EDUCATION

THE UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Report to the Education Interim Committee

Dropout Prevention and Recovery Report

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UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
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Dropout Prevention and Recovery Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is provided to the Education Interim Committee to summarize dropout prevention and recovery services reported by local education agencies. Local education agencies are required to report to the State Board of Education annually on the methods used to engage with or attempt to recover designated students along with the number of designated students including the number enrolled in a program and the number reaching attainment goals, and funding allocated for these services. This report provides dropout prevention and recovery information reported by local education agencies for the 2017-2018 school year. Compared to last year's report, more students classify as designated students (12,949 versus 9,599), and there is a slight decrease in the percent enrolled in a dropout prevention and recovery program; 76.5 percent compared to 77.9 percent in last year's report. In the 2017-2018 school year, there is a slight increase in the percent of enrolled students achieving attainment goals; 60.3 percent compared to 58.8 percent. Local education agencies report collectively allocating about $9.8 million for dropout prevention and recovery services including credit recovery, character development, and other services such as supplemental and life skills instruction.

BACKGROUND

In the 2016 General Session, House Bill 443, School Dropout Prevention and Recovery, enacted provisions regarding a school's responsibility to provide dropout prevention and recovery services. This bill established reporting requirements for local education agencies (LEAs) to annually submit a report to the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) on dropout prevention and recovery services including:

- the methods the LEA or third party uses to engage with or attempt to recover designated students;
- the number of designated students who enroll in a program;
- the number of designated students who reach the designated students' attainment goals; and
- funding allocated to provide dropout prevention and recovery services.

The State Board of Education is required to report a summary of the LEA-submitted reports to the Education Interim Committee annually.

METHODOLOGY

The USBE surveyed LEAs to gather the information required in 53G-9-802. Local education agencies are authorized to count a student who graduates on or before September 30 of the following school year for purposes of determining the graduation rate from the previous year. As a result, 2015-2016 school year data were used to meet the reporting requirements in code for 2017. For this report, 2017-2018 school year data were used. The limitations of the data used include the potential for misreported data since the data are self-reported.

DELIVERY SYSTEMS FOR DESIGNATED STUDENTS

All local education agencies provide support and programs for designated students for dropout prevention and recovery. As defined in Board Rule R277-606 (and in statute 53G-9-801), a designated student means a student:
- who has withdrawn from a secondary school prior to earning a diploma;
- who was dropped from average daily membership; and
- whose cohort has not yet graduated; or
- who is at risk of meeting the above criteria, as determined by the student's LEA, using specified risk factors.

Board Rule R277-606 defines risk factors as:
- low academic performance, as measured by grades, test scores, or course failure;
- poor behavior, as measured by office disciplinary referrals, suspensions, or expulsions; and
- absenteeism, whether excused or unexcused absences, and including days tardy and truant.

Local education agencies and third-party providers use a variety of methods to engage with or attempt to recover designated students, as depicted in Figure 1 on the following page. In many LEAs, multiple delivery systems are utilized concurrently.

Of the local education agencies surveyed that report having designated students, 33 percent work with a non-LEA third-party provider to support students who have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out.
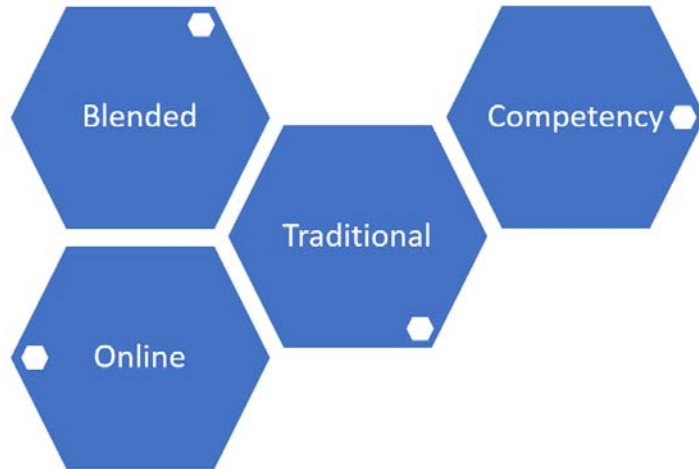
Figure 1. Delivery Systems for Dropout Prevention and Recovery

