

F I N A L R E P O R T

DROPOUT PREVENTION INTERIM STUDY COMMITTEE

January 1990

The Dropout Prevention Interim Study Committee was established by order of the Legislative Council of the 73rd General Assembly, First Session, to study the factors that lead to dropping out of school and the effectiveness of existing programs. The Committee was also charged with the duty to recommend state and local initiatives to curtail the dropout problem and educational alternatives for current dropouts. The members of the Committee were as follows:

Senator Wally Horn, Co-chairperson
Representative Don Shoultz, Co-chairperson
Senator Charles Bruner
Senator Joy Corning
Senator Beverly Hannon
Senator Jack Rife
Representative Linda Beatty
Representative Dennis Cohoon
Representative Horace Daggett
Representative Ray Lageschulte

MEETING DATES

The Committee was originally authorized two meeting days. Upon petition by Co-chairpersons Horn and Shoultz however, an additional meeting day was granted. The Committee met on August 15, September 25, and October 23, 1989.

AUGUST 15, 1989, MEETING

At its first meeting, which was held in Conference Room 4E of the Wallace Building, Des Moines, the Committee heard testimony from Dr. Carol Phillips, Child Development Coordinating Council of the Department of Education; Ms. JoAnn Callison, Department of Economic Development; Dr. Mary Wilcynski, Principal, Cedar Rapids Metro Secondary School; and Dr. Ray Morley, Bureau of Federal School Improvement Programs, Department of Education, relating to the status of early childhood, dropout, and youth employment programs in Iowa.

Dr. Carol Phillips talked about the importance of early childhood programs in the dropout prevention area and presented the

Committee with data relating to the effect of such programming on a student's later achievement. She also discussed the progress of the grant programs administered by the Child Development Coordinating Council and how funds appropriated to the Council have been allocated.

Ms. Callison spoke on youth programs conducted by the Department of Economic Development. She discussed the Iowa Conservation Corps, the Job Training Partnership Act, Iowa Youth 2000 project, and the work of the Iowa Youth 2000 Coordinating Commission.

Dr. Wilczynski discussed issues relating to why students drop out of school and described Metro High School, an alternative high school in Cedar Rapids, and how it functions. She provided the Committee with information relating to the students at her high school and how the school relates to their needs.

Dr. Ray Morley discussed programs implemented by the Department of Education and local initiatives in the area of dropout prevention. He suggested several areas in which improvements could be made in the funding and oversight of existing programs. Some of those areas included funding for departmental oversight of local at-risk programs, development of the role of merged area schools in high school completion programs, fostering of programs such as the "COOL" program which has been developed by Grinnell College, and legislation to require schools to follow up on, reenroll, and develop individual plans for students who have dropped out of school. He mentioned that the Department of Education had developed an inventory, which is currently being distributed to school districts, of policies and procedures to enable school districts to determine what policies and practices they are using which are encouraging students to drop out. He also discussed the ways in which state funding for Phase III of the Educational Excellence Program is currently being used to aid in the dropout prevention process. He noted that the dropout rate in Iowa is 14 to 15 percent, which is lower than the national average of 25 percent.

SEPTEMBER 25, 1989, MEETING

At its second meeting, which was held in Room 118 of the Statehouse, Des Moines, the Committee heard testimony from Ms. Karen Walker, National Conference of State Legislatures; Ms. Janet Levy, Joining Forces Initiative; Mr. Gary Lacy, Children's Defense Fund; Mr. Ed Tetelman, New Jersey Department of Human Resources; and Mr. Robert Palaich, Education Commission of the States, who talked to the Committee about what is being done nationally in the area of dropout prevention. The Committee also heard from Mr. Don Wiederquist from Adult Programs, Department of Education, about what the Department is doing in the area of assisting persons who have dropped out of school to go back for either their diploma or their general equivalency degree.

Ms. Walker generally described the function of the National Conference of State Legislatures and how Iowa rates nationally in the area of dropout prevention. She also introduced Ms. Levy, Mr. Lacy, and Mr. Tetelman to the Committee.

