

# HELPING SYSTEMS WORK TOGETHER FOR DISCONNECTED YOUTH: TOWARD COLLABORATION & ADVOCACY

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# NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES' INSTITUTE FOR YOUTH, EDUCATION & FAMILIES

- National association of 19,000 cities and towns
- New York State Conference of Mayors and Municipal Officials = state affiliate
- Institute for Youth, Education & Families (YEF)
  - Helping municipal leaders take action on behalf of the children, youth and families in their communities since 2001
  - Early childhood, family economic success, education and afterschool, safety, youth development

# TODAY'S TOPICS

1. Terms
2. Scale and context of key challenges
3. Applying a youth development perspective
4. Recent findings – municipal leadership to reengage dropouts and disconnected youth
  - a. Cross-system collaboration
  - b. Multiple pathways to college & career readiness
5. Advocacy options
6. Local responses

# 1. TERMS

- Disconnected youth = age 16-24 and neither in school nor employed
  - If not connected by 25, high risk of continuing issues
  - Includes dropouts, unemployed, transitioning foster youth, those released from secure JJ confinement, teen parents
- A.K.A. vulnerable youth, youth in transition
- Sometimes also: Struggling students, i.e., more than one year behind expected credit accumulation

## 2. SCALING THE CHALLENGE

### Nationwide / Statewide

- One in six young adults 16-24 neither in school nor working – at least four million
- 200,000 in NY State
- Three in ten do not graduate HS on time
- Overlapping sub-populations

### Westchester – partial picture

- 4.2% or ~ 2,800 youth 15-19 neither in school nor working
- ~ 700 dropouts per year
- 2,800 suspensions, approx. 6.5% of students
- 35 young people aging out of foster care