DESIGNATED STUDENTS ENROLLED

For the 2017-2018 school year, of the surveyed LEAs reporting designated students, 76.5 percent of students who have dropped out or at risk of dropping out entered into a recovery program (9,907 students enrolled out of 12,949 designated students). This percentage is similar to last year's report which found 77.9 percent of designated students entered a recovery program (see Figure 2).
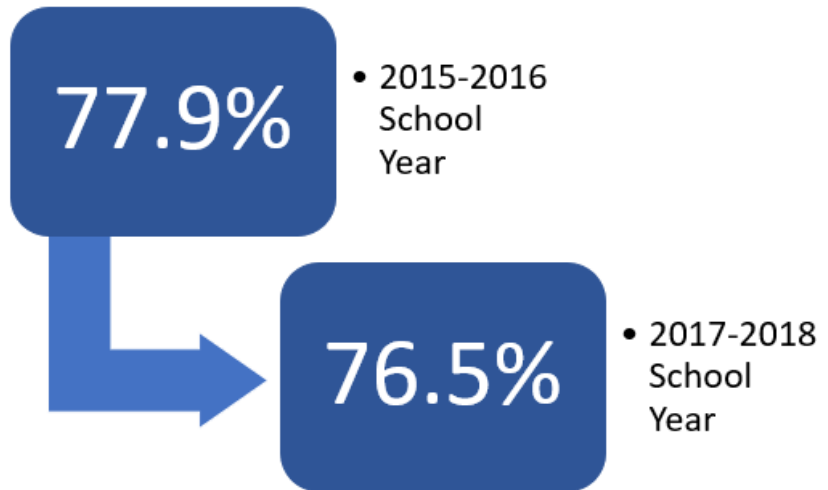

Figure 2. Percent of Students Who Have Dropped Out or At Risk of Dropping Out and Entered into a Recovery Program Over Time

ATTAINMENT GOALS

The purpose of dropout prevention and recovery is for designated students to reach their attainment goals. As defined in statute, 53G-9-801, an attainment goal means earning:

- a high school diploma;

- a Utah High School Completion Diploma, as defined in State Board of Education rule;
- an Adult Education Secondary Diploma, as defined in State Board of Education rule; or
- an employer-recognized, industry-based certificate that is: (i) likely to result in job placement; and (ii) included in the State Board of Education's approved career and technical education industry certification list.

For the 2017-2018 school year, LEAs reported that 60.3 percent of enrolled students achieved their attainment goals (5,971 students out of 9,907 enrolled) (see Figure 3). This percent is an increase compared to last year's report where 58.8 percent of enrolled students achieved their attainment goals (see Figure 4 on the following page).

5,971 attaining goal

9,907 enrolled
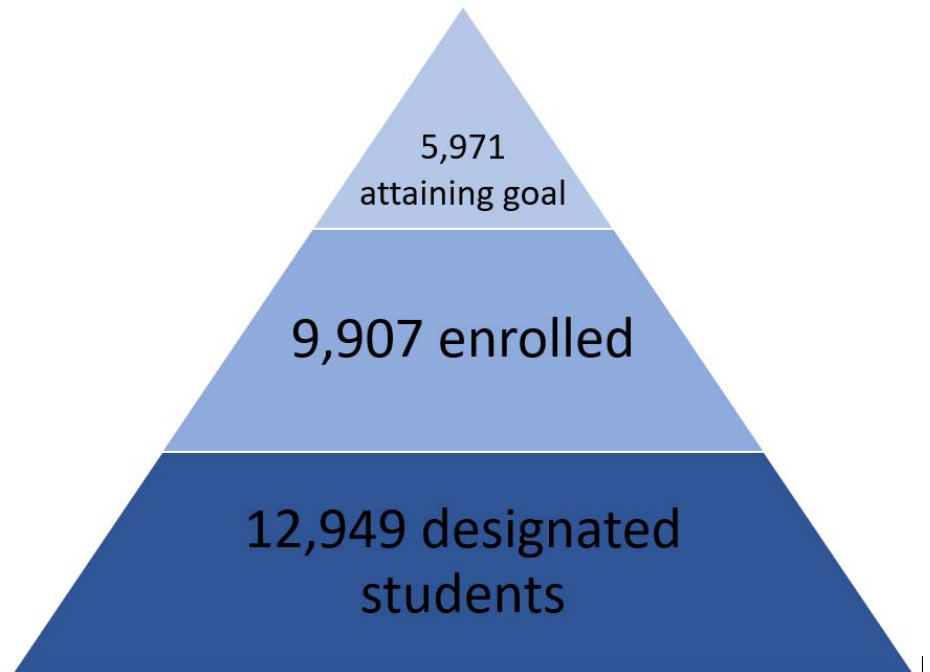
12,949 designated students

