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August 15, 2007

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Legislative Education Study Committee

**FR:** Pamela Herman *PH*

**RE: STAFF REPORT: PROMOTION, RETENTION, REMEDIATION, AND NEXT STEP PLANS**

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**Introduction**

According to the National High School Center, US ninth graders comprise the highest percentage of the overall high school population because students in disproportionate numbers are failing to be promoted out of ninth grade. The promotion rate from ninth and tenth grade is much lower than rates between other grades, with attrition far more pronounced among minority students and those in urban and high poverty schools. Data from the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) cited later in this report suggests that the same pattern applies in New Mexico.

As New Mexico focuses on implementing the high school redesign measures enacted in 2007 that will require all students to take a more rigorous curriculum to prepare them for college and the workplace, Achieve, Inc., cautions that a more rigorous diploma will do little to help those who do not earn one. This report surveys some of the strategies being employed in New Mexico public high schools to improve students' academic proficiency and keep them on track to graduate on time, including early interventions and parent notification, remediation programs and services, and opportunities for credit recovery, as well as the Next Step Plans required by law to help students plot out a high school pathway to graduation and postsecondary education or

employment. The report describes the recommendations of national authorities for accomplishing the “dual agenda” of high standards and high graduation rates.

### **Legislation on Promotion and Retention**

From 1995 to 2000, the Legislature considered proposals in every session to address the problem of students who are not achieving at grade level but who are promoted to the next grade despite being unprepared – a practice known as “social promotion.” During the 1999 interim, the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) heard testimony and research reports indicating that neither the practice of social promotion nor retention in grade alone are likely to be effective for underachieving students. According to the US Department of Education (USDE), “the results of both policies are unacceptably high dropout rates, especially for poor and minority students, and inadequate knowledge and skills for students.” Instead, researchers are in agreement that, whether retained or promoted, students who are not mastering the material at a given grade level must be identified early and receive additional help – tutoring, extended classes, transitional classes, intensive reading instruction, alternative programs, summer school – if they are to achieve at the required level.

In 2000, the LESC endorsed legislation that was enacted to change existing policy regarding remediation and retention that reflected the testimony heard by the LESC (see Attachment 1). In essence, the statute, as amended in 2007, requires districts to do the following:

- Develop remediation programs, academic improvement programs, and promotion policies aligned with district and state assessment results to provide special instructional assistance for students who do not demonstrate academic proficiency, and include these as part of the district’s Educational Plan for Student Success (EPSS) process;
- Notify a parent no later than the second grading period if the student is failing to achieve proficiency, and convene a meeting between teacher and parent to develop a detailed written remediation plan;
- If the student is not academically proficient at the end of grades 1 through 7, either:
  - require the student to participate in remediation, after which, if proficient, the student shall enter the next grade; or
  - after completing the remediation program, if the student is still not proficient, based on the Student Assistance Team (SAT) recommendation, either:
    - ◆ retain the student in the same grade for no more than one year with an academic improvement plan developed by the SAT; or
    - ◆ if the parent signs a waiver, promote the student to the next grade with a written academic improvement plan developed by the SAT and the parent, with the understanding that if not proficient by the end of the next school year, the student will be retained in the same grade for no more than one year;
- If the student is not academically proficient at the end of grade 8, either:
  - retain the student for no more than one year with a specific academic improvement plan, without the possibility of a parental waiver; or

- if the SAT determines that retention will not assist the student, the team shall design a high school graduation plan to prepare for the work force or postsecondary education; and
- If the student has not attained proficiency after two years in the same grade, refer the student to the SAT for placement in an alternative program.

### **Promotion and Retention in High School**

After middle school, promotion from grade to grade is not governed by the statute. Once students enter high school, PED indicates that promotion depends on earning the number of course credits required by the school for graduation, divided roughly by four. Not all districts have the same graduation requirements; for example, Roswell Independent Schools requires 23 credits to graduate, and classifies students with 5 credits as sophomores, 11 credits as juniors, and 17 credits as seniors, while Ruidoso Municipal Schools requires 25 credits and classifies students with up to 5.5 credits as freshmen; 6 to 11.5 credits as sophomores; 12 to 17.5 credits as juniors; and 18 or more as seniors.

A survey conducted by the LESC (see below) indicates that many of the public school districts that responded follow the procedural pathway established in statute regarding developing remediation programs and providing parental notification for high school students who are not academically proficient. In fact, almost all respondents state that they do not wait until the end of the second grading period to initiate early interventions, notify parents, hold parent-teacher conferences and SAT team meetings, and develop intervention and remediation plans.

However, in part because staying on track for on-time graduation in high school is a matter of course-by-course credit accumulation rather than the more holistic diagnostic assessment of a student's academic proficiency established in law and employed through grade eight, retention rates at grade nine are much higher than in earlier grades. In New Mexico as in the nation, many students enter high school unprepared for success, and they stumble once they get there:

- In 2006, at the end of eighth grade, approximately 50.6 percent of New Mexico students were not academically proficient in reading, 74.5 percent were not academically proficient in mathematics, and 73.2 percent were not academically proficient in science.
- In the 2006 interim, the committee heard testimony regarding the problem of high school dropouts in New Mexico. At that time, PED indicated that approximately 27.5 percent of the ninth grade cohort in 2004 had left the cohort by the 40<sup>th</sup> day of the following year. (Although the PED data were not disaggregated by ethnicity, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and other authorities report national research estimating that, nationally, approximately 51 percent of African-American students, 52 percent of Native American students, and 53 percent of Hispanic students fail to graduate from high school, with male students represented disproportionately.)
- PED reports that, in school year 2005-2006, 177 students were retained in eighth grade. That same year approximately 4,940 students who had not left school were retained in the ninth grade (see Table 1).

Low performing students also face social and emotional challenges in ninth grade that can increase the likelihood they will fail one or more courses. The National High School Center and Achieve point out some of the challenges inherent in the transition from middle to high school:

- While this transition can be exciting, it can also be stressful, and substantial research indicates that ninth grade is a time of increased disengagement and declining motivation, particularly for low-performing youth.
- In ninth grade “relationships are more complicated and temptations become greater at the same time that [students] begin to experience more freedom.”
- When moving from middle to high school, the instructional focus shifts from teaching and nurturing the whole child to more concentrated instruction on the content of academic subjects; there can also be intentional or unintentional tracking associated with social class and ethnicity, and special challenges for students with disabilities or English language learners.

New data from PED regarding the 2004 cohort of students, the first to be assigned state ID numbers, provide an update on their status that reveals approximately how many were still enrolled but were not promoted and do not appear to be on track for on-time graduation, as shown in Table 1:

**Table 1: Attrition and Promotion of Ninth Graders from School Year 2004-2005**

1 <sup>st</sup> High School Cohort Assigned PED ID #s in 2004	2004 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> grade 2005	11 <sup>th</sup> grade 2006	12 <sup>th</sup> grade 2007
Original cohort still enrolled in any grade	30,158	26,788 <sup>1</sup> 88.8 percent of cohort	22,662 75.1 percent of cohort	<i>Avail. fall '07</i>
Still enrolled and on track to graduate	n.a.	21,848 72.4 percent of cohort	17,586 58.3 percent of cohort	<i>Avail. fall '07</i>
Percent fewer on track from previous year	n.a.	27.5 percent	19.5 percent	<i>Avail. Fall '07</i>
Still enrolled but not promoted	n.a.	4,940 16.4 percent of cohort	5,076 16.8 percent of cohort	<i>Avail. fall '07</i>
“Leavers”	4,976 16.5 percent of cohort	4,126 13.7 percent of cohort	<i>Avail. fall '07</i>	<i>Avail. Fall '08</i>

Data provided by PED, June and July 2007

The PED data leave the exact number of dropouts from the cohort in doubt. PED notes that the category of “Leavers” includes both “Transfers Out,” and “Dropouts,” as well as some students who are involuntarily removed due to incarceration or death. PED states that current statewide documentation that accurately differentiates “Transfers Out” from “Dropouts” is inadequate; therefore, the true number of dropouts is still unknown.

<sup>1</sup> Includes 1,606 students who joined the cohort in school year 2005-2006, according to PED.

## National Recommendations and Models for Keeping Students on Track to Graduation

Research shows clearly that across the nation, almost all students who drop out leave school far behind in course credits, and those students are disproportionately members of ethnic minorities or from low income families. However, Achieve asserts that while “demographics matter . . . what happens in schools has a great impact on whether students stay in school and graduate.” Most dropouts follow identifiable pathways through the education pipeline, and large-scale studies in urban districts are successfully predicting eventual dropouts based on just a few facts about students in ninth grade or earlier.