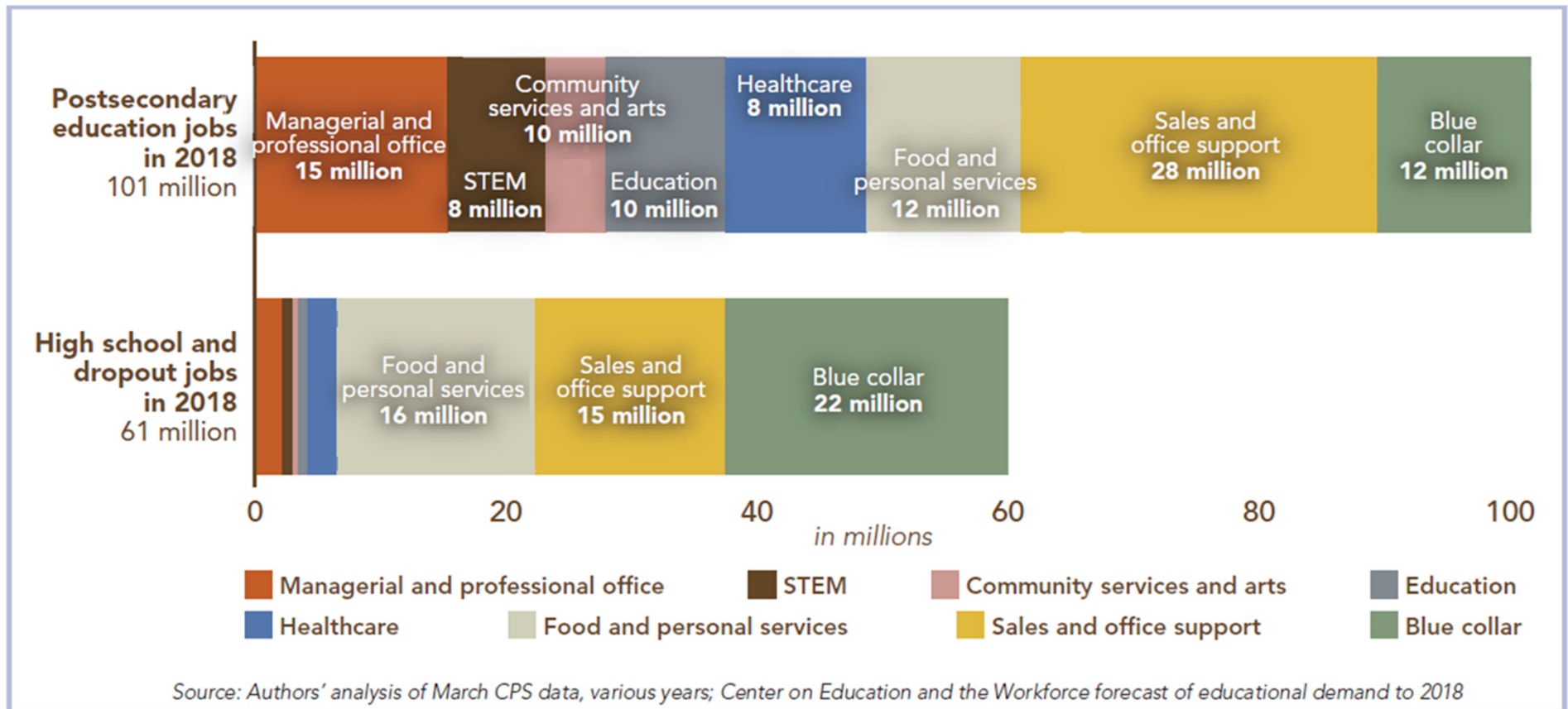
# DISCONNECTED YOUTH SUB-POPULATIONS

	<b>Implications</b>
<b><i>Foster Youth</i></b>	44% less likely to graduate 60% have some developmental delays 50% high rates of unemployment within 5 years of emancipation 10x more likely to be arrested
<b><i>Teen Pregnancies</i></b>	80% of mothers become dep. on welfare  Children at greater risk for low birth weight, infant mortality, delays in cognitive development, behavioral problems and child abuse
<b><i>Homeless</i></b>	14% diagnosed with learning disabilities 21% repeat one or more grades
<b><i>Juvenile Crime</i></b>	80% learning disabilities 80% drug/alcohol problems

*Sources: HHS, Administration for Children Services; Association of Maternal and Child Health programs; National Council to Prevent Teenage Pregnancy; The Institute for Children and Poverty; OJJDP; Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse*

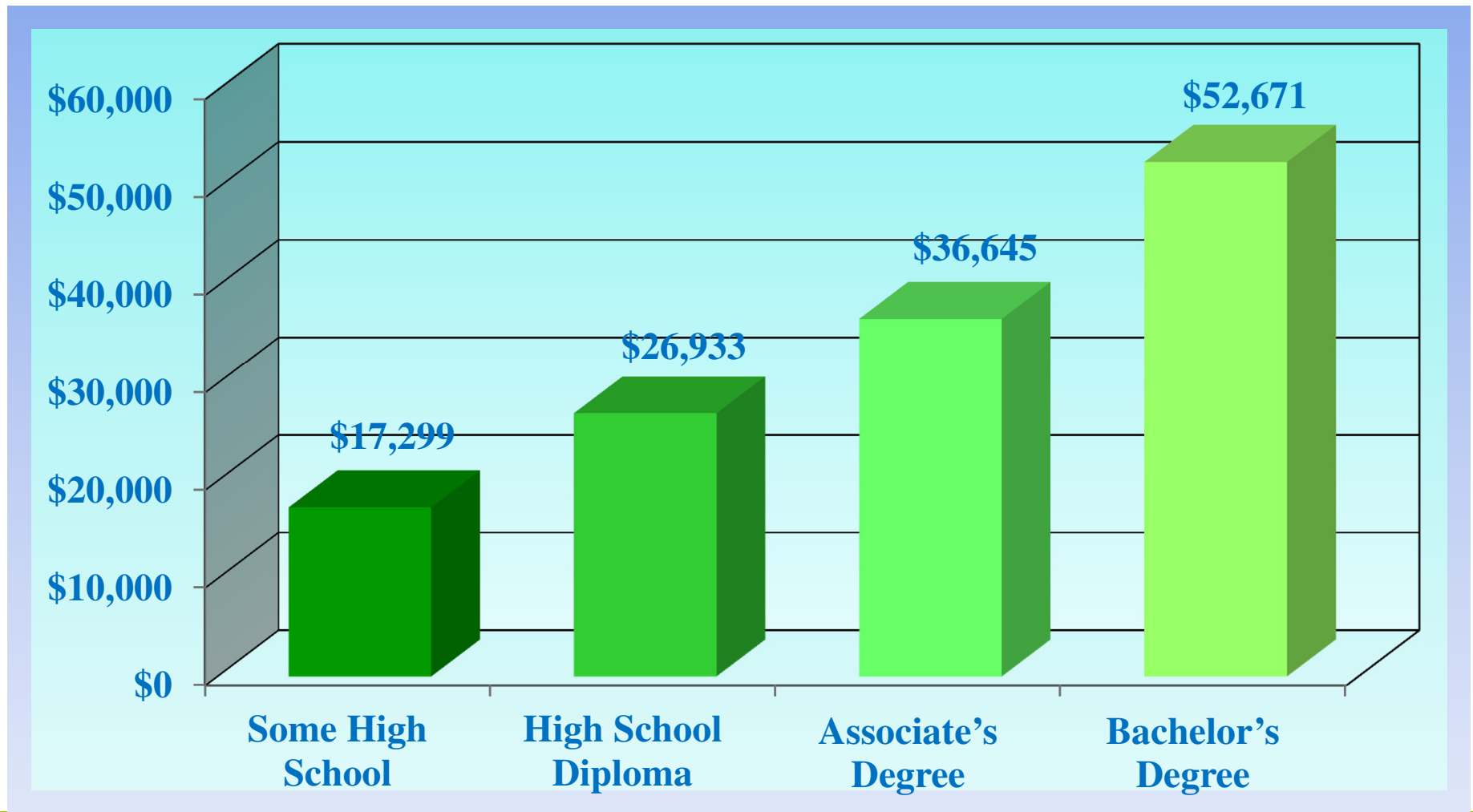
# POSTSECONDARY COMPLETION A NECESSITY FOR MOST

