

Drop-Out Prevention: **Increasing Graduation Rates for At-Risk, Foster Care, Homeless, Neglected and Delinquent Youth**

**Georgia Compensatory Educational Leaders
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Eric McGhee, Grant Programs Manager

**Outreach Programs Division
School Improvement**



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Neglected, Delinquent and At-Risk Youth Education Program

OVERVIEW OF TITLE I, PART D



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Overview of Title I, Part D

Neglected and Delinquent Children defined:

- ❑ Neglected = *Children and youth who are in need of care due to abandonment, neglect, or death of their parents or guardians.*
- ❑ Delinquent = *Children who have been adjudicated to be delinquent or in need of supervision.*



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Overview of Title I, Part D

Grantees and Population

□ Title I, Part A

- Provides financial assistance to LEAs and schools with high numbers or high percentages of poor children to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards.
- US ED determines the LEA Title I, Part A neglected set-aside amount based on the neglected child count derived from the N&D Annual Survey.

□ Title I, Part D

- Subpart 1 - Provides financial assistance to educational programs for youth in state-operated facilities or community day programs.
- Subpart 2 - Provides financial assistance to support eligible LEA programs involving collaboration with locally operated correctional facilities.



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Overview of Title I, Part D

□ Subpart 1

- Provides assistance for State Agencies:
 - ❖ Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).
 - ❖ Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC).
 - ❖ Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD).

□ Subpart 2

- Provides assistance for LEAs:
 - ❖ Working in collaboration with local residential correctional facilities (In Georgia, O.C.G.A. 20-2-133(b) facilities **MAY** be eligible).



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Overview of Title I, Part D

Services for N&D Children

- ❑ In general, the same allowable services provided under Title I are the same type of services provided to N&D residential facilities and children.
- ❑ Resources provided to N&D residential facilities and children should supplement, and not supplant, the “regular” school program.
- ❑ Services may include before and after school tutorials, summer school, credit recovery, educational materials and supplies, and more.



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McKinney-Vento Act

OVERVIEW OF TITLE X, PART C



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Overview of Title X, Part C

Definition of Homeless Students

- ❑ Individuals whose nighttime residence is NOT:
 - Fixed—stationary, permanent, and not subject to change.
 - Regular—used on a predictable, routine, or consistent basis.
 - Adequate—sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in the home.

(42 U.S.C. 11434A(2)(B)(i))

Can the student go to the SAME PLACE (fixed) EVERY NIGHT (regular) to sleep in a SAFE AND SUFFICIENT SPACE (adequate)?



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Overview of Title X, Part C

The Homeless definition includes children and youth who are:

- ❑ sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason;
- ❑ living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due the lack of alternative accommodations;
- ❑ living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- ❑ abandoned in hospitals;



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Overview of Title X, Part C

Homeless also includes children and youth who are:

- ❑ awaiting foster care placement;
- ❑ living in a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- ❑ living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus/train stations, or similar settings;
- ❑ migratory – who qualify as homeless living in circumstances described above.



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Overview of Title X, Part C

Definition of Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (UHY)

❑ 2-Step Process:

- 1) Does the student's living arrangement meet the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homeless?
- 2) Once homelessness is determined, is the student unaccompanied?

❑ Unaccompanied = not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian; in practical terms, this means the youth does not live with the parent or guardian.



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Overview of Title X, Part C

- ❑ Unaccompanied youth have the same rights as other students experiencing homelessness.

- ❑ Unaccompanied youth have run away from home, been thrown out of their homes, and/or been abandoned by parents or guardians. These young people are separated from their parents for a variety of reasons:
 - Over half report being physically abused at home.
 - Over one third report sexual abuse.
 - Over two-thirds report that at least one of their parents abuses drugs or alcohol.



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Overview of Title X, Part C

Resources to support children experiencing homelessness:

□ Title I, Part A Homeless Reservation (Set-Aside)

- Same uses of funds allowed under Title I, Part A – to supplement the regular instruction that leads to a diploma.

□ Title X, Part C McKinney-Vento Grant

- Same uses of funds allowed under Title I, Part A – to supplement the regular instruction that leads to a diploma.
- A few other educationally-related expenses allowed.



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Foster Care Children

OVERVIEW OF FOSTER CARE



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Overview of Foster Care

Services for Foster Care Children

- ❑ In general, there are no U.S. Department of Education or GaDOE grants that target just foster care students; *although, there are other agencies and organizations that target foster care youth.*
- ❑ Because foster care students are technically under state custody (DBHDD/DFCS), the family income level should be “zero” on school poverty data (I.e. Free and reduced meals application).
- ❑ Foster care students are eligible to receive free meals if they attend a school that participates in the School Nutrition program.



Overview of Foster Care

Services for Foster Care Children

Many foster care children receive educationally-related goods and services under programs not directly targeting them. For example:

- ❑ Resources provided through Title I, Part A may support academically at-risk foster children if they attend Title I designated schools.
- ❑ The few foster care students that meet the narrow definition of “awaiting foster care” under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act may be eligible to receive rights and services...This is determined on a case by case basis by LEAs in consultation with the local homeless liaison.
- ❑ Foster care students residing in residential treatment facilities may benefit from goods and services under the Title I, Part A neglected set-aside or Title I, Part D, if the residential facility is located in an LEA with one of these grants.
- ❑ All eligible students may receive Special Education support and services.