Authorities such as Achieve, the National High School Center, the National Association of School Administrators and others advocate that school systems take a data-driven approach to identifying the exact nature of their high school grade retention and dropout problem to design effective solutions. A data warehouse system such as that being implemented in New Mexico should enable educators to define which students drop out and when, as well as identify salient characteristics in their school careers, based on longitudinal data research and monitoring. Achieve states that such research can help educators:

- identify the retention and attrition risk factors most pertinent to a given school or district;
- use it to build an early warning system that will diagnose which students are struggling and why; and
- hold schools and districts accountable by making retention and graduation central to the mission of each district and school.

Among public school systems with data reporting and monitoring initiatives that the National High School Center describes as effective or promising are the State of Florida and districts in Chicago, Philadelphia, and New York. The Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago conducts and publishes research to assist Chicago Public Schools to develop and evaluate school reform, including student retention and attrition initiatives. Another example is the State of Indiana, which now requires that high schools annually report the number of freshmen not earning enough credits to become sophomores.

Once these early warning systems are in place, school systems will be able to take the following steps to improve retention and graduation rates:

- *Address instructional needs of incoming high school students.* High schools must meet the diverse needs of students for extra support to get them up to at least grade level in reading and math. It is clear from the research that traditional remedial classes do not work unless they are designed to “accelerate” learning so students are ready to do college prep work early in their high school careers. The Center notes the following examples:
  - Virginia’s Algebra Readiness Initiative, which provides 2½ additional hours of services per week at a low student-teacher ratio to bring students up to grade level for the ninth grade algebra test; and
  - the Talent Development High School model developed at Johns Hopkins University, which combines extended block scheduling, double-dosing of key subjects, and specialized curricula in ninth grade.

- *Personalize the learning environment.* As the committee heard during the 2006 interim, almost half of high school dropouts in a recent survey conducted for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation titled *The Silent Epidemic* reported being “bored” or disengaged from high school; and over a third said they had too much freedom and not enough rules. Among examples of interventions designed to personalize the high school environment are:
  - small learning communities or smaller high schools, an increasingly popular approach, funded at some sites nationally by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation or federal grants;
  - Georgia’s Graduation Coaches, who work with students at risk of dropping out in grades 8 through 12 to connect them with outside agencies and programs, create individualized graduation plans, and develop credit-recovery programs; and
  - Check & Connect, a mentoring program in Minnesota for students with learning, emotional, and behavioral disabilities.
  
- *Build capacity, including teacher quality, in low-performing schools.* PED reported to the USDE that, for school year 2005-2006, 88 percent of all secondary level classes were taught by highly qualified teachers, but only 83.8 percent of classes in low-income schools had such teachers. Nationally this is a prevalent pattern. Initiatives to increase teacher capacity in low performing schools can include both recruiting tools such as incentives for experienced or National Board certified teachers, and intensive staff development for teachers already on site.
  
- *Create connections to the community, employers, and higher education.* The Center cites a 2006 survey of high school dropouts that reports that 81 percent of respondents said that if schools provided opportunities for real world learning, it would have improved their chances of graduation from high school. Model initiatives include:
  - South Carolina’s Career Guidance Model, organized around a career cluster system; and
  - Career Academies, now found in an estimated 1,500 high schools nationwide. The committee has heard presentations regarding Career Clusters, Career Academies, and High Schools That Work in the 2005, 2006, and 2007 interims.

The USDE What Works Clearinghouse has identified eight dropout prevention, retention, and graduation projects with positive or potentially positive effects that have been documented by research, including Check & Connect, Career Academies, and Talent Development (see Attachment 2).

### **LESC Survey of High School Remediation and Other Interventions**

To get a sense of what high schools in New Mexico are doing to address the problem of students facing academic challenges in high school, LESL staff distributed a survey to all school district superintendents and charter school administrators in July 2007. The survey requested information about policies and practices related to early intervention, remediation, parental notification, credit recovery, and Next Step Plans, the process required by law to help students plan their high school programs and future careers.

Administrators from 31 school districts, or slightly more than one-third of all districts in the state, completed the survey (see list, Attachment 3). The districts that responded represent a wide range of enrollments, types of communities, and geographic areas of the state. The results, summarized below, provide an overview of districts' practices and policies designed to help students stay on track for graduation. For each item, the question is shown along with the summarized response.

***Early intervention practices:*** Respondents were asked for information about district policies for identifying and intervening prior to the end of the second grading period with students who appear to be at risk of failing a required course, advancing to the next grade, or graduating.

- All 31 school districts indicated that they had some type of early intervention process in place, which was initiated by a teacher in 25 districts (80.6 percent); a counselor in nine districts; a student in six districts; the Student Assistance Team in five districts; and a parent in four districts.
- Twenty-one school districts (67.7 percent) indicated that the early intervention process could begin immediately, within the first four weeks of school, or as soon as a problem is identified.
- Of 29 districts that estimated how many students experienced some form of early intervention in school year 2006-2007, responses ranged from zero to 50 percent; the mean response was 17.6 percent, and the median 14 percent.
- All but four school districts (87.1 percent) indicated they evaluate early interventions, either on a case-by-case basis or for programs as a whole. Only one district stated that it tracks the performance of students over time to determine the long term effectiveness of the interventions.

***Remediation:*** Respondents were asked for information about services or programs available for students who need remedial education to become academically proficient.

- Thirty school districts (96.8 percent) responded to this item, describing a wide variety of remediation activities:
  - Twenty school districts (64.5 percent) offer some type of tutoring, with 15 districts (48.4 percent) specifically naming before- and after-school tutoring. Teachers were most often identified as tutors, but some school districts also mentioned Supplemental Educational Services providers.
  - Fourteen school districts (45.2 percent) provide regular in-school reading and mathematics academies, labs, double-blocking, or programs such as America's Choice and Read 180.
  - Nine districts (29 percent) offer summer school or an extended school year.
  - Six districts (29 percent) employ self-paced computer-based programs such as PLATO or A+; six districts provide online web-based or other distance learning opportunities; and six districts offer academic advisement periods or classes such as AVID and SPARTANS that provide structured mentoring, academic counseling and study skills.

- Other services that districts named include individualized or modified instruction, remedial classes in extra periods or before or after school, special study halls (one operated in collaboration with the Juvenile Probation Office), Saturday school, mentoring, night school, and small learning communities.
- Twenty-five school districts (80.7 percent) stated that any student can participate in remedial programs. Only four districts (12.9 percent) restrict participation to those referred by a teacher or counselor based on a formal remediation plan.
- In 30 districts reporting, the percentage of students participating in remediation programs during school year 2006-2007 ranged from 5.0 percent to 100 percent. The mean participation rate was approximately 26 percent; the median was approximately 17 percent.
- All 31 school districts indicated that they had a process in place to evaluate remediation services, through short-cycle assessments (the most cited), teacher observations, grades, and other assessments. Only one respondent, however, indicated that it was systematically following remediated students to determine long-range outcomes such as promotion and graduation.
- Fifteen school districts offered comments about remediation. Seven of these comments addressed a need for additional funding for remediation. Other comments included the following:
  - “The best remediation happens on the same day as it is needed. Professional development for teachers and administrators, done in the context of professional learning communities, is the most effective way to manage this.”
  - “Extended school year and school day is needed for all students that are not proficient.”
  - “Huge need in this district both at middle and high school levels. PED is funding America’s Choice at Middle School; district is funding program at both high schools. The need for remediation is forcing students out of elective classes.”

***Credit Recovery:*** Respondents were asked what options were available for students who need to recover one or more credits in order to advance to the next grade level or graduate.

- Twenty-nine school districts (93.5 percent) offer some means of credit recovery, with a range of zero to 20 percent of students participating in credit recovery courses; the mean participation rate was 8.0 percent and the median was 6.0 percent. Responses regarding the services provided indicated:
  - Twenty-one school districts (67.7 percent) rely on computer-assisted and online learning for credit recovery, by far the most frequently-named method.
  - Eleven districts (35.5 percent) offer correspondence courses, some provided by out-of-state postsecondary institutions.
  - Nine districts (29 percent) offer a summer school.
  - Eight districts (25.8 percent) offer night or weekend school.
  - Seven districts (22.6 percent) offer credit recovery through concurrent enrollment with postsecondary institutions, and another seven provide credit recovery at an alternative high school.

