NC Dropout Rates: New Low!

The 2012-13 school year reflected another record low for the number of students dropping out of school. Key findings of the 2012-13 Consolidated Data Report show that:

- The annual high school dropout rate decreased from 3.01 percent to 2.45 percent for 2012-13 (18.6 percent decrease).
- A total of 11,049 high school students dropped out in 2012-13 as compared to 13,488 in 2011-12 (18.1 percent decrease).
- Both the number of high school dropouts and the high school dropout rate have been cut in half over the last five years. There were 22,434 North Carolina high school dropouts reported in 2007-08 compared to 11,049 in 2012-13. Also, in 2007-08, the high school dropout rate was 4.97 percent compared to 2.45 percent in 2012-13.
- There were dropout count decreases in 77.4 percent (89 of 115) of school districts, which represents a 9 percent improvement from 2011-12 when 81 of 115 school districts reported dropout count decreases.
- The number of high school students dropping out decreased at all grade levels and for all ethnic groups.
- Males accounted for 61.5 percent of reported dropouts, which was up from the 60.3 percent reported last year.
- Attendance issues were again the reason most often cited for dropping out, accounting for 45.9 percent of all dropouts. For the third year in a row, there was a decrease in the number of students reporting "Enrollment in a Community College" as the reason for dropping out.

The full report is available from NCDPI at www.ncpublicschools.org/research/dropout/.

NC Public School Crime, Violence and Suspensions Down

The 2012-13 school year saw the total number of reportable acts of school crime and violence, short- and long-term suspensions continue their downward trend although the number of expulsions increased according to the 2012-13 Consolidated Data Report. The total number of acts of school crime and violence was the lowest reported since 2008-09 while the number of students in North Carolina public schools was at an all-time high - 1,492,793.

School Crime and Violence

- The total number of reported acts of school crime and violence decreased by 4.8 percent to 10,630 from 11,161 acts in 2011-12. The rate of acts per 1,000 students also decreased by 5.6 percent to 7.20 acts per 1,000 students as compared to 7.63 acts per 1,000 students in 2011-12.

Suspensions and Expulsions

- Short-term suspensions (10 days or fewer) among students in all grades decreased by 4 percent in 2012-13. There were 247,919 short-term suspensions reported as opposed to the 258,197 reported in 2011-12. Of that total, 45 percent or 111,122 can be attributed to high school students, which is a 9.4 percent decrease from the 2011-12 total of 122,655. The average duration of a single short-term suspension was 2.74 days.
- Long-term suspensions (11 days or more) declined among students in all grades by 69 percent in 2012-13, with 1,423 reported. This is an 11.6 percent decrease from the 1,609 reported in 2011-12. Of that total, 45 percent or 111,122 can be attributed to high school students, which is a 12.4 percent decrease from the 2011-12 total of 122,655. The average duration of a long-term suspension was 49.3 school days, down from 53.8 days per suspension in 2011-12.
- Expulsions were up in 2012-13 with 37 reported as opposed to 30 in 2011-12. High school students received 28 of those expulsions.

The full report detailing district-by-district data on all of these measures is available online at www.ncpublicschools.org/research/discipline/reports/.

Advisory Board Meeting
September 9, 2014  3 - 4:30 p.m.
UNCW Watson College of Education

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**Career and Technical Education Forum**

On Feb. 27, the Watson College of Education Dropout Prevention Coalition hosted a forum to learn about CTE programs currently offered and discuss the future of CTE in school districts in the region. Amanda Lee, vice president of instruction at Cape Fear Community College and introductory speaker at the forum, said passage of Senate Bill 14 was a significant development for North Carolina “because it added momentum to efforts already underway in school districts, community colleges and universities to expand and enhance CTE programs.” Lee added that data supports an increased emphasis on CTE in the future because graduation rates are much higher for students with CTE concentrations. She said, “Taking a national perspective, students with a CTE concentration have a 90% graduation rate, compared to 74% who do not.”

CTE Directors from five area school districts presented at the forum: John Shannon, Onslow; Laverne Pickett, New Hanover County; Darrell Cheers, Brunswick; Robby Cauley, Pender, and Rod Likens, Columbus. Jerry Smith, coordinator, Brunswick County Schools and Brunswick Community College Center for Advanced Studies and Francisca Gray, career development and youth programs coordinator, Onslow County also participated in panel presentations and discussions, with WCE professor Robert Smith moderating.

