the Academy which serves overage 7th and 8th grade students operates from 7:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Attendance Officers and Home and School Visitors

Every school district of the first, second, or third class must, and every district of the fourth class may employ one or more attendance officers or home and school visitors.⁴ These persons are responsible for enforcing the state's compulsory school attendance laws. They have the power to arrest and apprehend children who are incorrigible, insubordinate, or disorderly at or on the way to or from school, as well as children who fail to attend school as required by law. Attendance officers can also enter places where children are employed to determine whether any child is working there that should be in school.

The requirement that school districts employ attendance officers or home and school visitors is a general one, and school districts with very large enrollments are only required to employ one person in this capacity. Such a school district could also comply with state law by joining with another district in appointing an attendance officer. State statute and regulations do not establish any qualifications for attendance officers.

⁴ Fourth Class school districts serve populations of less than 5,000; there are 25 such districts.

Home and school visitors, however, must be certified by the Department of Education. The certification requirement can be met by completing an approved⁵ course of study at a Pennsylvania college or an equivalent program in another state. As shown in Table 7, Pennsylvania school districts employed 237 home and school visitors in 1993-94. Table 7 also shows that the number of home and school visitors in Pennsylvania has decreased in the last five fiscal years. This decrease is due in part to the retirement of 48 home and school visitors in 1993, when a state statute encouraged early retirement. According to the Department of Education, 19 of these home and school visitors were from the Philadelphia School District. In June 1993, the Philadelphia School District furloughed 47 home and school visitors, abolishing all but one of these positions.⁶

Table 7

Home and School Visitors Employed in Pennsylvania

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>	<u>Total</u>
1989-90.....	280	Unknown	Unknown
1990-91.....	287	7	294
1991-92.....	279	9	287
1992-93.....	275	6	281
1993-94.....	230	7	237

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff based on information obtained from the PA Department of Education.

Truancy Proceedings

Every public school principal and teacher is required to report to the attendance officer, district superintendent, or secretary of the school board any child who does not enroll for school. They are also required to report any child who has withdrawn or who has been absent for three days without a lawful excuse.

The school official who receives such a report is to send a written notice to the child's parent or guardian. If, within three days, the parent fails to comply with the act by ensuring that the child attends school, the official sending the notice is to institute proceedings against the parent or guardian.

⁵ Such persons obtain a Level I certificate, which is good for six years of service as a home and school visitor. It may be converted to a Level II certificate (which is permanent) by obtaining three years of experience, completing 24 graduate credits, and completing an induction program.

⁶ The District subsequently rehired six home and school visitors: three as part of the Philadelphia Family Court Truancy Project (see Chapter V) and three who work directly for the District in administering attendance requirements.

The parent or guardian of a child who fails to comply with the compulsory attendance laws is subject to a fine plus costs. The amount of the fine, which is set in law, is up to \$2 for the first offense and up to \$5 for each subsequent offense.

In addition to, or instead of, actions against the parent, proceedings may be commenced against a child under the Juvenile Act, 42 Pa. C.S.A. §6301 *et seq.* The court can find the child dependent; placing him/her under its jurisdiction and issuing an appropriate order (e.g., placing the child with an agency). Dependent children can include children who are habitually truant. They also include children who are ungovernable and in need of care, treatment, or supervision.

According to the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts, in calendar year 1994 the district justice system imposed fines which totaled \$360,882, of which \$220,365 had been collected as of early 1995.⁷

According to spokespersons for the Special Court Judges Association of Pennsylvania,⁸ district justices handle truancy cases differently in different districts. The spokespersons noted that many district justices believe that imposing fines on the parents is ineffective for getting the children to attend school. In many cases, the parent is unable to pay the fine or to make the child go to school. Although many district justices believe that students need to be held more accountable for their truant behavior, they believe that fining the child would not be effective either.

The spokespersons added that district justice proceedings could be more effective if district justices were involved earlier in the school year. Currently, district justices do not hear some cases until the child has missed so much school that he or she will automatically fail under school district policy. In that situation, the child has little incentive to return to school. According to State Board of Education regulations, if a student has 10 days of consecutive unexcused absences, the school district must remove the child's name from its active membership roll (which is largely the basis for its reimbursement from the state) unless the case was or is being prosecuted.

We received several comments from district justices describing practices they have implemented with regard to truancy cases. These practices include:

- Upon receipt of an Unlawful Absence Citation, the District Justice automatically schedules a summary trial for all parties concerned (parents, student, school district officials, etc.) to create a forum to address the obvious, and not so obvious, issues. This is done prior to receiving a plea of

⁷The AOPC data does not include information for Philadelphia and the City of Pittsburgh. Philadelphia does not have district justices. In this county, truancy proceedings are heard by the Family Court division of the Court of Common Pleas.

⁸This association represents district justices and the members of the Philadelphia Municipal Court and the Philadelphia Traffic Court.

guilty or not guilty. This contrasts with the typical procedure in which a summons is sent to the defendant, who may plead guilty and pay the fine and costs without requiring a hearing.

- Borderline cases are deferred for 30 days after the hearing and the charge is dismissed if there is subsequent compliance. This procedure is intended to impress the child with the seriousness of the situation, yet give him one last chance to comply with the law.
- Truants are required to provide community service through the school district rather than fining the parent or guardian. This procedure holds the child, rather than the parent, accountable.
- Developing a "contract" with the parents and, more importantly, the child to ensure some understanding of the obligations and expectations of each. If the child complies with the contract, the charges against the parent are dropped.

Most district justices believe that the school district has an inherent duty to do everything in its power to identify the problem issues and to try to resolve them before a citation is issued. Some suggested that the duties and responsibilities of the district justices are being expanded well beyond that of a "finder-of-fact" and that schools need to do a better job of addressing the root causes of truancy before the case is brought to the district justice level.

IV. Federal, State, and Private Funds for Services to At-Risk Youth

The federal government and Pennsylvania state government target little money solely for dropout and truancy prevention. However, both provide multiple sources of funds to address the types of problems that can ultimately lead to truancy and dropping out of school. These include funds for drug and alcohol and other mental health services, pregnant and parenting teens, school-based probation services, career planning and job training, migrant education, and homeless children. Nonprofit foundations, private sector businesses, and local community groups are also involved in providing significant funds and services for at-risk youth.

This Chapter describes in general terms the major sources of funds at both the federal and state level and the types of programs and initiatives supported by these funds. Additional information on the types of programs supported by these funds can be found in Chapters V and VI. Several private sector initiatives are also discussed.

Federal Funding for School Districts to Serve At-Risk Youth

Listed below are the major sources of federal funds available to school districts and other educational agencies to serve at-risk youth. For the most part, these are federal "pass through" funds. This means that the Commonwealth has little discretion in how the funds are used and distributed (i.e., the purposes for which the funds can be used and how they are to be distributed are set forth specifically in federal statutes). These federal funds include:

- **Chapter 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.** In 1994-95, the 501 school districts in Pennsylvania received \$282.7 million. This is the major source of federal funds to help school districts serve children whose educational attainment is below the appropriate level for their age. School districts are awarded these funds through a statutory formula based primarily on the number of school-aged children living in low-income families within their district.
- **Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986** (recently replaced by the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994). In 1994-95, the 501 school districts in Pennsylvania received \$9.2 million in federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986 funding. Intermediate Units, which can serve nonpublic schools, received an additional \$1.6 million. Many Pennsylvania school districts use these funds to support their Student Assistance Program (SAP). Under this program, teams of specialists identify children and adolescents who are at risk of or are

experiencing behavioral or emotional problems. SAP teams offer prevention and intervention but not treatment services.

- **Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Grants.** In 1994-95, the 501 school districts received \$23.6 million to improve vocational education programs. Although not specifically targeted to at-risk youth, these programs must be accessible to such students, including the economically disadvantaged and those with limited proficiency in English.
- **Carl D. Perkins III-A Community-Based Organization Funds.** In FY 1994-95 the Pennsylvania Department of Education awarded \$498,880 in federal Carl D. Perkins III-A Community-Based Organization funding to assist several schools in three school districts with high dropout rates: the Philadelphia School District, the Lancaster City School District, and the Pittsburgh School District. The funds are being used by community organizations to provide career assessment, career counseling, group counseling, monitoring programs, tutoring services, home visits, vocational field trips, language skills enhancement, and basic remedial services. Appendix F lists the participating community-based organizations and the schools they serve.
- **Pregnant and Parenting Teen Initiatives.** The Pennsylvania Department of Education, in partnership with the Department of Public Welfare, funds these initiatives using three federal sources (and an \$825,000 state appropriation and required state matching funds). In the 1994-95 school year, 58 local education agencies have received \$5.4 million to assist pregnant and parenting youth to remain in school.
- **School-Based Health Center Initiative.** The Department of Health uses some of its federal Maternal and Child Health Block Grant funds to assist six school districts in establishing school-based health centers for students in pre-schools and elementary schools. The six participating school districts are Philadelphia, Allentown, Lancaster, Farrell, Towanda, and Central Fulton. The concept behind this initiative is that school-based health centers will help schools identify health problems early, resulting in reduced student absenteeism. In Central Fulton, for example, the school-based health center identified and treated 8 percent (37 of 489) of the elementary students for anemia, which causes fatigue and inattention. This intervention facilitated a significant improvement in their health, allowing them to be better prepared to learn. This initiative is currently being evaluated by the Center for Community Health Research and Development at East Stroudsburg University. A final evaluation report is due in early 1996.

Federal funds are also available to school districts and other educational agencies to provide services for migrant and homeless youth. In 1994-95, Pennsylvania will spend:

- \$4.0 million in federal migrant education funds, \$630,000 in federal day-care funds, and \$157,961 in state daycare funds to serve eligible migrant youth.
- \$1.1 million to support local educational agencies serving homeless children.

Other Federal Funding

In addition to federal funding provided to school districts, two other federal funding streams support school dropout and truancy prevention efforts:

- **Job Training Partnership Act Funds**
 - Title II-B and II-C. The PA Department of Labor and Industry (L&I) distributes federal JTPA Title II-B (summer youth employment and training) and II-C (disadvantaged youth in-school and out-of-school training) funds to local service delivery areas (SDAs). These funds are intended in part to encourage youth to complete school or enroll in alternative educational programs. In program year 1995, Pennsylvania is scheduled to receive \$34 million in II-B and \$20 million in II-C funds for SDAs.
 - State Education Coordination and Grants. Eight percent of JTPA Title II-A¹ (\$3.4 million in federal program year 1995) and Title II-C (\$1.9 million) funds are allocated for state education coordination and grants (SEG). State matching is required for 100 percent of these grants. These funds can be used to provide services, such as dropout prevention, school-to-work, alternative schooling, adult literacy, and skills training. Some funds are used to support the work of local JTPA agencies in PDE-funded family centers. (See Chapter V for more information on Family Centers.) A portion of this grant also goes to fund the Pennsylvania Career Program for Youth (PAC) which is discussed further in Chapter VI.
- **Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act Funds**
 - School-Based Probation Services. In 1994-95 the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) provided \$2.6 million in

¹Title II-A funds services for economically disadvantaged adults.

federal funds for school-based probation services. These funds are supplemented with \$884,224 in local matching funds, which typically come from county government. Grants are for a three-year period with the amount of local funding required to support the local project increasing each year. The school-based probation officers are providing services in 102 Pennsylvania school districts.

- Communities That Care. Title V of the 1992 reauthorization amendments to the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 emphasizes risk-focused delinquency prevention through comprehensive community planning. The PCCD expects to provide approximately \$892,000 through FFY 1995 to at least eight Pennsylvania counties for the Communities That Care program.

State Funding to Assist School Districts in Serving At-Risk Youth

The Commonwealth also provides state General Fund monies to assist school districts in serving at-risk youth. The major sources of state funding are:

- **Successful Students' Partnership (SSP) Initiative.** Although not a large initiative in dollar terms, these are the only Commonwealth funds specifically targeted to dropout prevention. This initiative began in 1987 after the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed legislation (Act 1987-49) instructing the Secretary of Education² to make grants available to school districts to serve as a springboard for dropout prevention programs. In the 1994-95 school year, this initiative had available \$1.5 million, \$960,750 in state funds and \$589,108 in federal funds from the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986. Local school districts also provide matching support for this grant (10 percent), which can be an in-kind contribution. In the 1994-95 school year, 40 school districts participated in this initiative. (See Table 8.)

The activities that can be funded through the SSP initiative are wide ranging, and as a result no two local projects are exactly alike. Activities include academic coursework, remedial education, vocational education, employment and training programs, counseling and assessment, public information and outreach, and human services. The Department of Education encourages schools participating in the SSP initiative to develop linkages with community services, local businesses, and job training programs; involve the family in the child's education; and provide staff development so schools can better serve at-risk youth.

²Criteria specified in the act for selecting grantees include the extent to which a district's dropout rate exceeds the state rate.

As shown in Table 8, the amount schools receive under the SSP initiative is modest, so the initiative typically pays for only a small portion of the total program the school might offer. For example, the Allentown City School District uses its \$62,000 SSP grant to pay for the cost of one Latino worker and part of the cost of a dropout prevention coordinator. As shown in Appendix G, however, its overall programs for at-risk youth are much more expansive. The SSP grant to the Philadelphia School District provides \$75,250 to help support the District's Cities-in-Schools program by paying for teacher in-service training and some student transportation.

- **School Health Programs.** The Pennsylvania Department of Health reimbursed school districts for \$37.2 million (all state funds) for school health services provided in the 1992-93 school year. These services, which are available to all students, include physical, dental, vision, and hearing exams as well as school nurse services. Such funds assist school dropout and prevention efforts by providing services aimed at improving the health status of school-age children.
- **School-Based Mental Health Service Grants.** In 1994-95, the Departments of Education and Public Welfare provided \$380,000 in state funds as seed money for 14 school districts to assist with startup costs associated with school-based mental health programs. The primary goal of the grant is to assist students with mental health needs to function in a regular education setting. (See Appendix H for a list of grantees.)
- **State Special Education Supplement.** In addition to each school district's basic education subsidy, in FY 1994-95 the Commonwealth provided school districts with \$495 million in state funding to supplement the services they provide to children and youth with special education needs. Additionally, intermediate units received approximately \$92 million in state funds and \$58 million in federal funds.

Federal and State Funds for At-Risk Students Are Targeted to School Districts With the Highest Dropout Rates

We reviewed the federal and state funds for at-risk students to determine the percentage given to school districts with the highest dropout rates. We found that, for the most part, federal and state funds are weighted toward school districts with high dropout rates.

The 25 school districts with the most serious dropout problems receive a substantial share of the funding available to the 501 school districts in Pennsylvania to serve at-risk youth. In the 1994-95 school year, the 25 school districts will receive:

Table 8

**Successful Students' Partnership Program
for School Year 1994-95**

<u>School Entity</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Federal^a</u>	<u>Total</u>
Allentown City School District	\$ 40,000	\$ 22,250	\$ 62,250
Altoona School District	41,500	3,750	45,250
Benton Area School District	30,000	10,250	40,250
Berwick Area School District.....	36,500	3,750	40,250
Bethlehem Area School District	38,000	7,250	45,250
Chester-Upland School District.....	41,500	0	41,500
Conewago Valley School District.....	36,500	3,750	40,250
Crawford Central School District.....	30,000	10,250	40,250
Derry Area School District	0	40,250	40,250
East Stroudsburg School District.....	0	45,250	45,250
Elizabethtown Area School District	0	40,250	40,250
Erie City School District	40,000	15,250	55,250
Greensburg-Salem School District.....	0	45,250	45,250
Harrisburg City School District	41,500	3,750	45,250
Highlands School District.....	0	45,250	45,250
Lancaster School District.....	40,000	15,250	55,250
Midd-West School District.....	36,500	3,750	40,250
Milton Area School District	17,500	0	17,500
Philadelphia School District.....	33,000	42,250	75,250
Pittsburgh School District	0	75,250	75,250
Purchase Line School District	36,500	3,750	40,250
Reading School District.....	40,000	15,250	55,250
Red Lion Area School District	36,500	3,750	40,250
Scranton School District	41,250	3,750	45,000
Selinsgrove School District.....	20,000	0	20,000
Shikellamy School District	36,500	3,750	40,250
Solanco School District	36,500	3,750	40,250
Southeastern Greene School District.....	30,000	11,358	41,358
Tamaqua Area School District	36,500	3,750	40,250
Upper Adams School District	30,000	10,250	40,250
Wattsburg Area School District.....	36,500	3,750	40,250
Waynesboro Area School District.....	0	45,250	45,250
West Perry School District.....	36,500	3,750	40,250
York City School District	41,500	3,750	45,250
York County High School ^b	<u>0</u>	<u>40,250</u>	<u>40,250</u>
Total	<u>\$960,750^c</u>	<u>\$589,108^c</u>	<u>\$1,549,858^c</u>

^aThis refers to funding authorized under the Federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986, Title V, Part B, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (P.L. 99-570, 100-297, 100-690, 101-226, and 101-647).

^bServices six school districts in York County.

^cTotal does not reflect \$66,500 in state funds and \$3,750 in Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act funds to the Center for Schools and Communities. This Center is a technical assistance contractor which is administered by the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit. The Center is also responsible for identifying program accomplishments and areas where improvements are needed.

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff from information obtained from PA Department of Education.

- 46.7 percent of total school district Chapter 1 funding,
- 30.1 percent of total school district Drug-Free Schools and Communities funding,
- 40.5 percent of total school district Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education funding,
- 27.5 percent of total school district school health funding, and
- 25.2 percent of total school district state special education funding supplement.

The 25 school districts, which account for 23.5 percent of the state's enrollment for grades 7-12, received 32.9 percent of the total funding from these five funding sources.

We also reviewed the amount going to these 25 school districts for the initiatives most pertinent to dropout and truancy prevention. As shown in Exhibit 2, 18 of the 25 school districts are served through the Commonwealth's Pregnant and Parenting Teen Initiatives, 14 are served through the School-Based Probation Initiative, 13 through the PA Career Program for Youth (PAC) initiative, 15 through the Successful Students' Partnership Initiative, and 11 through JTPA in-school programs.

In 1994-95, the 25 school districts with the most serious dropout problems are scheduled to receive:

- 51.8 percent of the total Pregnant and Parenting Teen Initiative funding,
- 58.4 percent of the total School-Based Probation Initiative funding,
- 80.4 percent of the total PA Career Program for Youth funding, and
- 49.8 percent of the total Successful Students' Partnership Initiative funding.

Overall, the 25 school districts received 59.3 percent of the total funding available from these four initiatives.

Private Sector and Community Involvement in Dropout and Truancy Prevention Programs

In addition to federal and state funds, many private foundations, businesses, and community groups support dropout and truancy prevention efforts. Although information is not available to determine the total amount being spent by such private organizations, we found many examples of their involvement in dropout and truancy prevention efforts. Among some of the largest of these efforts are the Cities-in-Schools program, the New Futures Initiative, and the Allegheny Policy Council for Youth and Workforce Development.

Exhibit 2

School Districts With High Dropout Rates and Number Involved With the Commonwealth's Major Dropout Initiatives

<u>School Districts</u>	<u>Pregnant & Parenting Teen Initiative</u>	<u>School-Based Probation</u>	<u>PA Career Program for Youth</u>	<u>JTPA In-School Programs</u>	<u>JTPA Summer Programs^a</u>	<u>Successful Students' Partnership Initiative</u>
Lancaster	X	X	X	X	X	X ^b
Harrisburg	X	X	X		X	X
Philadelphia	X	X	X	X		X
Pittsburgh School	X	X	X			X
Reading	X	X			X	X
Norristown Area	X	X		X		
Chester-Upland	X	X	X			X
Easton Area					X	
Erie City	X	X	X			X
York City	X	X	X	X	X	X
Scranton City	X		X	X	X	X
Allentown City	X	X		X	X	X
Shikellamy	X ^c	X		X		X
Altoona Area	X	X	X	X		X ^d
Williamsport Area	X	X		X	X	
Connellsville Area			X			
Woodland Hills			X	X		
Wyoming Valley West	X ^c			X	X	
Northampton Area					X	
East Stroudsburg Area		X				X
Bethlehem Area	X		X		X	X
Mifflin County	X ^c		X			
Crawford Central						X
Carlisle Area						
William Penn	X ^c					

^a Only includes school districts under contract to provide JTPA services. Disadvantaged youths residing in all of these school districts are being served through the local JTPA agency itself and/or a community-based organization even if the school district itself is not directly involved in offering JTPA summer school programs.

^b Funding for elementary grades 4-6.

^c Intermediate Unit receives funding for this program which may be available for this school district.

^d Includes elementary and high school.

Cities-in-Schools. At least 50 Pennsylvania schools participate in the Cities-in-Schools program (see Exhibit 3). Cities-in-Schools, Inc. (CIS) is a national nonprofit organization that relies on private and public funding to offer programs to prevent school dropout. It operates on the principles that at-risk youth can be prevented from dropping out of school through personal, accountable, one-on-one relationships with caring adults and that schools require help from the community to accomplish this. Local CIS programs form partnerships with schools, typically providing at-risk students with tutoring, mentors, internships, counseling, and health and social services.

Businesses and Local Chambers of Commerce. Businesses and local Chambers of Commerce also support efforts to improve school attendance and reduce dropout rates. Twenty-one of the school districts participating in the Successful Students' Partnership Initiative collaborate and have support from the local business community. For example, the Derry Area School District in western Pennsylvania is involved in several partnerships with the private sector, such as the BRIDGES project. This is a school-college-industry partnership designed to show students the relationship between math/science and the workplace. Latrobe Steel, Latrobe Brewery, Westinghouse, Kennametal, Security Resources, and others participate in this program. Local industries also fund a program which discourages the use and abuse of drugs and alcohol.

Private Foundations. Several foundations are also involved in assisting at-risk students. The PEW Foundation, the Annenberg Foundation, the William Penn Foundation, the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation have all made major contributions to support school reforms and programs for disadvantaged youth in the Philadelphia School District. For example, the PEW Memorial Trust has contributed \$10.22 million to support the recent restructuring efforts of the Philadelphia School District, and in February 1995 the Annenberg Foundation announced a grant in the amount of \$50 million over five years to the District for assistance in creating small learning clusters.

The Pittsburgh School District participated in the Annie E. Casey Foundation's New Futures initiative. The foundation provided \$40 million over five years to four communities nationwide. The New Futures initiative was intended to increase the life chances of disadvantaged youth by promoting institutional change in the schools and other youth-serving agencies. In Pittsburgh the foundation's funding was used to support academies within traditional high schools, extended-day or after-school activities, and a case manager for at-risk students. The results of this initiative are discussed further in Chapter V.