- School districts mentioned math (30 responses) and English/language arts (28 responses) as the courses most needed by students. Nine districts mentioned science and eight mentioned social studies courses.
- Twenty-six school districts (83.9 percent) indicated that they evaluate credit recovery programs, by means of factors such as passing of courses, grades earned and completion rates.
  - Eight school districts (25.8 percent) said evaluation is based on student achievement of state standards or review of student proficiency.
  - Two school districts (6.5 percent) stated that graduation is a factor in evaluating credit recovery programs.
- The most frequently stated obstacles to credit recovery were time and scheduling problems (10 responses, or 32.3 percent); student motivation (6 responses, or 19.4 percent), and cost or resource shortages (5 responses, or 16.1 percent.) Other concerns were teacher availability, transportation and access, technology infrastructure, rigor of coursework, student basic skills, and lack of summer school in the district.

***Parental Notification:*** Respondents were asked about policies for notifying parents if a student is at risk of failing a course or failing to have enough credits to graduate.

- Twenty-three districts (74.2 percent) have formal district-wide policies regarding parental notification. Seven districts (22.6 percent) do not.
  - Of those with district-level policies, 22 (70.9 percent) require written notice mailed to the parent at home; 15 (48.4 percent) send a bilingual notice or notice in the home language; and 10 (32.3 percent) require proof that the notice was received.
  - Seventeen school districts use multiple means to notify parents, including written notices, notices sent home with the student, and telephone calls.
- One district (3.2 percent) stated that it has a policy developed at the high school level by the principal and staff, and one stated that is in the process of developing formal parental notification policies.

***Social Promotion:*** Respondents were asked if they considered social promotion of students to be a problem in their districts.

- Seventeen districts (54.8 percent) stated that social promotion was a problem:
  - four districts indicated it is “a big problem” and
  - thirteen districts indicated it is “sometimes a problem.”
- Thirteen districts (41.9 percent) stated that social promotion is not a problem:
  - eight districts indicated it “seldom occurs” and
  - five districts indicated that the district “ensured that it does not occur.”

- Districts that believed social promotion is a problem cited the following reasons:
  - in 18 districts (58.1 percent), “parental pressure to promote or pass students”;
  - in 12 districts (38.1 percent), “some educators’ beliefs that failing a student is more harmful than socially promoting the student”;
  - in 10 districts (32.4 percent) “some staff have low expectations”; and
  - in nine districts (29 percent) “lack of adequate support or remediation services for socially promoted students.
- Fifteen districts (48.4 percent) suggested that the best way to deal with social promotion is to base promotion on standards, assessments or end-of-course tests and provide adequate support for students who need help to reach the standards. Five districts (16.1 percent) advocated addressing the issue of social promotion on a case-by-case basis or based on local procedures.

This survey is just a beginning; however, it provides a snapshot of current remediation programs in the state. The results will be used as the foundation for further investigation of this subject in greater depth and specificity in the future.

### **Next Step Plans**

The Center for Social Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University suggests that an important purpose of the early years of high school should be to help students build a bridge to adulthood. One important aspect of creating a sense of purpose in high school is to structure electives and the themes of the core curriculum in order to stress the relevance of what is being learned to foster adult success. Researchers at the Center assert that, “[c]ritical to success is that students make informed choices that let them align their studies with their interests.”

To provide New Mexico students entering high school with an opportunity to plan their high school coursework to support their college and career goals and create a sense of purpose, in 2003, legislation was enacted that requires students to create Next Step Plans. The law was amended in 2007 in high school redesign legislation to ensure that plans align with college and career-readiness initiatives (see Attachment 4). Current statute defines Next Step Plans, and states the requirements for students, school districts, and the Secretary of Public Education, as follows:

- A Next Step Plan is an annual personal written plan of studies developed by a student in consultation with the parent and school counselor or other school official charged with coursework planning, signed by the parent and school official, and filed with the principal, that includes one or more of the following: an advanced placement (AP) course; dual credit course; or distance learning course. An individualized education plan (IEP) that meets the requirements of the *Individuals with Disabilities Act* (IDEA) can satisfy Next Step Plan requirements.
- At the end of grades 8 through 11, a student must prepare an Interim Next Step Plan, updated annually, that specifies post-high school goals and sets forth the coursework for the grades remaining until high school graduation that will allow the student to achieve those goals.

- During the senior year and prior to graduation, a student must complete a final Next Step Plan that shows the student has committed or intends to commit in the near future to a four-year college or university, a two-year college, a trade or vocational program, an internship or apprenticeship, military service or a job.
- A local school board must ensure that each high school student has the opportunity to develop a Next Step Plan, based on reports of college and workplace readiness assessments, as available, and other factors; and is reasonably informed about:
  - curricular and course options including honors and AP courses, dual credit courses, distance learning courses, career clusters or remediation programs that readiness assessments indicate to be appropriate;
  - opportunities available that led to different post-high school options; and
  - alternative opportunities available if the student does not finish a planned curriculum;
- The Secretary must:
  - establish specific accountability standards for administrators, counselors, teachers, and school district staff to ensure that every student has the opportunity to develop a Next Step Plan;
  - promulgate rules for accredited private schools to ensure substantial compliance with this section;
  - monitor compliance with the requirements of the statute; and
  - compile the information necessary to evaluate the success of the Next Step Plan and report annually in December to the LESC and the Governor.

PED states that the department has taken the following steps to implement the Next Step Plan requirements:

- informed school districts by memorandum of the Next Step Plan requirement in April 2003;
- convened an intra-departmental group from the Career Technical and Workforce Education Bureau, the Special Education Bureau, and the Curriculum and Instruction Bureau that developed a draft Next Step Plan form and revised it based on feedback from superintendents, principals, counselors, and career technical educators;
- convened a task force in November 2004 to develop rules to implement the statute; however, the proposed rule was never promulgated;
- disseminated the final Next Step Plan form with instructions for completion via email to all superintendents in December 2004 (see Attachment 5);
- issued a contract for \$12,600 in IDEA funds to support the linkage of the Next Step Plan with the transition plan included in an IEP; and
- issued a contract to the University of New Mexico (UNM) in the amount of \$37,500 from Carl Perkins funds to provide technical assistance and training workshops to school districts in the Next Step Plan, pursuant to which:
  - a “train the trainers” workshop was held in February 2005 at Santa Fe Community College; and

- five school staff training workshops were held in April 2005 in Las Cruces, Roswell, Albuquerque, Las Vegas, and Farmington.
- between 2005 and 2007, produced and distributed approximately 4,000 copies of a Career Guidance & Development Framework Toolkit in collaboration with the Center for Education and Study of Diverse Populations (CESDP) at New Mexico Highlands University;
- partnered with the state Department of Labor (now the Department of Workforce Solutions) via a Joint Powers Agreement for Carl Perkins funds to create a web-based New Mexico Career Resource Network, which has since been discontinued due to a shift in federal Carl Perkins funds; and
- collected sample Next Step Plans from 54 of 89 public school districts during 2006 and 2007 to monitor compliance with the act (PED anticipates submissions from the remaining districts).

PED states that the department's current priorities for the Next Step Plan include the following:

- rule-making for Next Step Plans;
- development of a procedure for reporting Next Step Plans in the Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System (STARS);
- exploring the possibility of offering online professional development for teachers and advisors for fall 2007; and
- exploring the possibility of implementing electronic student Next Step Plan portfolios in the spring of 2008.

### **District Survey Results Regarding Next Step Plans**

*Survey respondents were requested to provide information regarding implementation of the Next Step Plan.*

- In most school districts, 24 of 31 (77.4 percent), the school counselor is responsible for helping students create their Next Step Plans:
  - in nine districts (16.1 percent), a team composed of staff such as counselors, teachers, assistant principals, and principals share responsibility; and
  - in two districts (6.5 percent) teachers alone are responsible, and in one case (3.2 percent) the principal is responsible.
- Sixteen of 31 school districts (51.6 percent) indicated that they employed some type of systematic checklist or monitoring to ensure that all students had the opportunity to complete Next Step Plans.
- Regarding staff training on the Next Step Plan:
  - eleven school districts (35.5 percent) stated that they relied on their own staff to provide training to counselors and others who help students complete Next Step Plans; in seven cases (22.6 percent) this training was provided annually;
  - seven districts indicated they relied on PED for Next Step Plan training; and

- five districts (16.1 percent) stated that staff did not receive training or did not need any training.
- Twenty-three school districts (74.1 percent) described a monitoring process in place to ensure that remediation and credit recovery, if needed, are included in a student’s Next Step Plans.
- In response to a list of possible resources that might help high school staff be more effective in working with students on Next Step Plans, school districts selected the following:
  - in 23 districts (74.2 percent), “a website with links to colleges, vocational training programs, scholarships, career pathways, and other information”;
  - in 22 districts (71 percent), “information about skill and training requirements, employment opportunities and income-earning potential for various career options”;
  - in 20 districts (approximately 58 percent), “a catalog of information about college scholarships”; and
  - in 20 districts, “a catalog of information about vocational training opportunities in New Mexico.”
- Asked about the greatest challenges to ensuring that all students have an opportunity to develop meaningful Next Step Plans:
  - twelve districts (38.7 percent) identified staff issues such as time and professional development;
  - eight districts (25.8 percent) identified parental involvement; and
  - five districts (16.1 percent) identified student awareness.