Ms. Levy stated that the purpose of Joining Forces Initiative is to foster linkage between the education and human services areas. She noted that, in selecting and developing dropout prevention programs, the home and community environment of children, as well as the educational system should be considered. She then discussed several factors that the Committee should consider in forming a dropout prevention program. She also suggested that school structures should be made to ensure that nonconforming students are not placed in programs which bore them and decrease their desire to learn and to initiate parental involvement, in order to increase the parents' interest in their child's performance. She noted that both teacher/student ratio and parental involvement are important in the area of early childhood programming. She also noted that middle school programs for potential dropouts are important, since children psychologically drop out of school during junior high.

Mr. Lacy discussed the importance of employment programs for young people, especially in the development of job and life skills for those who will not go on to attend college. He noted that most state programs are vocational or remedial programs for noncollege bound students, conservation or service corps programs, remedial programs for dropouts, or are programs which use coordinated services for the participants. Mr. Lacy suggested that the Committee consider recommending increased funding for vocational, conservation corps, and adult education programs and work toward coordinating efforts in a number of other areas. On the issue of increasing the maximum compulsory attendance age, he suggested that the issue be carefully researched, to determine whether such action is appropriate. He also noted that if certain school-to-work programs are established, good public relations and promotional programs will assist in the implementation process.

Mr. Tetelman discussed the nature, and effect of the implementation, of the New Jersey school based youth services program upon which the Iowa school-based youth services program, contained in section 279.51, is based. He described the types of services, which include both educational and social services, provided under the program. He noted that, although funding for the program is included in the annual state budget, the host communities contribute 25 percent toward the costs of the services, either directly or by providing "in-kind" contributions. The number of youths served in the first year of the program, according to Mr. Tetelman, was 10,000 persons, with 35,000 instances of services provided. He also noted that the program is primarily staffed by people with degrees or backgrounds in social work, psychology, or education.

Mr. Palaich discussed the Education Commission of the States' Youth At-Risk program, which examines the dropout problem and identifies policy strategies. He said that at-risk students commonly face problems of low self-esteem, lack of a sense of accomplishment, lack of trust and confidence in the future, and an inability to connect to the broader society. Mr. Palaich stated that the Education Commission of the States and several other organizations have identified five policy strategies to address the problems of at-risk students. These strategies include early intervention, interagency and public/private collaboration, school restructuring, parental involvement, and mentoring. He also described several programs which are operating in the United States, which deal with at-risk students at various grade levels.

Mr. Wiederquist discussed alternatives available to high school dropouts or at-risk students which are provided by area colleges in Iowa, focusing on the Adult Basic Education program and the Adult Secondary Education program. The Adult Basic Education program he described is available to persons 16 years of age or older who have not completed high school, and who need to acquire basic educational skills. The Adult Secondary Education program, he stated, is offered at a level equivalent to the instruction in grades nine through twelve, and may lead to attainment of an adult high school diploma or its equivalent. He noted that these programs could be adapted for use as alternatives for dropouts and at-risk students. He also said that area colleges may develop, in conjunction with local districts and Area Education Agencies, programs to assist dropouts, at-risk students, and disadvantaged or handicapped students.

OCTOBER 23, 1989, MEETING

At the third and final meeting of the Committee, the members discussed the following issues:

1. Compulsory school attendance -- S.F. 149.
2. Revocation of driver's licenses of dropouts.
3. Dropout prevention funding.
4. Proposed Committee Bill LSB 7199HI -- modification of current dropout prevention and at-risk programs.
5. Proposed Committee Bill LSB 7200SI -- modification of Conservation Corps Young Adult and in-school programs.
6. Limits on age for persons attending alternative schools.

On the issue of compulsory attendance, the Committee discussed whether raising the age would actually result in increased

attendance by students who otherwise would have dropped out. The Committee was provided with information relating to compulsory attendance maximum ages in other states. The Committee also reviewed the provisions contained in Senate File 149.