The Allegheny Policy Council for Youth and Workforce Development was formed as an outgrowth of the business community's support for the New Futures initiative. In 1994 the Council joined with the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County to coordinate a summer community service employment program for the

Exhibit 3

Cities-in-Schools Local Project Sites

June 30, 1994

<u>Project Site</u>	<u>Project Type</u>	<u>School District</u>
<u>Allegheny County:</u>		
Centennial Elementary School.....	CIS Site	McKeesport
Barrett Elementary School.....	CIS Site	Steel Valley
Park Elementary	CIS Site	Steel Valley
Franklin Primary Center	CIS Site	Steel Valley
Turner Elementary School	CIS Site	Wilkinsburg
Cornell Middle School.....	CIS Site	McKeesport
Woodlawn Middle School.....	CIS Site	Steel Valley
Francis McClure Middle School	CIS Site	McKeesport
Steel Valley High School	CIS Site	Steel Valley
Wilkinsburg High, CIS Burger King Institute	Burger King	Wilkinsburg
Clairton Education Center	CIS Site	Clairton City
Cities in Schools Connection	CIS Site	Wilkinsburg
<u>Dauphin County:</u>		
E.H. Phillips Elementary	CIS Site	Central Dauphin
Lawnton Elementary	CIS Site	Central Dauphin
Middle Paxton Elementary	CIS Site	Central Dauphin
North Side Elementary	CIS Site	Central Dauphin
Rutherford Elementary	CIS Site	Central Dauphin
South Side Elementary.....	CIS Site	Central Dauphin
Tri-Community Elementary	CIS Site	Central Dauphin
Linglestown Elementary	CIS Site	Central Dauphin
Steele Elementary	CIS Site	Harrisburg;
East Jr. High	CIS Site	Central Dauphin
Swatara Jr. High	CIS Site	Central Dauphin
Rowland Middle School	CIS Site	Harrisburg
Scott Middle School	CIS Site	Harrisburg
Central Dauphin High School.	CIS Site	Central Dauphin
Central Dauphin East High School..	CIS Site	Central Dauphin
Dauphin County Vo-Tech	CIS Site	Area Vo-Tech
Homebound.....	CIS Site	Central Dauphin
<u>Fayette County:</u>		
J.F. Kennedy Elementary	CIS Site	Laurel Highlands
Hutchinson Elementary	CIS Site	Laurel Highlands
Colonial Elementary.....	CIS Site	Brownsville Area

Exhibit 3 (Continued)

<u>Project Site</u>	<u>Project Type</u>	<u>School District</u>
<u>Fayette County: (Continued)</u>		
Central Elementary.....	CIS Site	Brownsville Area
Redstone Middle School.....	CIS Site	Brownsville Area
<u>Lehigh County</u>		
Deiruff High School.....	CIS Site	Allentown City
Allen High School/Lehigh Valley Hospital.....	CIS Site	Allentown City
<u>Philadelphia County:</u>		
Edison High School.....	CIS Site	Philadelphia
Franklin High School.....	CIS Site	Philadelphia
Germantown High School.....	CIS Site	Philadelphia
Kensington High School.....	CIS Site	Philadelphia
Lincoln High School.....	CIS Site	Philadelphia
Olney High School.....	CIS Site	Philadelphia
Overbrook High School.....	CIS Site	Philadelphia
George Washington High School.....	Burger King	Philadelphia
West Philadelphia High School.....	CIS Site	Philadelphia
Philadelphia Regional High School...	Goldman & Sachs	Philadelphia
Gratz High School-Project ELECT....	CIS Site	Philadelphia
Martin Luther King High School/BKA	Burger King	Philadelphia
Penn High School-Project ELECT.....	CIS Site	Philadelphia

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff from information provided by Cities-in-Schools, Inc., and from information provided by schools participating in the Successful Students' Partnership Initiative.

youth of the Greater Pittsburgh community. In total \$6.5 million in funding was available for 2,434 summer jobs. The business community provided \$907,800 and foundations, including the Heinz Endowments and R. K. Mellon, provided an additional \$674,500. The remainder came from federal, state, and local government sources.

In 1994 the Allegheny Policy Council on Youth and Workforce Development began a project called Open Doors. Committees representing six sections of the city reviewed proposals for after-school projects they could then choose to fund with the \$560,000 received from the R. K. Mellon foundation and the Heinz Endowment. The Open Doors project is also discussed further in Chapter V.

V. Dropout and Truancy Prevention Efforts in Pennsylvania

During this study we found that many school districts, county human service agencies, and local communities are engaged in a combination of strategies to improve schools and to help at-risk students stay in school and succeed in school. These strategies include:

1. School reform and restructuring.
2. Efforts to better enable school staff to identify at-risk youth, mobilize available school resources, link students with serious problems with human service programs, and enable young children to acquire necessary developmental skills.
3. Intervening early to prevent truancy before a history of truancy develops.
4. Intervening to break the cycle of truancy once it is present.
5. Special services to pregnant and parenting teens and youth on probation.

Such combinations of strategies and programs are important for schools and communities to help at-risk youth remain and succeed in school because there is no one cause of truancy and no one cause of school dropout. The General Accounting Office (GAO) and other researchers have concluded that while social, health, and employment assistance are helpful to at-risk youth, such services alone are not enough. For at-risk youth to succeed in school, issues such as school and class size, credit accumulation, staff development, and specialized service must also be addressed.

While these types of fundamental changes are important, particularly in schools where large numbers of students are failing, they are also difficult to implement. For example, the Annie E. Casey Foundation recently invested \$40 million dollars to assist school districts in four major cities, including Pittsburgh, to implement fundamental school reforms to help enable at-risk youth to succeed in school. University of Wisconsin researchers who evaluated this effort concluded that, for the most part, the school reforms were not fully implemented. Although the schools participating in the demonstration provided additional health and social services, the basic practices of the schools remain essentially unchanged.

Nonetheless, several approaches appear to be successful in improving school attendance, maintaining at-risk students in educational programs, helping them to graduate, and improving their academic skills. The approaches for which there is evidence of success include:

1. The Comprehensive Approach to Schooling Success (CASS) program, which is being carried out in a few schools in the Philadelphia School District. CASS is based on two school reform models: the Adaptive Learning Environments and Dr. James Comer's School Development Program Model.
2. Efforts to enable schools to better identify and assist at-risk youth such as the PA Department of Education's Instructional Support Team Project and the Student Assistance Program.
3. Absenteeism Prevention Programs based on a model developed by the Beaver County Community College.
4. The Berks County Children and Youth Program's Truancy Intervention Program.
5. The Commonwealth's Pregnant and Parenting Teen Initiative known as ELECT.

With the exception of the pregnant and parenting teen initiative and the Student Assistance Program, these approaches are typically targeted toward elementary and middle school youth rather than older youth.

We found other initiatives that are promising but, because they are relatively new, have not been evaluated. These include, for example, the School-Based Probation demonstrations. Other initiatives, such as Pennsylvania Career Program for Youth (PAC) and the York County High School, while they have not been evaluated, are based on models that have been shown to be successful.

When considering the effectiveness of truancy and dropout prevention programs, it is important to remember that these programs often serve students with serious and multiple problems. A strict application of traditional measures of success, such as regular school attendance or school completion, may, therefore, be inappropriate. To some extent, programs serving youth with serious and multiple problems can be considered successful if they are able to assist these troubled youth to obtain services required to address the underlying causes of school absence and to help the student maintain some tie with educational programming even if it is nontraditional, such as a GED or a JTPA job training program.

School Reform and Restructuring

The General Accounting Office, educators, and researchers have concluded that programs to improve school attendance, promote school completion, and enable at-risk youth to succeed in school must rest on the foundation of school reforms and

changes in school practices. This is particularly true in schools where large numbers of students are failing. School reform takes many forms, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education and local school districts are involved in several such efforts.

Coalition of Essential Schools

Eighteen school districts, including the Philadelphia School District, are involved with the Coalition of Essential Schools whose aim is to develop alternatives to large impersonal comprehensive high schools. (See Appendices I and J for additional information and a list of the participating school districts.) According to the National Center on Education in the Inner Cities at Temple University's Center for Research in Human Development and Education:¹

Today, the alienating effect of large schools is more profound than ever. High schools in the United States often enroll 1,000 to 3,000 students. Yet schools this large are difficult to defend on educational grounds. Research indicates that large school size adversely affects attendance, school climate, and student involvement in school activities, and contributes to higher dropout rates, vandalism, and violence. Further, the social and psychological support formerly provided by families and communities appears to have declined, especially among the urban poor, suggesting that today's students may be even less able to cope with large schools.

Small unit organization, on the other hand, allows teachers and students in large schools to form bonds of familiarity, identification, and support. In small units, small numbers of students and teachers interact with one another; the range of activities they share is expanded; and these groups remain together across years. Under these conditions, students and teachers are more likely to get to know one another, to respect and support each other.

Philadelphia's school superintendent has recently proposed a wide-ranging plan for school reform and restructuring through the creation of small learning communities or clusters (see Chapter II). The Annenberg Foundation recently pledged \$50 million to the Philadelphia public schools over five years to assist in financing such restructuring of the entire school system. Similarly the Pew Foundation has provided major funding to the Philadelphia School District to establish

¹The National Center on Education in the Inner Cities (CEIC) was established by the Temple University Center for Research in Human Development and Education in collaboration with the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Houston. CEIC is conducting systematic studies of innovative initiatives that take bold steps to improve education in inner cities and is supported by a five-year cooperative agreement with the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education as one of its network of national research and development centers.

several charter schools, or small schools within larger schools. Many different types of charter schools are supported in several states. The Governor's proposed 1995-96 budget also provides new funding for school districts to establish charter schools.

Comprehensive Approach to Schooling Success (CASS)

School reforms which are underway involve more than just the creation of small learning communities. They involve changing relationships among school administrators, principals, teachers, parents, and the community in which the school is located as well as introducing different approaches to learning and discipline.

The National Center on Education in the Inner Cities at Temple University is working with the Philadelphia School District to implement this program in parts of the Stetson Middle School and William Penn School. The CASS model is based on two successful school reform models: Adaptive Learning Environments and Comer's School Development Program.

A key component of CASS is the use of adaptive instruction to meet the diverse needs of students in regular classroom settings by a team of regular and specialist teachers. CASS classrooms use the school district's curriculum but the learning materials, instructional sequences, and pace are modified to meet the needs of individual students.

The CASS model also incorporates Dr. James Comer's School Development Program model. The Comer model focuses on improving the social and intellectual skills of inner city children and changing how school staff respond to such children, which is often through low expectations and punishment. The Comer Model attempts to bring together families and school staff to create a social setting within the school that makes improved teaching and learning possible. The model includes a Governance Management Team consisting of parents, teachers, administrators, and staff; a Mental Health or Support Team; and a Parents' Program.

The Governance Management Team is responsible for developing a comprehensive school plan with specific goals for improving the school's social and academic climate. The Mental Health or Support Team focuses on preventing negative student behavior by facilitating changes in school practices found to be harmful to students, staff, and parents. The Parent's Program provides for participation on the Governance and Management Team and in various school events.

The Comer model has been shown to produce significant academic gains for many inner city youth in the cities where it has been implemented, according to a November 1988 article in *Scientific American*. Elementary students at the two New Haven schools taking part in the program ranked lowest in achievement among the

city's 33 elementary schools when the Comer model was introduced in 1969. By 1979, the 4th grade students in these two schools had caught up to their grade level. By 1984, the 4th grade students in the two schools ranked third and fourth highest on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Attendance rates at Comer schools also improved, with one school changing from having one of the worst to having one of the best attendance rates in the city. Serious behavior problems were also virtually eliminated at schools where this approach was implemented.

CASS also appears to be having some success in the two Philadelphia schools that are participating in this program. According to a Temple University study, in both the 1992-93 and 1993-94 school years students from the William Penn School who participated in the program had statistically significant better school attendance than their peers from the same school who did not participate. In the Stetson Middle School, students who participated in the program also attended school more than their peers who were not part of the demonstration, although the difference was not statistically significant. The Stetson School participants did, however, have statistically significant higher math and reading scores than their nonparticipating peers.

The use of the Comer School reform model is one of the strategies recommended by Communities That Care to address school attendance/dropout problems.

Communities That Care

Communities That Care is a national program that seeks to prevent adolescent health and behavior problems by mobilizing key community actors. Schools are a critical actor in this process, especially for school dropout and truancy prevention efforts. This program is being undertaken in eight Pennsylvania counties: Allegheny, Blair, Cambria, Delaware, Dauphin, Erie, Luzerne, and Mercer. As of early April 1995, the counties of Bucks, Cumberland, Franklin, Jefferson, Lackawanna, Lycoming, and Philadelphia had also begun key leader team training to implement Communities That Care.

The approach uses key community leaders who establish a policy planning board. The board uses individual, family, and community-risk factors to assess the community's problems and to develop appropriate intervention strategies.

Staff of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission told us that this project is engaging juvenile court judges, school officials, and human service agencies in cooperative activities aimed at reducing risk behavior. They believe Communities That Care projects will create new sets of community groups that will be better able to coordinate their activities, and they expressed confidence in the success of the program. The Assistant Director of the Dauphin County Juvenile Probation Office told us that, while it is not specifically considered as a dropout prevention program, he expects Communities That Care will positively impact school dropout and truancy rates because it draws together important community actors and school district officials in developing a comprehensive approach to the community's problems.

In late 1994 the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency sponsored a training symposium to encourage greater implementation of the Communities That Care model. The PCCD expects to provide \$892,000 through Title V of the 1992 reauthorization of the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 to the eight participating counties. PCCD officials anticipate federal funding in like amounts next fiscal year. Title V emphasizes risk-focused delinquency prevention via comprehensive community planning. The program includes a self-evaluation component and evaluation, including site visits, by PCCD.

York County High School

One way in which the Commonwealth and school districts are addressing the needs of at-risk youth is through alternative education approaches. The PDE has been providing technical assistance, funding and waivers of regulations to support the development of dropout retrieval and alternative learning programs.²

One of the best examples of an alternative high school is the York County High School which is funded by a consortium of school districts, the Department of Education's Successful Students' Partnership Program, and the local Job Training Partnership Program. This program incorporates many of the practices which educational research has shown help at-risk youth to succeed in school.

This program serves older students who are behind grade level and who have had problems, including behavioral problems, in traditional high schools. The York County High School is a high school diploma program, housed in a shopping mall and in a local neighborhood center. It provides students with social services and it allows students great flexibility in establishing a learning pace that best meets their individual needs. About 75 percent of the students served are white and about 25 percent are non-white.

Students, including those who have dropped out of a traditional high school program, may apply for entry at any time of the year. Students can attend classes while holding a job, develop class schedules consistent with family responsibilities, and graduate when high school requirements are met. Each student is assessed before entering the program and is assisted by a counselor to establish an appropriate program of study. The program is competency based, with progress being determined through an assessment of completed assignments, test scores, and final examinations. Students must also pass a competency test at the 12th grade level in English, reading, and mathematics.

²In 1994-95, PDE provided at least \$135,000 in JTPA funds to support alternative education programs. PDE has supported development of programs such as the York County High School, the Lancaster County Academy, the Cumberland Valley School District, the Chester-Upland School District, the Mercer County Area Vo-Tech, the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit, the Carbon County Area Vo-Tech program, and the Bethlehem Area Vocational-Technical School.

The York County High School Program and others like it use several approaches to serving youth at risk of school dropout that researchers have found to be effective. In particular, teachers perform the role not of a lecturer but of a mentor. As noted by one prominent educational researcher:

To promote both school membership and academic engagement, it is essential that students have frequent contact with adults; in particular, it is through frequent one-on-one relations that care, support and personalized teaching are possible, and adults can come to understand students' problems and points of view.

The York County High School's willingness to be flexible in meeting student needs is also a key trait of successful programs. A U.S. General Accounting Office report on school dropouts notes that "flexibility with respect to scheduling and the use of resources are crucial aspects of successful programs for at-risk students."

The six school districts that participate in the York County High School have historically had high dropout rates. Four of the six school districts participating in the York County High School have in recent years shown improvement in their overall secondary school dropout rates, and now have dropout rates below the statewide average. While this improvement cannot be attributed with any certainty to these alternative education programs, it may be a factor contributing to the success of these districts in reducing their dropout rates.

Another indicator of success is that 73 of the 125 students who were in the 12th grade graduated. Graduating students reported in a follow-up survey that teachers show a genuine concern that students learn, and they particularly like the self-paced approach to learning, feeling a sense of pride in knowing that they receive credit for the work they actually produce rather than for "putting in time."

Enabling Schools to Identify At-Risk Youth and Address Their Needs

Schools need staff development and support if they are to assist today's at-risk youth to succeed in school. Recognizing this, the PDE has initiated efforts to systematically provide for such staff development. It has also, in collaboration with other state agencies, worked with local school districts to establish systems to identify at-risk youth and link such youth with serious problems to services from county human service programs. These systems include the Instructional Support Teams (IST), the Student Assistance Program (SAP) core teams, and county human service agencies' Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP).

The importance of these teams in assisting schools to address the problems of at-risk youth whose behavior interferes with the learning of other students can be

seen in the responses of school vice-principals to a survey conducted by the Pennsylvania Association of Secondary School Principals. Many of those responding to the survey noted that IST, SAP, and CASSP were the key resources they relied on to address the needs of such youth.

School staff and county human service programs also view these teams as important in addressing the needs of youth who are truant and at risk of school dropout. Several counties which have developed programs to address truancy rely on the prior intervention of IST and SAP teams before they accept a referral or refer a truant to the county child welfare agency. In Crawford County, 74 percent of the truancy cases that were referred to the county human service programs were handled by CASSP teams without further referral to the juvenile court for a dependency hearing.

Instructional Support Teams

At-risk youth may act inappropriately or disruptively or lag behind the rest of the class academically. In the past, many of these students were referred to special education even though they may have been able to achieve success in a regular classroom if the proper help were available. To address the needs of such youth, in 1990 Pennsylvania school districts were required to introduce Instructional Support Teams in all elementary schools. An IST consists of the school building principal, the student's regular classroom teacher, the support teacher assigned to the student's school building, and others as appropriate. All 1,969 elementary and 489 middle schools in the Commonwealth are expected to have an IST in place by the 1997-98 school year. At the secondary level (grades 7-12) such teams are permissible but not required. As of the 1994-95 school year, all 501 school districts had Instructional Support Teams in at least one school building in the district. Nearly 1,400 schools have initiated the program in the Commonwealth.

Since 1992-93 the Pennsylvania Department of Education has sponsored the Instructional Support Team Project which provides training for the staffs of participating schools during their first year of IST operation. The training consists of collaboration and team building, instructional assessment, instructional adaptation, effective interaction patterns/student discipline/behavior management, and student assistance. In addition to these five basic training components, the IST Project provides specialized training to better serve the needs of students with severe disabilities and students who are culturally and linguistically diverse.

An IST training specialist is assigned to each school. This individual assists the school principal and other team members in the design, planning, and implementation of a multi-year training effort that is to involve all members of the school's professional staff as well as parents and community members. This effort requires changes in many established school practices and procedures, especially

those involving the role of the classroom teacher in addressing the needs of students with learning, behavior, and emotional needs.

The training focuses on collaboration and team building both within the school and with community agencies. The IST team is trained to ensure that all services in regular education are used to meet students' needs, and that community services, such as mental health services, are accessed whenever needed. Moreover, the students' parents are involved with the team as essential partners in resolving the presenting problem.

In schools where IST has been implemented, fewer students are referred to special education services. A study conducted during the first phases of IST implementation showed that in schools that implemented the IST process as it was designed, students exposed to IST increased their academic achievement. Improvements in academic achievement were based on measures such as task completion, time on task, and task comprehension.

Since 1992-93 all school districts have received IST training and support in at least one school. At the secondary school level, staff at 141 secondary schools and 11 area vocational technical schools have been trained. In his 1995-96 budget proposal to the General Assembly, the Governor has requested funding to expand the IST program to additional schools.

However, fewer than half (11 of 25) of the school districts with high dropout rates in 1992-93 have participated in IST training at the secondary school level. In Philadelphia, only nine secondary schools and one vocational technical school have received IST training thus far.

Student Assistance Program Teams (SAP)

Pennsylvania school districts rely on their federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986 funds to support the work of their SAP core teams.³ SAP team members, who receive specialized training, consist of school personnel and designated liaisons from local county mental health and drug and alcohol programs. Other agencies such as juvenile justice and child welfare also participate on these teams in some schools. The purpose of the SAP team is to identify children and adolescents who are at risk of or experiencing behavioral or emotional problems. A study carried out by Villanova University found that SAP teams are effective in identifying such youth.

SAP teams are now in all 501 Pennsylvania school districts. In 1993-94, 1,290 core teams had been trained and were in place in 1,096 public school build-

³The Student Assistance Program model was developed collaboratively by the Departments of Education, Public Welfare, and Health.

ings, 18 vocational-technical schools, and 90 non-public schools in the Commonwealth. SAP teams served 63,758 students between the ages of 10 and 21 in 1993-94. SAP teams offer prevention and intervention programs but not treatment services. Instead, students are referred to appropriate service providers. SAP teams referred over 14,000 students to licensed mental health providers and 8,634 students to licensed drug and alcohol treatment providers during the 1993-94 school year.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education reports that for 1993-94 only 6 percent of students referred to SAP teams dropped out of school. According to available data, students participating in the SAP program do not show improvements in school attendance because they tend to be youth who do not have attendance problems.

Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP)

In 1984 Pennsylvania received a federal grant to improve services for children with severe mental health problems. At the time, a national study reported that two-thirds of all children with severe emotional disturbances were not receiving appropriate services. These children were "unclaimed" by the public agencies responsible to serve them, and there was little coordination between the various child-serving systems: mental health, child welfare, juvenile justice, health, and education.

Since 1985 Pennsylvania has been working to better coordinate these service delivery systems. This effort has resulted in a children's service bureau in the state Department of Public Welfare's Office of Mental Health, a children's mental health specialist in each of the state's four regions, and a CASSP coordinator in each county mental health joinder. In addition, a statewide advisory committee works to coordinate programs at the state level. To further enhance coordination of CASSP and other programs, in 1992 the Governor formed the Children's Cabinet in Pennsylvania. The Children's Cabinet is comprised of the Secretaries of Health, Education, and Public Welfare and senior level staff from the Governor's Office. The mission of the Children's Cabinet is to assure that all programs which serve Pennsylvania's children are comprehensive, culturally competent, focused on prevention, and designed to strengthen families.