The Numbers Are Talking

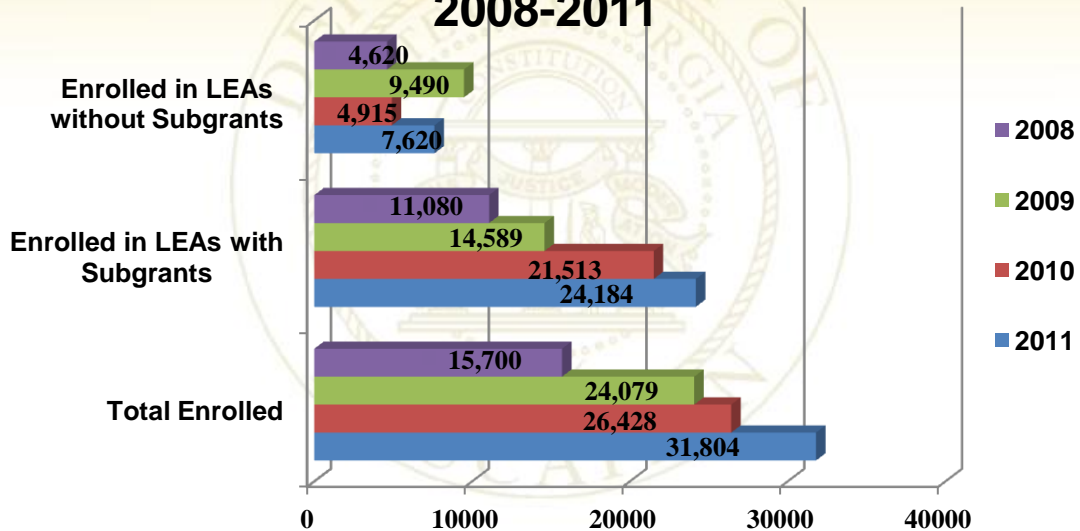
GEORGIA AT-RISK STUDENT DATA



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FY11 Georgia Homeless Data

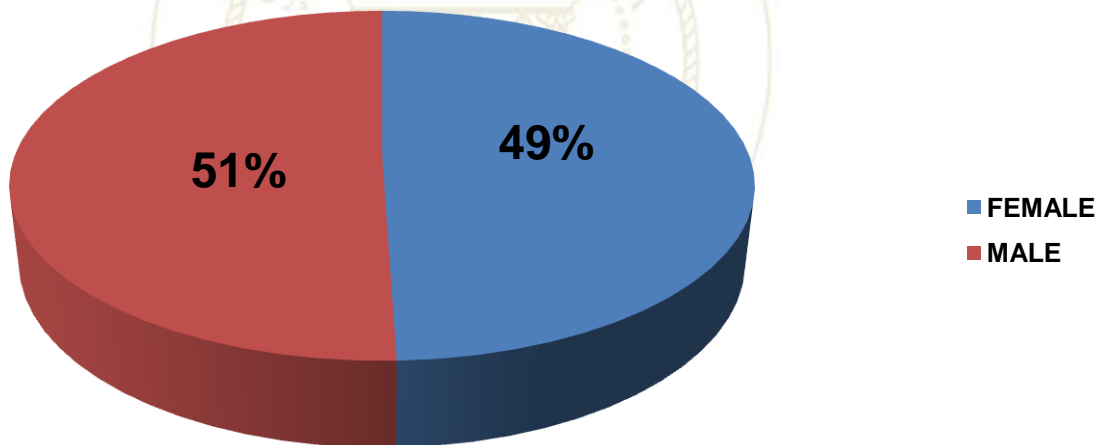
Homeless Children and Youth Enrolled 2008-2011



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FY11 Georgia Homeless Data

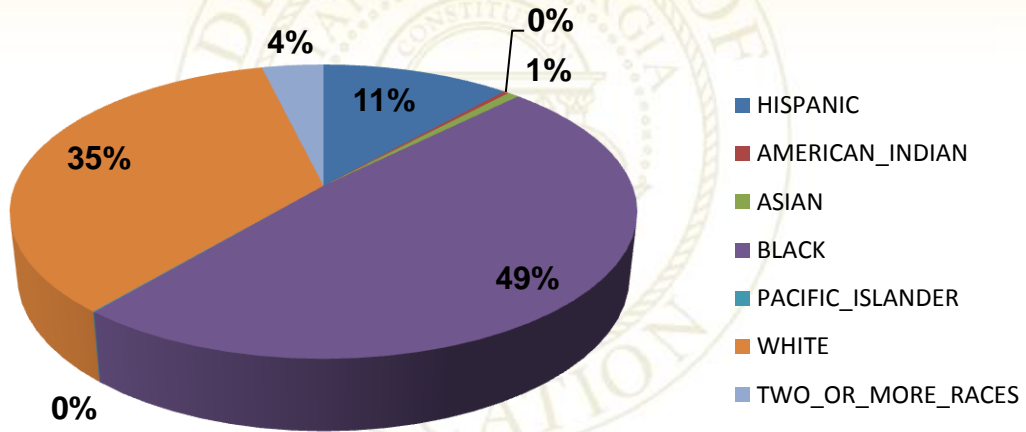
Percentage of Homeless Students by Gender 2010-2011