### **Academic and Postsecondary Planning in Other States**

According to the Education Commission of the States, other states including Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Florida, Iowa, and Ohio have requirements similar to those in New Mexico for the creation of student academic and career plans. Some of these requirements differ from New Mexico’s, either by moving the planning process to earlier years of middle school, or by linking the process to a web-based career information system. For example:

- Legislation enacted in Florida in 2006 shifted the requirement for career and postsecondary planning from ninth grade to the beginning of middle school, so that by the time students enter ninth grade, they and their parents have a four to five year academic and career plan in place.
- School reform legislation enacted in Michigan in 2006 that increases graduation requirements also requires schools to ensure that each seventh grade student has the opportunity to develop an educational development plan under the guidance of the school counselor or other qualified person that is based on a career pathway or similar career exploration program.
- Legislation was enacted in Ohio in 2006 directing the Department of Education to make the required individual academic plan available through the its Ohio Career Information System

web site for districts and schools to use as a tool for communicating with and providing guidance to students and families in selecting high school courses.

- The Kentucky Board of Education adopted a rule in 2006 requiring school districts to implement an advising and guidance process through the middle and high schools to develop an Individual Learning Plan.
  - When a student is in eighth grade, the plan must establish learning goals for the student based on academic and career interests and identify required academic courses, electives and extracurricular opportunities aligned to the postsecondary goals.
  - Each student's plan must be in place by the end of sixth grade, focused on career exploration and related postsecondary education and training needs.
  - Feeder middle schools must work together with high schools to ensure that every student and parent receives information and advising on the relationship between education and career opportunities, and guidance to include information about financial planning for postsecondary education.
  - The state of Kentucky contracted with a private web-based career advisement site to create a customized site that provides students with the means to develop their Individualized Learning Plan online, with the capability to link to information about career options and requirements, career cluster information, college websites and entrance requirements, and the state's higher education resources including financial aid information. A representative of the Kentucky Board of Education states that the state spent approximately \$2.0 million to develop this website.

### **Policy Options the Committee May Wish to Consider**

The results of the LESC survey indicate that most of the school districts that responded are attempting to provide the early intervention, remediation, credit recovery, and academic planning services that their students need. Their responses, however, indicate that many of the districts feel challenged by the scope of the remediation needs their students present, and data concerning the progress of New Mexico students into and through high school to graduation indicate that despite districts' best efforts, a large percentage of students are being lost along the way. In order to implement the practices recommended by national authorities and cited earlier in this report, the LESC may wish to consider some or all of the following options to assist school districts to make their efforts more effective:

- Require PED and school districts to track and report student drop out and retention data from grade 6, rather than grade 9, to identify student attrition in middle as well as high school, and to identify sites with problems and those implementing effective strategies for retention or promotion that meet students' needs and help them stay in school until they graduate. Successful practices can then be replicated and resources and technical assistance targeted where they are most needed.
- Request the Office of Education Accountability (OEA) to conduct longitudinal research related to retention and attrition that compares outcomes for students with similar demographic characteristics who are retained or promoted at districts across the state, to identify key risk factors for course failure, retention and attrition in specific districts or schools, and to identify effective interventions. When training school leaders to use data for

decision making, OEA, PED, and other appropriate entities can show leaders how to use this research to develop early warning systems that will improve the effectiveness of early intervention and remediation activities and keep more students on track to graduation.

- Request PED and other appropriate entities to study the preparation of students in middle school, and to develop a short list of possible initiatives to improve middle school students' preparation for high school, identify which initiatives are most appropriate under which circumstances, and make recommendations regarding programs with proven effectiveness in bringing students' skills, particularly in reading and math, up to grade level before ninth grade.

PED is engaged in efforts to improve the implementation of the Next Step Plan process in grades 8 through 12. Districts indicated, however, that they need more support and training to help students complete Next Step Plan.

**Presenter:**

Mr. Walter G. Gibson, Superintendent, Los Lunas Public Schools, will provide the committee with an example of how one public school district is addressing issues of high school attrition and retention through remediation, curricular change and student support strategies integrated into data-driven district-wide reform, and the results the district has seen to date.



The Legislature  
of the  
State of New Mexico

48th Legislature, 1st Session

LAWS 2007

CHAPTER 309

HOUSE BILL 34, as amended

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Introduced by

REPRESENTATIVE MIMI STEWART

REPRESENTATIVES THOMAS E. SWISSTACK,  
JONI MARIE GUTIERREZ, ANTONIO LUJAN,  
RICK MIERA, NATHAN P. COTE AND  
JOHN A. HEATON



FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION  
STUDY COMMITTEE

1 ~~school personnel" means a licensed school employee."~~

2 Section 2. Section 22-2C-1 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2003,  
3 Chapter 153, Section 10) is amended to read:

4 "22-2C-1. SHORT TITLE.--Chapter 22, Article 2C NMSA  
5 1978 may be cited as the "Assessment and Accountability Act"."

6 Section 3. Section 22-2C-5 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2003,  
7 Chapter 153, Section 14) is amended to read:

8 "22-2C-5. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RATINGS--CALCULATION OF  
9 ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS.--The department shall adopt the  
10 process and methodology for calculating adequate yearly  
11 progress. The statewide standards-based assessments used to  
12 assess adequate yearly progress shall be valid and reliable  
13 and shall conform with nationally recognized professional and  
14 technical standards. Academic performance shall be measured  
15 by school and by the following subgroups:

- 16 A. ethnicity;  
17 B. race;  
18 C. limited English proficiency;  
19 D. students with disabilities; and  
20 E. poverty."

21 Section 4. Section 22-2C-6 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1986,  
22 Chapter 33, Section 7, as amended) is amended to read:

23 "22-2C-6. REMEDIATION PROGRAMS--PROMOTION POLICIES--  
24 RESTRICTIONS.--

- 25 A. Remediation programs, academic improvement

1 programs and promotion policies shall be aligned with school-  
2 district-determined assessment results and  
3 requirements of the state assessment and accountability  
4 program.

5 B. Local school boards shall approve school-  
6 district-developed remediation programs and academic  
7 improvement programs to provide special instructional  
8 assistance to students in grades one through eight who do not  
9 demonstrate academic proficiency. The cost of remediation  
10 programs and academic improvement programs shall be borne by  
11 the school district. Remediation programs and academic  
12 improvement programs shall be incorporated into the school  
13 district's educational plan for student success and filed with  
14 the department.

15 C. The cost of summer and extended day remediation  
16 programs and academic improvement programs offered in grades  
17 nine through twelve shall be borne by the parent; however,  
18 where parents are determined to be indigent according to  
19 guidelines established by the department, the school district  
20 shall bear those costs.

21 D. Diagnosis of weaknesses identified by a  
22 student's academic achievement may serve as criteria in  
23 assessing the need for remedial programs or retention.

24 E. A parent shall be notified no later than the  
25 end of the second grading period that the parent's child is

1 not academically proficient, and a conference consisting of  
2 the parent and the teacher shall be held to discuss possible  
3 remediation programs available to assist the student in  
4 becoming academically proficient. Specific academic  
5 deficiencies and remediation strategies shall be explained to  
6 the student's parent and a written intervention plan developed  
7 containing time lines, academic expectations and the  
8 measurements to be used to verify that a student has overcome  
9 academic deficiencies. Remediation programs and academic  
10 improvement programs include tutoring, extended day or week  
11 programs, summer programs and other research-based  
12 interventions and models for student improvement.

13 F. At the end of grades one through seven, three  
14 options are available, dependent on a student's academic  
15 proficiency:

16 (1) the student is academically proficient  
17 and shall enter the next higher grade;

18 (2) the student is not academically  
19 proficient and shall participate in the required level of  
20 remediation. Upon certification by the school district that  
21 the student is academically proficient, the student shall  
22 enter the next higher grade; or

23 (3) the student is not academically  
24 proficient after completion of the prescribed remediation  
25 program and upon the recommendation of the teacher and school

1 principal shall either be:

2 (a) retained in the same grade for no  
3 more than one school year with an academic improvement plan  
4 developed by the student assistance team in order to become  
5 academically proficient, at which time the student shall enter  
6 the next higher grade; or

7 (b) promoted to the next grade if the  
8 parent refuses to allow the child to be retained pursuant to  
9 Subparagraph (a) of this paragraph. In this case, the parent  
10 shall sign a waiver indicating the parent's desire that the  
11 student be promoted to the next higher grade with an academic  
12 improvement plan designed to address specific academic  
13 deficiencies. The academic improvement plan shall be  
14 developed by the student assistance team outlining time lines  
15 and monitoring activities to ensure progress toward overcoming  
16 those academic deficiencies. Students failing to become  
17 academically proficient at the end of that year as measured by  
18 grades, performance on school district assessments and other  
19 measures identified by the school district shall be retained  
20 in the same grade for no more than one year in order to have  
21 additional time to achieve academic proficiency.