CASSP teams work at the county level to coordinate services from different agencies by bringing together people from mental health, education, juvenile justice, child welfare, drug and alcohol, and vocational rehabilitation programs. All counties have some type of CASSP Interagency Planning Teams for Children, and all but 13 counties have Interagency Treatment Planning Teams. Treatment planning teams consist of staff from multiple agencies, such as the child's therapist, teacher, principal, and probation officer. The primary responsibility of the

treatment planning team is to work with the family and child to develop an inter-agency treatment plan that meets all of the child's needs.

Services available through CASSP include: family-based mental health services, wrap-around services, family support services, school-based mental health services, community-based residential facilities, case management, early intervention programs, and Student Assistance Programs. The services provided through CASSP are paid for through Medical Assistance for those who are eligible. Services may also be covered by private medical insurance or through health maintenance organizations.

The Department of Public Welfare provides \$1.7 million in state and \$315,000 in federal funds to county mental health programs to support the work of local CASSP coordinators. See Appendix K for each county mental health joiner's allocation for FY 1994-95 and Appendix L for counties with CASSP or Interagency Treatment Planning Teams.⁴

Farrell Area School District Early Intervention Program

The Farrell Area School District program, called the Family Center for Child Development (FCCD), provides early child development and family intervention services. This program emphasizes working with pre-school age children and their families to assure school readiness.⁵ The program identifies young children who may be at risk for educational, behavioral, health, and social problems; attempts to ameliorate the risk factors; and follows the child and family throughout the educational process. A number of involved state officials consider the program to be a model in showing success in preventing truancy and dropout.

The FCCD is a collaborative program emphasizing total family involvement in conjunction with family development specialists, school and county government services, the county Head Start program, health care providers, and a variety of other human service agencies. The program seeks to:

- promote positive child development through effective parenting, early intervention and outreach services;
- support and preserve the family unit as the foundation for success for children;
- assure healthy development and health care services for children;

⁴Beginning in 1987, DPW's Bureau of Children's Services reviewed county CASSP programs through a series of site visits to county projects and narrative reports from local programs. The five review categories are management and structure, parent/professional collaboration, interagency coordination, cultural competence, and service development. The work showed that the first year or two seems to be a time when much groundwork is being laid for later measurable accomplishments in most areas. After a program has been in existence two to three years, the changes are less dramatic and focus may shift to include parent/professional relationships and concerns about cultural competence.

⁵In part for this reason, 291 of Pennsylvania's 501 school districts offer pre-school and Head Start Programs.

- provide a seamless, comprehensive and easily accessed network of services for families; and
- encourage economic self-sufficiency for families through adult education, training, and employment.

Families enrolled in the program receive at least one home visit every three weeks by a family development specialist. This specialist offers advice on parenting skills, child development, assistance in interacting with other agencies and support to encourage more effective parenting. Other available services include Parents as Teachers (PAT), developmental screenings, a Toy-Book Lending Library, Head Start, Parent/Child Activity Groups, monthly Teen Parenting meetings, a Conversation Corner for discussion groups, scheduled Playtime sessions each week, and a Lead Prevention program.

The 1994-95 Family Center budget included \$200,000 in grants from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, \$176,700 of in-kind contributions, and \$120,777 in local matching funds which includes \$10,000 in JTPA funding from the West Central Job Partnership, funding from the county MH/MR agencies, and others.⁶ As of late March 1995, 149 families had received services in the Family Center for Child Development program. The approximate annual cost per family ranges from \$2,500 to \$3,000.

The FCCD is one of 14 programs statewide chosen for a two-year evaluative study called the Family Center Initiative. This evaluative program is funded by the Howard Heinz Endowment and involves the Office of Child Development at the University of Pittsburgh, the Human Service Research Institute in Salem, Oregon, and the Center for Schools and Communities in Harrisburg. This study began in the fall of 1994 and is expected to be completed in June 1996.

Truancy Prevention

Schools and communities also attempt to prevent truancy through community after school programming, attendance incentive projects, and programs to intervene early on with students who begin to show possible patterns of truancy.

After-School Programs

One approach to promoting school attendance is by helping at-risk youth to succeed in school through provision of after school programming by community groups. This type of approach is carried out in many communities. An example of such an effort is Open Doors.

⁶In addition to the funds provided by PDE to Family Centers, in 1994-95 PDE provided \$345,000 in JTPA State Education Grant funds to local JTPA agencies to support their work in cooperation with Family Centers.

Open Doors is an umbrella program for a range of long and short term after-school programs sponsored by the Allegheny Policy Council. Parents and local community groups select the projects to be funded. The projects, which are designed by parent and community groups and schools, provide student mentors, recreation, education, cultural and other activities for elementary through high school students who are at risk of school failure. Open Doors has also funded book clubs and parenting skills training.

An independent evaluation of the Open Doors project found that the participants in the project were clearly at risk of school failure.⁷ Consistent, though small, improvements were found in grade point average, the percentage of F and A grades the students received, and the suspension rates for students in the project. The only area in which there was no improvement was in the average rate of absenteeism. Absenteeism actually increased between the 1992-93 and 1993-94 school years, from 11.7 to 12.7 percent. The evaluation noted that the increase could be due, at least in part, to the severe weather conditions during the winter of 1994.

Attendance Incentive Programs

Many schools sponsor these types of programs as a way of promoting attendance in their schools. For example, the Butler County Area Vocational-Technical School has received national acclaim for its innovative incentive approach to reducing truancy through greater student self esteem. As part of the program, which has active participation by local businesses, prizes are awarded to students. Prizes include cars, a paid trip to a NASCAR race, and a night on the town, complete with dinner and a limousine chauffeured by a teacher. According to school data, this program has increased average attendance by three percent and resulted in a much lower school dropout rate. After this program was introduced the school's dropout rate fell to 0.7 percent compared to 1.9 percent in the prior year.

The Woodland Hills School District also sponsored an attendance incentive program in 1993-94, in this case for students in grades 4-6.⁸ Local businesses contributed cash and in-kind donations valued at over \$20,000. Several thousand prizes, including a week long trip for four to Disney World, were awarded during school assemblies at which students and their families participated. According to the school district's data, the program resulted in the average daily attendance

⁷In 1994, 89 percent of the 3,917 youth served in the project were black, 69 percent lived with single parents, and another 6 percent with foster parents or substitute parents. Eighty-seven percent of those participating qualified for free school lunches and 30 percent were participating in Chapter 1 programs for the disadvantaged.

⁸The Woodland Hills School district is presently operating under the guidelines of a Court Ordered Integration Plan. This Court Order in part mandated that the District focus on improving the attendance of African American students. As part of the Court Order, the school district was required to employ home and school visitors. One of the activities of the home and school visitors was to design and implement an attendance incentives program.

increasing from 89 to 95 percent. One of the participating schools showed a 5.55 percent drop in the number of chronically absent students.

Programs Based on Beaver County's Absenteeism Prevention Project

Some schools have introduced programs to provide for early identification of students when they begin to exhibit patterns of excessive absenteeism. Many of these programs are based on the Community College of Beaver County's Absenteeism Prevention Program Model. Information about this program, which targets elementary and middle school students, was provided to school districts by the Commonwealth in the late 1980s. An absenteeism prevention coordinator typically examines the attendance register and identifies students who were absent for 12 or more days during the previous school year. The coordinator alerts the students' teachers of the problem and monitors their attendance. If the child is absent three or more times a month, the coordinator confers with the child's teacher to determine if the absences are legitimate.

If the absences cannot be readily explained, the coordinator gathers information about the child and his or her family, interviews the child, contacts the family, and makes a home visit with the family to develop a plan to improve the child's attendance. According to the designers of this program, home visits are necessary to develop a level of trust with the families before referring the family to community resources. The coordinator then provides or arranges for needed services, monitors implementation of the plan, meets with the student and contacts the parents on a weekly basis, and meets with the student's teachers on a weekly basis until the identified problems are resolved.

The Beaver County child welfare agency funds the Community College of Beaver County to carry out this program in the Big Beaver Falls, the New Brighton Area, the Ambridge, and the Aliquippa School Districts. With some adaptations, this approach is also being used by the Allentown School District, which recently expanded its program to include high school students. Funding for the Allentown program is provided in part by the local drug and alcohol program and by the local Cities-in-Schools program.

In Allegheny County, a similar program has been implemented by the Center for Substance Abuse in the McKeesport Area, Elizabeth Forward, and Clairton City school districts. This program, which operated in conjunction with the Student Assistance Program, was supported with mental health funding available to the county through the Department of Public Welfare, drug and alcohol funding available to the county through the Department of Health, and a small amount of funding from the participating school districts. In 1991 the Allegheny County effort received a national award from the National Organization of Student Assistance Programs and Partners and the National School Boards Association.

The University of Arizona evaluated the Absenteeism Prevention Program when it was introduced in the Big Beaver Falls Area School District in the early 1980s. The researchers found that there was a statistically significantly lower percentage of absences for participants during the first and second year after the program intervention compared to their percentages of absences before intervention. Based on unexcused absences only, 80.4 percent of the students in the program showed improvement in their attendance after intervention, 8.7 percent showed no change, and 10.9 percent had worse attendance after intervention. Improvement in attendance was defined as at least 10 percent reduction in absences.

In 1990 the Absenteeism Prevention Program was recognized by the federal Department of Health and Human Services and the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors and the National Prevention Network as one of the ten Exemplary Prevention Programs in the United States. In 1989 this program received the Program of the Year Award from the International Association of Pupil Personnel Workers.

The effectiveness of this program has also been evaluated and demonstrated in several projects carried out in Pennsylvania, Michigan, and New Jersey. One such demonstration involved the Allentown, Lancaster, Altoona, Clairton City, and McKeesport school districts. The Villanova University researchers who evaluated this demonstration project concluded that the program had a positive effect in curtailing absenteeism and tardiness at most, but not all, of the participating schools.

The researchers noted, however, that despite the overall success of the program, for financial reasons the program may have trouble being replicated in certain districts. According to the report, "although the Absenteeism Prevention Program operating costs are modest, financially pressed school districts may be reluctant to allocate dollars for full-time Absenteeism Coordinators." In fact, one of the school districts that had been interested in participating in the demonstration project withdrew their application because they estimated the annual cost for the project to be \$101,500. This was \$71,550 over the \$29,950 the Commonwealth was reimbursing districts for participating in the project.

University of Pittsburgh School of Education researchers evaluated a similar program at the Elizabeth Forward School District. The evaluation found a modest, but statistically significant, difference in school attendance and social competence as measured by the students' teachers for students who were in the program compared to those who were not. The researchers noted that to be effective the program requires a collaborative effort between teachers, school administrators, community mental health center counselors, and children and youth agency staff. However, the researchers found that "in many instances, needed services did not exist in the community, and access to such services outside the community was complicated by the families' lack of medical insurance and transportation."

Truancy Interventions

In Pennsylvania habitual truants can be adjudicated as dependent children and custody given to the county child welfare agency. Several counties have designed specific programs to work with such children to address their truancy problem.

County child welfare programs differ in their approaches to such intervention. In some counties, county child welfare agencies provide services directly, or funds are provided to juvenile court staff. In other counties, multiple county and community-based agencies are involved. As noted earlier, county truancy intervention efforts often use school IST and SAP teams and county CASSP teams to assist in their service interventions.

Erie County Truancy Program

The Erie County Truancy Program is a unified and systematic approach to dealing with truancy involving the school districts, the county child welfare agency and the juvenile court. The program has four components. As shown in Appendix M, the Erie program relies on the school to initially use all of its resources, including home contacts, before the county child welfare program will actively intervene to consider if the child is dependent.⁹

If the school intervention fails, the child welfare agency becomes involved with the family, school, and child in assessing the causes of truancy and developing a treatment or intervention plan. Students who continue to be truant are referred to a community truancy diversion committee. This committee involves the local district justice office, school officials, community volunteers, and child welfare staff in meeting with the child and family to determine if all options to correct the cause of truancy are being made available and to impress on the family and the child the significance of continued failure to attend school and its possible consequences. This committee is funded in part by the Department of Education's Successful Students' Partnership Program.

If all else fails, the county child welfare agency can petition the juvenile court to declare the truant child a dependent. The agency can then place the child outside of the home. This is not the emphasis of the program, however.

To supplement these efforts, the county children and youth and mental health programs have joined together with the school district to fund an after-school program to provide counseling for at-risk youth. This program is carried out in conjunction with an alternative education program sponsored by the Erie City

⁹In the Erie City School District, child welfare staff are assigned to work with specific schools and are often in and out of the school building and have ongoing working relationships with school student assistance staff.

School District. The school district provides \$130,919 in direct support for the two programs along with \$54,000 in in-kind support. The county children and youth and mental health programs together contribute \$250,000 in support of this after-school program.

The Berks County Children and Youth Services Truancy Intervention Program

A somewhat different approach is taken in Berks and Lancaster Counties (discussed below) where there is an emphasis on culturally appropriate and in-home intervention by community based agencies.

The Berks County Children and Youth Services Truancy Intervention Program was initiated in September 1992. It is carried out on behalf of the county commissioners by the Berks County Intermediate Unit. The program serves all schools in the county.

The Berks County Commissioners, the Juvenile Court, the Children and Youth Service, and the Juvenile Probation Office believe strongly that the primary responsibility for truancy rests with the school district.¹⁰ This can be accomplished through referral of the student to the Instructional Support Teams and Student Assistance Program teams. Districts are also expected to document three home school contacts concerning the problem of the student's absences, and demonstrate that they are involving the district justices in progressive fines.

After school district remedies have failed, the Berks County Truancy Intervention Program will intervene for students who are under age 14¹¹ and who have had more than 25 days of illegal absences (or 10 days of such absences within a quarter).

The goal of the program is to assist students in developing consistent attendance patterns. To accomplish this, program staff monitor student attendance and visit the student's home and school to meet with the student and their family and school personnel. At times, they may even transport students to school. Special attention is paid to providing services in a culturally sensitive manner, and many of the professional staff employed in the program speak Spanish. The program can also purchase psychological services in an emergency. During a visit to this program, we accompanied a truancy intervention specialist and a parent to a local district justice's office where the truancy specialist advocated on behalf of a parent who was cooperating with the program.

¹⁰They also believe, however, that they should intervene when there is suspected delinquency, neglect, or abuse.

¹¹Previously, this was age 15 with older youth served on an exception basis.

In the 1993-94 school year, the program served 322 youth at a cost to the county child welfare agency of \$776 per child served. Fifty-six percent of those served were white, 6 percent were black, and 38 percent were Hispanic.

Only 16 percent of the cases of 1993-94 participants were closed due to lack of cooperation/unwillingness to participate.¹² Remarkably, given the number of absences of students in this program and their characteristics, 40 percent of the students served in the program achieved the goal of consistent school attendance. According to the program's 1993-94 school year report, the program tended to be more successful in maintaining attendance for students ages 6 through 14 than for those who are 15 and older.

The Lancaster County Children and Youth Social Service Agency

The Lancaster County Children and Youth Social Service Agency contracts with several community-based agencies to serve youth at-risk of truancy and school dropout. One of these community agencies is the Boys' and Girls' Club of Lancaster. This program receives referrals from county agencies, schools, and district justices. Program staff monitor the attendance of students in the program and provide after-school programming, including homework help and tutoring and leisure time activities. As in the Berks County program, many of the staff in this program are bilingual. They develop plans for service for individual students and their families, meet with families in their homes, and help families obtain services from the school and other community agencies. They will also transport students to school in situations where appropriate. The Boys' and Girls' Club operates a similar program on behalf of the county commissioners in the Columbia School District.

Although we were not able to independently evaluate this program, internal evaluation reports were issued in May 1992 and March 1995. According to these reports, youth in the program increased their school attendance rates compared to pre-treatment, although specific data was not available. Additionally, more than 90 percent of the parents responding to a survey believed their child benefited from the program and that the program helped them deal with the school and other agencies.

Allegheny County Truancy Prevention Project

Another model of intervention which involves both the county child welfare agency, district justices, and an intermediate unit is provided by Allegheny County. Since the mid-1980s, Allegheny County has had a truancy prevention project carried out by the Allegheny County Children and Youth Services, the Allegheny County Juvenile Court, the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, local school districts, and the Allegheny County District Justice Association.

¹²Additional reasons for case closure included age inappropriateness, relocation, placement for reasons other than truancy, alternative education, and other reasons.

This project, which is coordinated by the Allegheny County Intermediate Unit, accepts students up to age 14. Prior to being accepted into the program, all school remedies must have been exhausted, such as attendance contracts, counseling, assessment by a Student Assistance Team, assignment to district-operated alternative education classes, and referrals to community family/child guidance programs or MH/MR service centers. Schools must also have had close contact with the student's home by telephone and home visits and have initiated citations with the local magistrate.

Once the referral is accepted, the county child welfare agency investigates the case and the case becomes active with the IU's Regional Educational Support Centers. The centers provide transitional educational support services, such as tutoring, academic testing, psychological screening, advocacy, and counseling. They also provide a GED program and career counseling and planning.

Students who accrue 20 or more days of unexcused absences may be referred to the Juvenile Court for an adjudication hearing in the county juvenile detention center. The purpose of the hearing is to impress on the parent and the child the seriousness of truancy and to ensure that there is a plan to address the cause of truancy. After 30 days of unexcused absences, project staff may file a dependency petition with the Juvenile Court, which can develop an appropriate treatment plan or order the child placed with an agency.

This project was evaluated in 1989-90 using data from the Pittsburgh public schools. In that year the program served 73 students, but only 50 cases were analyzed because of problems with school district attendance data. For the 50 students in the study, absences declined from 46 percent to 19 percent. In a 1992 survey questionnaire sent to selected program staff in public schools, the Allegheny County Intermediate Unit, and the Children and Youth Agency, 94 percent of the respondents rated the overall impact of the interventions as positive.

An earlier evaluation of this project funded by the Henry C. Frick Educational Commission also reported positive results; the percent of days truant dropped from 33 percent to 17 percent.

Philadelphia Family Court Truancy Project

The Philadelphia Family Court has developed a program to address the root cause of a child's truancy early on, before more significant school problems

develop.¹³ To demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach, in April 1994 the Philadelphia Family Court entered into a collaborative effort with the School District of Philadelphia. As a result of this collaboration, three home and school visitors from the District were assigned to work with the Family Court and maintain ongoing contact with the families and schools of students participating in the demonstration. Two home and school visitors worked with students in select middle and high schools, and a third worked with students in select elementary schools. The Family Court also made available social work services through its REAAP Unit.¹⁴

The Family Court initially tested this approach between April and June 1994. The Court found that the approach was not successful with older students who averaged 3.1 absences (both excused and unexcused absences) per week compared to 2 absences per week prior to the referral to the project. Apparently the increases in absences by older students was due, at least in part, to the program's late start. Several students stated they "had already failed so why bother" to attend. The Court believes that this, coupled with the older group's access to other activities and the arrival of spring after a harsh winter, led to the increased truancy.

In contrast, the project resulted in substantial improvements in the attendance of younger students. Prior to the introduction of the project, the younger students averaged 2 absences (both excused and unexcused) per week. Once the project began, they averaged only 1 absence per week. Included in this average is data for one student who had perfect attendance during the project until the child contracted chicken pox and missed nine days of school. The project staff attribute their success in working with younger students to early intervention; direct involvement with the child, family, and school; and the use of community supports, such as volunteer mentors, for each family.

In January 1995, the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency awarded the Philadelphia Family Court \$77,034 in federal funding to help support part of the cost of the demonstration, which services approximately 75 students in 12 schools.

¹³Another promising truancy intervention effort in Philadelphia is carried out by the staff of the Parents Union for Public Schools (PUPS). Beginning in the fall of 1992, staff of PUPS began providing direct school truancy intervention services to students, their families, the schools and community in the 25th Police District in Philadelphia. Funding for this service was provided by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. As part of the program, the PUPS Truancy Project Coordinator meets with youth who have shown a history of truancy to obtain information about their experiences with school, to assist them in getting help, and attempt to revive their interest in school and an education.

¹⁴The REAAP Unit (Reasonable Efforts in Assessment, Access and Prevention) is an interagency cooperative effort to prevent out of home placement of children through assessment, evaluation, and diversion to community resources.

Programs for Pregnant and Parenting Teens and Students on Probation

Below we discuss two programs for students who are at very high risk of dropping out of school: the ELECT program for pregnant and parenting teens and the school-based probation program for students on probation. These are Pennsylvania's two largest state-initiated dropout and truancy prevention initiatives. Although relatively new, both of these initiatives appear to be showing at least short-term positive results.

ELECT and Other Pregnant and Parenting Teen Initiatives

The Commonwealth has several successful initiatives to assist school districts to serve pregnant and parenting teens. In the 1994-95 school year, 58 local education agencies will receive \$5.4 million to assist pregnant and parenting youth to remain in school and graduate. Appendices N and O list the local educational agencies which receive these funds and their source.

One of these initiatives which has been evaluated and shown to be successful is known as ELECT (Education Leading to Employment and Career Training). The ELECT program, which serves teens who are receiving Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) benefits, provides several insights into the types of services and changes in school practices that can help at-risk youth to succeed in school.

The services provided through the ELECT program, as well as the Commonwealth's other initiatives for pregnant and parenting teens, are described in detail in our April 1994 evaluation report entitled *Commonwealth Programs and Initiatives for Pregnant and Parenting Teens*. While programs varied at each ELECT site, ELECT students had available home visitation, alternative education programs, and transitional services to help youth who graduate from high school gain entry to other available training programs. Many were in programs that awarded high school credit for participating in parenting training courses and adaptive physical education classes. Several programs offered credit bearing summer activities so that these youth could overcome high school graduation credit deficiencies.

Pregnant and parenting teens who qualified for ELECT could have day care and transportation expenses paid for by the Department of Public Welfare through separate DPW/Office of Income Maintenance funding sources. In many cases such child care was provided within the school.

In addition, the ELECT site which had the most participants routinely provided homebound instruction for participants when medical complications arose during pregnancy and at the time of childbirth. While school districts are not required to provide homebound instruction to such students, such programs afford

pregnant teens the opportunity to stay in school and not fall behind in high school credit accumulation needed for graduation.

