



NTACT

National Technical Assistance Center on Transition

Extension of NTACT Resources Focused on School Completion

NTACT Focuses on Strategies for Decreasing the Dropout Rate for Males with Disabilities from Culturally and Ethnically Diverse Backgrounds

Male minority students with disabilities drop out at higher rates than their white peers. Approximately 33% of American Indian or Alaskan Native, 19% of Asian or Pacific Islander, 32% of African-American, and 27% of Latino students with disabilities dropped out compared to 15.5% of White students with a disability (Grady & Bost, 2014). Students who dropout experience higher rates of unemployment, poverty, incarceration, and depression (Grady & Bost, 2014). A recent report from the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities highlights numerous strategies for decreasing the dropout rate for African-American and Latino males with disabilities in the areas of parent and family involvement, cultural diversity, and Early Warning Systems.

Grady, M., & Bost, L. W. (Eds.). (2014). Decreasing dropout rates for minority male youth with disabilities from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities.

Parent and Family Involvement strategies include:

- Schools should work in partnership with parents of African American males. They should employ strategies that foster, expand, and encourage parental engagement and that value the critical role parents can play in their child's educational experience
- Parents and family members must be involved in the school life of their children. Families play an especially vital role in the lives of Latino males. Family members must know about the educational options open to their children, the implications of staying in school, and the promise of their options when they do
- Conduct home visits to develop relationships with family members

- Provide transportation or arrange car-pooling to school events and offer to meet parents in locations that are convenient for them
- Provide assistance for parents in reinforcing classroom instruction and providing behavioral support for their children at home
- Contact parents with positive information about their children and thank them for their support

Cultural Diversity strategies include:

- Educational policy should address and correct unfair applications of zero tolerance disciplinary policies and racial inequities in enforcing discipline
- State departments of education should develop and train on systems, strategies, and policies to ensure that school leaders and teachers understand the importance of, and have the resources and support to create, positive learning environments for all students. This should include training teachers a broader understanding of how African American male students with disabilities can remain in and excel in school
- Professional development programs in schools should stress the importance of school engagement for academic outcomes and teach strategies for improving student experiences and connections with school
- Employ restorative justice practices to promote student accountability and embrace all students as important members of their school community
- Policies should expand connections between schools and communities and encourage school- and community-based dropout prevention programs that promote high academic achievement, positive attitudes toward school, prosocial skills, character building, and school engagement
- Schools should work in partnership with parents of African American males and employ strategies that foster, expand, and encourage parental engagement and that value the critical role parents can play in their child’s educational experience
- Counseling and mental health services at the school should be strengthened to address students’ feelings of hopelessness and lower feelings of self-worth and mitigate the negative effects of disciplinary action
- Schools should use early warning systems that serve to identify students who show the first signs of school disengagement or problems.
- Student data must be understandable and useful for teachers and staff for early identification of potential drop-outs and intervention efforts
- Schools should employ strategies to re-engage students who are already off track and working with these students often on skill remediation, alternative school options, and school planning
- School staff should be trained in interpreting the risk data and implementing the appropriate intervention and prevention strategies

- All school staff, including teachers and school administrators to bus drivers and secretaries, should be trained in cultural competence so that every adult in the school community can serve as a cultural broker and bridge cultural gaps between students, parents, and schools
- Parents and family members must be involved in the school life of their children. Families play an especially vital role in the lives of Latino males. Family members must know about the educational options open to their children, the implications of staying in school, and the promise of their options when they do

Early Warning Systems strategies include:

- Schools need early warning systems that serve to identify students once they show the first signs of school disengagement or problems.
- This system must be able to identify students who are at risk of school failure using a data-driven model in which school districts collect and analyze data related to academic success
- The available data must be understandable and useful for teachers and staff for early identification and intervention efforts
- Schools need strategies to re-engage students who are already off track
- School staff must be trained in interpreting the risk data and implementing the appropriate intervention and preventions strategies

For more information see: [Decreasing Dropout Rates for Minority Male Youth with Disabilities](#)