On the issue of driver's license revocation, the Committee discussed the fact that a bill had been introduced last year, which would require the revocation of driver's licenses of minor students who drop out of school and whether this type of legislative action was an advisable method of dealing with the state's dropout problem.

On the issue of dropout prevention funding, the Committee discussed a proposal by Co-chairperson Shoultz to alter the current funding mechanism for dropout programs. The proposal calls for a fifty-fifty split in program funding between state and local funding, with a cap on program costs of two to three percent of the regular local program budget.

The Committee reviewed and discussed LSB 7199HI, a bill proposed by Co-chairperson Horn, which adds language to current dropout prevention and at-risk student program provisions to emphasize program use of community, business, and social welfare organization resources, to ensure evaluation of current and future programs, to ensure the provision of parenting training for students who have children, to generate data on the numbers of at-risk students served, and to give priority to programs which serve large numbers of at-risk students or dropouts.

The Committee reviewed and discussed LSB 7200SI, a bill proposed by Co-chairperson Shoultz, which requires that participants in the Young Adult program of the Iowa Conservation Corps possess or obtain a high school or high school equivalency diploma and which increases the funding for the program by \$56,662. The bill also increases funding for the in-school program of the Iowa Conservation Corps by \$400,000. All funds appropriated for the increases are made up of lottery revenue.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

After discussing each of the issues mentioned at their third meeting, the Committee made the following recommendations:

1. That the House reject the Senate amendment to the House amendment to Senate File 149 and send the bill to Conference Committee. The Committee further recommends that an additional exception be added to section 4 of SF 149 which permits school boards to grant exemptions from the compulsory attendance law to students, if the district has followed certain procedures which are to be developed by the state Department of Education.

2. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly not consider legislation providing for driver's license revocation for dropouts.

3. The Committee recommends that funding for dropout prevention programs be amended to provide that local dropout prevention budgets be equivalent to a figure which equals two to three percent of the regular local program budget and that the cost be shared equally by the state and local district.

4. The Committee recommends that the bill LSB 7199HI, relating to dropout prevention and at-risk student programs, as amended by the Committee, be adopted by the General Assembly. A copy of LSB 7199HI, as amended, is attached to this report.

5. The Committee recommends that the bill LSB 7200SI, relating to Iowa Conservation Corps Young Adult and in-school programs, as amended by the Committee, be adopted by the General Assembly. A copy of LSB 7200SI, as amended, is attached to this report.

6. The Committee also recommended that the language which prohibits attendance in alternative schools by persons whose age exceeds 21 years be amended to permit completion of an alternative school program even if a student has attained the age of greater than 21 years.

HOUSE FILE _____
BY (PROPOSED DROPOUT PREVENTION
STUDY COMMITTEE BILL)

Passed House, Date _____ Passed Senate, Date _____
Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____ Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____
Approved _____

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to dropout and at-risk student programs.
2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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1 Section 1. Section 257.38, Code Supplement 1989, is
2 amended by adding the following new subsections:

3 NEW SUBSECTION. 10A. Numbers of resident pupils proposed
4 to be served by the program.

5 NEW SUBSECTION. 10B. A provision to facilitate the use of
6 business, community, or social welfare services.

7 Sec. 2. Section 257.40, Code Supplement 1989, is amended
8 to read as follows:

9 257.40 PLANS FOR RETURNING DROPOUTS AND DROPOUT
10 PREVENTION.

11 The board of directors of a school district requesting to
12 use additional allowable growth for programs for returning
13 dropouts and dropout prevention shall submit applications for
14 approval for the programs to the department not later than
15 November 1 preceding the budget year during which the program
16 will be offered. The department shall review the program
17 plans and shall prior to January 15 either grant approval for
18 the program or return the request for approval with comments
19 of the department included. The department shall give
20 priority for approval to programs which provide for increased
21 personnel or equipment to directly assist students, which
22 provide for cooperation with business, community, or social
23 welfare organizations, or which provide parent training
24 components for students who are parents. An unapproved
25 request for a program may be resubmitted with modifications to
26 the department not later than February 1. Not later than
27 February 15, the department shall notify the department of
28 management and the school budget review committee of the names
29 of the school districts for which programs using additional
30 allowable growth for funding have been approved and the
31 approved budget of each program listed separately for each
32 school district having an approved program.