Some schools also allowed flexible scheduling and crediting for ELECT students. In the Philadelphia ELECT II program, for example, ELECT students were awarded graduation credits based on the work they had completed. As a consequence when they returned to school after childbirth, they were not required to repeat a full year of high school and could resume their course work where they left off prior to giving birth. Practices such as these are important to enable youth with family problems to stay in school and stay at grade level. Such practices have been identified by educational researchers as key to enabling certain at-risk youth to remain in school and they are recommended by the Department of Education in its technical assistance manuals for school districts.

We found that the ELECT program, which began in FY 1992-93, was successful during its first full year of operation. In particular, we found:

- After twelve months 86 percent of the ELECT students had either graduated or were still in school.
- Only 7 percent were reported out-of-school. The remaining 7 percent had moved, were no longer eligible for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) benefits, or were employed.

We also reviewed the records of each student who participated in the ELECT program but was not in school at the end of the 12-month period. We found that, for the most part, these students had experienced one or more serious social or health problems, such as homelessness, abuse, medical complications during pregnancy, seriously ill children, and repeat pregnancies. Some of the students who dropped out of school after participating in the program were special education students, and several were 19 years old or older.

We attributed the success of the ELECT program to the fact that many of the students were enrolled in school when they entered the program, they had paid day care and transportation, and they had high school equivalency programs available to them if they could not succeed in a traditional high school. Moreover, these programs were designed and operated by dedicated staff which research indicates is often key to successfully serving at-risk youth.

School-Based Probation

This initiative uses federal demonstration funds to help link county probation programs and schools to better serve youth in trouble with the law who are at risk of school dropout and have school attendance problems. With \$3.5 million in funding in FY 1994-95 (see Appendix P), school-based probation is the second largest

Commonwealth-sponsored initiative to serve youth who are at risk of dropping out of school. This initiative helps fund school-based probation services for 102 of Pennsylvania's 501 school districts, including 15 of the 25 school districts with the most severe dropout problems.

Youth with legal problems are among those most at-risk of school dropout, and poor school performance is correlated to both juvenile and adult crime. In one recent study of adult prison inmates, 90 percent of the prisoners had not graduated from high school and had reading levels at or below the fourth grade level. To help address this problem, in FY 1992-93, the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency began a program with county juvenile probation offices to provide school-based probation services. The goals of this program are: (1) to encourage probation officers to work closely with school officials; (2) to act as a liaison between the family, probation department, school district, and police to meet the best educational interest and needs of the students; and (3) to attack drug use and abuse by having probation officers join and contribute to the school district's Student Assistance Program after receiving SAP training. In all, there are 88 full-time and 2 part-time school-based probation officers providing services in 144 school buildings.¹⁵

The Lehigh County school-based probation program served about 86 students in the 1992-93 school year, and in 1993 their program received an award from the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission. The two Lehigh County Juvenile Probation Officers assigned to work in the District's middle schools participate in school SAP teams and counsel students.¹⁶ The officers also follow up on absences by making contact with the family and conducting home visits to immediately involve the student's family when absences occur. When students in the program receive out-of-school suspensions, they obtain the student's homework or may arrange for them to work at one of the County's community service work sites, such as the Recycling Center or with some other supervised work crew. The probation officers can also require suspended students to follow a strict curfew and in-home detention.

The probation officers also help coordinate school and community services needed by the student, develop a summer activity designed to promote self-esteem and help students to better manage anger, and work to provide after-school activities for their students, especially those with much unstructured time.

¹⁵In April 1994 the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission's Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research at Shippensburg University conducted a survey of 18 of the counties that have been operating school-based probation programs for the longest period. The survey found that in some areas school-based probation officers serve a single school, and in other areas they serve as itinerants covering more than one school district and more than one school building. Of the 18 school-based probation programs surveyed, all but 2 reported that they participated in SAP teams. (The Student Assistance Program is described earlier in this chapter.) School-based probation officers participate in SAP meetings concerning their clients, and in many cases they sit in on most SAP meetings. In one case the school-based probation officer reported meeting with the SAP team for 30 minutes every day.

¹⁶Two more officers are now assigned to the district's two high schools.

The probation officers reported spending a lot of time during the school day supervising and tutoring juveniles who are functionally illiterate or have behavior problems. Many of the youth they serve have difficulty comprehending school material, which can result in them not attending school or being disruptive because they are embarrassed or frustrated. Because of this, the school-based probation officers also advocate with the school district to obtain tutors for their students.

Most of Pennsylvania's school-based probation programs are quite new, and the data that is available is not complete. It was not, therefore, possible to evaluate the success of these efforts with any degree of certainty. However, an independent evaluation of school-based probation in Pennsylvania is underway. In March 1995 the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission's Center at Shippensburg University was awarded a Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) grant of \$108,000 to evaluate Pennsylvania's school-based probation programs using an outside contractor. The purpose of the study is to determine whether these programs have accomplished their objectives, which include decreasing truancy and dropout rates for youth served. The evaluation is scheduled to be completed by September 1996.

Much of the information we did collect on this program was quite positive. For example, the Lehigh County Juvenile Probation Office reported that one of the most important accomplishments has been the development of excellent working relationships among education, juvenile justice, law enforcement, other social agencies, and families. They reported serving between 91 and 104 students a year, and based on their informal evaluation:¹⁷

- Absenteeism of program students was reduced by an average of 60 percent from the pre-program year. Each year of the program, absenteeism has decreased by an average of 24 percent over the previous year.
- Grades of program students improved by an average of 14.4 percent from the pre-program year.
- Placement of program students decreased by an average of 45.7 percent in years two and three of the program.
- Detentions/Suspensions of program students decreased by an average of 15.9 percent from the pre-program year. Each year of the program, detentions and suspensions decreased by an average of 12.9 percent over the previous year.

We also reviewed 1994 data from the Pike County School Based Probation Program, which served 45 students, to compare student achievement before and

¹⁷Some of this data reports a group average and as such can be influenced by the absence or behavior of just one youth.

after participating in the program. This data shows that 71 percent of the students had improved their grade point average from 1993 to 1994. Positive comments on report cards increased for 52 percent of the students, remained the same for 25 percent, and decreased for 23 percent. Absenteeism decreased for 44 percent of the students, increased for 44 percent, and remained unchanged for 12 percent. Disciplinary referrals decreased for 34 percent of the students in the fourth quarter, increased for 26 percent, and remained the same for 40 percent. Although the data shows mixed results, it is possible that student performance will improve further as the students spend more time in the program.

We also solicited input from Juvenile Court Judges and the Chief Probation Officers in the 67 counties on dropout and truancy prevention programs within their counties, including school-based probation. Twenty-one counties responded. The respondents noted the importance of the school-based probation programs but expressed concern over the source of future funding for these programs. The programs are currently funded under a three-year grant that requires increasing matching amounts, from 75 percent state and 25 percent local in year one, to 50/50 in year two, and to 25/75 in the third year of the grant.

The Juvenile Court Judges and the Chief Probation Officers also cited examples of innovative programs within their counties other than school-based probation. Although we were not able to independently evaluate the effectiveness of many of these small programs within the time available for this study, Appendix Q contains summary information about some of these efforts.

VI. Job Training Partnership Act and School-to-Work Programs

In addition to the truancy and dropout prevention programs discussed in Chapter V, the Commonwealth's 28 Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) agencies also work with school districts and community agencies to provide services to at-risk youth. The services include, for example, alternative learning programs, school-to-work programs, pre-employment preparation programs, GED/High School diploma programs, and skill training programs.

In program year 1995 Pennsylvania has been allocated \$24 million in JTPA Title II-C and \$34 million in JTPA Title II-B funds.¹ Last year, 16,823 disadvantaged youth were served in JTPA Title II-C programs and 27,000 youth were served in JTPA Title II-B summer youth programs. Appendix R shows the school districts actively involved in JTPA-funded II-C and certain II-B programs. (This appendix includes school districts providing services to youth with the Title II-C funds coming through the PA Department of Labor and Industry and, at times, with funds from PDE's JTPA State Education Grant (SEG) funding.) At the local level, SDAs often combine the SDA's "direct" JTPA funds and the PDE's SEG funds to support a school district's program.

The future of federal funds for JTPA and other funds the Commonwealth uses for truancy and dropout prevention programs is, however, uncertain. The U.S. House and Senate have already reached agreement on a rescission bill which cuts JTPA Title II-C 1995 funding by \$200 million (33.3 percent). Such rescissions would apply to funds already appropriated. Additional rescissions to 1995 federal funding levels were proposed in February 1995. As adopted by the House of Representatives in March 1995, the rescissions would reduce funding for the Departments of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services by \$5.9 billion. Under the House plan, the JTPA 1995 summer youth programs would be cut completely this year. The proposed House rescissions would also virtually eliminate federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act funding, which in part supports the Commonwealth's Successful Student Partnership program and which PDE and many Pennsylvania school districts use for their Student Assistance Programs (see Exhibit 4). The proposed House rescissions would also eliminate federal funding for the federal dropout prevention demonstrations.

On April 6, the U.S. Senate almost unanimously passed a bipartisan rescission agreement that differed substantially from that passed earlier by the House of Representatives. The Senate proposal reduces JTPA youth job training funding and

¹Pennsylvania also received \$43 million in JTPA Title II-A funding, 8 percent of which goes to the Pennsylvania Department of Education for its State Education Grant which, in part, funds some of the programs discussed below.

Exhibit 4

**Proposed Congressional Rescissions Related to
Dropout and Truancy Prevention**

(As of April 1995)

	FY 1995 Appropriations (In Millions)	House Proposed Rescissions (In Millions)	Senate Proposed Rescissions (In Millions)
<u>Department of Labor:</u>			
Youth Job Training (JTPA Title II-C)	\$ 598.7	\$ 310.0 ^a	\$ 272.0 ^a
1995 Summer Youth Program (JTPA II-B)	867.0	867.0	--
1996 Summer Youth Program (JTPA II-B)	871.5	871.5	871.5
School-to-Work Activities	125.0	12.5	2.5
Youth Fair Chance	24.8	24.8	24.8
JTPA Pilots and Demos	<u>35.5</u>	<u>10.5</u>	<u>6.2</u>
Total	\$11,032.0 ^b	\$2,380.3 ^b	\$1,420.9 ^b
<u>Health and Human Services:</u>			
Total	\$32,786.1	\$1,688.5	\$ 511.8
<u>Department of Education:</u>			
Goals 2000, State Grants	\$ 371.8	\$ 142.0	\$ 6.3
Goals 2000, National Programs	21.5	21.5	1.3
School-to-Work Activities	125.0	12.5	2.5
Safe and Drug-Free Schools	481.9	471.9	--
Dropout Demonstrations	28.0	28.0	2.0
Training in Early Childhood Education and Violence	13.9	13.9	13.9
Voc. and Education - Community- Based Organizations	<u>9.5</u>	<u>9.5</u>	<u>9.5</u>
Total	<u>\$25,088.5^b</u>	<u>\$1,681.5^b</u>	<u>\$ 403.3^b</u>
Total Labor, HHS, and Education and Related Agencies	\$68,906.6 ^b	\$5,896.4 ^b	\$2,740.9 ^b

^aThe House rescission amount includes the \$200 million rescission to the JTPA II-C program included in a separate rescission bill which received final approval by both the House and Senate on April 6. The Senate rescission amount was, therefore, reduced \$200 million to account for passage of this earlier rescission bill.

^bIncludes programs and rescissions not listed.

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff from information obtained from the National Governors' Association.

keeps the 1995 Summer Youth Program funding at present levels, but eliminates all funding for 1996 Summer Youth Programs. The bipartisan Senate agreement also maintains funding for Safe and Drug-Free Schools at current levels and cuts Dropout Demonstrations funding by only \$2 million. A conference committee will need to iron out differences between the House and Senate versions. Final enactment of any rescissions requires Presidential approval or override of a Presidential veto. Final action on these rescissions is not anticipated until mid-May.

JTPA-Funded In-School and Summer Youth Programs

Local JTPA agencies sponsor a variety of in-school and summer youth programs. These include programs that emphasize pre-employment skills training, traditional vocational technical programs that are modified to emphasize academic remediation, alternative learning programs for students who are not able to succeed in traditional schools, and summer employment programs with academic components.

Local JTPA agencies, school districts, and community-based organizations are involved in operating these programs. Sometimes the local JTPA agency contracts directly with a local school district to provide in-school and/or summer youth programs. At other times the JTPA program or a community-based agency may operate the program.²

Pre-Employment Skills Training

Most high school programs that receive JTPA funds emphasize preparing youth for employment. Although a few programs concentrate solely on pre-employment skills training, most combine this type of training, which includes career planning, with work experience and academic remediation.

One such program is the Allentown City School District. This JTPA-sponsored program emphasizes basic education skills in reading, writing, and other academic areas. Students in the program explore different career options and receive training in finding job opportunities, completing job applications, writing resumes, and interviewing. This program also provides students the opportunity to gain work experience and teaches the importance of having good attitudes to get along with others at work. The Pittsburgh Catholic Educational Program is another example of a JTPA program that has a pre-employment skills training component. (The in-school portion of this program is funded with Title II-C SEG funds. See discussion on PAC below.) It provides JTPA eligible youth in the

²For example, the Pittsburgh school district is involved in offering JTPA youth programs. The local JTPA office in Pittsburgh also contracts with the Northview Heights Citizen Council to provide after-school, pre-employment skills training, and summer programs. JTPA eligible youth residing within Pittsburgh city limits can participate in this program regardless of the school district in which the youth live.

Woodland Hills, Highland, McKeesport, and Sto Rox school districts with pre-employment and basic life skills training, academic remediation, counseling, and work experience.

Alternative Learning Programs

Alternative learning programs provide youth who are not able to cope with the traditional school environment a way of acquiring academic credentials and skills training. This type of program can also help attract dropouts back into school. Some programs are self-contained, others are schools within schools, and some are operated in whole or in part by community groups or businesses.

Lancaster County school districts offer such an alternative learning program for at-risk youths. The program started in November 1993 and, therefore, has not had a sufficient track record to be evaluated. It is a partnership among nine Lancaster County school districts, the Lancaster/Lebanon Intermediate Unit, Lancaster's local JTPA office, and a community service organization. Some program features include flexible, integrated academic and vocational curricula, competency-based and self-paced learning, and strict standards of discipline and performance. From November 1993 to June 1994, the Academy enrolled 79 students, 16 of whom graduated in June 1994. The Academy anticipates that 20 students will graduate in June 1995.

Pennsylvania Career Program for Youth (PAC)

PAC, a collaborative effort of the Department of Education and the Department of Labor and Industry, received \$2.8 million in 1994-95. It is funded with PDE's JTPA/SEG funding and state matching funds. In 1994-95, 20 of the 28 local JTPA Service Delivery areas are working with 58 Pennsylvania school districts on the PAC initiative.³ Appendix R lists the SDAs and school districts involved in PAC.

PAC combines and expands on two previous PDE programs: Jobs for Pennsylvania Graduates (JPG) and the Summer Training and Education Program (STEP). These two programs have been shown to be effective in helping at-risk youth to make academic gains, graduate, and successfully transition into the work force. By combining the two programs, PDE is involving secondary school students earlier in their high school career with in-school programming through (JPG), and providing programming during the school year which reinforces the academic and other gains achieved by at-risk youth who have participated in the summer STEP program.

³Local SDAs invest considerably more funds in PAC and similar programs than the reported \$2.8 million. PAC funds do not support financial stipends received by participants in the summer component of the program. Local JTPA agencies use other sources of funds for such stipends.

The JPG program is based on the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program, the nation's largest, most consistently applied model of school-to-work transition for at-risk youth. Pennsylvania is one of 20 states and the District of Columbia to have adapted this national school-to-work model.⁴ The U.S. Secretary of Labor has noted that JAG is a pioneer in connecting schools with the workplace and provides a network to help implement the federal School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994. In Pennsylvania, some of the PAC programs are also involved in the School-to-Work and the PA Youth Apprenticeship Programs discussed later in this chapter. One example of this is the Altoona Area School District. As a consequence, these local PAC programs provide student participants with the option of being linked with these programs.

JPG helps selected high school seniors graduate, prepares them for the realities of the workplace, and helps them transition to the job market. JPG students work with career/job specialists to develop individual graduation and career plans. They take part in a comprehensive competency-based program promoting personal and employability skills wanted by today's employers. Students have an opportunity to be involved in a youth association that fosters self-esteem and leadership skills. They can participate in part-time jobs prior to graduation and are helped to transition to full-time employment.

For the past 14 years the national program, of which PA's program is a part, has demonstrated success. For the 1992 class, the graduation rate was 90.5 percent, 81.1 percent of the graduates transitioned into the work force during the nine month follow-up period after graduation, and 48.8 percent of the employed graduates received increased work hours, and/or increased salary or promotions during the follow-up period. Employers participating in the program found that they felt JAG graduates were well prepared for their initial job, and 82 percent confirmed a willingness to employ future graduates. Similarly favorable results are reported for graduates in Pennsylvania's program.

The summer component of the PAC program is based on STEP. Thirty-seven of the 58 school districts participating in PAC had participated in one of its predecessor programs, the STEP program. STEP was a summertime dropout prevention program (since summer is a time when youth have much unstructured time) designed to capitalize on the need of low-income youth (14 and 15 year olds) for both income and added support as they moved from middle to high school and approached the age when they can legally drop out of school. It enriched that work experience with academic remediation in reading and math using two specially created curricula, advanced teaching methods, computer-assisted instruction, and high engagement classes focusing on responsible social and sexual behavior, drug use, careers, and community involvement. STEP was designed as a short-term low cost intervention.

⁴Other such states include, for example, Massachusetts, California, Ohio, Delaware, Florida, and Virginia.

STEP was independently evaluated and shown to have had positive short-term results. According to evaluation findings, STEP youth--all of whom were below grade academically and one-third of whom had been held back in school--had high attendance rates in the program and a high return rate (75 percent) for the second summer. When compared to a control group which only had summer jobs, youth who completed the STEP program had test scores that were approximately a half-grade higher in both reading and math and showed substantial improvement in their knowledge of pregnancy prevention.

The long term follow-up research, however, found that these improvements were not sustained. Several years after finishing the program, STEP participants were no better off than the youth in the control group who had summer jobs only. STEP youth had dropped out of school at the same rate and showed no improvement in early labor market performance or reduction in rates of teen pregnancies.

According to the evaluators, STEP demonstrated that with investment in staff development, successful programs to serve at-risk youth can be introduced in urban and rural areas. The program can have a positive effect on teenagers who have already experienced failure in school. STEP filled a critical gap in the lives of disadvantaged youth--the summer. It provided them with an important introduction to the experience of working, protected them from the summer learning losses typical of their peers, and increased their knowledge of the dangers of early parenting. The results, however, underscored the need for reinforcement at the end of the summer program. For this reason, the PAC program has been designed to encourage schools and JTPA agencies to provide a continuum of career oriented services and employment throughout the year.

JTPA-Funded Out-of-School Programs

JTPA Title II-C also funds programs for out-of-school youth. Many of these programs are targeted to young adults who have completed school or who have obtained a GED and, therefore, cannot be considered truancy or dropout prevention programs. Below are discussed two types of out-of-school programs that are intended to provide high school or high school equivalent degrees to program participants.

GED Programs

Many local JTPA agencies sponsor GED programs for youth who have dropped out of school. These programs are carried out by local education agencies and by community-based agencies. For example, Philadelphia offers several GED programs through community-based organizations. Examples of such programs are Aspira and CORA. Philadelphia's JTPA agency contracts with Aspira to provide

Latino youths with education and job training opportunities. Training consists of GED preparation courses in English and Spanish, basic skills remediation, career development, and pre-employment skills training.

CORA Services is another GED program in Philadelphia. Participants receive instruction in literature, social studies and science, writing skills, and math to prepare for the GED examination. The program also provides pre-employment skills training, which includes career exploration, interviewing techniques, resume writing, and job applications skills. Teen parents receive additional instruction on health and parenting.

Several independent academic research efforts have found that the availability of a GED degree is important to those who need to quickly certify their basic skills. However, the research also indicates that a GED serves primarily as a necessary credential for further education. One study found that, on average, GED recipients earn only about 5 to 10 percent more than high school dropouts. This study concluded that a GED, by itself, does not appear to improve the recipients' labor market prospects.

Reentry Programs

In Lancaster, the school district, local JTPA agency, and the Spanish American Civic Association (SACA) work together to help at-risk youth by offering a reentry program. The program carried out by SACA encourages youths to return to school and if this is not feasible, to enroll in a job training or GED program. The program began in September 1994, and by February 1995, 26 JTPA-eligible students had enrolled in the program. Of the 26 students, 10 returned to a traditional high school, 8 are still in the program, and 8 have not completed the program for various reasons (e.g., incarceration or family problems). Starting in September 1995 students will receive high school credit for participating in the program.

School-to-Work and Youth Apprenticeship Programs

School-to-Work

In May 1994 Congress passed the School-to-Work Opportunities Act. This initiative is intended to help school-age youth who participate in school-to-work programs achieve high academic and occupational standards, prepare for further post-secondary education and training, and prepare for first jobs in high-skill, high-wage careers. The School-to-Work program includes:

- A planned program of training and structured work experiences integrated with school-based learning.

- A selection of career major and a study program designed to meet state academic standards.
- Acquisition of a skills certificate and preparation for post-secondary education.
- Effective secondary-post-secondary linkages.
- Exposure to an array of career opportunities.
- Integration of academic and vocational learning.
- Assistance in finding jobs and continuing education and training.

All 50 states received developmental grants to plan school-to-work programs. Although Pennsylvania was not awarded an initial implementation grant for the federal school-to-work program, the Commonwealth is using state and other federal funds for this initiative. For 1994-95, these sources include state Youth Apprenticeship Funds (\$450,000), federal Carl D. Perkins Leadership Funds (\$186,000), and Pennsylvania Economic Development Funds (\$158,000). See Table 9 for 1994-95 funding by site. PDE officials expect additional implementation grants to become available later this year.

PA's Youth Apprenticeship Program

Pennsylvania had already begun to develop a School-to-Work type program, known as the Youth Apprenticeship Program. The Youth Apprenticeship Program began in 1991 as a pilot project in Lycoming County. By the 1993-94 school year 361 students at 16 sites throughout the state participated in the program. Students in the program spend two days per week at the worksite receiving training from a skilled worker. Three days each week the students are taught by a team of teachers using a curriculum which integrates academic, technical, and occupational education.