22 G. At the end of the eighth grade, a student who  
23 is not academically proficient shall be retained in the eighth  
24 grade for no more than one school year to become academically  
25 proficient or if the student assistance team determines that

1 retention of the student in the eighth grade will not assist  
2 the student to become academically proficient, the team shall  
3 design a high school graduation plan to meet the student's  
4 needs for entry into the work force or a post-secondary  
5 educational institution. If a student is retained in the  
6 eighth grade, the student assistance team shall develop a  
7 specific academic improvement plan that clearly delineates the  
8 student's academic deficiencies and prescribes a specific  
9 remediation plan to address those academic deficiencies.

10 H. A student who does not demonstrate academic  
11 proficiency for two successive school years shall be referred  
12 to the student assistance team for placement in an alternative  
13 program designed by the school district. Alternative program  
14 plans shall be filed with the department.

15 I. Promotion and retention decisions affecting a  
16 student enrolled in special education shall be made in  
17 accordance with the provisions of the individual educational  
18 plan established for that student.

19 J. For the purposes of this section:

20 (1) "academic improvement plan" means a  
21 written document developed by the student assistance team that  
22 describes the specific content standards required for a  
23 certain grade level that a student has not achieved and that  
24 prescribes specific remediation programs such as summer  
25 school, extended day or week school and tutoring;

1 (2) "school-district-determined assessment  
2 results" means the results obtained from student assessments  
3 developed or adopted by a local school board and conducted at  
4 an elementary grade level or middle school level;

5 (3) "educational plan for student success"  
6 means a student-centered tool developed to define the role of  
7 the academic improvement plan within the public school and the  
8 school district that addresses methods to improve student  
9 learning and success in school and that identifies specific  
10 measures of a student's progress; and

11 (4) "student assistance team" means a group  
12 consisting of a student's:

- 13 (a) teacher;
- 14 (b) school counselor;
- 15 (c) school administrator; and
- 16 (d) parent."

17 ~~Section 5. Section 22-2C-7 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2003,  
18 Chapter 153, Section 16, as amended) is amended to read:~~

19 ~~"22-2C-7. ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS--SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT  
20 PLANS--CORRECTIVE ACTION--RESTRUCTURING.--~~

21 ~~A. A public school that fails to make adequate  
22 yearly progress for two consecutive school years shall be  
23 identified as a school in need of improvement. A school in  
24 need of improvement shall be ranked as:~~

- 25 ~~(1) school improvement 1;~~

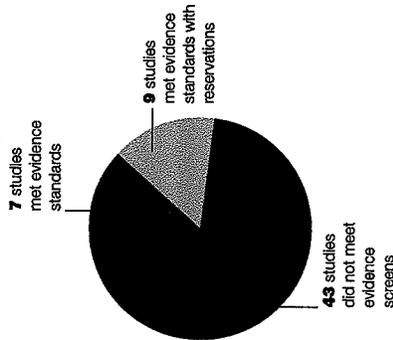
# What Works Clearinghouse



## Dropout Prevention

July 30, 2007

WWC identified 59 studies of 16 dropout prevention programs



Dropout prevention programs are school- and community-based initiatives that aim to keep students in school and encourage them to complete their high school education. To be included in the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) review, programs have to operate within the United States and include dropout prevention as one of their primary objectives. Programs that aim primarily to address risky behaviors correlated with dropping out—such as delinquency, drug use, and teen pregnancy—are not included. The reviewed programs provide a mix of services, such as counseling, monitoring, school restructuring, curriculum redesign, financial incentives, and community services to mitigate factors impeding academic success.

The review focused on three outcome domains: staying in school, progressing in school, and completing school. The WWC looked at 59 studies of 16 dropout prevention programs that qualified for our review. Of these, 16 studies of 11 programs met WWC evidence standards—7 without reservations and 9 with reservations. The five other programs did not have studies that met WWC evidence screens.

- In looking at the three outcome domains for the 11 programs:
  - *ALAS (Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success)* had potentially positive effects on staying in school and on progressing in school
  - *Career Academies* had potentially positive effects on staying in school and on progressing in school
  - *Check & Connect* had positive effects on staying in school and potentially positive effects on progressing in school
- Five other programs had potentially positive effects in one domain. Three had no discernible effects in any of the three domains.

The findings in this topic report summarize the first wave of WWC dropout prevention intervention reports prepared in 2006-07. [www.whatworks.ed.gov](http://www.whatworks.ed.gov)

### Dropout prevention in practice

**Mentoring and monitoring students.** In a large urban high school, students at risk of dropping out are paired with “monitors,” who regularly assess their academic progress and intervene as soon as students appear to be struggling. Monitors work with students to identify social services in the community that will help them address problems that may be hindering their academic success. They also provide ongoing feedback and encouragement.

### Dropout prevention in practice

**Alternative high schools.** To reduce dropping out, students struggling academically in regular high schools can earn their diplomas and continue on to postsecondary education at a small alternative school on a community college campus. The school’s interdisciplinary curriculum focuses on developing critical thinking skills and providing individualized attention from a team of teachers. The school offers career-oriented courses and internships. Faculty and students have access to the college’s educational resources and facilities, and students can take college-level classes.

### Dropout prevention in practice

**Schoolwide restructuring.** Under another approach to dropout prevention, schools are reorganized into small “learning communities”—including ninth-grade academies for first-year students and career academies for those in upper grades—to reduce student isolation and anonymity. As part of the schoolwide restructuring, schools introduce a new curriculum that emphasizes high academic standards and provides all students with a college-preparatory academic sequence—with a focus on English and math instruction.

### Absence of conflict of interest

Several studies in the WWC review of dropout prevention programs were conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR). Because the principal investigator for the WWC review is an MPR staff member, these MPR studies were rated by staff from Caliber, an ICF International Company, which also prepared the corresponding intervention reports. These reports were then reviewed by MPR staff, as well as the WWC Technical Review Team and external peer reviewers.

### Intervention Ratings for Dropout Prevention

Each dropout prevention program that had at least one study meeting WWC standards (with or without reservations) received a rating of effectiveness in one

or more of the three outcome domains: staying in school, progressing in school, and completing school. The rating aims to characterize the evidence in a given domain, taking into account the quality of the research design, the statistical significance of the findings, the size of the difference between participants in the intervention and comparison conditions and the consistency in findings across studies.

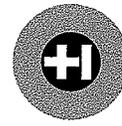
The research evidence can be rated as positive, potentially positive, mixed, no discernible effects, potentially negative, or negative (see the [WWC Intervention Rating Scheme](#)). Table 1 shows the effectiveness ratings for the 11 dropout prevention interventions (empty cells indicate that no evidence was reported).

**Table 1 Effectiveness ratings for 11 dropout prevention programs in three domains**

Intervention name	Staying in school		Progressing in school		Completing school	
	Rating of effectiveness	Extent of evidence	Rating of effectiveness	Extent of evidence	Rating of effectiveness	Extent of evidence
<b>ALAS (Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success)</b> <i>(no website available)</i>	+	Small	+?	Small	+	Small
<b>Career Academies</b> ( <a href="http://www.ncacinc.org">http://www.ncacinc.org</a> )	+?	Small	+?	Small	?	Small
<b>Check &amp; Connect</b> ( <a href="http://ici.umn.edu/checkandconnect">http://ici.umn.edu/checkandconnect</a> )	+	Small	+?	Small	?	Small
<b>Financial Incentives for Teen Parents to Stay in School</b> <i>(no website available)</i>	+?	Moderate to large	?	Small	?	Moderate to large
<b>High School Redirection</b> <i>(no website available)</i>	+	Moderate to large	+?	Moderate to large	?	Moderate to large
<b>Middle College High School</b> ( <a href="http://www.mcnc.us">http://www.mcnc.us</a> )	?	Small	?	Small	?	Small
<b>Project GRAD</b> ( <a href="http://www.projectgrad.org">http://www.projectgrad.org</a> )			?	Small	?	Small
<b>Quantum Opportunity Program</b> <i>(http://www.eisenhowerfoundation.org/qop.php)</i>			?	Small	?	Small
<b>Talent Development High Schools</b> <i>(http://www.csos.jhu.edu/tahs)</i>			+?	Small	?	Small
<b>Talent Search</b> <i>(http://www.ed.gov/programs/tri talent/index.html)</i>						
<b>Twelve Together</b> <i>(no website available)</i>	+?	Small	?	Small	+?	Moderate to large

Note: WWC intervention reports describe each program and provide information on the students, cost, and scope of use. To view the intervention reports, please click on the program name or go to [www.whatworks.ed.gov](http://www.whatworks.ed.gov). When available, websites offering additional information about the program are included after the program name.