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FY11 Georgia Homeless Data

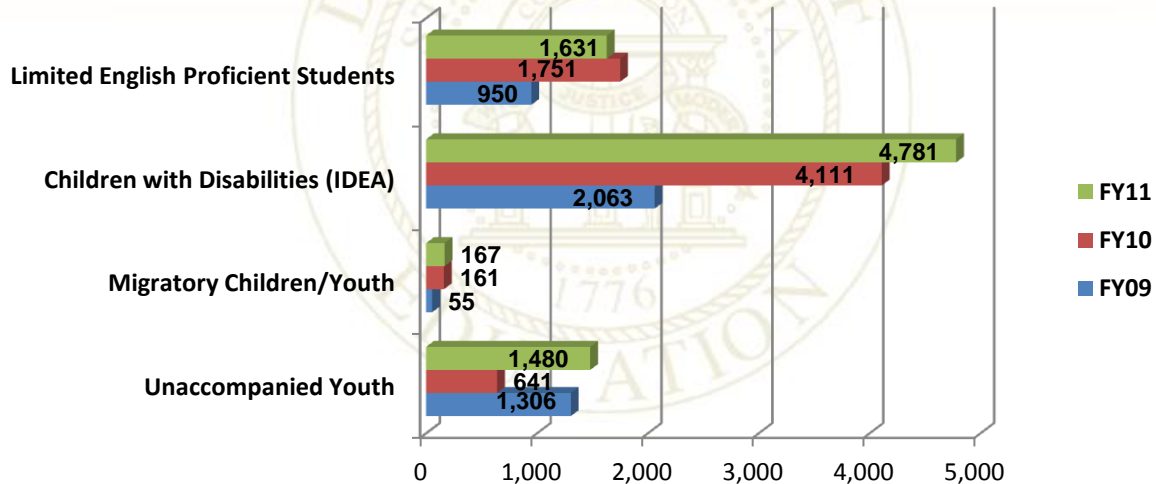
Homeless Students by Ethnicity/Race 2010-2011



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FY11 Georgia Homeless Data

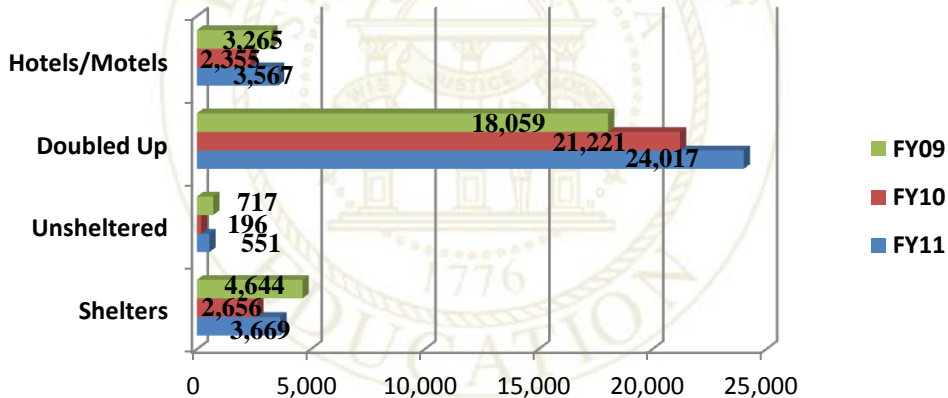
Subgroups of Homeless Students Served



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FY11 Georgia Homeless Data

FY11 Primary Nighttime Residence of Homeless Students



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FY11 Georgia Homeless Data

Discipline Incident Types found in SIS

ALCOHOL
ARSON
BATTERY
BURGLARY
COMPUTER TRESPASS
DISORDERLY CONDUCT
DRUGS NOT A LCOHOL
FIGHTING
HOMICIDE
KIDNAPPING
LARCENY / THEFT
MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT
ROBBERY
SEXUAL BATTERY
SEXUAL HARASSMENT
SEX OFFENSES
THREAT / INTIMIDATION
TOBACCO
TRESPASSING
VANDALISM
WEAPON (KNIFE)
WEAPON (HANDGUN)
WEAPON (RIFLE)
WEAPON (OTHER FIREARM)
WEAPON (OTHER)
SERIOUS BODILY INJURY
OTHER DISCIPLINE OFFENSE