A student who successfully completes the four-year program will have a high school diploma, a certificate of recognized skills and knowledge in an occupation, postsecondary credits applicable toward an Associates Degree and transferable to a four-year institution, and the opportunity to continue his education to earn an associates degree in a technical field and/or a bachelor's degree.

Because it is a new program, little quantitative evaluation information is available on the Youth Apprenticeship Program. A September 1993 preliminary evaluation of the first six sites suggested a modest degree of success in enrollment and retention rates. Eighty-eight of the 104 participating students completed the year. The report notes that some who did not continue in the program enrolled in other vocational programs. Students and parents expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the program. Department of Education officials told us they plan to undertake a more comprehensive evaluation of the successor school-to-work program in late 1995. A late April meeting is planned to construct the evaluation design.

Table 9

**Pennsylvania's School-to-Work Program
(Youth Apprenticeship Program)**

1994-95

<u>Grantee</u>	<u>Commonwealth Funding</u>
Altoona AVTS	\$ 30,000
Beattie Tech	30,000
Chester County IU	30,000
Derry Township School District.....	30,000
Franklin County AVTS	30,000
Greater Lehigh Valley Consortium	60,000
Industrial Modernization Center.....	36,000
Lancaster County AVTS	30,000
Lebanon County AVTS.....	30,000
McKeesport AVTS	30,000
Mercer County Career Center	30,000
North Montgomery County AVTS	30,000
Northern Tier Industry & Education Consortium	68,000
Northwest Tri-County IU.....	30,000
Philadelphia School District	90,000
Pittsburgh School District	30,000
Schuylkill County AVTS	30,000
Somerset County AVTS	30,000
St. Marys Area School District	30,000
Western Area AVTS	30,000
Western Montgomery County AVTS	30,000
York County AVTS.....	<u>30,000</u>
Total.....	<u>\$794,000</u>

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education.

VII. Dropout and Truancy Prevention Programs in Other States

Since the publication of *A Nation At Risk* in the mid-1980s, states have placed increasing attention on education and the problem of high school dropouts. Many states established programs for pre-schoolers, pregnant and parenting teens, and incarcerated youth. They also established programs for substance abuse prevention, dropout prevention, education for dropouts, and bilingual and English as a Second Language programs.

According to a 1988 survey by the Council of Chief State School Officers, the new programs to serve at-risk youth are generally small, categorical programs that often rely on federal funds. States have also stressed interagency cooperation and collaboration, including collaboration with the business sector and local Job Training Partnership Act programs. Appendix S lists the Council's 1993 recommendations for addressing at-risk behavior.

A few states, however, have gone beyond establishing small, categorical programs. Some states, Wisconsin in particular, have used fiscal sanctions as a way of promoting improved school attendance. Florida requires that pregnant and parenting teens be given special school services. Illinois and New York have also invested extensive state funding in attendance promotion and dropout prevention projects. These states are discussed below, and Appendix I contains additional examples of dropout and truancy prevention efforts in other states.

In 1988 the U.S. Department of Education began funding 89 school dropout demonstration projects across the nation. A preliminary report on these projects addressed the program characteristics of promising dropout prevention strategies. Twenty-three of the demonstration projects are being more fully evaluated, and a report on impacts and student outcomes was to be released in February 1995. The report's release date, however, has been moved to spring 1996.

Dropout and Truancy Prevention Efforts in Selected Other States

Learnfare

Wisconsin implemented a Learnfare demonstration to promote school attendance for students in families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) benefits. Wisconsin obtained a series of waivers from the federal Department of Health and Human Services to implement this demonstration in the 1980s for teenagers aged 13 through 19. In general, this demonstration requires attendance at a traditional high school or participation in some other type of educational

programming (e.g., GED or English as a Second Language) as a condition for receipt of AFDC benefits. Families with children who have unexcused absences can have their monthly AFDC benefits reduced. Detailed information about the Wisconsin Learnfare demonstration can be found in our April 1994 report entitled *Commonwealth Programs and Initiatives for Pregnant and Parenting Teens*.

In September 1994 the Wisconsin demonstration was expanded to younger school-age children on an experimental basis in four counties, phased in over three years beginning September 1, 1994. Children aged 10 through 12 were covered in 1994 and younger age groups will be covered in 1995 and 1996. Like Learnfare for older youth, preteens of AFDC families are required to be enrolled in school and to have fewer than ten unexcused absences in each semester. Unlike teenagers, whose family's grant can be reduced based on school attendance alone, a preteen's family may avoid financial sanctions if the family cooperates with a case manager to address the preteen's school attendance problems. Case managers are expected to assess families' needs, develop family service plans, and assist in the implementation of such plans. As long as the family of a preteen is cooperating with a case manager the family's grant will not be reduced, regardless of enrollment or attendance.

Wisconsin's Legislative Audit Bureau is now evaluating the Learnfare program. The preliminary study, based on one out of six semesters in the evaluation period, found that when all Learnfare teenagers are considered together, they had slightly better levels of school enrollment and better rates of attendance and unexcused absences than the comparison group. However, these results are not statistically significant and, therefore, cannot be attributed to Learnfare.

For some specific age groups, however, the study results could be attributed to the Learnfare program. These results, however, are mixed. For example, 16- and 17-year olds responded more positively than other age groups to Learnfare. The researchers attribute the positive response of this group possibly to the alternative education programs which were available to these youth. In contrast, 14- and 15-year olds attended school less frequently under Learnfare. This group had statistically significant higher rates of unexcused absences than students who were not enrolled in Learnfare. All of these results are preliminary and insufficient to determine if the program's goals of school completion and economic self-sufficiency will be achieved as a result of Learnfare according to Wisconsin's Audit Bureau.

Pennsylvania has also proposed a Learnfare demonstration project. Act 1994-49 instructs the Department of Public Welfare to submit a waiver request to the federal government seeking approval to operate a Learnfare Program in seven areas of Pennsylvania. Under the program described in the act, the County Boards of Assistance are responsible for monitoring the school attendance of AFDC children and youth ages 8 through 18. When the number of unexcused absences in any one

school month exceeds three full days, the County Board of Assistance must notify the head of the AFDC household of the attendance problem and the possible imposition of sanctions. If the County Board determines that in any subsequent month within the school year the student continues to have an attendance problem, the County Board must take steps to reduce the monthly family size allowance by \$65 dollars for each AFDC child who fails to meet the attendance requirements. This sanction is imposed for each month that the child fails to meet the attendance requirement. For dropouts, the sanction remains in effect until the family provides written proof from the school district that the youth has re-enrolled and has met the attendance requirements for one month.

The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare's Office of Income Maintenance submitted a waiver application for the Learnfare program, officially known as the School Attendance Improvement Program Demonstration Project, on September 8, 1994. As of late March 1995, the Department had not yet received approval of the waiver request from the federal government.

Florida's Dropout Prevention Programs

Florida funds a wide range of dropout prevention programs and requires that school districts implement a teen parent program that provides educational and ancillary services. Ancillary services include child care, health care, social services, parenting education, and transportation. Additionally, Florida schools must give pregnant and parenting students the option of participating in regular classroom activities or enrolling in a special program designed to meet their needs.

Florida increases the state subsidy it gives to schools for students participating in several different types of dropout prevention programs. These include alternative programs for students who are overage for their grade level, substance abuse programs, disciplinary programs, and youth service programs for students in detention facilities or mental health, mental retardation, or other programs for dependent and disabled youth. Appendix U contains additional information about these programs. In 1994-95, Florida expects to give school districts up to an additional \$137.8 million in subsidies for these programs.

The most recent report on the effectiveness of Florida's program is based on the 1992-93 school year. In that year, 14 percent of all students in grades 4 through 12 were served in one of the programs. The statistics for the students who participated in these programs are:

- 66 percent of the 12th graders graduated
- 87 percent were promoted at the end of the school year
- 2 percent of the students 6 to 15 years of age were habitual truants

Eight percent of students 16 years and older who participated in these programs dropped out of school. This compares with a dropout rate of 17 percent for program participants in 1990-91. The Florida evaluators, however, point out that the expected dropout rate for the students served in these programs is 50 percent or greater. Despite the large investment of state funding, only 31 percent of the students who dropped out of school in the 1992-93 school year were served in one of these programs.

Illinois' Truants Alternative and Optional Education Programs

In the 1980s Illinois began a competitive grant program to encourage local educational agencies to serve truants and dropouts. Eligible agencies include school districts, regional educational agencies, and community colleges. In 1993 Illinois awarded \$27.6 million in grants to serve 34,400 students. The program used \$17.2 million in state funds and \$10.4 million in federal funds.

The primary goal of the Illinois program is to reduce chronic truancy and the incidence of school dropout. Services include counseling, tutoring, monitoring, medical care, child care, attendance incentives, and transportation. Optional services, such as summer school, evening school, and alternative schools, can also be provided. Thirty-five percent of the grant money was spent for such options.

In terms of outcomes, in 1993, 11 percent of the participants graduated from high school, 1 percent received a GED certificate, 58 percent were promoted to the next grade, 9 percent improved attendance, 3 percent improved academic achievement, 2 percent returned to regular school, and 4 percent received academic credits. According to Illinois evaluators, the positive outcomes are due largely to grade promotions. However, some of the students who were promoted may not have improved attendance or academic achievement. Their promotion was partly a consequence of the "no student retention" policy of several participating schools. In these instances, the positive outcomes could not be attributed to the services provided.

Forty-four percent of the program participants were referred for program services because of school absenteeism. For this group, school attendance improved after program participation. The evaluators noted, however, that all of those referred for school absences may not have been chronic truants. A standard definition of chronic absenteeism was not used by schools. As a result, a student who attended 95 percent of the time in a school district with an average attendance rate of 96 percent could have been referred to the program for chronic absences. In districts with average attendance rates of 85 percent, such a student may not have been referred.

The Illinois researchers also cautioned that the positive outcomes may not have been due to services provided through the grant program because over 66

percent of the program participants were also served in the state's Bilingual Education, Hispanic Dropout Prevention, Migrant Education, and Chapter 1 programs.

New York State's Attendance Incentive/Dropout Prevention Program

New York invested significant funding in the mid-1980s in school districts for attendance incentives and dropout prevention programs. Services included site coordinators at each participating school, attendance outreach programs, guidance and counseling services, a health service program providing diagnostic screening and referral for appropriate follow-up services, activities to ease the transition from middle school to high school, and alternative education programs involving basic skills instruction and individualized attention. In 1993-94, New York spent \$46.8 million in state funds on this program, of which \$40.8 million went to New York City. Nineteen of New York's 716 school districts participated.

In the mid-1980s New York City's program was evaluated by independent researchers from the Public Education Association and by researchers from Columbia University's Teachers College. In a 1987 report on dropout prevention programs, the U.S. General Accounting Office highlighted some of the findings from these two evaluations. The GAO noted that, while youth in these programs may respond to the social services and employment assistance provided through the programs, such aid alone does not automatically translate into success in school. The GAO also noted that improvements in the school setting may be needed if special efforts to help at-risk youth are to be effective.

According to the Public Education Association's evaluation, the effectiveness of dropout prevention:

Is ultimately dependent on the schools' directing resources and attention to their overall instructional policies and considering how those policies interact with their specific dropout prevention programs If the at-risk are to succeed in mainstreamed academic programs, a host of issues from school and class size, admissions, credits, and security policies, to the focus on instruction and quality of staff development activities must be addressed.

The evaluations also found that implementation difficulties can limit program effectiveness. For example, the programs were not always successful in involving parents. Home visits were considered of particular value, but due to scheduling difficulties, the time involved, and other problems such visits were not pursued extensively.

Finding staff interested in working with truants and in after-school hours activities also proved to be a problem. This occurred because truants are viewed as unmotivated and difficult to work with. According to one report, staff will seek

other assignments unless special staff development, including use of school psychologists, guidance counselors, and instructional staff experienced in meeting the problems of at-risk youth, is conducted to gain staff commitment and help impart skills needed to deal with truants.

The Federal School Dropout Assistance Program

Recognizing the lack of rigorous information about effective dropout prevention programs, in 1988 the U.S. Congress authorized demonstration programs to find successful strategies for reducing the number of high school dropouts. The School Dropout Demonstration Assistance Program (SDDAP) provided funding for local educational agencies, community-based organizations, and educational partnerships to establish and demonstrate:

- Effective programs to identify potential student dropouts and prevent them from dropping out.
- Effective programs to identify and encourage youths who have already dropped out to reenter school and complete their elementary and secondary education.
- Effective programs for early intervention designed to identify students at risk in elementary and early secondary school.
- Model systems for collecting and reporting information to local school officials on the number, ages, and grade levels of youths not completing their elementary and secondary education and the reasons why they have dropped out of school.

In September 1988, 89 projects across the United States were awarded two-year grants which were later extended to a third year. The total for the three years was \$64 million. The U.S. Department of Education funded an ongoing evaluation that began the second year of the program. The evaluation is to answer the following questions:

- What are the organizational characteristics of effective dropout prevention programs?
- What program strategies are most effective in preventing students from dropping out of school? In encouraging dropouts to reenter school?

In 1994 a preliminary report was issued that addressed the organizational characteristics of dropout prevention programs that appeared to be effective. The report concluded:

- The more complex the organizational structure of a dropout prevention initiative (i.e., the greater tendency toward restructuring or

nonschool-based coordination of services), the longer the time period that is likely to be required for startup and the less likely it is there will be evidence of gains for students in the short term.

- Coordination of services has the potential to increase the services that are available, but such efforts require joint planning and review sessions to be successful.
- Providing an array of complementary services may be the most effective way of meeting the needs of students at risk of school failure.

The report notes that effective dropout prevention programs provide:

- Counseling services and adult advocacy for students.
- After-school tutoring and enrichment and having in-class adult friends (elementary level), team teaching strategies, flexible scheduling, and counseling is needed (middle level).
- Paid work, embedded in activities that prepare and monitor students' on-the-job experience (secondary level).

Based on these early observations, the report recommends that dropout prevention programs:

1. Put the services in rather than pull the students out.
2. Deliver the services without calling attention to the fact that "special services" are being provided.
3. Deliver the services within a supportive climate that includes adults as student advocates.
4. Provide students with substantive incentives to participate.
5. Carefully select, train, and support the staff persons providing the services.

To sustain a dropout prevention initiative, programs should:

1. Reinforce staff commitments to the program (team spirit).
2. Keep staff fresh in pursuit of dropout prevention goals (challenge).
3. Establish connections to existing programs (bridging).

The School Dropout Demonstration Assistance Program continued funding for 65 projects in FY 1991. A second phase of evaluation is being conducted on 23 of these projects, including several school restructuring projects. The second phase will (1) describe and evaluate the effectiveness of projects funded by the program and (2) identify the program's components or strategies that are most effective in improving academic performance of at-risk students and preventing students from dropping out of school.

A report on this second phase of the evaluation discussing program impacts and student outcomes was scheduled for release in February 1995. A final report, including cost effectiveness, was due in February 1996. We had anticipated incorporating the findings of the February 1995 report in our report. However, in January 1995 we were informed that the February 1995 target date had been moved to spring 1996.¹ While U.S. Department of Education staff would not comment on the preliminary findings and conclusions, they did indicate that they are increasingly recognizing the importance of counseling in all dropout and prevention programs.

¹An implementation report that documents strategies and approaches, scheduled for release in fall 1994, has also been delayed, until summer 1995.

VIII. Appendices

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION**No. 386**Session of
1994

INTRODUCED BY EVANS, VEON, COY, BELARDI, MIHALICH, KAISER,
PISTELLA, BATTISTO, LAUB, ROBINSON, TIGUE, ROONEY, STABACK,
PRESTON, MASLAND, E. Z. TAYLOR, GEIST, J. TAYLOR, FAIRCHILD,
KASUNIC, MARKOSEK, VAN HORNE, PESCI, STURLA, GODSHALL, MUNDY,
SATHER, SURRA, L. I. COHEN, TRELLO, FAJT, BOYES, STEELMAN,
COLAFELLA, GIGLIOTTI, RICHARDSON, JOSEPHS, MANDERINO, COWELL,
SCRIMENTI, TANGRETTI AND DeWEESE, OCTOBER 3, 1994

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES, OCTOBER 3, 1994

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to
2 conduct a study identifying all relevant programs that target
3 school dropout prevention and truancy, assessing the
4 effectiveness of these programs and evaluating other programs
5 that have the potential to impact dropout and truancy rates
6 in this Commonwealth and to make recommendations to the House
7 of Representatives.

8 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives has established The
9 Pennsylvania Anti-Violence Education Initiative (PAVE) to study
10 the causes of violence in schools and communities and to
11 evaluate programs that seek to prevent violent behavior among
12 this Commonwealth's youth; and

13 . WHEREAS, One of the key components of this effort is to
14 foster a comprehensive solution for strengthening the
15 educational experience for this Commonwealth's at-risk youth;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Effective truancy and dropout prevention programs
18 are integral to this effort; and

Appendix A (Continued)

1 WHEREAS, In the 1991-1992 school year, 18,085 students
2 dropped out of public schools in this Commonwealth; and

3 WHEREAS, Approximately one in five public school students
4 drops out of school between grade 7 and grade 12; and

5 WHEREAS, Of the 1991-1992 dropouts, approximately 30% were
6 unemployed and approximately 26% were employed as unskilled
7 laborers; and

8 WHEREAS, Forty percent of young women drop out of school due
9 to pregnancy, and dropouts are twice as likely to become
10 frequent drug users; and

11 WHEREAS, Although school dropout rates in this Commonwealth
12 have declined since 1989, the dropout rate is still a source of
13 significant concern for Pennsylvania, which must reduce this
14 amount by 50% to achieve its National Education Goals; and

15 WHEREAS, Truancy is also on the rise in this Commonwealth;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Figures supplied by the Auditor General show that on
18 any given day in the Philadelphia Public School System,
19 approximately 27,000 of the 191,000 students are absent from
20 school; and

21 WHEREAS, In secondary schools in Philadelphia, nearly 40% of
22 these absences are unexcused; and

23 WHEREAS, In a single school year, 5 million days of learning
24 are lost due to absence, much of it unexcused; and

25 WHEREAS, Truant students are increasingly engaging in high-
26 risk behavior, which often requires intervention by county
27 children and youth agencies across this Commonwealth; and

28 WHEREAS, Dropping out of school and truancy are not isolated
29 developments but rather two stark consequences of a multitude of
30 problems facing at-risk youth in this Commonwealth; and

19940H0386R4252

- 2 -

Appendix A (Continued)

1 WHEREAS, A comprehensive and integrated solution, which joins
2 together schools, job training programs, employers and community
3 service programs, is needed to curb the proliferation of these
4 at-risk youth in this Commonwealth; and

5 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth has a dropout prevention program
6 known as the Successful Students' Partnership, which is
7 administered by the Department of Education; and

8 WHEREAS, The Department of Labor and Industry and the
9 Department of Public Welfare provide relevant programs for at-
10 risk youth; and

11 WHEREAS, Successful dropout prevention and truancy programs
12 and services are provided in other states and include programs
13 that provide intensive education and support services for
14 individuals that are designated as disadvantaged potential
15 dropouts; and

16 WHEREAS, There is a need for a thorough assessment of the
17 effectiveness of the programs for at-risk youth administered in
18 this Commonwealth, particularly those programs not specifically
19 earmarked as dropout prevention or truancy programs, but which
20 have a positive effect on keeping Pennsylvania youth in school;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, It is imperative to consider those programs for at-
23 risk youth that have been implemented in other states; therefore
24 be it

25 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the
26 Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to undertake a
27 comprehensive review of the various dropout prevention and
28 truancy programs, as well as those programs that indirectly
29 provide assistance to at-risk youth, such as summer youth jobs
30 and vocational apprenticeship training; and be it further

Appendix A (Continued)

1 RESOLVED, That the report shall include, but not be limited
2 to, the following:

3 (1) A description of the various programs and services
4 offered in this Commonwealth.

5 (2) An analysis of the effectiveness of these programs.

6 (3) Information on the cost of the programs and the
7 number of students served in this Commonwealth.

8 (4) Information on the funding streams utilized.

9 (5) Information on available non-State funding sources
10 and the extent to which these sources have been accessed and
11 maximized by this Commonwealth.

12 (6) An analysis of the most viable programs that have
13 been implemented with success in other states, as well as the
14 successful community-based programs that exist.

15 (7) Recommendations for future programs and services by
16 this Commonwealth, including a discussion of any statutory or
17 regulatory changes needed for the implementation of these
18 recommendations;

19 and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee
21 submit the report to the House of Representatives no later than
22 six months after the adoption of this resolution.

Cooking the Books on Dropout Rates

By Richard Fossey
and Jim Garvin

"Was I sleeping while the others suffered? Am I sleeping now?" —Samuel Beckett, "Waiting for Godot"

Several years ago, Harold Hodgkinson, the eminent education demographer, listed in a magazine article the states with the highest dropout rates. Louisiana, where we live and teach, was shown to have a dropout rate of 39.9 percent, the second-highest rate in the country. Last year, the Annie E. Casey Foundation ranked the states based on the percentage of students who don't graduate on time. Louisiana was ranked dead last. An astonishing 44 percent of Louisiana students, the rankings suggest, do not graduate from high school with their age group.

But the Louisiana Department of Education also calculates dropout rates, based on annual reports from parish school districts. According to the department, only 3.66 percent of students in grades 7-12 dropped out of school in 1991-92. The department's much lower dropout rate consists of the percentage of Louisiana public school students who drop out of grades 7 through 12 in any given year as reported by local districts.

Of course dropout rates vary depending on how they are defined. But there comes a point when a definition becomes deceptive, and we have reached that point in Louisiana. In East Baton Rouge Parish, for example, the 51st-largest school district in the nation, 40 percent of the students who were in 9th grade in 1990 did not graduate in 1993. The district reported a dropout rate of only 2.6 percent. Orleans Parish, the nation's 28th-largest district, lost more than half of its 9th graders before graduation and reported a dropout rate of 3.9 percent. In St. John the Baptist Parish, an astonishing 59.1 percent of a cohort of 9th graders failed to graduate with their class in 1993, the second-highest loss of any Louisiana parish. Its reported dropout rate? Only 1.5 percent, among the lowest in the state.