There was consensus among panelists and presenters that CTE will play a significant role in secondary education in the future. Onslow County has created career academies and this year brought 1,800 eighth graders to explore CTE course offerings at all seven high schools as the students prepared to select high school pathways. Brunswick County has focused on developing strong partnerships with Brunswick Community College, local businesses and Future Farmers of America; work that earned the county national recognition in 2012. New Hanover County has aligned course offerings to state and national career clusters. Pickett says the county now offers 65 CTE courses in 13 of the 16 clusters that make up career pathways. Among other programs under development, Pender County will add Firefighting Technology to 2014-15 CTE offerings in an effort to reduce the high school dropout rate and capitalize on strong local volunteer participation in fire and EMS. In Columbus County, recent work has focused on creating a school for 250 students that offers intensive concentration in fields including audio and video, culinary arts and masonry, with a focus on job shadowing and other activities that provide real world experience.

Enthusiasm for new programs and future opportunities was apparent, but area CTE directors acknowledged they face challenges as well. Top among them are lingering and widespread perceptions of CTE as vocational training for students who struggle academically. “CTE is not limited to home economics and shop like it was 30 years ago,” Shannon said. “Unfortunately, not enough people know that and we need to do more to align kids with career pathways for the future.” Shannon says when students don’t understand career pathways they often ‘Chinese menu’ select courses. A better avenue is to choose a career cluster and earn a nationally recognized Career Readiness Certificate credential (CRC). Shannon said these credentials are important for students’ future careers because they can lead to higher wages and employers are increasingly asking job candidates, “Do you have your CRC?”

Lee agreed that perceptions are lodged in a past that no longer exists. “Today CTE is at least as academically rigorous as the college ready track,” she said. Lee added, “Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 in core courses to participate in the career pathways now offered.” Representatives from area districts and community colleges who participated in the forum agree there’s high future potential for career and technical education, but work still to be done to raise awareness of “the new CTE” among students, parents, educators, and the broader community. Going forward, the educators hope to extend career pathways to middle school and more actively engage businesses and other future employers in CTE programs offered in the region.

The CTE Forum was planned by Dropout Prevention Coalition co-coordinators and WCE professors Janna Robertson and Robert Smith, and DPC co-chairs of the professional development committee John Shannon, CTE director, Onslow County Schools and Deloris Rhodes, outreach liaison for the Watson College.
North Carolina News

North Carolina's innovative schools continue progress in reducing dropouts

North Carolina's innovative schools continue to demonstrate strong results by ensuring that students stay in school and on track to graduation. The latest dropout data released by the State Board of Education earlier this month show that schools that partnered with North Carolina New Schools in 2012-13 lost comparatively few students. More than half of the 103 schools that NC New Schools helped support last year had no dropouts from any grade, and eight of every 10 of the schools had no dropouts from ninth grade, when students are most vulnerable for quitting school.

The combined dropout rate for the 103 schools was 1.3 percent, a slight improvement from the previous year’s rate of 1.4 percent. The statewide rate reported by the State Board of Education for all high schools was 2.45 percent.

Key findings in the state data for 2012-13 NC New Schools partner schools include:

- 54 NC New Schools partner schools lost no students to dropping out (see list at end of release)
- 79 of the partner schools lost no more than two students as dropouts
- 82 partner schools lost no students from ninth grade
- The 77 partner early colleges had a combined dropout rate of only 0.3 percent.
- Of the nearly 15,000 students enrolled in the early colleges in 2012-13, just 50 dropped out of all grades, and only six ninth graders quit school.


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Career and Technical Education Forum continued

For more information see:
Career Clusters
National link - http://www.careertech.org/career-clusters/glance/careerclusters.html
CTE Career Clusters - NC DPI - http://dpi.state.nc.us/cte/curriculum/

District Offerings
Brunswick: http://www.co.brunswick.k12.nc.us/education/dept/dept.php?sectiondetailid=30980
Columbus: http://www.columbus.k12.nc.us/cte/
New Hanover: http://www.nhcs.net/workforce/
Onslow: http://onslowcounty.schoolinsites.com/?DivisionID=2539&DepartmentID=2475&ToggleSideNav=ShowAll
For information about the Brunswick County Schools/ Brunswick Community College Partnership that earned national recognition view 2012 PortCityDaily.com article online at:
National News

According to recent federal data, the national graduation rate has climbed to over 80% for the first time in U.S. history.