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FY10 Georgia Homeless Data

In-School Suspension



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FY10 Georgia Homeless Data

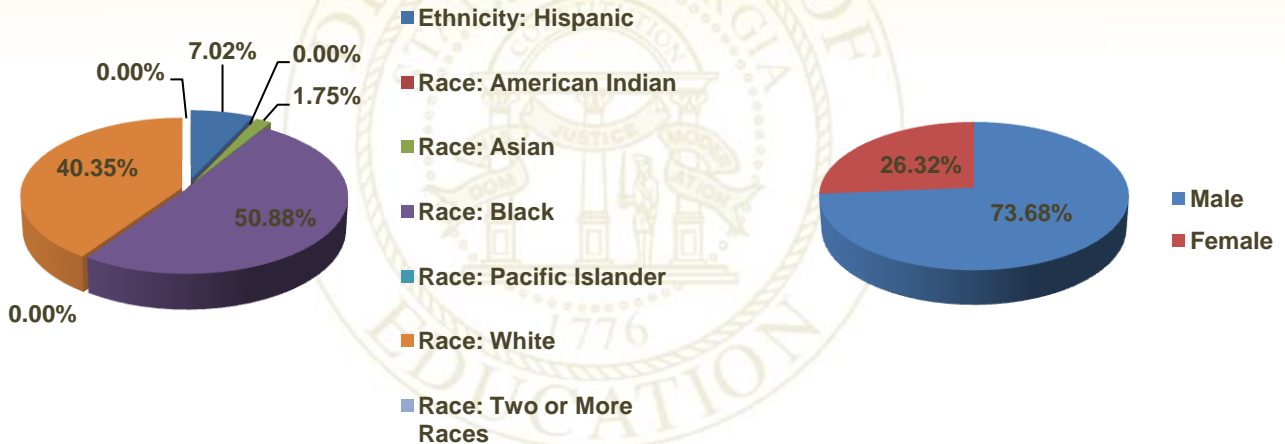
Out-of-School Suspension



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FY10 Georgia Homeless Data

Expulsions



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FY11 Georgia Foster Care Data

- ❑ 7,844 children in foster care.
- ❑ 2,229 youth between 13 and 17 (28% of total population) .
- ❑ 1,658 or 74% of youth aged 13-17 in foster care have a diagnosed disability.
- ❑ 43.3% living in a residential facility.
- ❑ Average number of placements in the year = four (numbers range from 1 to 32).



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Georgia

GRADUATION RATE INFORMATION

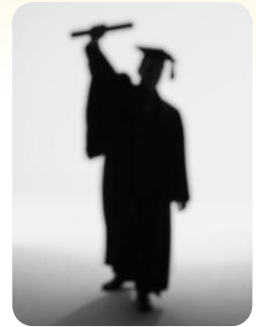


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Graduation Rate Information

The Cost of Dropping Out Nationwide Statistics

- ❑ **7,200** students drop out of U.S. public high schools every day.
- ❑ Each year, approximately 1.3 million students fail to graduate from high school and more than **half are from minority groups.**



Diplomas Count, 2010

Retrieved from <http://www.edweek.org>



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Graduation Rate Information



The Cost of Dropping Out National & State Statistics

- ❑ Dropouts from the Class of 2008 alone **will cost the nation more than \$319 billion** and will cost **Georgia almost \$15.5 billion** in lost wages over their lifetimes.

July 2009 by the Alliance for Excellent Education



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Graduation Rate Information

The Cost of Dropping Out Nationwide Statistics



- ❑ Dropouts are more likely to experience **higher rates of unemployment**, a greater likelihood of **living below the poverty line** and **relying on public assistance**, and more frequent and severe **health problems**.
- ❑ High school dropouts are **two times less likely to vote or participate in community service activities**.

Levin, Belfield, Muenning, & Rouse, 2007; SREB, 2005



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Graduation Rate Information

The Cost of Dropping Out Nationwide Statistics

- ❑ High school dropouts are **eight times more likely** than high school graduates to be incarcerated in their lifetimes.
- ❑ **86% of Georgia inmates** do not have a high school diploma.
- ❑ If the male graduation rate were increased by only 5%, the nation would see an annual savings of **\$4.9 billion** in crime-related costs.



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Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morison, 2006; GDC, 2007; SREB, 2005

Graduation Rate Information

The Cost of Dropping Out

“The math simply does not work for Georgia”

- ❑ **\$3,800** per year on each K-12 student.
- ❑ **\$6,800** per year on each university student.
- ❑ **\$18,000** per year on each prison inmate.

Governor Deal February 2011
Georgia Public Policy Foundation



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Graduation Rate Information

The Dropout Issue in Georgia

- ❑ **20,633** students dropped out in grades 7-12 in 2009-2010 school year. That is roughly **115 students dropping out every school day in Georgia.**