But few Louisiana districts can match the published dropout rate of Lafayette Parish, a district of 29,000 students, where 37 percent of the 1990 students in 9th grade failed to graduate on time. Lafayette reported that only 22 students dropped out of grades 7 through 12 in 1993, and it calculated its dropout rate to be two-tenths of 1 percent.

As the Louisiana education department has pointed out, not every child who departs a school district between 9th and 12th grade is a dropout. Some students transfer to other districts, some enter private schools, and some enroll in adult-education classes in order to obtain a General Educational Development diploma. But in Louisiana, at least, these three alternative possibilities account for very few of the missing students.

According to a recent study, most Louisiana residents who enroll in G.E.D.-preparation classes are over 25 years old. Only 3 percent of these students are between the ages of 16 and 18. So it is apparent that very few of the state's departing teenagers substitute the G.E.D. for a high school diploma. Virtually all Louisiana dropouts who pursue the G.E.D. do it when they are older.

Moreover, very few of Louisiana's army of high school deserters enrolled in private schools. We examined private school enrollments for the three years prior to 1993 and generally found no spike in enrollment in grades 9 through 12. In fact, private schools gained enrollment between the 9th and 12th grades in only five of the state's 64 parishes. Some of the other 59 parishes had no private

high schools. And in the remaining parishes where private high schools existed, private high school enrollment either held steady or declined.

It is true, of course, that some of the missing students from each district's 1990 cohort of 9th graders merely transferred to another Louisiana school district and are not dropouts. Nevertheless, more than 26,000 Louisiana students who were 9th graders in 1990 failed to graduate from any Louisiana high school in 1993—a 43.9 percent enrollment loss for the state as a whole.

We do not think very many of these missing students moved out of Louisiana. During the three years prior to the 1993 graduation date, Louisiana's population grew by an estimated 1.7 percent. Louisiana's student-attrition rate has been high for many years, and we discern

Michelle Fine wrote of New York City schools that manipulated their attendance figures to maintain artificially high enrollment levels.

In fact, Louisiana parishes' reported dropout rates illustrate what is true in many communities across the United States: The percentage of students dropping out of high school is much higher than is publicly acknowledged. For every American, a high school diploma is the barest minimum survival kit against a life of poverty. Indeed, as Richard Murnane and Frank Levy have pointed out, real income for high school graduates who don't go on to college has declined over the past 25 years. Young people who do not complete high school stand almost no chance of obtaining economic security. So it is critical from the standpoint of public policy that we have accurate information about the education status of American youths.

Our society would not tolerate this lack of accountability if the commodity being measured were money instead of children. If a bank lost 37 percent of its investment over four years, would it accept a report that its annual loss was .02 percent?

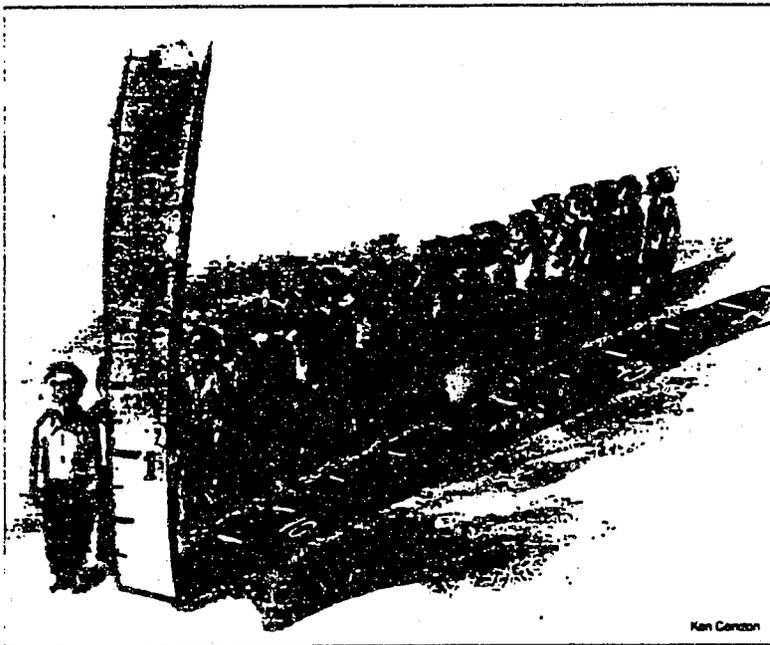
Clearly, the dropout rates reported by many Louisiana districts are inadequate to inform educators and the public about the status of public education in the state. And if these numbers are worthless, which some obviously are, what does that suggest about all the other calculations and reports that are being generated by school districts?

Too often, the education community treated the condition of our schools as a public-relations problem to be managed rather than a human crisis that must be solved. And in this regard, it has been fairly successful. The public is largely unaware of how many children are failing to receive even the most basic education in many of our nation's schools.

But, in our inner cities and poor rural communities, where more than half the students drop out of school before graduation, and where many who graduate are

unprepared for college or the workplace, it is not too much to say that public education is very near collapse. In these settings, the condition of American youths can be likened to a forest fire that consumes a portion of tomorrow's workforce and moral citizenry with every passing day. The education establishment—state education officials, college professors, school administrators, and union leaders—may lull themselves into believing the time is not critical, that school reform can be accomplished on a schedule that meets our convenience and does not threaten our personal interests. But if we do not recognize the problems of our children for the emergency that it is, eventually this fire will consume us all. Sure! one step toward action is to tell the truth about the magnitude of the dropout problem.

Richard Fossey is an associate professor of education law and policy at Louisiana State University. Jim Garvin is an assistant professor of education at Louisiana State University.



Ken Condon

no trends in U.S. Census data that suggest a significant, long-term migration of 15-, 16-, and 17-year-olds out of the state.

In sum, we believe that most of the Louisiana youths who failed to graduate on time in 1993 are truly dropouts. Thus, in Louisiana at least, any definition of dropout rates that masks the fact that high numbers of students fail to graduate with their classmates is misleading.

By calling attention to our state's high dropout rates, we are not saying this is solely a Louisiana problem. The percentage of students who fail to graduate on time is high all across the Southern rim of the United States; it exceeds 30 percent in Arizona, California, Florida, New Mexico, Mississippi, and Texas. As for other parts of the country, New York State's dropout rates are high, particularly in the state's eight largest cities; and, according to Donald Moore and Suzanne Davenport, in a group of inner-city Chicago schools, only 4 percent of a cohort of children both graduated on time and read at grade level.

Nor are we saying that Louisiana districts are the only communities to understate the magnitude of their dropout problems. In their book *The Closing Door*, Gary Orfield and Carol Ashkinaze wrote that the Atlanta public schools reported an annual dropout rate of 4.7 percent, while a working paper prepared in connection with the authors' study reported an attrition rate of 39 percent—eight times higher. And in *Framing Dropouts*,

Source: Reprinted with permission from *Education Week*, Volume XIV, Number 22, February 22, 1995.

APPENDIX C

Programs in the Philadelphia School District

The School District of Philadelphia is the fifth largest school district in the nation. The school district provides a wide range of programs designed to address truancy and dropout prevention. The following provides a brief description of some of these programs.

- **Cities-in-Schools (CIS)** is a public/private partnership responsible for charter programs in thirteen high schools across Philadelphia. These schools-within-schools serve at-risk students by increasing graduation rates and assisting students with the transition from high school to higher education and/or employment. The program is designed to promote and facilitate the coordinated delivery of existing health, social, academic, and other support services at educational sites for at-risk youth and their families.
- **Successful Students' Partnership Program (SSP)** is a major component of Philadelphia's Cities-in-Schools (CIS) program. SSP funds supplement the CIS resources to enhance and expand the basic educational program for high risk students. The implementation of SSP in twelve target high schools involved intervention strategies that complement the CIS program. These activities include: staff development; restructuring, cultural activities, career education, personal and career counseling; substance abuse prevention education; partnership with community agencies; parental involvement; and tutoring. According to a school district report, the SSP program has had a positive impact on academic achievement, attendance, dropout rates, discipline problems, and teacher enhancement.
- **ELECT Programs** are intended to assist AFDC pregnant and parenting teens to continue their education and complete high school. The Philadelphia School District offers on-site day care, counseling, referrals, and the opportunity for students to pursue their academic studies.
- **The Philadelphia High School Academies** are four-year vocational preparation programs organized by a partnership of business, labor, community organizations, and the School District of Philadelphia. These schools serve vocationally at-risk youth by linking academic skills, vocational training, and the prospect of employment for graduates. Students receive hands-on work experience, practice interviews, and summer and part-time work/study jobs. Each Academy concentrates on a distinct vocational area such as Applied Electrical Science, Business, Mechanical Sciences, and Health.
- **Essential Schools** is intended to simplify the structure and rethink priorities of individual schools in order to develop an alternative to large, impersonal, comprehensive high schools. Each school's teachers, students, administrators, and

Appendix C (Continued)

parents evolve a plan appropriate to the individual school based on nine common principles. The goal is to improve education by motivating students to be active learners who eventually learn to teach themselves. This program is in place in nine Philadelphia schools.

- **Comprehensive Approach to Schooling Success (CASS).** Three schools in Philadelphia serve as demonstration/training sites for the Comprehensive Approach to Schooling Success. This model joins the efforts of Dr. Wang with the work of Dr. Comer to provide an inclusive education and related service delivery system to meet the diverse needs of all students. Key features of the program include a school development component, and adaptive instruction component and a family involvement and community connection component.
- **Restructuring for Dropout Reduction**, also known as the Gratz Connection, involves restructuring a cluster of 17 schools (a high school, its feeder middle schools and their feeder elementary schools) to improve children's opportunities for school success. Activities include training for principals, supervisors, teachers, and other school staff; family/parent involvement in the planning and execution of the program; identification of potential dropouts and provision of intervention activities; and improving communication between and among individuals and schools.
- **Children Achieving** is a restructuring initiative presented by the superintendent of Philadelphia's Schools intended to develop a performance-based school system.
- **Pennsylvania Career Program for Youth (PAC)** is a cooperative program between the Philadelphia School District, the Private Industry Council of Philadelphia, and community-based organizations to create a system for developing economic self-sufficiency for students. Six Philadelphia schools participate in the PAC program and offer year-round services focused on personal and career development. The program stresses the development of basic academic skills, pre-employment skills, job finding, and interviewing. PAC students are involved in paid employment or unpaid internships in the summer.
- **JTPA Programs.** A number of programs available to students of the Philadelphia school district are funded by JTPA Title II-C grants. As discussed in Chapter VI of this report these programs include activities such as traditional classroom learning, vocational and skills training, work experience opportunities, and GED preparation.
- **Truancy Intervention Project (TIP)** is intended to improve the school attendance of 200 youths, ages 10 to 14, who are at risk of placement due to truancy; to provide family oriented support services; and to train court staff as Parent Effectiveness Trainers. This program was to begin in January 1995 in six

Appendix C (Continued)

elementary/middle schools in North Philadelphia and involves the Philadelphia Family Court, Children & Youth REAAP Unit, and Temple University School of Social Administration.¹

- **School-Based Health Units.** Nine schools in Philadelphia have established School-Based Health Units. These units are intended to improve the health of children in targeted schools through the expansion of health services available in the school. Most sites provide a broad range of screening, preventive and acute care services.
- The **School-Based Probation Unit** in Philadelphia supervises all adjudicated youth who attend one of the 12 schools in the program. Probation Officers work in a particular school building serving juveniles who are on probation. The goal of the school-based unit is to reduce recidivism, increase attendance, and reduce disciplinary referrals.
- **Disciplinary Schools.** There are three disciplinary schools in Philadelphia School District. A student may be placed in a disciplinary school for a Level II or Level III Misbehavior or for continued violations of Level I offenses as identified in the Student Handbook. These types of infractions include possession of a weapon or endangering the health, safety, or welfare of the school community. Placement in a disciplinary school may serve as an alternative to expulsion.
- **Drop Out Retrieval.** Two high schools focus educational efforts on students who have dropped out of school. The Philadelphia Regional High School admits students who have dropped out or who are potential dropouts. Personalized instruction and small class size are emphasized. Carroll School recruits students who have dropped out during the prior school year.
- **ASPIRA** serves inner city youth considered at-risk of dropping out, including non-English speaking youth, who need assistance with the selection or maintenance of a vocational education program. The program is designed to serve students at three Philadelphia high schools with high Latino populations.
- The **Special Alternative Cultural Resource Program** facilitates the linguistic, academic, and cultural transition of language minority students through supplemental assistance in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Social Studies, and Science and through enrichment activities. The program serves three major language groups (Russian, Asian, and Spanish) at two high schools in Philadelphia. This program also targets children who have never been to school and are illiterate in their native tongue.
- The **Bilingual Education Program** at Julia de Burgos Bilingual Middle Magnet School stresses cultural enrichment, curriculum development, parental participation, computer technology in instruction, and identifying potentially gifted

Appendix C (Continued)

minority students. The program is designed to serve both Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and non-LEP gifted and potentially gifted students.

- **The Dropout Prevention Early Intervention Language Program** is designed to reduce the number of students who do not complete elementary and secondary education by providing an early identification and intervention program. This includes a language-based intervention program in grades K-4, parent and teacher training activities, a curriculum-based test of language competence, and coordinated activities with high school faculty and students.
- **Project PRIDE** is a school-based education program offered in the Philadelphia School District. The purpose of the program is to increase youth's resistance to drug use and abuse through weekly small group counseling sessions. The program is a prevention effort targeted to reach youth before there is need for treatment.
- **West Philadelphia Improvement Corps (WEPIC)** is a school and community revitalization project which operates year-round programs in 12 Philadelphia schools. The program provides in-school, extended day, and weekend educational, recreational, cultural, and community service activities for young people and their families.

¹Reasonable Efforts in Assessment, Access and Prevention (REAAP) is a program developed by the Family Court of Philadelphia in cooperation with the City Council, Department of Human Services, the School District and other agencies as an alternative to involvement with the justice system for certain juvenile offenders such as incorrigibles, truants, and runaways. The goals are to divert these cases whenever possible from a formal court proceeding, to provide an assessment, formulate a plan of intervention, and identify appropriate resources for the youth and family.

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff.

APPENDIX D

Some Reasons for Truancy

Health Reasons

- Poor nutrition and subsequent lack of energy.
- Dental problems, some not even causing pain, but which can "poison" the system.
- Vision and/or hearing problems which the child may not recognize, but which thwart any attempt to succeed.
- Asthma or other illness.
- Child abuse and/or neglect: physical, psychological, or sexual.
- Pregnancy.
- Drug or alcohol use and/or abuse.
- Childhood depression.

School Reasons

- Inappropriate programming, causing students to be in classes that are either well beyond or well below their ability.
- Fear of administrators or teachers.
- Uninteresting curriculum.
- Learning style differs from teaching style.
- Teacher burnout.

Cultural Reasons

- The only minority child in the school.
- Rough elements who frighten the child.
- Teasing about heritage or ethnic background.
- Teachers, administrators, or clerks who are unaware of cultural patterns and differences, placing a child in cultural conflict.
- Language problems.

Economic Reasons

- Insufficient food in the house.
- Proper clothing not available.
- Lower economic child in high economic school.
- No funds for transportation.
- Parent out of work.
- Problems communicating with welfare workers.

Appendix D (Continued)

Family Reasons

- Family lack of appreciation for education.
- Family fails to support school in school-child problems.
- Child kept home for babysitting.
- Migrant family with no roots.
- Family sleeps late - no alarm clock.
- Ineffective parenting.
- Inappropriate role models.
- Siblings dropped out of school.
- No supervision - parents working long hours.
- Parent addicted to drugs or alcohol.

Community Reasons

- Inadequate provision for transportation.
- Lack of support for school program.
- Neighborhoods through which child fears to walk to school.
- Gang activity.
- Sparse employment opportunities.
- Lack of or unresponsive community service agencies.

Personal Reasons

- Peer pressure to play "hookey."
- Feelings of rejection and failure.
- Embarrassment due to lack of "current fashion" clothing.
- Perception of being different (overweight or underweight, for instance).
- The child believes that the teacher doesn't like him/her or makes fun of him/her.
- The child doesn't have any friends.

Source: Everything You Need to Know About Student Absenteeism Truancy School Dropout. Used with permission.

APPENDIX E

Pending Bills Relating to Truancy and Dropout Prevention (As of March 15, 1995)

- House Bill 8: Establishing educational programs for disruptive students in order to modify their disruptive behavior and return the students to a regular school program.
- House Bill 38: Requiring the expulsion of students for at least one year for bringing a weapon to school or school activities.
- House Bill 64: Granting authority to state, municipal, port, transit, and housing authority police officers to enforce compulsory attendance laws.
- House Bill 402: Establishing the School Incentive Funding Act to fund programs which remove disruptive students from regular school programs in order to provide those students with an educational program designed to modify disruptive behavior and return the students to a regular school program.
- House Bill 422: Establishing a pilot program to make incentive payments to minor parents to encourage school attendance.
- House Bill 930: Requiring the Department of Education to prepare a report on truancy and submit it to the General Assembly no later than December 31, 1996.
- Senate Bill 250: Providing assistance to academically distressed schools.
- Senate Bill 255: Encouraging collaboration between public schools and social service agencies to develop programs to provide guidance to students in the areas of health, employment assistance, mental health, drug and alcohol abuse, and family counseling.
- Senate Bill 274: Establishing truancy as a summary offense in the Crimes Code.
- Senate Bill 281: Requiring school districts to provide truancy information, along with other information, each year to the Department of Education.
- Senate Bill 288: Establishing educational programs for disruptive students in order to modify their behavior to allow them to return to a regular school program.

Appendix E (Continued)

- Senate Bill 367: Providing grants for alternative education programs.
- Senate Bill 380: Establishing the Student Antiviolence Education (SAVE) grant program.
- Senate Bill 381: Requiring the Department of Education to report to the General Assembly and school districts on alternative education programs for children who violate school policies related to weapons, alcohol, or drugs, who intentionally injure another person, or who have been expelled or suspended.
- Senate Bill 382: Establishing the School Violence Prevention grant program.
- Senate Bill 623: Establishing educational programs for disruptive students; reimbursing school districts up to \$500 per year for each student enrolled in the program.
- Senate Bill 627: Requiring expulsion of students who bring weapons to school; establishing programs for disruptive students.
- Senate Bill 637: Encouraging each school board to establish a parent involvement program to involve parents in their child's academic efforts.

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff.

APPENDIX F

Carl D. Perkins III-A Community-Based Organizations Contracts (FY 1994-95)

<u>Organization and Schools</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Philadelphia School District	
Opportunities Industrialization Center Martin Luther King H.S. Philadelphia Technical School	\$ 67,500
Lutheran Children and Family Services Lincoln H.S. Frankford H.S.....	67,500
Lutheran Social Mission Society Edison H.S. Kensington H.S.....	67,500
ASPIRA, Incorporated of PA Edison H.S. Kensington H.S.....	67,500
Impact Services Corporation Carroll School Gratz H.S.	55,928
Indochinese American Council Olney H.S. University City H.S.	64,774
School District of Lancaster	
Spanish American Civic Association McCaskey H.S. Lancaster County Technical School.....	67,316
School District of Pittsburgh	
Vocational Rehabilitation Center of Pittsburgh Oliver H.S. Langley H.S.	<u>40,862</u>
Total	\$498,880

Source: PA Department of Education.

APPENDIX G

The School District of the City of Allentown (At-Risk Student Programs by Type of School)

Pre-School

Drug & Alcohol (D&A) Prevention Curriculum
Family Centers
Pre-School Programs
Project HAPPY (Helping Achieve Potential
of Preschool Youngsters)
Parent Programs
School-Based Health Services

Elementary School

Casa Guadalupe¹
D&A Prevention Curriculum
Elementary Absenteeism Program
Homeless Student Initiative
Instructional Support Teams/
Student Assistance Program
Parent Programs
School-Based Health Services
School-Based Initiatives
Student Support Groups

Middle School

Casa Guadalupe¹
D&A Prevention Curriculum
Daycare Center
Elementary Absenteeism Program (Grade 6)
Homeless Student Initiative
Interim Program for Pregnant Students
Off-Site Program

Middle School (Cont.)

Parent Programs
Parenting Support
School-Based Initiatives
School-Based Probation
Student Assistance Program
Student Support Groups

High School

Alternate Education Program
Day Care Center
D&A Prevention Curriculum
D&A Aftercare
Diversified Occupation Program
Employment Assistance Strategies
for Youth
Furlough Program
Homeless Student Initiative
Interim Program for Pregnant Students
Mental Health Aftercare
Off-Site Program
Parenting Programs
Parenting Support
School-Based Initiatives
Second Chance
Student Assistance Program
Student Support Groups
Vocational Education Alternative
Learning Center

¹This organization is designed to assist students needing academic tutoring or supportive counseling services and who are experiencing bicultural or adaptation problems in the classroom.

Source: Department of Pupil Services, the School District of the City of Allentown.

APPENDIX H

School-Based Mental Health Grant Proposal Awards for 1994-95, by School District

\$20,000 Awards

1. Allegheny-Clarion Valley School District
2. Centennial School District
3. Chartiers Valley School District
4. Deer Lakes School District
5. Greensburg-Salem School District
6. Harrisburg City School District
7. Lake-Lehman School District
8. Mohawk School District
9. Ringgold School District
10. Scranton School District - Elementary Schools
11. Scranton School District - Intermediate School
12. State College School District
13. West Mifflin School District
14. York City School District

\$10,000 Awards

1. Bethlehem School District
2. Bristol Borough School District
3. Donegal School District
4. Dover School District
5. Farrell School District
6. Hazelton School District
7. Penn-Cambria School District
8. Pittsburgh City School District
9. Ridgeway School District
10. Towanda School District

Source: PA Department of Education.