In the 2014 annual update of Building a Grad Nation, the authors conjecture that if states can keep up this pace of improvement, the rate could hit 90% by 2020. The authors point to three key factors that have driven the increased graduation rates: 1) awareness of the issue and spotlighting the problems; 2) accountability, higher expectations, and data-based decision making; and 3) communities answering the call with increases in quality public, private, and nonprofit supports for young people. The greatest increases for broad subgroups have been for African American and Hispanic students.

![U.S. High School Averaged Freshman Graduation Rates (AFGR), Classes of 2006-2012](image_url)

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), “NCES Common Core of Data State Dropout and Graduation Rate Data file,” School Year 2011-12, Preliminary Version 1a; School Year 2010-11, Provisional 1a; School Year 2009-10, 1a; School Year 2008-09, 1a; School Year 2007-08, 1b.


To see the most recent North Carolina Educational Statistics data showing Regulatory Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) data (which adjusts for transfers in and out and is a more precise measurement of cohort graduation) and Event Dropout Rates, link to the just released National Center for Education Statistics "Public High School Four-Year On-Time Graduation Rates and Event Dropout Rates: School Years 2010-11 and 2011-12" at [http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2014/2014391.pdf](http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2014/2014391.pdf)

Regional Resources

- Check out our website!
- Local STEM resources!
- More STEM assistance
- Watson College of Education Chronicle
- WCE website
More National News

Understanding Why Students Drop Out of High School, According to Their Own Reports: Are They Pushed or Pulled, or Do They Fall Out? A Comparative Analysis of Seven Nationally Representative Studies: http://sgo.sagepub.com/content/3/4/2158244013503834

School Climate Practice Briefs: NSCC School Climate Practice Briefs summarize effective practices that support implementation and sustainability efforts. The first set of Briefs summarizes research and best practices for effective school reform in eleven overlapping areas. The second Practice Brief summarizes a number of early childhood issues and school climate reform. http://www.schoolclimate.org/publications/practice-briefs.php


President Obama launched the "My Brother's Keeper" initiative to build ladders of opportunity for boys and young men of color. Hear the February 2014 remarks about the initiative. Read the fact sheet.

North Carolina: Rural innovation efforts help to decline dropouts by a third

A two-year-old initiative aimed at boosting student outcomes at 18 rural high schools across North Carolina is helping keep students in school and on track to graduation. The combined dropout rate for the first five schools to join the effort fell by nearly a third in 2011-12 to 2.43 percent from 3.53 percent the year before, according to recently released state data.


Several members of the Dropout Prevention Coalition presented at the Myrtle Beach Annual At Risk Forum on Feb. 17, 2014. Presentations will be available on the DPC website at:

http://www.uncw.edu/ed/dropout/
An excellent source for funding information is the Foundation Center. Listings of foundations and guidelines for writing grants are available. Sample proposals and common grant applications are also provided. The Foundation Center provides a variety of other resources and materials, including prospect worksheets that can help you focus on funders whose priorities match those of your project.

Many businesses donate money to the communities in which they are located. You will usually find giving guidelines on corporate Web sites under headings such as “community” or “corporate citizenship.”

Business grants can be found at: http://www.dropoutprevention.org/grant-resources/funding-sources

- Government grants can be found at UCLA Center’s Mental Health in Schools site.
- Grants Alert - A website dedicated to making life a little easier for those who devote their time to searching for education grants.
- Grant Station can help your organization make smarter, better-informed fundraising decisions
- Grant Watch - A free grants listing service that helps teachers find classroom grants for school funding.
- GrantWrangler - A free grants listing service that helps teachers find classroom grants for school funding.
- National Service-Learning Clearinghouse Funding Opportunities
- Youth Today Grants Today - A national source for news, views and important developments in the youth service field from a nonprofit organization.
- Kids in Need Teacher Grants

More grant information is available at Dropout Prevention and Youth Today.

Videos Worth Watching!

- Wilmington’s own District Attorney Ben David inspirational TED talk on using a holistic approach to combatting gang violence is full of good ideas. MORE
- Dropout Issues in North Carolina were covered well in the North Carolina Now overview: MORE

Additional Information for our members . . .

UNCW Pediatric ADHD & Neurofeedback Clinic is offering free screening and biofeedback for children and adolescents with attention deficit disorder from low income households. Call 910.962.3373 for more information. The clinic is located in the Teaching Laboratory Building room 3111. Please pass this information along to anyone who you believe may benefit or know someone who might. We have parking spaces and bus route information available.

NOTE: Please send any items you would like to see in upcoming newsletters to Janna Robertson. We want to share your news!