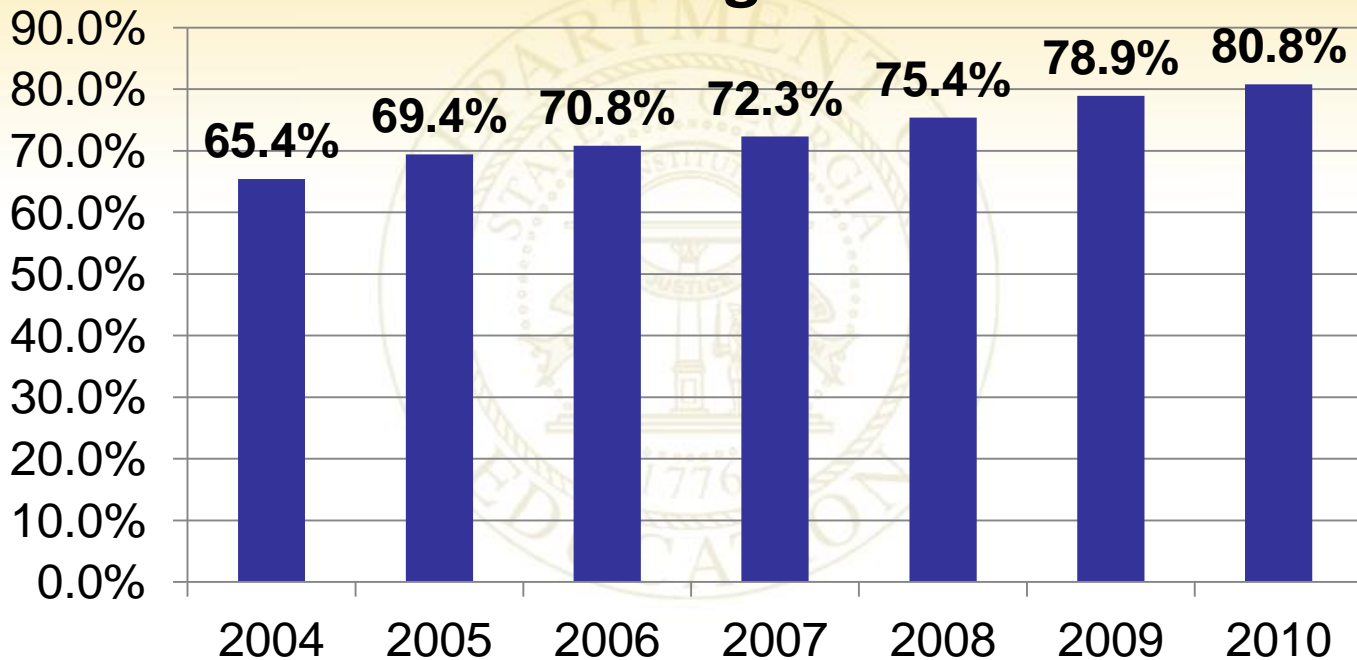


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Belfantz & Letgers, 2004;
Governor's Office of Student Achievement 2009-2010 Report Card

Graduation Rate Information

Georgia

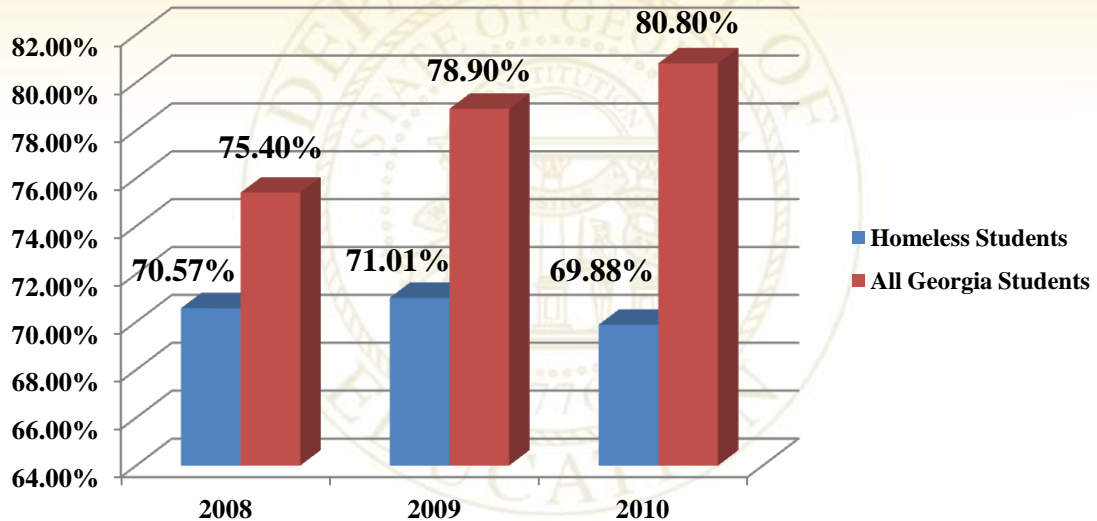


Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA)