APPENDIX I

Description of the Coalition of Essential Schools Program

The Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) was begun in 1984 by an educator with Brown University. Through his work with the American educational system he identified a number of shortcomings that applied to both urban and rural schools, regardless of whether they were public or private. The shortcomings he found also appeared to effect both large and small schools. The most dramatic shortcoming he found was that students had little input into a learning process that directly affected them. He developed nine common principles that individual schools could adapt to simplify their structure so that students could better be taught to use their minds well. Allowing for adaptability was considered essential by researchers if schools were going to actively participate in such school reform efforts. The basic aim of the program was to "develop an alternative to large, impersonal, comprehensive high schools--that is, schools in which staff and students function as a community of learners." The nine principles are:

- Schools should focus on helping students learn to use their minds well, rather than attempt to infuse the student with comprehensive knowledge.
- Each student should master a limited number of essential skills and areas of knowledge.
- The school's goals should apply to all students; only the means to these goals should vary.
- Teaching and learning should be personalized to the maximum extent possible; no teacher should have direct responsibility for more than 80 students.
- Teachers should be coaches rather than deliverers of instruction; only then can students learn to teach themselves.
- Diplomas should be awarded on "exhibition" by students of their grasp of the required skills; the emphasis is on students demonstrating they can perform certain skills.
- The tone of the school should be trust and decency.
- The principal and teachers should be generalists rather than specialists in a particular field.
- Per-pupil cost should not exceed the cost of traditional schools plus 10 percent.¹

Appendix J provides a list of schools in Pennsylvania which participated in this program during the 1993-94 school year. As shown by that appendix, 18 different school districts utilized this concept in 27 different elementary, middle, or high schools. The majority of the schools, however, where this program was utilized were high schools.

¹Identified by the Office of Policy and Planning, U.S. Department of Education, in a November 1992 publication titled *Transforming American Education, A Directory of Research and Practice to Help the Nation Achieve the Six National Education Goals*.

Source: Coalition of Essential Schools, Brown University, Providence, RI.

APPENDIX J

Coalition of Essential Schools Learning Schools of Pennsylvania 1993-94

<u>School District</u> ¹	<u>Targeted Building</u>
Austin Area School District	Austin Area Elementary School
Bellefonte Area School District.....	Bellefonte Area Senior High School
Canon-McMillan School District.....	Canon-McMillan Senior High School
Centennial School District	William Tennent High School
Central Bucks School District	Central Bucks High School East Central Bucks High School West
Chartiers Valley School District.....	Chartiers Valley High School
Franklin Regional School District	Franklin Regional Senior High School
Halifax School District.....	Halifax Area Jr/Sr High School
Keystone Oaks School District	Keystone Oaks High School
Lancaster School District.....	J.P. McCaskey High School
New Hope-Solebury School District	New Hope-Solebury Jr/Sr High School
North Hills School District	North Hills Senior High School
Philadelphia School District	Alexander McClure Elementary School Alternative for the Middle Years Bayard Taylor Elementary School Cayuga Elementary School Edwin H. Vare Middle School Horace Furness High School Roberto Clemente Middle School Simon Gratz High School Strawberry Mansion High School
Sullivan County School District	Sullivan County Jr/Sr High School
Tyrone Area School District.....	Tyrone Area Jr/Sr High School
Wallenpaupack Area School District.....	Wallenpaupack Area High School
West Jefferson Hills School District.....	Thomas Jefferson High School
York City School District	William Penn Senior High School

¹Participants also include the Crefeld Schools, a licensed private academic school, and Parkway West AVTS, an area vocational-technical school.

Source: Coalition of Essential Schools, Brown University, Providence, R.I.

APPENDIX K

PA Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP) FY 1994-95

<u>County MH/MR Provider</u>	<u>State Allocation</u>	<u>Federal Allocation</u>	<u>Total Allocation</u>
Allegheny	\$ 33,872	\$ 0	\$ 33,872
Armstrong/Indiana	31,774	0	31,774
Beaver.....	36,414	0	36,414
Bedford/Somerset	32,375	0	32,375
Berks.....	37,070	0	37,070
Blair	34,951	0	34,951
Bradford/Sullivan	32,041	0	32,041
Bucks	37,070	0	37,070
Butler.....	37,070	0	37,070
Cambria.....	31,774	0	31,774
Cameron/Elk/McKean	30,927	32,000	62,927
Carbon/Monroe/Pike	30,062	0	30,062
Centre	36,414	0	36,414
Chester	31,457	0	31,457
Clarion.....	33,893	0	33,893
Clearfield/Jefferson	34,951	0	34,951
Columbia/Montour/Snyder/Union	36,414	32,000	68,414
Crawford.....	37,070	0	37,070
Cumberland/Perry	37,070	0	37,070
Dauphin.....	34,869	165,000	199,869
Delaware	36,037	0	36,037
Erie	32,942	0	32,942
Fayette.....	33,893	51,000	84,893
Forest/Warren.....	33,250	0	33,250
Franklin/Fulton	36,414	0	36,414
Huntingdon/Mifflin/Juniata.....	72,070	0	72,070
Lackawanna/Susquehanna/Wayne.....	32,355	0	32,355
Lancaster.....	37,070	0	37,070
Lawrence	37,070	0	37,070
Lebanon.....	37,070	0	37,070
Lehigh.....	37,070	0	37,070
Luzerne/Wyoming.....	32,715	0	32,715
Lycoming/Clinton.....	34,951	0	34,951
Mercer	36,010	0	36,010
Montgomery	33,362	0	33,362
Northampton.....	37,070	0	37,070
Northumberland	44,275	0	44,275
Philadelphia	99,620	35,000	134,620
Potter	36,414	0	36,414
Schuylkill	31,837	0	31,837
Tioga	31,774	0	31,774
Venango.....	31,774	0	31,774
Washington/Greene	37,070	0	37,070
Westmoreland	37,070	0	37,070
York/Adams.....	37,070	0	37,070
Statewide.....	<u>\$1,673,791</u>	<u>\$315,000</u>	<u>\$1,988,791</u>

Source: Department of Public Welfare, Office of Mental Health.

APPENDIX L

Counties With CASSP or Interagency Treatment Planning Teams

<u>County</u>	<u>County CASSP Team</u>	<u>Interagency Treatment Planning Teams</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>County CASSP Team</u>	<u>Interagency Treatment Planning Teams</u>
Adams	Yes	No	Lackawanna	No	Yes
Allegheny	Yes	Yes	Lancaster	Yes	Yes
Armstrong	Yes	Yes	Lawrence	Yes	Yes
Beaver	Yes	Yes	Lebanon	Yes	Yes
Bedford	Yes	Yes	Lehigh	Yes	Yes
Berks	Yes	Yes	Luzerne	Yes	Yes
Blair	Yes	Yes	Lycoming	Yes	No
Bradford	Yes	No	Mckean	Yes	Yes
Bucks	Yes	Yes	Mercer	Yes	Yes
Butler	Yes	Yes	Mifflin	Yes	No
Cambria	Yes	*	Monroe	Yes	No
Cameron	Yes	Yes	Montgomery	Yes	Yes
Carbon	Yes	No	Montour	Yes	*
Centre	Yes	Yes	Northampton	Yes	Yes
Chester	Yes	Yes	Northumberland	Yes	No
Clarion	No	Yes	Perry	Yes	Yes
Clearfield	Yes	Yes	Philadelphia	Yes	Yes
Clinton	Yes	No	Pike	Yes	No
Columbia	Yes	*	Potter	Yes	Yes
Crawford	Yes	Yes	Schuylkill	No	Yes
Cumberland	Yes	Yes	Somerset	Yes	Yes
Dauphin	Yes	Yes	Sullivan	Yes	No
Delaware	Yes	Yes	Susquehanna	No	Yes
Elk	Yes	Yes	Synder	Yes	1
Erie	Yes	Yes	Tioga	Yes	1
Fayette	Yes	Yes	Union	Yes	1
Forest	No	Yes	Venango	Yes	Yes
Franklin	Yes	Yes	Warren	No	Yes
Fulton	Yes	Yes	Washington	Yes	Yes
Greene	Yes	Yes	Wayne	No	Yes
Huntingdon	Yes	No	Westmoreland	Yes	Yes
Indiana	Yes	Yes	Wyoming	Yes	Yes
Jefferson	Yes	Yes	York	Yes	No
Juniata	Yes	No			

¹Other service-oriented teams are in place.

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff with information provided by the Department of Public Welfare, Office of Mental Health.

APPENDIX M

Components of Erie County's Truancy Intervention Program

First Program Component

Prior to a referral to the program by the school, all in-school remedies must have been applied without result. This component includes:

- Use of guidance counselor services.
- Involvement of the school nurse.
- Parent conferences.
- Active home contacts.
- Referral to Student Assistance Program.
- Psychological evaluations whenever necessary.
- Notification of the parent of the referral to the county children and youth agency.
- Gaining permission from the parents for the release of information from the school.
- Issuance of first and second truancy notices.
- Holding, or formally requesting, a hearing before the district justice.

Second Program Component

The Erie County Office of Children and Youth agency accepts the referral and coordinates treatment planning with the school district and other relevant human service agencies. The corrective plan is written and signed by all involved parties. This component involves:

- Monitoring the child's attendance.
- Meeting with the child and family.
- Holding a case conference with the children and youth staff, school staff and the child and the child's parents/guardian.

At the case conference, information is reviewed concerning school attendance; results of psychological tests, if available and necessary; the child's level of academic functioning; special help given to the child; the child's functioning with peers and adults; comments by the teacher; family information pertinent to truancy; resources already involved with the family; resources which the child welfare agency is in the process of making available; and the parents' and child's reason for the child not attending school. During the conference, the child welfare worker advocates for any resources (such as diagnostic services or school program changes) that may benefit the child. Parental and child input and concerns are discussed during the conference as well as the consequences of continued truant behavior.

Third Program Component

Those students who continue to be truant and accrue 20 or more unexcused absences may be referred to the truancy diversion committee. The purpose of the review is to convene all the parties involved under the auspices of the district magistrate to ensure that proper services are being provided to maintain the child in school and to explain to the parents and child the possible consequences of continued truancy. One possible consequence is the recommendation by the County Truancy Diversion Committee to the Erie County Office of Children and Youth to file a dependency petition which may result in the truant child being adjudicated "dependent" and removed from the home.

Fourth Program Component

The Erie County Office of Children and Youth may file a dependency petition. However, the focus of the program is on the first three components.

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff from information provided by the Erie County Child Welfare Agency.

APPENDIX N

FY 1994-95 ELECT Pregnant and Parenting Teen Program Grants*

<u>Participant</u>	<u>ELECT I</u>	<u>ELECT II</u>
Allentown City School District	\$ 174,925	\$ 0
Altoona Area School District	119,415	0
ARIN Intermediate Unit.....	83,878	0
Berks County Intermediate Unit.....	0	46,960
Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit	0	115,000
Chester County Intermediate Unit	0	120,000
Erie City School District	281,536	0
Greater Johnstown School District	0	90,000
Greater Johnstown Area Vo-Tech	128,618	0
Harrisburg City School District.....	0	120,000
Lancaster School District.....	0	95,189
Luzerne County Intermediate Unit.....	117,431	0
Midwestern Intermediate Unit.....	154,371	0
Penncrest School District Consortia.....	79,830	0
Philadelphia City School District	253,451	375,000
Pittsburgh School District	249,711	224,463
Punxsutawney School District.....	0	0
Reading Area School District.....	0	0
Riverview Intermediate Unit.....	0	0
Scranton City School District	53,430	0
Souderton Area School District	51,519	0
Venango County Area Vo-Tech.....	<u>12,293</u>	<u>0</u>
Total.....	\$1,760,408	\$1,186,612

*ELECT is a program carried out by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare under its federal Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training Programs (JOBS) as authorized by the Family Support Act of 1988, Pub. L. 100-485, 42 U.S.C. §602 *et seq.* ELECT monies are composed of federal, state, and local dollars to help AFDC pregnant and parenting teens stay in school and graduate.

Source: PA Department of Education.

APPENDIX O

FY 1994-95 Other Pregnant and Parenting Teen Initiative Grants

<u>Participant</u>	<u>State Pregnant & Parenting Teen Initiative¹</u>	<u>Federal Single Parent/Displaced Homemaker Initiative²</u>	<u>Federal Consumer & Homemaking Initiative³</u>
A. W. Beattie Area Vo-Tech Consortia	\$ 30,000	\$ 0	\$ 0
Albert Gallatin Area School District	0	0	25,000
Allentown City School District	40,000	0	0
Altoona Area School District	40,000	0	0
ARIN Intermediate Unit	36,000	37,224	0
Bensalem Township School District	12,000	0	0
Berks County Intermediate Unit	22,900	0	31,500
Berwick Area School District	29,550	0	0
Bethlehem Area School District	23,665	0	0
Big Beaver Falls School District	28,288	0	0
Bristol Township School District	0	0	25,413
Butler Area School District	24,000	0	0
Centennial School District	10,000	0	0
Central Greene School District	0	0	20,780
Central Intermediate Unit	0	0	40,000
Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit ⁴	0	79,000	23,000
Chester County Intermediate Unit	0	51,666	30,000
Chester Upland School District	0	25,000	0
Dauphin County Area Vo-Tech	0	42,810	29,997
Delaware County Intermediate Unit	19,200	0	0
DuBois Area School District	35,713	0	0
Erie City School District	33,000	0	52,523
Farrell Area School District	0	0	29,000
Forbes Road Area Vo-Tech	0	44,997	29,256
Gettysburg Area School District	22,769	0	0

Appendix O (Continued)

<u>Participant</u>	<u>State Pregnant & Parenting Teen Initiative¹</u>	<u>Federal Single Parent/Displaced Homemaker Initiative²</u>	<u>Federal Consumer & Homemaking Initiative³</u>
Greater Johnstown School District	\$ 10,000	\$ 0	\$ 0
Greater Johnstown Area Vo-Tech	30,000	0	0
Harrisburg City School District.....	20,000	0	0
Highlands School District.....	10,709	0	0
Kennett Consolidated School District	9,600	0	0
Keystone Central School District	0	25,949	23,165
Lancaster School District.....	30,000	0	0
Luzerne County Intermediate Unit.....	0	84,000	37,000
McKeesport Area Vo-Tech	0	29,719	26,500
Midwestern Intermediate Unit	10,000	107,965	0
Millcreek Township School District	20,000	0	0
New Castle School District	14,400	0	0
Norristown Area School District	20,000	0	0
Penn Cambria School District	10,872	0	0
Penncrest School District Consortia.....	0	0	28,000
Philadelphia City School District	0	250,854	0
Pittsburgh School District	0	144,572	48,195
Punxsutawney School District.....	25,600	0	0
Reading Area School District.....	12,800	0	41,200
Riverview Intermediate Unit.....	21,008	0	27,708
Scranton City School District	24,000	0	0
Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit.....	38,177	0	0
Sharon Area School District	0	0	36,909
Souderton Area School District	28,000	0	0
Southern Tioga School District.....	0	0	17,077

Appendix O (Continued)

<u>Participant</u>	<u>State Pregnant & Parenting Teen Initiative¹</u>	<u>Federal Single Parent/Displaced Homemaker Initiative²</u>	<u>Federal Consumer & Homemaking Initiative³</u>
State College Area School District	\$ 5,200	\$ 0	\$ 0
Tuscarora Intermediate Unit	19,751	0	0
Venango County Area Vo-Tech.....	0	0	29,887
West Shore School District.....	0	0	28,290
Westmoreland Intermediate Unit.....	26,800	0	0
Wilkinsburg School District.....	0	0	30,000
Williamsport School District	0	0	29,480
York City School District.....	<u>31,383</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total.....	\$825,385	\$923,756	\$739,880

106

*Does not include local funds used to support pregnant and parenting teen programs. These initiatives are administered by PDE.

¹This initiative is funded with monies from the General Fund. Local education agencies (LEA) are required to provide a match which may be in kind or in cash.

²These are federal funds authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act, Title II, Pub.L 101-392, 20 U.S.C. §§2331-2342, no local match is required.

³These are federal funds authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act, Title II, Pub.L 101-392, U.S.C. §§2361-2363, and requires a local match for equipment purchase, which may be waived.

⁴The Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit also had a contract with PDE to provide Project SUCCESS technical assistance services.

Source: PA Department of Education.

APPENDIX P

School-Based Probation Projects for 1994

<u>County</u>	<u>Project Cost</u>	<u>School Districts Served</u>
Adams.....	\$151,853	Conewago Valley, Gettysburg Area, Fairfield Area, Bermudian Springs, Littlestown Area
Allegheny.....	302,267	Pittsburgh (Peabody, Allegheny, Knoxville, Greenway, Prospect, Arsenal), Wilkinsburg
Beaver.....	33,918	Aliquippa
Berks.....	79,611	Reading
Blair.....	22,738	Altoona
Bucks.....	79,370	Bensalem Township
Cambria.....	61,246	Greater Johnstown
Carbon.....	31,841	Jim Thorpe, Lehigh, Palmerton, Panther Valley, Weatherly
Chester.....	32,311	Coatesville Area, Downingtown Area, Phoenixville Area
Dauphin.....	188,379	Harrisburg City (Scott/Rowland)
Delaware.....	97,288	Chester-Upland
Erie.....	197,819	Erie City (Central, Strong Vincent, East, Roosevelt, Wilson)
Franklin.....	70,000	Chambersburg Area, Waynesboro Area
Indiana.....	53,654	Homer-Center, Indiana Area, Marion Center, United, Penns Manor, Blairsville-Saltsburg, Apollo-Ridge, Purchase Line
Jefferson.....	28,608	Brockway, Brookville, Dubois Area, Punxsutawney
Lancaster.....	166,691	Lancaster School District (Hand, Lincoln, Reynolds, Wheatland, Buehrle)
Lebanon.....	35,889	Lebanon City
Lehigh.....	211,762	Allentown City (Raub, Trexler, Harrison-Morton, South Mountain, Dieruff, William Allen)
Luzerne.....	86,180	Wilkes-Barre Area (Coughlin, G.A.R. Memorial, Meyers), Hazleton Area (West Hazleton, Freeland)

Appendix P (Continued)

<u>County</u>	<u>Project Cost</u>	<u>School Districts Served</u>
Lycoming	\$ 31,405	Williamsport Area
McKean.....	37,272	Bradford, Kane, Otto-Eldred, Port Allegany, Smethport
Mifflin.....	43,253	Mifflin County (Lewistown, Indian Valley)
Monroe.....	71,547	East Stroudsburg, Pleasant Valley, Pocono Mountain, Stroudsburg
Montgomery.....	322,115	Abington, Norristown, North Penn, Pottstown, Wissahickon Area, Pottsgrove, Upper Merion, North Penn
Northumberland	27,694	Shamokin Area, Shikellamy
Philadelphia	344,079	Philadelphia (Audenried, Martin Luther King, Strawberry Mansion, Edison, University City, William Penn, Shallcross, Daniel Boone, E.S. Miller, Oiney, Roberto Clemente, Central East)
Pike.....	132,360	Delaware Valley, East Stroudsburg, Wallenpaupack
Somerset.....	52,228	Conemaugh Township, Meyersdale Area, North Star Area, Rockwood Area, Shade-Central City, Somerset Area, Berlin Brothersvalley, Shanksville-Stoneycreek, Turkeyfoot Valley, Windber Area
Union.....	27,000	Lewisburg, Midd-West, Mifflinburg, Selinsgrove, Shikellamy
Venango.....	35,035	A.C. Valley, Cranberry, Franklin, Maplewood, Oil City, Valley Grove, Forest
Warren.....	47,000	Warren County
Wayne.....	62,142	Western Wayne, Wayne Highlands, Wallenpaupack
Westmoreland ..	199,421	Greensburg Salem, Hempfield, Kiski, New Kensington, Derry, Greater Latrobe
Wyoming.....	36,569	Tunkhannock
York.....	66,507	Central York, Dover, Red Lion, Spring Grove, York City

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff from Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency September 1994 report titled *School-Based Probation Funding Initiative*. Federal dollars for this program come from the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Fund and the Drug Control and System Improvement Formula Grant.

APPENDIX Q

Excerpts From Comments and Descriptive Information on Noteworthy Programs as Identified by Juvenile Judges and the Involved Officials in Response to an LB&FC Questionnaire

- **Berks County.** The Intervention Program, run out of the Berks County Intermediate Unit, provides a culturally sensitive, social, educational, and therapeutic intervention for students and families that are experiencing chronic truancy. The immediate goal is to assist a student in developing a consistent attendance pattern in school by assisting students and families in addressing the issues supporting the truancy and coordinating with all collateral agencies to support positive change. A specialist works with each student referred to the program and meets with significant school personnel, community agencies, and families to assess the attendance problem. Through the program, the school must document internal efforts to address the truancy problems.
- **Crawford County.** The Unified School Attendance Program which came into effect in 1991-92 places the responsibility for enforcing school attendance for those students in grade 7 and above with the Crawford County Juvenile Probation Office. This program involves several social service agencies in all the school districts in Crawford County. It has been successful in regard to those students who are under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court. Some problems continue to exist regarding early referrals by the school districts and early intervention by Children Youth Services.
- **Jefferson County.** One project is the intergenerational project which provides volunteers to work with delinquent children both individually and in groups. Eleven senior centers located throughout the county are open to youths or delinquent children and volunteers for afterschool activities.
- **Lycoming County.** The Youth Community Program is supervised under the Juvenile Probation Office and is comprised of youth placed on community service as a condition of their probation or as supervision for when they are suspended from school or have idle time during the summer. Additionally, it is used for youths who owe money to the magistrates for fines and are unable to pay. It has been helpful in dealing with school dropouts. If they are suspended or drop out, they are not idle and realize they cannot escape responsibility by being suspended or dropping out.

Appendix Q (Continued)

Another program is the Citizen Youth Commission comprised of appointed citizens who act in a voluntary capacity to deal with pre-delinquent youths referred to them. Since many of these pre-delinquent youths have poor school attendance as part of their problem behavior, these commissions tend to have positive impact as a result of the initial referral for school or other behavioral problems.

- **Northumberland County.** The Clancy Program currently operates an alternative educational component which is used for youth from any school district in Northumberland who is experiencing behavioral or other problems in the home school.
- **Venango County.** One program that is most needed in rural counties is an alternative education. There is a tremendous need for such a locally-based program that combines education, job training, and recreation and is community-based. The dilemma that I have encountered in trying to begin such a program is that there are three very distinct funding streams for these programs, PA Department of Education, Labor and Industry, and the Department of Public Welfare.
- **Westmoreland County.** Families at School Together - FAST works with county human services agencies. It is designed to aid students who are experiencing difficulties in school, due to issues of truancy, incorrigibility, and insubordination. The primary goal of the program is to provide intensive intervention which will aid family functioning and enable the student to maintain an acceptable level of school attendance, performance, and behavior as determined by school personnel.

Source: LB&FC staff questionnaire to Juvenile Court Judges and Chief Probation Officers.