Figure 3. Total Designated Students, Students Enrolled, and Students Attaining Goal

FUNDING FOR DROPOUT PREVENTION AND RECOVERY

In fiscal year 2018, LEAs collectively allocated about $9,852,900 to deliver support to students who have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out. The maximum reported allocation was about $3,668,200 by a single school district to support 956 designated students with 88.5 percent of those students (846) reaching goal attainment. Excluding LEAs reporting zero dollars allocated in funding, the lowest funding amount was about $400 reported from a charter school with one designated student enrolled and also achieving his or her attainment goal. The average reported funding from surveyed LEAs was about $197,100 and the median funding amount was about $20,500 (both excluding any LEAs reporting zero dollars).
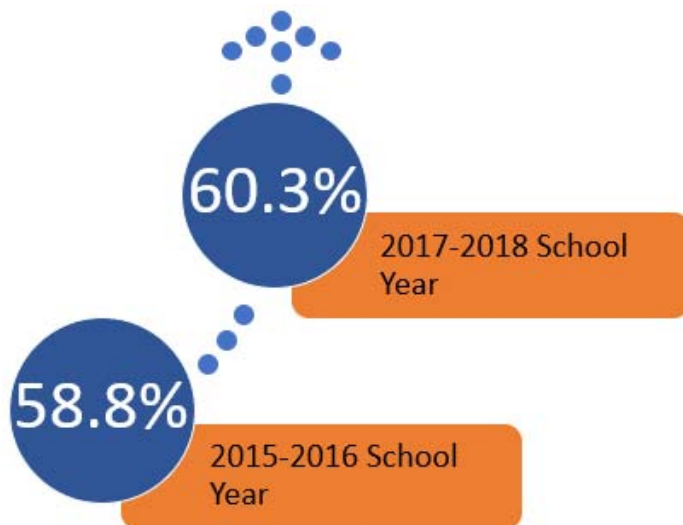
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Figure 4. Percent of Designated Students Who Have Dropped Out or At Risk of Dropping Out and Reached Their Attainment Goals Over Time

In terms of expenditures, dropout prevention and recovery funding was spent on credit recovery, character development, or other services as illustrated in Figure 5. Examples of other services include, but are not limited to, supplemental instruction, tutoring, mentoring, tracking students at risk of not graduating, life skills instruction, and training for school counselors.
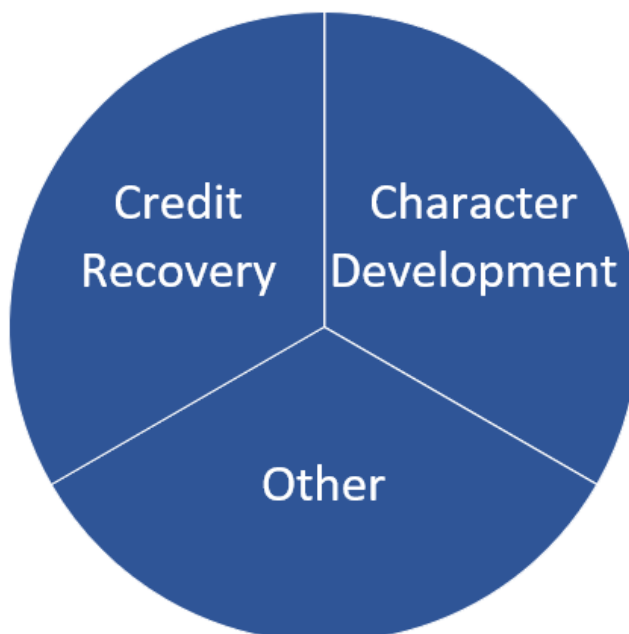

Figure 5. Categories of Dropout Prevention and Recovery Funding

No funding is allocated directly to LEAs for the sole purpose of dropout prevention and recovery services. However, in the 2017 General Session, the Legislature appropriated $150,000 one-time in fiscal year 2018 for a dropout

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prevention program based on a character development curriculum. The request for proposals for this funding was awarded to Studentnest which piloted a program in one LEA during the 2017-2018 school year.

CONCLUSION

This report is provided to the Education Interim Committee to summarize dropout prevention and recovery services reported by local education agencies. A variety of methods are used to support dropout prevention and recovery and, thus far, the percent of designated students enrolled in a program and achieving attainment goals has been relatively consistent over time.