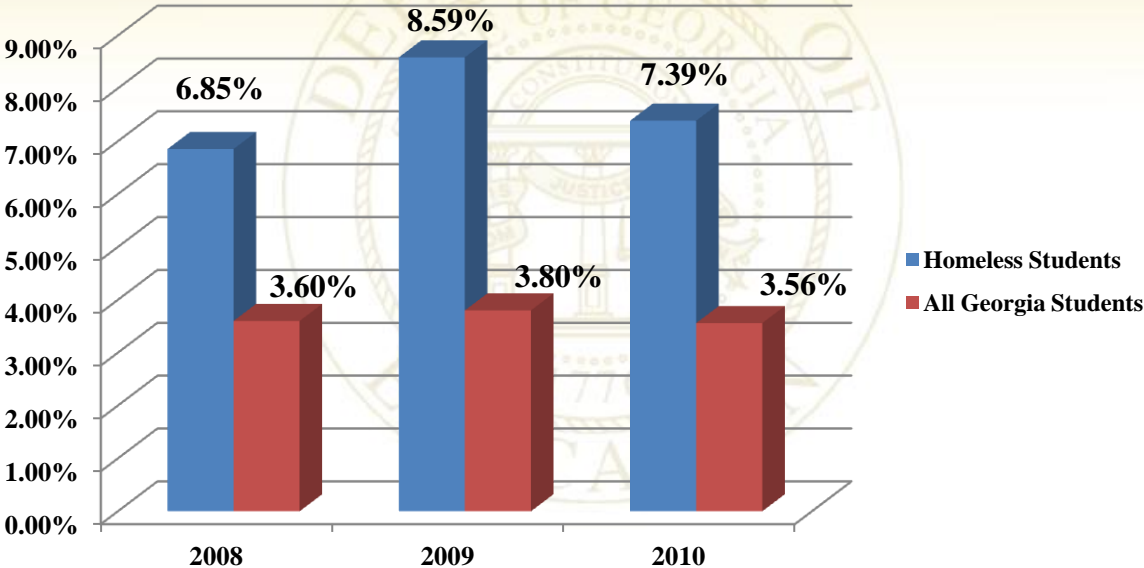
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Homeless Student Graduation Rates 2008-2010

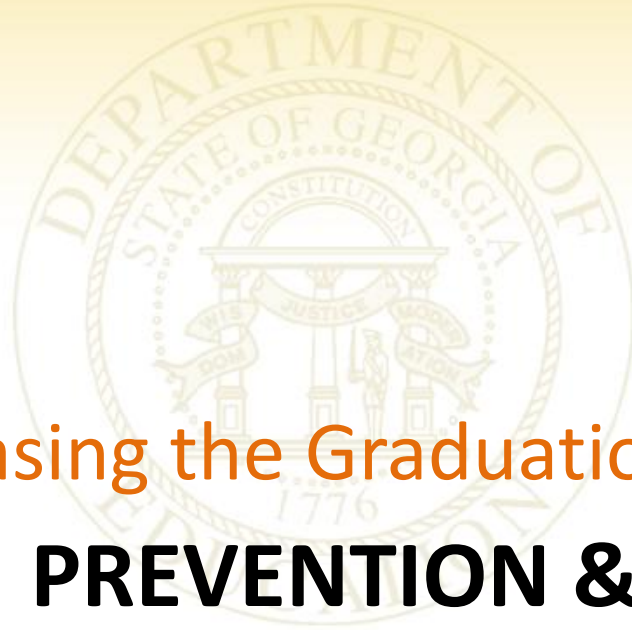


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Homeless Dropout Rates 2008-2010



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Increasing the Graduation Rate

PREVENTION & INTERVENTION STRATEGIES



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Prevention & Intervention Strategies

ENVIRONMENT CODE indicates the type of residential environment in which a student resides or the type of school the student attended at anytime during this school year at this school. Code only those students for whom one of the codes below apply. For students where codes do not apply, leave blank.

Environment Code	Description
1	Resides in a local institution for neglected
2	Resides in a local institution for delinquent
3	Is homeless
4	Unaccompanied Youth



Prevention & Intervention Strategies

Take a few minutes to discuss the following with your colleagues:

- Does your LEA have a way to disaggregate data by the environment code?
- Do you know the person in your LEA who may need data for N&D students?
- Do you know the person in your LEA who may need data for homeless students?
- Because there is no code to delineate foster care students, do you have a way in your LEA to identify foster children that may need additional services?



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Prevention & Intervention Strategies

Consider these facts about homeless children in America:

- ❑ In one year, 42% transferred schools at least once. Of these, 51% transferred twice or more.
- ❑ 28% will attend three or more different schools in one year.
- ❑ With each change in schools, it is estimated that a student is set back academically by an average of four to six months.
- ❑ Many lack basic school supplies and a reasonable environment in which to do homework.
- ❑ Three quarters of older homeless students drop out of school.