### Key



### Average improvement indices

The WWC computes an average improvement index for each domain and each study as well as a domain average improvement index across studies of the same intervention (see the [Technical Details of WWC-Conducted Computations](#)).

The improvement index represents the difference between the percentile rank of the average student in the intervention condition and the percentile rank of the average student in the comparison condition. It can take on values between -50 and +50, with positive numbers denoting results favorable to the intervention group. Unlike the rating of effectiveness, which is based on four factors, the improvement index is based only on the size of the difference between the intervention and the comparison conditions.<sup>1</sup>

### Staying in school

The staying in school domain includes measures of whether the student remained enrolled in school or dropped out of school without earning a high school diploma

or GED certificate. We reviewed outcomes in this domain for seven dropout prevention programs, and the average improvement index ranged from -3 to +42 percentile points (figure 1).

### Progressing in school

The progressing in school domain includes measures of credits earned, grade promotion, and whether the student is making normal progress toward graduation. We reviewed outcomes in this domain for nine programs, and the average improvement index ranged from -6 to +30 percentile points (figure 2).

### Completing school

The completing school domain includes measures of whether the student earned a high school diploma or received a GED certificate. We reviewed outcomes in this domain for eight programs, and the average improvement index ranged from -3 to +17 percentile points (figure 3).

Figure 1 Staying in school: average improvement

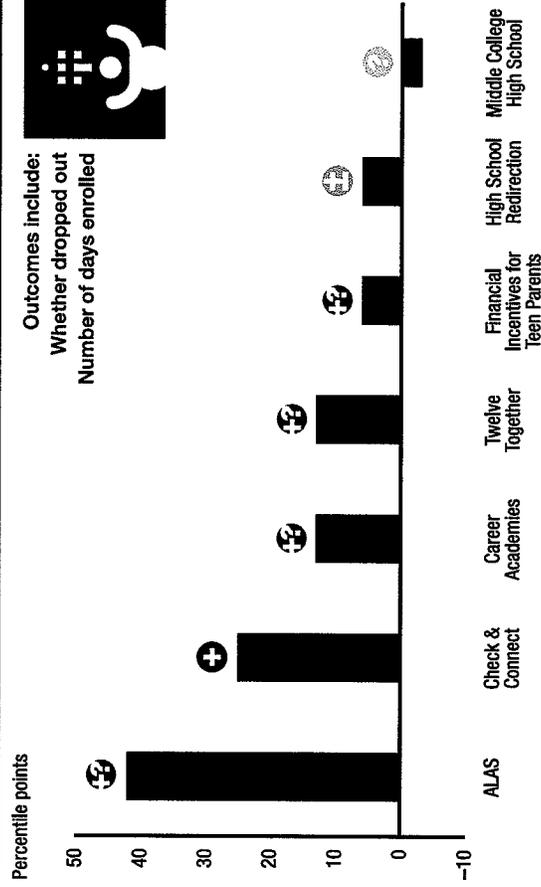
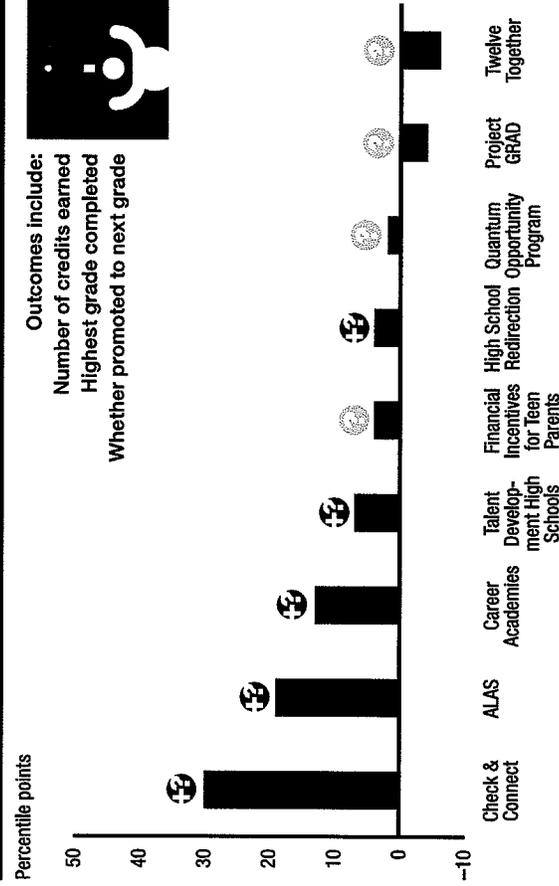
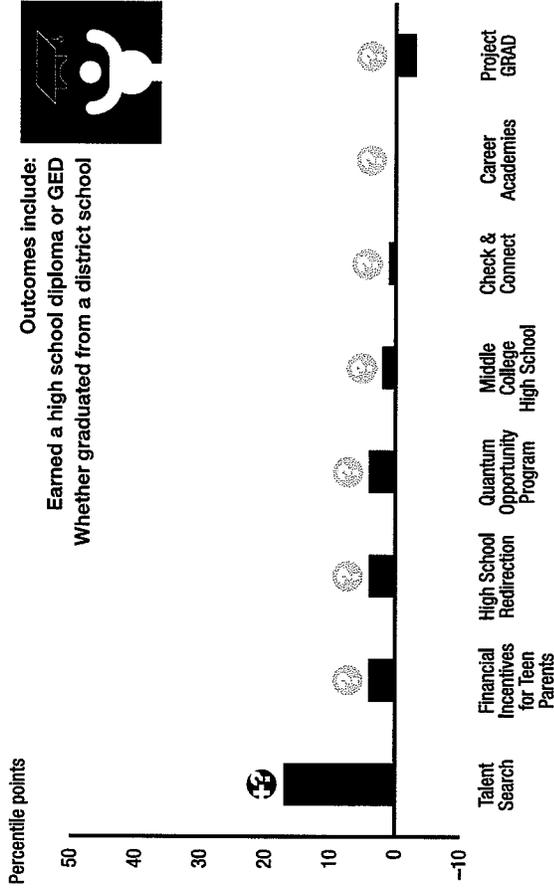


Figure 2 Progressing in school: average improvement



1. To enable comparisons across interventions, improvement indices are calculated from student-level findings. For further details please see [Technical Details of WWC-Conducted Computations](#).

**Figure 3** Completing school: average improvement



**Table 2** Interventions reviewed with no studies meeting WWC evidence screens<sup>1</sup>

<b>Belief Academy</b> (no website available)
<b>Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program</b> ( <a href="http://www.idra.org/Coca-Cola_Valued_Youth_Program.htm">http://www.idra.org/Coca-Cola_Valued_Youth_Program.htm</a> )
<b>National Guard Youth Challenge Corps</b> ( <a href="http://www.ngyccp.org">http://www.ngyccp.org</a> )
<b>Project COFFEE</b> ( <a href="http://www.oeps.org/NEW%20COFFEE%20II/newcoffee.htm">http://www.oeps.org/NEW%20COFFEE%20II/newcoffee.htm</a> )
<b>Talent Development Middle Grades Program</b> ( <a href="http://web.fmu.edu/CSOS/dmg/index.htm">http://web.fmu.edu/CSOS/dmg/index.htm</a> )

1. The table includes all eligible programs considered for the WWC dropout prevention review with no studies meeting evidence standards.