33 Sec. 3. Section 279.51, subsection 1, paragraph d, Code
34 Supplement 1989, is amended to read as follows:

35 d. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1990, three

1 million dollars, and for each fiscal year thereafter, four
2 million dollars of the funds appropriated shall be allocated
3 as grants to school districts ~~that have~~ for elementary schools
4 ~~that demonstrate the greatest need for programs for at-risk~~
5 ~~students with preference given to innovative programs for the~~
6 early-elementary-school-years school programs in the manner
7 provided in subsection 3A.

8 Sec. 4. Section 279.51, subsection 3, Code Supplement
9 1989, is amended to read as follows:

10 3. A school-based youth services education program is
11 established. The department of education, in consultation
12 with the department of human services, the department of
13 employment services, the Iowa department of public health, and
14 the division of job training and entrepreneurship assistance
15 of the department of economic development, shall develop a
16 four-year demonstration grant program that commences in the
17 fiscal year beginning July 1, 1990. The department shall
18 provide grants to individual middle schools or high schools to
19 establish school-based youth services programs based upon
20 program plans filed by the board of directors of the school
21 district. Priority shall be given to schools with student
22 populations characterized by high rates of a number of the
23 following: school dropout and absenteeism; teenage pregnancy;
24 juvenile court involvement; unemployment; teenage suicide; and
25 teenage mental health, substance abuse, and other health
26 problems. The department shall evaluate proposed programs
27 based upon the department's analysis of effectiveness in
28 reducing these rates within the schools and the numbers of
29 students to be served by a program.

30 Additional objectives of the programs shall be: to
31 increase the ability of existing agencies within the
32 community, in cooperation with the schools, to address the
33 multiple problems of teenagers and to coordinate their
34 activities, to provide an accessible and attractive center for
35 teenagers in or near school that they are most likely to use,

1 and to facilitate joint planning to make the most economic and
2 innovative use of community resources. Programs shall at a
3 minimum provide job training and employment services, mental
4 health and family counseling services, and primary health care
5 services that include but are not limited to physical
6 examinations, immunizations, hearing and vision screening, and
7 preventive and primary health care services, in the context of
8 the educational needs of the students. Programs shall not
9 include abortion counseling or the dispensing of
10 contraceptives. The department shall give additional
11 consideration to program proposals that provide access to the
12 center after school, in the evening and on weekends, and
13 during the summer; that provide a twenty-four hour telephone
14 hotline or similar service; and that provide access to day
15 care or on-site day care and provide parenting skills
16 training.

17 The plan shall include the appointment by the board of a
18 local advisory board for each proposed program, which at a
19 minimum shall include a representative of the private industry
20 council serving the area, parents of children enrolled in the
21 school, a teacher recommended by the local teachers
22 association, a representative from the health and mental
23 health community in the area, teenagers enrolled in the school
24 and recommended by the school student government, a
25 representative from the nonprofit provider community, and a
26 representative from the juvenile court system serving the
27 area. Management of the program shall be by the school or by
28 a nonprofit youth service organization. As used in this
29 subsection, "youth service" means recreational services,
30 employment services, civic services, or juvenile treatment
31 services.

32 Program proposals shall include a written commitment from
33 the school principal and the board of directors that the
34 school will work to coordinate and integrate existing school
35 services and activities with the center and shall include

1 letters of support for the proposal from the local teachers
2 association; parent-teacher organizations; community
3 organizations; nonprofit agencies providing social services,
4 health, or employment services in the area; and the area
5 private industry council. Proposals shall include the
6 percentage of the total student population to be served.