APPENDIX R

School Districts Involved in JTPA-Funded Youth Programs*

<u>School Districts</u>	<u>PA Career Program for Youth¹</u>	<u>In-School Programs²</u>	<u>Out-of- School Programs</u>	<u>Summer School Programs</u>
Aliquippa.....	X			X
Allentown City.....		X		X
Altoona Area.....	X	X	X	
Ambridge Area.....				X
Apollo-Ridge.....				X
Armstrong.....				X
Avon Grove.....		X		
Bald Eagle Area.....	X			
Bangor Area.....				X
Beaver Area.....				X
Bedford Area.....		X		
Bellefonte Area.....	X			
Belle Vernon Area.....		X		
Bellwood-Antis.....		X		
Benton Area.....		X	X	
Bermudian Springs.....		X		
Berwick Area.....		X	X	
Bethlehem Area.....	X			X
Big Beaver Falls Area.....	X			X
Blackhawk.....				X
Blacklick Valley.....		X		
Blairsville-Saltsburg.....				X
Bloomsburg Area.....		X	X	
Blue Ridge.....	X			
Brownsville Area.....		X		
Burrell.....		X		
Butler Area.....				X
Cambria Heights.....		X		
Catasauqua Area.....		X		X
Central Cambria.....		X		
Central Columbia.....		X	X	
Central Fulton.....		X		X
Central York.....		X	X	X
Chambersburg Area.....		X		
Chester-Upland.....	X			
Chestnut Ridge.....		X		
Clairton City.....		X		
Claysburg-Kimmel.....		X		
Clearfield Area.....		X	X	
Coatesville Area.....		X		

Appendix R (Continued)

<u>School Districts</u>	<u>PA Career Program for Youth¹</u>	<u>In-School Programs²</u>	<u>Out-of-School Programs</u>	<u>Summer School Programs</u>
Cocalico.....		X		
Columbia Borough.....		X	X	
Commodore Perry.....		X	X	
Conemaugh Township Area.....		X		
Conestoga Valley.....		X	X	
Conewago Valley.....		X		
Connellsville Area.....	X			
Corry Area.....	X			
Coudersport Area.....			X	
Crestwood.....		X		X
Dallas.....		X		X
Dallastown Area.....			X	X
Danville Area.....		X		
Delaware Valley.....		X		
Derry Area.....	X	X		
Donegal.....		X	X	
Dover Area.....		X	X	X
Downingtown Area.....		X		
Dubois Area.....		X	X	
Duquesne City.....		X		
East Lycoming.....				X
East Penn.....		X		X
Eastern Lancaster.....		X	X	
Eastern York.....			X	X
Easton Area.....				X
Elizabethtown Area.....		X		
Elk Lake.....	X			
Ellwood City Area.....	X			X
Ephrata Area.....		X		
Erie City.....	X			
Everett Area.....		X		X
Fairfield Area.....		X		
Fannett-Metal.....		X		
Farrell Area.....	X			
Ferndale Area.....		X		
Forbes Road.....		X		X
Forest City.....	X			
Forest Hills.....		X		
Fort LeBoeuf.....	X			
Franklin Regional.....		X		
Freedom Area.....				X
Freeport Area.....				X
Gettysburg Area.....		X		
Glendale.....		X		
Great Valley.....		X		

Appendix R (Continued)

<u>School Districts</u>	<u>PA Career Program for Youth¹</u>	<u>In-School Programs²</u>	<u>Out-of-School Programs</u>	<u>Summer School Programs</u>
Greater Johnstown.....	X	X		
Greater Latrobe.....		X		
Greater Nanticoke Area.....		X		X
Greencastle-Antrim.....		X		
Greensburg Salem.....		X		
Greenville Area.....		X	X	
Grove City Area.....		X	X	
Hanover Area.....		X		X
Hanover Public.....			X	X
Harrisburg City.....	X			X
Hazleton Area.....	X	X		
Hempfield Area.....		X		
Hempfield.....		X	X	
Hermitage.....		X	X	
Highlands.....	X			
Holidaysburg Area.....		X		
Homer-Center.....				X
Hopewell Area.....				X
Huntingdon Area.....		X		
Indiana Area.....				X
Jamestown Area.....		X	X	
Jeannette City.....		X		
Jersey Shore Area.....				X
Juniata Valley.....		X		
Kane Area.....		X		
Karns City Area.....				X
Kennett Consolidated.....		X		
Keystone Central.....				X
Kiski Area.....		X		
Lackawanna Trail.....	X			
Lake-Lehman.....		X		X
Lakeview.....		X	X	
Lampeter-Strasburg.....		X		
Lancaster.....	X	X	X	X
Laurel.....	X			
Laurel Highlands.....		X		
Leechburg Area.....				X
Lewisburg Area.....		X		
Ligonier Valley.....		X		
Line Mountain.....		X		
Littlestown Area.....		X		
Loyalsock Township.....				X
Manheim Central.....		X		
Manheim Township.....		X	X	
Marion Center Area.....				X

Appendix R (Continued)

<u>School Districts</u>	<u>PA Career Program for Youth¹</u>	<u>In-School Programs²</u>	<u>Out-of-School Programs</u>	<u>Summer School Programs</u>
Mars Area				X
McKeesport Area	X			
Mercer Area		X	X	
Mid-West	X			
Midland Borough				X
Mifflin County	X			
Mifflinburg Area		X		
Millcreek Township	X			
Millville Area		X	X	
Milton Area		X		
Mohawk Area	X			
Monaca				X
Moniteau				X
Montgomery Area				X
Montoursville Area				X
Montrose Area	X			
Mt. Carmel Area		X		
Mt. Pleasant Area		X		
Mt. Union Area		X		
Mountain View	X			
Muhlenberg				X
Muncy				X
Nazareth Area				X
Neshannock Township	X			
New Brighton Area				X
New Castle Area	X			
New Kensington-Arnold	X	X		
Norristown Area		X		
Northampton Area				X
North East	X			
Northeastern York		X	X	X
Northern Cambria		X		
Northern Lehigh		X		X
Northern York County			X	X
Northern Bedford County		X		
Northwest Area		X		X
Northwestern	X			
Northwestern Lehigh		X		X
Norwin		X		
Octorara Area		X		
Owen J. Roberts		X		
Oxford Area		X		
Parkland		X		X
Pen Argyl Area				X
Penn Cambria		X		

Appendix R (Continued)

<u>School Districts</u>	<u>PA Career Program for Youth¹</u>	<u>In-School Programs²</u>	<u>Out-of-School Programs</u>	<u>Summer School Programs</u>
Penn Manor		X	X	
Penn-Trafford		X		
Penns Manor Area.....				X
Pequea Valley		X		
Philadelphia City.....	X	X		
Phoenixville Area		X		
Pittsburgh	X			
Pittston Area.....		X		X
Portage Area.....		X		
Pottstown.....		X		
Pottsville Area	X			
Purchase Line.....	X			X
Reading				X
Red Lion Area.....			X	X
Reynolds.....		X	X	X
Richland.....		X		
Rochester Area				X
Salisbury Township.....		X		X
Saucon Valley				X
Scranton City.....	X	X		X
Selinsgrove Area.....		X		
Seneca Valley.....				X
Shamokin Area.....	X	X		
Sharpsville Area		X	X	
Shenango Area	X			
Shikellamy		X		
Slippery Rock Area.....				X
Southern Huntingdon County.....		X		X
South Williamsport Area				X
Solanco	X	X	X	
South Butler County.....				X
Southern Columbia Area		X	X	
South Eastern.....			X	X
Southeast Delco.....	X			
South Side Area.....				X
South Western.....			X	X
Southern Fulton		X		X
Southern Lehigh.....		X		X
Southern York County.....			X	X
Southmoreland		X		
Spring Cove		X		
Spring Grove Area.....		X	X	X
St. Marys Area.....		X		
Steel Valley		X		
Sto-Rox.....	X			

Appendix R (Continued)

School Districts	PA Career Program for Youth ¹	In-School Programs ²	Out-of-School Programs	Summer School Programs
Sullivan County.....	X			
Susquehanna Community.....	X			
Tredyffrin Easttown.....		X		
Tunkhannock Area.....	X			
Tuscarora.....		X		
Tussey Mountain.....		X		
Tyrone Area.....		X		
Union Area.....	X			
Union City Area.....	X			
Unionville-Chadds Ford.....		X		
United.....				X
Upper Adams.....		X		
Warrior Run.....		X		
Warwick.....		X		
Washington.....	X			
Wattsburg Area.....	X			
Waynesboro Area.....		X		
West Chester Area.....		X		
West Middlesex Area.....		X	X	
West Shore.....			X	X
West York Area.....		X	X	X
Western Beaver County.....				X
Westmont-Hilltop.....		X		
Whitehall-Coplay.....		X		X
Wilkes-Barre Area.....	X	X		X
Wilkinsburg Borough.....	X	X		
Williamsburg Community.....		X		
Williamsport Area.....		X		X
Wilmington Area.....	X			
Wilson Area.....				X
Windber Area.....		X		
Woodland Hills.....	X			
Wyoming Area.....		X		X
Wyoming Valley West.....		X		X
York City.....	X	X	X	X
York Suburban.....			X	X
Yough.....		X		

*The reader should not conclude from this appendix that disadvantaged youth in school districts which are not checked are not receiving services because not all local JTPA agencies provided information about which school districts are involved in JTPA youth programs. Moreover, the local JTPA agency itself may provide youth programs or the local JTPA agency may contract with a community-based organization instead of a school district to provide youth programs. In some cases, the local JTPA program has a contract with an area vocational technical school or an intermediate unit which serves the school district noted on the table.

¹All PAC programs offer in-school and summer programs.

²JTPA-funded in-school programs other than PAC.

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff based on information from 24 Service Delivery Areas. Information on the school districts participating in the PAC program is from the PA Department of Education. Information for this appendix was also taken from PDE SEG contracts with SDAs for dropout prevention programs.

APPENDIX S

Recommendations of the Council of Chief State School Officers to Address At-Risk Students

Policymakers face two major tasks as they continue to address the needs of at-risk students: building a consensus among educators, legislators, and community and business leaders for mandating and funding state programs for at-risk youth; and overcoming resistance to change at the state and local levels.

Specific recommendations:

1. Leadership in the education of the public about the human loss and economic consequences of failing to meet the needs of at-risk children and youth.
2. Pursuit of sufficient financial resources to meet the educational needs of at-risk children and youth.
3. Elimination of constraints to the provision of appropriate and effective educational services for at-risk children and youth.
4. Identification of the characteristics of effective educational programs and practices for at-risk students.
5. Entitlement of each at-risk student to access to a curriculum that is challenging and includes a common core of knowledge for all students.
6. Provision of alternative educational programs for at-risk youth for whom traditional educational approaches have proven unsuccessful (e.g., smaller classes, extra vocational training, literacy training for youth offenders with rewards of reduced sentences for participation).
7. Assurance that students have experiences that lead to employability skills.
8. Assurance of an integrated, school-initiated community-home support system for at-risk students.
9. Development of curricula and instructional techniques that enhance diverse cultural understanding.
10. Promotion of the need for and the value of a staff that reflects the cultures of all students.
11. Improvement of teacher pre-service and in-service training to prepare teachers to work with at-risk students.
12. Initiation of data collection systems that enable school officials to identify appropriate program and individual needs.

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff from information provided by the Council of Chief State School Officers in a report "School Success for Students at Risk."

APPENDIX T

Dropout Prevention Efforts in Selected Urban School Districts

According to a 1993 GAO report, 75 percent of poor school-age children live in urban areas. Philadelphia ranked fifth among the 25 largest cities in the nation with a school-age poverty rate of 29.3 in 1990. Pennsylvania as a whole had a poverty rate of 14.5.

Dropout problems are most pronounced in large urban school districts. LB&FC staff contacted selected urban school districts among the 100 largest in the nation in an effort to identify successful dropout or truancy prevention programs. These programs include alternative schools; preventive, interventive, and remedial services; monitoring for at-risk students; and strict enforcement of truancy laws. Many of these are similar to programs being offered in school districts within Pennsylvania.

Boston Public Schools

Boston Public Schools rank 52nd among the 100 largest school districts in the county and have a number of programs to address truancy and dropout prevention. According to a school official, alternative schools are among the most effective because they are off-site programs, community based, and have a low student/staff ratio. There are 16 alternative schools in the Boston Public School System.

Three alternative schools were established with the cooperation of local social service agencies and serve 150 students in grades 9-12 who are at risk of dropping out of school. This partnership with the local business community provides work/study programs and job placement services.

Three Back-to-School Programs for middle school students offer neighborhood-based alternative programs for up to 60 middle school students. Two off-site alternative programs are available for pregnant middle and high school students. These students return to their assigned school after delivery.

Four alternative education programs in existence for over ten years serve middle/high school students aged 12-22. These programs are funded by state and federal agencies with eligibility based on JTPA guidelines.

Two unique alternative high school programs are affiliated with local colleges. Another Course to College is a college preparatory alternative program. Over 90 percent of students in this program entered the college of their choice. The Fenway Community College in collaboration with Bunker Hill Community College provides a high school program in a college environment for an older group of students who are trying to return after prolonged absences.

Two new programs began in the fall of 1994. Community Academy will serve approximately 90 at-risk or expelled middle/high school students. A second program, El Centro Del Cardenal, provides bilingual education and dropout prevention services for Latino students in grades 9-12.

Appendix T (Continued)

Chicago Public Schools

Chicago Public Schools rank third in the nation in total enrollment. The Truants' Alternative and Optional Education Program provides a broad range of supportive services and educational options. Preventive, interventive, and remedial services are offered. The program is targeted at the 20 high schools with the highest dropout rates and the feeder elementary schools of these high schools.

The TAP Elementary School Program emphasizes early identification of chronic truants. Services include developing diagnostic profiles and individual action plans to improve attendance, instructional support in reading and mathematics, home visitation to reinforce improved attendance, and referral to support services. In the first quarter of 1994 the aggregate attendance rate improved by 19.3 percent.

The TAP High School Program includes the Center for Alternative Re-Entry Education for students who are no longer regularly enrolled in an educational program. This program provides academic instruction, work-study opportunities, and transitional counseling. A second component is the Cooperative Learning Centers providing academic support services for students as they continue in regular classroom instruction. Another component is the Infant Child Care Program designed to improve attendance by providing child care services to at-risk teen parents.

Cleveland Public Schools

Cleveland Public Schools rank 39th among the 100 largest school districts in the country. The Alternative to Expulsion Program targets students who have committed expellable offenses in grades 7-12. Students enrolled in the program are involved in activities designed to provide them with alternative ways of behaving and handling adjustment problems. The program includes computerized learning, individual and small group guidance services, and attendance support.

The Elementary Alternative to Student Expulsion provides intensive student support services to the targeted students in grades 1-6 and their families. These services include counseling, conflict management training, and psychological testing.

District of Columbia Public Schools

The District of Columbia Public Schools rank 29th in the nation in enrollment. Beginning in October 1994, the District of Columbia Public Schools and the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) began implementation of the new Truancy Law. Under an agreement between the school district and the MPD, students in public, private, independent, or parochial schools may be deterred by the MPD solely on the basis of the possibility of truancy. Students may be picked up from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. each school day and transferred to the school the student attends or a designated site. Each school must designate

Appendix T (Continued)

staff to receive the truants, counsel them, contact parents, and offer other appropriate services.

The District of Columbia Public Schools dropout prevention planning model for 1994-95 reflects a new approach for addressing dropout prevention in the District of Columbia. This model includes an emphasis on elementary school involvement, new technology, statistical awareness, greater public relations, participation from the private sector, and strengthening the existing DCPS programs.

The District of Columbia recently changed its compulsory school age requirements. Beginning in March 1991, all children ages 5 through 17 must attend school. The parents of violators may be penalized \$100 and/or imprisoned for up to five days for each two full days, or four half days, of unexcused absences in any school month. According to one school official these reforms caused a significant increase in the number of younger children (ages 5-6) attending school but have not produced a significant decline in truancy or dropouts.

St. Louis School District

The St. Louis School District ranks 99th among the largest 100 in the nation. Their Dropout Prevention Program involves six schools in a feeder system--elementary, middle, and high schools. The major component of the program is mentoring. Approximately 600 volunteers from the community mentor the 800 children in the program. The mentors meet with their child at least once a month but usually more often and provide support and tutoring when needed.

The program also includes a Home/School Liaison at each school site. This person facilitates the program, checks on absenteeism on a daily basis, and works with the mentors to help the children. A resource assistant works to publicize the program and secure mentors.

There is also a six-week summer program to help keep the children busy and off the streets when school is not in session. Activities include day and overnight camps and field trips. Last summer 289 children participated in the summer program.

APPENDIX U

Components of Florida's Dropout Prevention Programs

- **Teenage Parent Programs** - Entitles pregnant students or students who are parents to educational and ancillary services. Students have the option of participating in regular classroom activities or enrolling in a special program designed to meet their needs. Necessary child care, health care, social services, parent education, and transportation are components of these programs. Students in this program are exempt from minimum attendance requirements for absences related to pregnancy or parenting.
- **Educational Alternatives Programs** - Offer variations of traditional instructional programs to increase the likelihood that students who are unmotivated or unsuccessful in traditional programs remain in school and obtain a high school diploma or equivalent. Educational alternatives may be offered full- or part-time at regular school campuses or alternative sites. Courses may be modified to lengthen or shorten the amount of in-class instruction required, alternative methods of assessing student mastery of performance standards may be utilized, and two or more courses may be combined to create interdisciplinary units of study. Participation is voluntary and the student is not assigned to the program without parental or adult student permission.
- **Substance Abuse Programs** - School- or agency-based educational programs designed to meet the needs of students with drug- or alcohol-related problems. Participation can be voluntary with parental or adult student permission or the student may be placed in the program by the school district, courts, or other agencies. The instructional program must be a minimum of five hours per day but may be offered on a variable schedule and includes instruction designed to deter substance abuse. These programs may be offered in a residential or day treatment facility, alternative sites, or regular school campuses.
- **Disciplinary Programs** - Provide positive intervention for students who are disruptive in the traditional school environment or have committed an offense that warrants out-of-school suspension or expulsion. The program includes in-school suspension, alternatives to expulsion, counseling centers, and crisis intervention centers. Participation may be voluntary or assigned by the school district, courts, or other agencies. The instructional program consists of instruction and counseling and consists of five hours of instruction per day. Disciplinary programs may be offered in in-school suspension, alternative sites, regular school campuses or other approved locations. The program is operated in collaboration with local law enforcement or other community agencies.
- **Youth Services Programs** - Provide intensive counseling, behavior modification, and therapy to students assigned to a detention, commitment, or rehabilitation program. Participation is assigned by the school district, courts, or other agencies for students who are neglected, delinquent, or dependent; or assigned by the court to a detention, commitment, or rehabilitation program. The instructional program consists of at least five hours per day and includes intensive counseling, conflict resolution training, behavior modification, therapy, appropriate academic, vocational or exceptional curricula, and related services. Services may be delivered at any time most appropriate for a youth services program. The instructional program provides the opportunity for attainment of a high school diploma and supports rehabilitation goals.

Source: Developed by LB&FC staff from information provided by the Florida Department of Education.

Appendix V
Responses to This Report

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
333 MARKET STREET
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17126-0333

April 17, 1995

SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

717-787-5820

Mr. Philip R. Durgin
Executive Director
Legislative Budget and Finance Committee
Room 400 Finance Building
P.O. Box 8737
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8737

Dear Mr. Durgin:

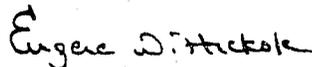
We have reviewed the draft report prepared by the staff of the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee entitled **Dropout and Truancy Prevention Programs and Efforts**. The report presents a comprehensive review of the nature and extent of these problems and the Commonwealth's responses to date to address them.

We generally concur with the Committee's findings and recommendations. The problems of truancy and students leaving school prior to graduation have serious consequences on our schools, communities and the economic competitiveness of the Commonwealth. The economic prospects for students who leave school without a diploma are dim with job opportunities mostly limited to low skill, minimum wage employment.

Governor Ridge, in the coming months, will submit proposals to the General Assembly that will provide new opportunities to parents for the education of their children. These efforts will help to improve all schools throughout the Commonwealth and thereby helping to reduce the problems of truancy and dropouts.

We look forward to working closely with the Members of the General Assembly to improve schools and expand educational opportunities for Pennsylvania's families.

Sincerely yours,



Eugene W. Hickok
Secretary of Education Designate

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
JUVENILE COURT JUDGES' COMMISSION

Room 401, Finance Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3018
(717) 787-6910
(717) 783-6266 Fax

April 18, 1995

AIRMAN

Hon. Isaac S. Garb
Bucks County

E-CHAIRMAN

Hon. Thomas C. Raup
Lycoming County

SECRETARY

Hon. Carol K. McGinley
Lehigh County

MEMBERS

Hon. Fred P. Anthony
Erie County

Hon. Emanuel A. Cassimatis
York County

Hon. Abram Frank Reynolds
Philadelphia County

Hon. Eugene B. Strassburger, III
Allegheny County

Hon. Esther R. Sylvester
Philadelphia County

Philip Durgin
Executive Director
Legislative Budget and Finance
Committee
Room 400 Finance Building
P. O. 8737
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8737

Dear Mr. Durgin:

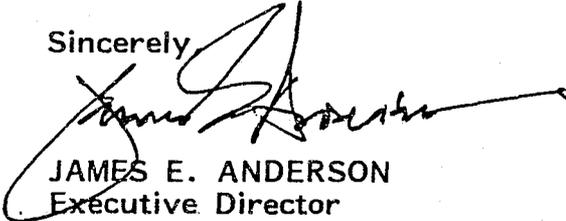
Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft of your report regarding dropout and truancy prevention in the Commonwealth pursuant to House Resolution 386.

The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission is very pleased with the positive results to date of school-based probation initiatives in the Commonwealth and we are looking forward to the completion of the research project regarding these initiatives which has just been funded by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD).

We also believe that the PCCD "Communities That Care" risk-focused prevention and intervention initiative holds great promise, and are pleased to be working with PCCD to provide training to the key leader teams from participating jurisdictions.

Your report serves to underscore the increasing importance of statewide and local coordination of truancy and dropout prevention initiatives. While there has been significant progress in recent years in coordinating services in many jurisdictions, children who are chronically truant continue to receive relatively low priority for services from county children and youth agencies. Schools must certainly have the primary responsibility for identifying students who are experiencing problems with truancy or who are dropout risks. However, the children and youth agencies must be available to provide essential services, particularly when younger children are involved.

Sincerely,



JAMES E. ANDERSON
Executive Director