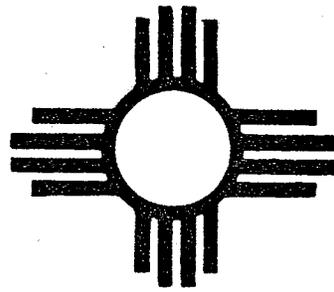
**For more information about studies reviewed and WWC methodology, please see the Dropout Prevention Technical Appendices.**

## ATTACHMENT 3

### HIGH SCHOOL REMEDIATION, CREDIT RECOVERY, NEXT-STEP PLANS AND PROMOTION SURVEY

#### Respondents

- Albuquerque Public Schools
- Animas Public Schools
- Bernalillo Public Schools
- Central Consolidated Schools
- Cimarron Municipal Schools
- Clovis Municipal Schools
- Estancia Municipal Schools
- Des Moines Municipal Schools
- Española Public Schools
- Farmington Municipal Schools
- Fort Sumner Municipal Schools
- Gallup-McKinley County Public Schools
- Grady Municipal Schools
- Hagerman Municipal Schools
- Hobbs Municipal Schools
- Hondo Valley Public Schools
- House Municipal School District
- Los Lunas Schools
- Moriarty Municipal Schools
- Questa Independent School District
- Rio Rancho Public Schools
- Roswell Independent Schools
- Roy Municipal Schools
- Ruidoso Municipal Schools
- Santa Fe Public Schools
- Silver Consolidated Schools
- Socorro Consolidated Schools
- Springer Municipal Schools
- Texico Municipal Schools
- Truth or Consequences Municipal Schools
- Zuni Public Schools



The Legislature  
of the  
State of New Mexico

48th Legislature, 1st Session

LAWS 2007

CHAPTER 307

HOUSE BILL 584, as amended

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Introduced by

REPRESENTATIVE SHERYL WILLIAMS STAPLETON

REPRESENTATIVES ROBERTO "BOBBY" J. GONZALES,  
LUCIANO "LUCKY" VARELA, PETER WIRTH,  
THOMAS A. GARCIA, JIM R. TRUJILLO,  
RICK MIERA, RAY BEGAYE, ELIAS BARELA,  
GEORGE J. HANOSH, RICHARD D. VIGIL,  
PATRICIA A. LUNDSTROM, DANIEL P. SILVA,  
THOMAS E. SWISSTACK AND W. KEN MARTINEZ



1 ~~(10) United States history;~~

2 ~~(11) geography;~~

3 ~~(12) physical education; and~~

4 ~~(13) health education.~~

5 E. Beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, in  
6 eighth grade, algebra I shall be offered in regular classroom  
7 settings or through on-line courses or agreements with high  
8 schools.

9 F. In fourth through eighth grades, school  
10 districts shall offer electives that contribute to academic  
11 growth and skill development and provide career and technical  
12 education.

13 G. In ninth through twelfth grades, instruction  
14 that meets academic content and performance standards shall be  
15 ~~provided in health education."~~

16 Section 8. Section 22-13-1.1 NMSA 1978 (being Laws  
17 1986, Chapter 33, Section 5, as amended by Laws 2005, Chapter  
18 314, Section 1 and by Laws 2005, Chapter 315, Section 10) is  
19 amended to read:

20 "22-13-1.1. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.--

21 A. At the end of grades eight through eleven, each  
22 student shall prepare an interim next-step plan that sets  
23 forth the coursework for the grades remaining until high  
24 school graduation. Each year's plan shall explain any  
25 differences from previous interim next-step plans, shall be

1 filed with the principal of the student's high school and  
2 shall be signed by the student, the student's parent and the  
3 student's guidance counselor or other school official charged  
4 with coursework planning for the student.

5 B. Each student must complete a final next-step  
6 plan during the senior year and prior to graduation. The plan  
7 shall be filed with the principal of the student's high school  
8 and shall be signed by the student, the student's parent and  
9 the student's guidance counselor or other school official  
10 charged with coursework planning for the student.

11 C. An individualized education program that meets  
12 the requirements of Subsections A and B of this section and  
13 that meets all applicable transition and procedural  
14 requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities  
15 Education Act for a student with a disability shall satisfy  
16 the next-step plan requirements of this section for that  
17 student.

18 D. A local school board shall ensure that each  
19 high school student has the opportunity to develop a next-step  
20 plan based on reports of college and workplace readiness  
21 assessments, as available, and other factors and is reasonably  
22 informed about:

23 (1) curricular and course options, including  
24 honors or advanced placement courses, dual-credit courses,  
25 distance learning courses, career clusters or remediation

1 programs that the college and workplace readiness assessments  
2 indicate to be appropriate;

3 (2) opportunities available that lead to  
4 different post-high-school options; and

5 (3) alternative opportunities available if  
6 the student does not finish a planned curriculum.

7 E. The secretary shall:

8 (1) establish specific accountability  
9 standards for administrators, counselors, teachers and school  
10 district staff to ensure that every student has the  
11 opportunity to develop a next-step plan;

12 (2) promulgate rules for accredited private  
13 schools in order to ensure substantial compliance with the  
14 provisions of this section;

15 (3) monitor compliance with the requirements  
16 of this section; and

17 (4) compile such information as is necessary  
18 to evaluate the success of next-step plans and report  
19 annually, by December 15, to the legislative education study  
20 committee and the governor.

21 F. Successful completion of a minimum of twenty-  
22 three units aligned to the state academic content and  
23 performance standards shall be required for graduation. These  
24 units shall be as follows:

25 (1) four units in English, with major

1 emphasis on grammar and literature;

2 (2) three units in mathematics, at least one  
3 of which is equivalent to the algebra 1 level or higher;

4 (3) two units in science, one of which shall  
5 have a laboratory component; provided, however, that with  
6 students entering the ninth grade beginning in the 2005-2006  
7 school year, three units in science shall be required, one of  
8 which shall have a laboratory component;

9 (4) three units in social science, which  
10 shall include United States history and geography, world  
11 history and geography and government and economics;

12 (5) one unit in physical education;

13 (6) one unit in communication skills or  
14 business education, with a major emphasis on writing and  
15 speaking and that may include a language other than English;

16 (7) one-half unit in New Mexico history for  
17 students entering the ninth grade beginning in the 2005-2006  
18 school year; and

19 (8) nine elective units and seven and one-  
20 half elective units for students entering the ninth grade in  
21 the 2005-2006 school year that meet department content and  
22 performance standards. Student service learning shall be  
23 offered as an elective.

24 G. For students entering the ninth grade beginning  
25 in the 2009-2010 school year, at least one of the units

1 required for graduation shall be earned as an advanced  
2 placement or honors course, a dual-credit course offered in  
3 cooperation with an institution of higher education or a  
4 distance learning course.

5 H. The department shall establish a procedure for  
6 students to be awarded credit through completion of specified  
7 career technical education courses for certain graduation  
8 requirements.

9 I. Successful completion of the requirements of  
10 the New Mexico diploma of excellence shall be required for  
11 graduation for students entering the ninth grade beginning in  
12 the 2009-2010 school year. Successful completion of a minimum  
13 of twenty-four units aligned to the state academic content and  
14 performance standards shall be required to earn a New Mexico  
15 diploma of excellence. These units shall be as follows:

16 (1) four units in English, with major  
17 emphasis on grammar, nonfiction writing and literature;

18 (2) four units in mathematics, of which one  
19 shall be the equivalent to or higher than the level of algebra  
20 2, unless the parent submitted written, signed permission for  
21 the student to complete a lesser mathematics unit;

22 (3) three units in science, two of which  
23 shall have a laboratory component;

24 (4) three and one-half units in social  
25 science, which shall include United States history and

1 geography, world history and geography and government and  
2 economics, and one-half unit of New Mexico history;

3 (5) one unit in physical education;

4 (6) one unit in one of the following: a  
5 career cluster course, workplace readiness or a language other  
6 than English; and

7 (7) seven and one-half elective units that  
8 meet department content and performance standards. Student  
9 service learning shall be offered as an elective.

10 J. Final examinations shall be administered to all  
11 students in all classes offered for credit.

12 K. Until July 1, 2010, a student who has not  
13 passed a state graduation examination in the subject areas of  
14 reading, English, mathematics, writing, science and social  
15 science shall not receive a high school diploma. The state  
16 graduation examination on social science shall include a  
17 section on the constitution of the United States and the  
18 constitution of New Mexico. If a student exits from the  
19 school system at the end of grade twelve without having passed  
20 a state graduation examination, the student shall receive an  
21 appropriate state certificate indicating the number of credits  
22 earned and the grade completed. If within five years after a  
23 student exits from the school system the student takes and  
24 passes the state graduation examination, the student may  
25 receive a high school diploma.

1           L. Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, a  
2 student shall not receive a New Mexico diploma of excellence  
3 if the student has not demonstrated competence in the subject  
4 areas of mathematics, reading and language arts, writing,  
5 social studies and science, including a section on the  
6 constitution of the United States and the constitution of New  
7 Mexico, based on a standards-based assessment or assessments  
8 or a portfolio of standards-based indicators established by  
9 the department by rule no later than January 15, 2008. If a  
10 student exits from the school system at the end of grade  
11 twelve without having satisfied the requirements of this  
12 subsection, the student shall receive an appropriate state  
13 certificate indicating the number of credits earned and the  
14 grade completed. If within five years after a student exits  
15 from the school system the student satisfies the requirement  
16 of this subsection, the student may receive a New Mexico  
17 diploma of excellence.