- Job market has changed: By 2018, 60% of jobs will require postsecondary degrees (Georgetown Univ.)



# ECONOMIC IMPACT ON THE INDIVIDUAL

2005 Average Income by Educational Attainment  
(2006 Census Data as depicted by Alliance for Excellent Education)



## LONG TERM IMPACT OF THOSE LOWER AVERAGE EARNINGS - EXAMPLE

*Lifetime earnings of 18-65 year olds for high school graduates and dropouts in the state of Massachusetts (in \$1,000)*

	<u>All</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
No diploma or GED	\$729	\$954	\$490
High school graduate or GED holder	\$1,075	\$1,398	\$755
Difference in lifetime earnings	<b>\$346</b>	<b>\$444</b>	<b>\$265</b>

# OTHER REASONS TO FOCUS ON DISCONNECTION – BEYOND ECONOMIC

- Disconnection greatly increases the chances of getting off track – diverts careers, families, futures
- Toward productive re-engagement and a goal such as, “connected by 21, credentialed by 26”
- Nationwide scale, local manageability
- Policy gap due to age, lack of clarity re: transition

### 3. A STRENGTH-BASED FRAME: GOOD NEWS ABOUT YOUNG ADULTS

- Capacity for hard work
- Learn quickly
- Idealistic, relate well to team structure
- Resilient – can attach to adults, develop a skill, remain optimistic
- Examples -- since 1994, 40,000 YouthBuild students produced more than 12,000 units of low-income housing nationwide

# KEEP YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN MIND

- Broad strategic objectives – promote educational attainment, develop workforce connections, support youth through transition
- Schuyler Center adds, rely on programs that are youth-, knowledge, and care-centered.
- Or borrow BUIC from Boys & Girls Clubs: Belonging, Usefulness, Influence, Competence

# 4A. CROSS-SYSTEM COLLABORATION TO REENGAGE DISCONNECTED YOUTH

## Assumptions

*No one agency or system has full responsibility, or can succeed on its own...cities rarely in the lead on all aspects...thus, cross-system collaboration required!*

## Collaboration

- *Exchanging information, altering activities, sharing resources, and enhancing capacity of another to achieve a common purpose.*
- *Putting the money on the table, and taking your hands off.*

# CASE STUDIES OF CROSS-SYSTEM COLLABORATION

- **Evanston, Wyoming, pop. 12,000.**  
High rates of teen suicide, substance abuse: Youth Drug & Alcohol Court + OST programs 6-12 grade
- **San Francisco, Calif., pop. 600,000.**  
High rates of youth homelessness: Transition Age Youth Task Force & new city function; programs for former foster youth
- **Philadelphia, PA, pop. 1.5 million.**  
Multiple issues facing large disconnected youth population; foster youth one-stop + work for returning JJ youth
- **Manchester, Conn., pop. 40,000.**  
DY “even” in suburb, youth homelessness. Process steps – cross-system group meets regularly, completed Results-Based Accountability analysis

# CASE STUDY FINDINGS 1: MUNICIPAL LEADERS' ROLES – 5 CS AND A P

- Conceptualizing – vision
- Convening
- Commissioning – research, intermediaries
- Cross-walking – with counties, school districts, foundations, businesses
- Co-financing – federal, state, and local \$\$
- Promoting

