

Dropouts: What Should We Do?



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APPROACH ONE Emphasize Achievement

EXAMPLES OF WHAT MIGHT BE DONE

Set high standards that can be measured to reward high achievement.

Emphasize that education is an individual privilege, not a right.

Emphasize that hard work is expected in school.

Tailor education to job opportunities for global competition, particularly in math and science and their applications to technological advancements.

Emphasize going to college to prepare our young people for even further achievement.

Keep young people who are not willing to compete for achievement from distracting those who are.

CONSEQUENCES TO CONSIDER

Lessens attention to desired qualities that cannot be easily measured; fosters "teaching to the test."

Appears to contradict mandatory attendance requirements for community purposes of public schools.

By emphasizing hard work and achievement on standardized tests, other softer skills may be neglected.

Some needs of businesses and industries are not globally competitive but are important to the local community.

Neglects numerous jobs that need to be filled that do not require a college education.

Places burdens on community resources to deal with those who are not kept in schools and become even greater problems for local employees, social services, and law enforcement.

APPROACH TWO Emphasize Preventive & Corrective School Programs

EXAMPLES OF WHAT MIGHT BE DONE

Implement school-based early childhood education programs and pre-K initiatives to help young people prepare for success in school.

Emphasize special literacy education where needed prior to fourth grade and remedial reading programs after fourth grade.

Do not assume that everyone should go to college; offer career tech options, credit for work experience, and student informed education plans.

Institute positive discipline and truancy diversion programs, including resource and discipline education for parents.

Broaden sports programs and other extracurricular activities to keep young people engaged in their school and schoolwork.

Develop additional pathways to graduation such as drop-back-in academies and other programs to make it easier to come back to school.

CONSEQUENCES TO CONSIDER

Lessens attention to desired -Not everyone agrees early childhood education programs are effective, and they cost money and personnel resources.

Schools may not have the funds and personnel to offer such programs.

May put artificial limits on what individuals can achieve through competition, harder to standardize reports of results, takes time to make qualitative assessments.

Intrudes on responsibilities that families should bear and takes teachers away from teaching.

Not all students may be attracted to what programs the school emphasizes, and expanding programs costs money and other resources.

The public may not accept major changes to the way schools operate, leading to public backlash against schools.

APPROACH THREE Emphasize Community Responsibility

EXAMPLES OF WHAT MIGHT BE DONE

Institute early childhood education programs and pre-K programs outside the schools.

Develop privately delivered literacy and remedial programs.

Involve more parents, grandparents, and other adults in delivering school programs and serving as role models.

Make more use of libraries, museums, and community programs for arts, music, hobbies, recreational pursuits and other activities not offered by the schools.

Provide more governmental and volunteer social services to address problems with substance abuse, juvenile delinquency, and dysfunctional families.

Provide more individual and community mentoring of young people who need hope and encouragement.

CONSEQUENCES TO CONSIDER

Results in unequal opportunities for all children; may be uneven in quality and cost.

Again, results in unequal opportunities depending upon who conducts such programs and who has access.

Increases administrative burdens and takes teachers away from preparing students for standardized achievement tests.

Community may have to take time, effort, and resources to expand these opportunities, and some community members may feel underserved by such programming.

Expanding social services may result in significant tax increases and/or further community resource investment.

Takes time and energy and may lead to stressful interpersonal situations and relationships.