18           M. As used in this section:

19                   (1) "final next-step plan" means a next-step  
20 plan that shows that the student has committed or intends to  
21 commit in the near future to a four-year college or  
22 university, a two-year college, a trade or vocational program,  
23 an internship or apprenticeship, military service or a job;

24                   (2) "interim next-step plan" means an annual  
25 next-step plan in which the student specifies post-high-school

1 goals and sets forth the coursework that will allow the  
2 student to achieve those goals; and

3 (3) "next-step plan" means an annual  
4 personal written plan of studies developed by a student in a  
5 public school or other state-supported school or institution  
6 in consultation with the student's parent and school counselor  
7 or other school official charged with coursework planning for  
8 the student that includes one or more of the following:

9 (a) advanced placement or honors  
10 courses;

11 (b) dual-credit courses offered in  
12 cooperation with an institution of higher education; and

13 (c) distance learning courses.

14 N. The secretary may establish a policy to provide  
15 for administrative interpretations to clarify curricular and  
16 testing provisions of the Public School Code."

17 ~~Section 9. Section 22-13-1.4 NMSA 1978 (being Laws~~  
18 ~~2005, Chapter 78, Section 1) is amended to read:~~

19 ~~"22-13-1.4. HONORS OR SIMILAR CLASSES IN MATHEMATICS~~  
20 ~~AND LANGUAGE ARTS--DUAL CREDIT COURSES--LANGUAGES OTHER THAN~~  
21 ~~ENGLISH.--~~

22 ~~A. Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, each~~  
23 ~~school district shall offer at least one honors or similar~~  
24 ~~academically rigorous class each in mathematics and language~~  
25 ~~arts in each high school.~~

**NEXT STEP PLAN  
STUDENT INFORMATION**

Student Information

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student #: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender:  M  F

English Language Status:  Native English Speaker  English Language Learner  Fluent English Proficient

Projected High School Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Ph: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Ph: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Ph: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Ph: \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT GOALS**

What are your long-term career interests? [Click here for Next Step Career Links](#)

9<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

10<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

11<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

12<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

What academic goals do you have?

9<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

10<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

11<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

12<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

What extra-curricular activities do you participate in or plan to participate in?

9<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

10<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

11<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

12<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

What are your plans for post-secondary training & learning?

9<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

10<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

11<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

12<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

What are your personal and/or social goals?

9<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

10<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

11<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

12<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

### STUDENT COURSE OF STUDY

NEW MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION	
English	4 credits
Social Studies	3.5 credits (1 = World Hist/Geog; 1 = US Hist/Geog; 1 = Government/Economics; .5 NM History)
Science	2 credits (1 = lab science) (3 credits beginning 2005-2006 ninth graders )
Mathematics	3 credits (1 = Algebra I)
Physical Education	1 credit
Communication Skills	1 credit (Sec. 22.13.1.1 NMSA 1978 identifies courses that can satisfy this)
Electives	9 credits (7.5 credits beginning 2005-06 ninth graders) <b>TOTAL: 23 credits</b>

**Please Note:** These are the state's minimum requirements. Schools may, however, require more credits but not less. Charter Schools and accredited non-public schools may have different requirements.

**CAREER PATHWAY (click here for links):** \_\_\_\_\_

9th Grade	COURSE OF STUDY				
Year: _____ CRT Exam: _____ Score _____ GPA: _____ English Proficient: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Total credits earned _____	Course	Name	Proposed	#Credits Earned	
	English	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Math	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Science	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Social Studies	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Physical Education	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Electives (List specific course/s)	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

8<sup>th</sup> grade Academic Improvement Plan?     YES     NO    If YES, attach the plan.

Is this student on target with graduation requirements?     YES     NO

If NO, describe the reason(s) and outline a plan of action for the student getting back on target.

**CAREER PATHWAY (click here for links):** \_\_\_\_\_

10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	COURSE OF STUDY				
Year: _____ CRT Exam: _____ Score _____ GPA: _____ English Proficient: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Total credits earned _____	Course	Name	Proposed	#Credits Earned	
	English	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Math	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Science	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Social Studies	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Physical Education	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Electives (List specific course/s)	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Is this student on target with graduation requirements?     YES     NO

If NO, describe the reason(s) and outline a plan of action for the student getting back on target.

**Next Step Plan of** \_\_\_\_\_

### STUDENT COURSE OF STUDY

**CAREER PATHWAY (click here for links):** \_\_\_\_\_

11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	COURSE OF STUDY				
Year: _____  CRT Exam _____ Score _____  GPA: _____ English Proficient: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Total credits earned _____	Course	Title	Proposed	#Credits Earned	
	English	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Math	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Science	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Social Studies	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Physical Education	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Electives (List specific course/s)	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Is this student on target with graduation requirements?       YES       NO

If NO, describe the reason(s) and outline a plan of action for the student getting back on target.

**CAREER PATHWAY (click here for links):** \_\_\_\_\_

12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	COURSE OF STUDY				
Year: _____  CRT Exam: _____ Score _____  GPA: _____ English Proficient: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Total credits earned _____	Course	Name	Proposed	#Credits Earned	
	English	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Math	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Science	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Social Studies	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Physical Education	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Electives (List specific course/s)	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Is this student on target with graduation requirements?       YES       NO

If NO, describe the reason(s) and outline a plan of action for the student getting back on target.

**Next Step Plan of** \_\_\_\_\_

### STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES AND LINKAGE

What does the student need in order to prepare for desired post-school outcomes?

Student Needs	Activities/Strategies			
GRADE:	9	10	11	12
<b>Academic Support and/or Study Skills:</b>	Language support svc <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Tutoring <input type="checkbox"/>	Tutoring <input type="checkbox"/>	Tutoring <input type="checkbox"/>	Tutoring <input type="checkbox"/>
	Study group <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Extracurricular Experiences and Out-of-School activities:</b>	Student organization <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Athletics <input type="checkbox"/>	Athletics <input type="checkbox"/>	Athletics <input type="checkbox"/>	Athletics <input type="checkbox"/>
	Community Involvement <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Exposure to Postsecondary Education and Career Options: (click here)</b>	College tours <input type="checkbox"/>	College tours <input type="checkbox"/>	Concurrent enrollment <input type="checkbox"/>	Concurrent enrollment <input type="checkbox"/>
	Job shadowing <input type="checkbox"/>	Job shadowing <input type="checkbox"/>	College tours <input type="checkbox"/>	College tours <input type="checkbox"/>
	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Internship <input type="checkbox"/>	Job shadowing <input type="checkbox"/>	Job shadowing <input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Internship <input type="checkbox"/>	Internship <input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Work Experience <input type="checkbox"/>	Work Experience <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Family and/or Social Supports:</b>	Parent involvement <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Student leadership <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Mentoring <input type="checkbox"/>	Mentoring <input type="checkbox"/>	Mentoring <input type="checkbox"/>	Mentoring <input type="checkbox"/>
	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Assessments and Credentials:</b>	Pre-admission testing <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Career assessment <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Student certification <input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Other:</b>				

Next Step Plan of \_\_\_\_\_

**Next Step Plan Signatures (9<sup>th</sup> grade):**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Counselor or other school official: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

**Next Step Plan Signatures (10<sup>th</sup> grade):**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Counselor or other school official: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

**Next Step Plan Signatures (11<sup>th</sup> grade):**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Counselor or other school official: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

**Next Step Plan Signatures (12<sup>th</sup> grade):**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Counselor or other school official: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

**Next Step Plan of** \_\_\_\_\_

## FINAL NEXT STEP PLAN

What are the student's long-term career interests?

What does the student plan to do after high school?

(Check appropriate box and describe.)

- Bachelor Degree Program \_\_\_\_\_
- Public College/University (name) \_\_\_\_\_
- Private College/University (name) \_\_\_\_\_
- Associate Degree Program \_\_\_\_\_
- Trade Certificate Program \_\_\_\_\_
- Military Service (branch) \_\_\_\_\_
- Work/Study/Apprenticeship Program \_\_\_\_\_
- On-the-job Training \_\_\_\_\_
- Work \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

How does the student intend to accomplish these goals? (Financial aid, scholarships, etc.)

### FINAL NEXT STEP PLAN SIGNATURES (just prior to high school graduation)

Student: _____	Date: _____
Parent/Guardian: _____	Date: _____
Counselor or other _____	Date: _____
School Official _____	Date: _____

Next Step Plan of \_\_\_\_\_