7 Grants for the program shall not be used to construct a new
8 facility, but up to ten percent of the grant may be used to
9 renovate an existing structure. In addition, up to ten
10 percent of the grant funds may be used to provide each of the
11 following service categories: day care, transportation, and
12 recreation.

13 Program proposals shall include a contribution of at least
14 twenty percent of the total costs of the program, which ~~can~~
15 may include "in-kind" contributions of in-kind services.
16 Proposals shall reflect a budgetary priority for personnel or
17 equipment to be used to provide direct assistance to youth
18 served by the program. Partnerships between the public and
19 private sectors to provide employment and training
20 opportunities for youth served by the program are particularly
21 encouraged. The budget for a proposed program shall not
22 exceed two hundred thousand dollars per year.

23 Sec. 5. Section 279.51, Code Supplement 1989, is amended
24 by adding the following new subsection:

25 NEW SUBSECTION. 3A. An elementary school grant program is
26 established. The department of education shall allocate
27 grants to school districts that have elementary schools that
28 demonstrate the greatest need for programs for at-risk
29 students. The department shall give priority to innovative
30 programs for the early elementary years. Grant proposals
31 shall reflect the size of the at-risk population to be served,
32 contain criteria for the identification of at-risk students
33 within the district, and contain an evaluation component to
34 assess program effectiveness. The department shall give
35 priority to programs which integrate at-risk children with the

1 rest of the school population, which limit class size and
2 pupil-teacher ratios, which include parental involvement,
3 which demonstrate community support, which cooperate with
4 other community agencies, which provide appropriate guidance
5 counseling services, which reflect use of educational models
6 which are supported by research or developmental literature,
7 and which use teachers with an early childhood endorsement.

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EXPLANATION

9 This bill adds language to current dropout prevention and
10 at-risk student program provisions to emphasize program use of
11 community, business, and social welfare organization
12 resources, to ensure evaluation of current and future pro-
13 grams, to ensure the provision of parenting training for
14 students who are parents, to generate data on the numbers of
15 students served, and to give priority to programs which serve
16 large numbers of at-risk students or dropouts.

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SENATE FILE _____
BY (PROPOSED DROPOUT PREVENTION
STUDY COMMITTEE BILL)

Passed Senate, Date _____ Passed House, Date _____
Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____ Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____
Approved _____

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to the in-school and young adult programs of the
2 Iowa conservation corps and making an appropriation.
3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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1 Section 1. Section 15.225, subsection 1, paragraph a, Code
2 Supplement 1989, is amended to read as follows:

3 a. A full-time public service employment and training
4 program for young adults with a program emphasis on resource
5 and wildlife conservation, public recreation, or related areas
6 to be known as the "young adult program". Program
7 participants shall be required to possess or be working to
8 obtain a high school or high school equivalency diploma.

9 Sec. 2. Section 99E.10, subsection 1, Code 1989, is
10 amended by adding the following new paragraph:

11 NEW PARAGRAPH. e. For the fiscal year beginning July 1,
12 1990, and ending June 30, 1991, and in each succeeding fiscal
13 year thereafter, four hundred thousand dollars is appropriated
14 to the department of economic development, to be used for the
15 provision of the in-school program of the Iowa conservation
16 corps under section 15.225, and three hundred thousand dollars
17 is appropriated to be used for the provision of the young
18 adult program of the Iowa conservation corps under section
19 15.225.

20 EXPLANATION

21 This bill requires participants in the young adult program
22 of the Iowa conservation corps to possess or be working to
23 obtain a high school or high school equivalency diploma.

24 The bill appropriates \$400,000 from the lottery revenues to
25 the department of economic development for the in-school Iowa
26 conservation corps programs. The bill also appropriates
27 \$300,000 to the department of economic development for the
28 young adult program of the Iowa conservation corps. These
29 appropriations are in addition to moneys currently
30 appropriated to the department for Iowa conservation corps
31 programs.

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