# MOTIVATING THEMES FOR LEADERS

- Public safety – perceived or actual
- Equity – a second (or third) chance for all
- “These are our kids”
- Strong families, workforce, citizenry
- Efficiency –
  - 1) Invest now, save later
  - 2) Extend current reach
- Livability

# CASE STUDY FINDINGS 2: WHY CROSS-SYSTEM COLLABORATION AS A KEY STRATEGY

- Volume of need
- Complexity – *We can't do it alone*
- Combining resources – human, financial
- Multiple agencies working with a youth or family anyway
- Produces better results for young people and communities

# CASE STUDY FINDINGS 3: INTERMEDIARY ROLES AND NOTES

- Roles
  - Convene, coordinate, connect
  - Institutional knowledge
  - Measure progress
  - Keep focus on systems and sustainability
- Esp. important -- more than two systems
- May build upon existing group or structure
- Examples in San Diego, San Jose, Boston

# CASE STUDY FINDINGS 4: SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY AND DATA

- San Diego - Regional Risk/Resiliency Tool
- Boston - Renewed multi-agency focus on “hot spots” identified through mapping and case file sharing
- Philadelphia – “data warehouse” – school district and city agencies together

# RESULTS OF SUCCESSFUL CROSS-SYSTEM COLLABORATION FOR DY...

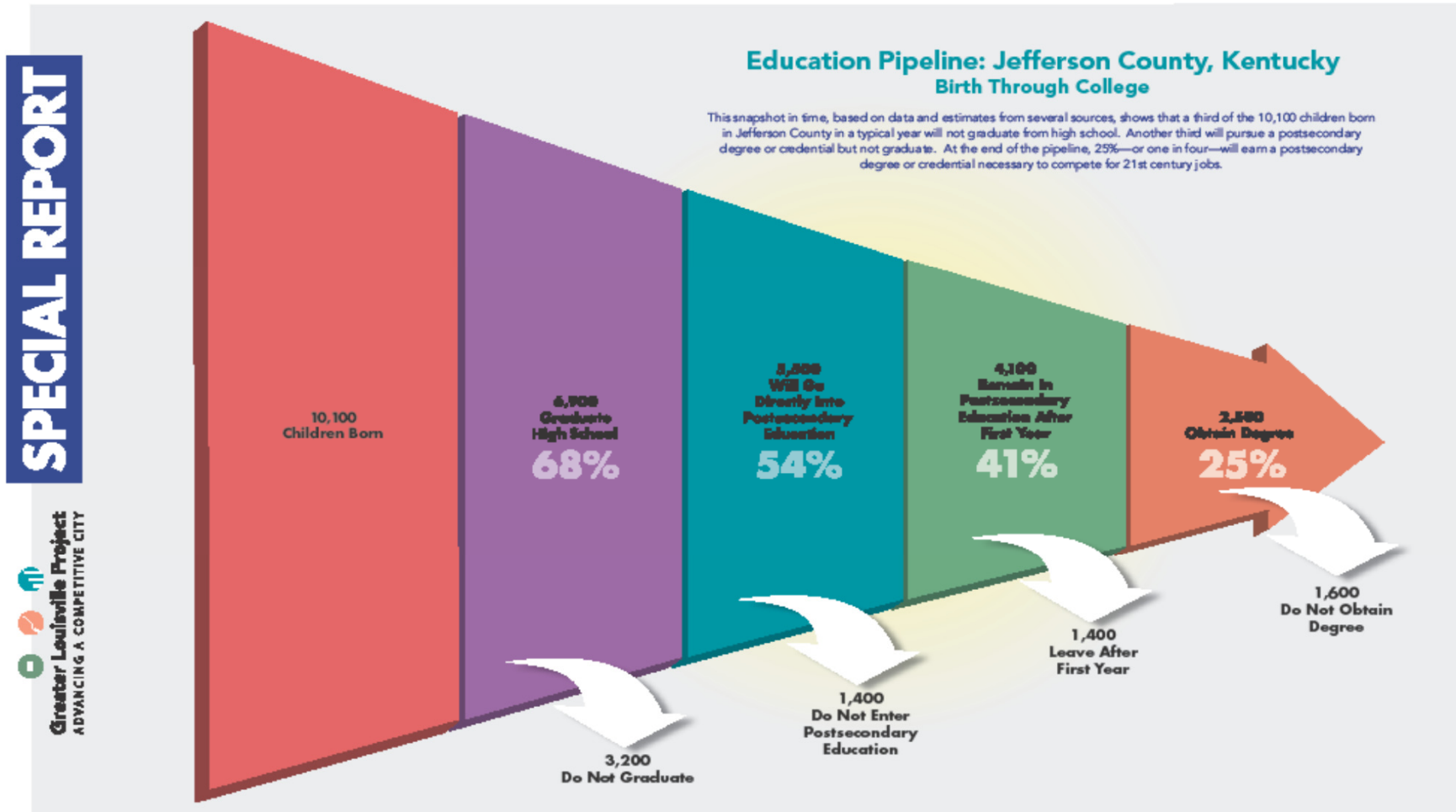
- Common points of entry, intake, assessment
- Common case management
- Transition / aftercare planning
- Outreach / new capacity
- Financial sustainability / leveraging local funds
- Expanded range of high school alternatives