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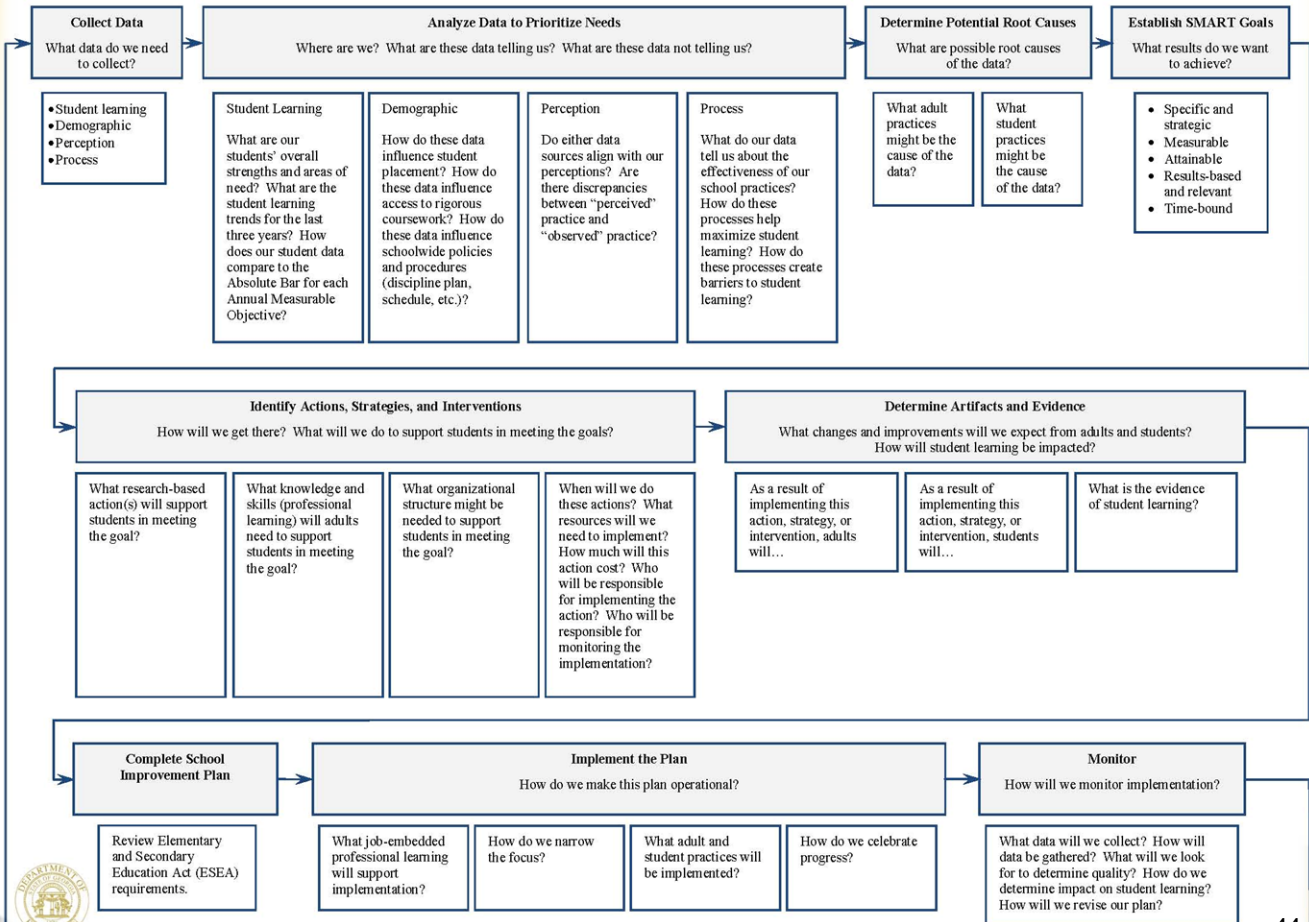
Prevention & Intervention Strategies

Consider these facts about foster care children in America:

- ❑ An average of four to six months of educational progress lost with every change of schools when compared to peers.
- ❑ Only 28% of youth are able to remain in their original school when they enter foster care.
- ❑ 75% of foster care students function below grade level.
- ❑ 15% of foster care students graduate with a high school diploma.
- ❑ 2% of foster care students earn a bachelor's degree.



School Improvement Process



Prevention & Intervention Strategies

Support at-risk students:

- ❑ **Model** positive and respectful behavior.
- ❑ **Offer guidance, stability, and assistance** in making intelligent personal and educational choices.
- ❑ **Garner family and community support.**
- ❑ **Triage efforts of school leadership, teachers, and other student support staff** to acquire resources, broker extra help, and address individual and collective challenges.

Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morison, 2006; Goldschmidt & Wang, 1999; Hammond, Linton, Smink, & Drew, 2007; Howard & Johnson, 2002; Ingels et al., 2002; Tinto, 1987; Roderick, 1993; Wehlage, 1989; Wehlage et al., 1989



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Prevention & Intervention Strategies

Implement schoolwide support and interventions:

- ❑ Develop and implement **credit recovery and alternative options, adapt curriculum, and differentiate instruction** to meet the needs of identified at-risk students.
- ❑ **Provide training and/or support** to teachers on strategies that work with at-risk youth.



Alexander, Entwisle, & Kabbani, 2001; Battin-Pearson et al., 2000; Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morrison, 2006; Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack, and Rock, 1986; Jordan, Lara, & McPartland, 1994; Wagner et al., 1993



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Prevention & Intervention Strategies

Provide Direct Service and Case Management:

- ❑ Develop and implement **individual, small group, and whole school intervention and prevention strategies** to help students stay in school and graduate.
- ❑ Create a **graduation and career plan** that can track progress and follow students from grade to grade to ensure consistent support.
- ❑ Offer **personal, academic, and career advisement**.

Berk, 2000; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Myers, Varkey, & Aguirre, 2002; Schaffer, 2006



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Prevention & Intervention Strategies

- ❑ Develop and maintain **transition programs and vertical teams.**
- ❑ Assist in **mediating conflicts, bridging communication gaps, brokering services, and negotiating bureaucracies** among home, school, and community agencies.