## 4B. MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

- A range of choices to meet the needs and learning styles of the full range of students
- Overage/under-credited
- CTE and Tech Prep
- Dual enrollment
- Dropout recovery
- Career pathways and academies
- Work-learning

# LOUISVILLE PIPELINE ILLUSTRATION



# TO TACKLE THE DROPOUT ISSUE FULLY, EVERY CITY NEEDS TO PUT IN PLACE...

- Early warning systems
- Efforts to transform struggling high schools
- Integration of education & other data systems
- Means to reflect, re-tool, innovate across systems
- Means to engage parents and stakeholders, to set high common aspirations – prepared for college, career, life
- *Flexible portfolio of quality options offering rigor, relevance, relationships, and future focus*

# NYC MULTIPLE PATHWAYS PORTFOLIO: SCHOOL AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

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## Transfer Schools

Small, academically rigorous, full-time high schools for students who have been enrolled in high school for at least one year and are far from promoting on grade level.

## Young Adult Borough Centers

Supportive learning environments designed for students who have been in high school for at least four years and have attained a minimum of 17 credits, operated through a collaborative partnership between the DOE and a community-based organization, which provides services to students, including youth development support, career and college counseling, and assistance with job placement.

## Blended GED Programs

Prepare students for the GED and support them in developing meaningful post-secondary connections.

## Learning to Work

Helps students stay engaged in school by developing the skills they need to complete high school, gain employment, and succeed in post-secondary education, via services provided by CBO partners and integrated across Multiple Pathways schools and programs, including Transfer Schools, GED programs, and YABCs.

# PROMOTING HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION & POSTSECONDARY READINESS: LEADERS

- Use the bully pulpit to highlight dropout rates, engage public, set high expectations
- Use leadership roles to highlight school & student success
- Convene school, college and university leaders
- Implement or update city policies and programs – zoning, building space, etc.
- Promote and ensure resources to support options – especially wraparound services

Sources: *Setting the Stage and Expanding Options reports, Roles in Creating High School Alternatives for Struggling Students*

# RECOMMENDED ADVOCACY STEPS

- **Detail sharper picture of population, dynamics**
  - Crossover among subpopulations
- **Conduct resource & gap analysis; develop plan**
  - Analyze availability of multiple pathways, for example
  - Assess orientation of employment & training funds to out-of-school
- **Inform and engage leaders**
  - Present information and plan to city and public system leaders
  - Ask the Mayor to sign on to the Mayors' Action Challenge; you suggest concrete local goals
  - Create a platform for the mayor to speak out on the need to re-engage older disconnected youth
  - Present findings to Assembly delegation, with reference to state programs and initiatives
- **Identify a common project** on which city and county “systems” can work together for older youth
- **Pursue youth and community engagement strands**

# BUILD OUT A CITYWIDE ANALYSIS AND PLAN: EXAMPLES

## Boston

- Youth Transitions Task Force
- “Too Big To Be Seen” report
- Social and fiscal consequences
- Spurred additional research, legislation

## Philadelphia

- “Unfulfilled Promise” report
- Project U-Turn
- District multiple pathways office, strategy
- RFP to identify new providers, models





- Calls on mayors from across the nation to set at least one bold, measurable goal for children in four areas:  
*Opportunities to learn and grow; a safe neighborhood to call home; a healthy lifestyle and environment; and a financially fit family.*
  - **Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter:** Cut the city's dropout rate in half in five to seven years and double the college degree attainment rate in five to 10 years.
  - **Charleston, S.C., Mayor Joseph P. Riley Jr.:** Expand by 25 percent the number of community learning centers and out-of-school time programs serving elementary school children.
- More than 100 mayors have signed on to date
- **[www.mayors4kids.org](http://www.mayors4kids.org)**

## 6. LOCAL RESPONSES

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