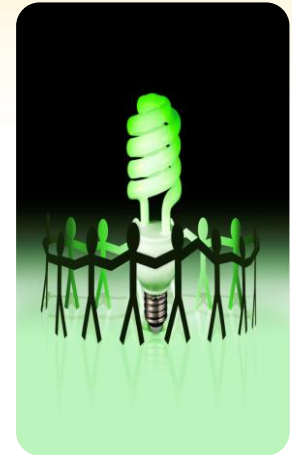
Bridgeland, Dililio, & Morrison, 2006; Elliot & Voss, 1974; Hammond, Linton, Smink, & Drew, 2007; Ingels et al., 2002; Roderick, 1993



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Prevention & Intervention Strategies

- ❑ **Combat family, school, and community culture issues** that may hinder a student's chances of achieving educational success.
- ❑ **Develop cultures that value learning, hold high expectations** for the scholastic outcomes of all students, and **celebrate academic achievement.**



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Prevention & Intervention Strategies

Limit placements:

- ❑ **The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008** requires child welfare agencies to have a plan for “ensuring the educational stability of the child while in foster care,” including the child remaining in the school in which the child enrolled at time of placement unless it is not in the best interests of the child.
- ❑ **The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008** requires in cases when remaining in the same school is not in the best interest of the child that **“the State agency and local educational agencies...** provide immediate and appropriate enrollment in a new school, with all of the educational records of the child provided to the school.” States are now beginning to implement practices to meet this new federal mandate.



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Prevention & Intervention Strategies

Limit placements:

- ❑ In a national study of 1,087 foster care alumni, youth who had even one fewer placement change per year were almost twice as likely to graduate from high school before leaving foster care.

Holding Students Back Can Lead to Dropping Out of School:

- ❑ Studies consistently show that children in foster care tend to experience high levels of grade retention and are more likely to be retained than are their non-foster care peers. Research documents that because of grade retention, children in foster care are more likely to be old for grade than are children who have not been involved with the child welfare system. These results on retention and being old for grade are important because both are strong predictors of dropping out of school.



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Prevention & Intervention Strategies

Georgia House Bill 400 – Bridges Legislation

- ❑ Legislation focuses on students receiving quality career advisement and links the high school course work with their future college and career goals.
- ❑ The implementation of the BRIDGE (Building Resourceful Individuals to Develop Georgia’s Economy) Act will become an integral part of a student’s educational plan this year.
- ❑ The BRIDGE Act will help students and parents work together to enhance their child’s education to reach their goals and dream career.
- ❑ The most critical part of this recently signed law is the requirement for all students in middle and high school to receive annual career guidance and advisement to choose a career area, create an Individual Graduation Plan and graduate high school prepared to go to college or enter the work force.



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(c) Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, students in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades shall be provided counseling, advisement, career awareness, career interest inventories, and information to assist them in evaluating their academic skills and career interests.

end of the second semester of the eighth grade, students shall develop an individual graduation plan in consultation with their parents, guardians, or individuals appointed by the parents or guardians to serve as their designee. High school students shall be provided guidance, advisement, and counseling annually that will enable them to successfully complete their individual graduation plans, preparing them for a seamless transition to postsecondary study, further training, or employment. An individual graduation plan shall:

- (1) Include rigorous academic core subjects and focused course work in mathematics and science or in humanities, fine arts, and foreign language or sequenced career pathway course work;
- (2) Incorporate provisions of a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), where applicable;
- (3) Align educational and broad career goals and a student's course of study;
- (4) Be based on the student's selected academic and career focus area as approved by the student's parent or guardian;
- (5) Include experience based, career oriented learning experiences which may include, but not



House Bill 400

Before the

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(4) Be based on the student's selected academic and career focus area as approved by the student's parent or guardian;

(5) Include experience based, career oriented learning experiences which may include, but not be limited to, internships, apprenticeships, mentoring, on- or off-education, and service learning;

Prevention & Intervention Strategies

The Individual Graduation Plan

- 1) Include rigorous academic core subjects and focused course work in mathematics and science or in humanities, fine arts, and foreign language or sequenced career pathway course work;
- 2) Incorporate provisions of a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), where applicable;
- 3) Align educational and broad career goals and a student's course of study;
- 4) Be based on the student's selected academic and career focus area as approved by the student's parent or guardian;
- 5) Include experience based, career oriented learning experiences which may include, but not be limited to, internships, apprenticeships, mentoring, co-op education, and service learning;



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The Individual Graduation Plan

- 6) Include opportunities for postsecondary studies through articulation, dual enrollment, and joint enrollment;
- 7) Be flexible to allow change in the course of study, but be sufficiently structured to meet graduation requirements and qualify the student for admission to postsecondary education; and
- 8) Be approved by the student and the student's parent or guardian with guidance from the student's school counselor or teacher adviser.

An individual graduation plan shall be reviewed annually, and revised, if appropriate, upon approval by the student and the student's parent or guardian with guidance from the student's school counselor or teacher adviser. An individual graduation plan may be changed at any time throughout a student's high school career upon approval.



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Survey of people in Georgia that work with foster care, homeless, and/or children that live in residential facilities: What are the top things you will tell someone aiming to help these students graduate and succeed?

- IEP and child specific educational needs to be current/up-to-date/followed-through.
- Peer to peer support (big brothers/big sister or mentor).
- Teen Parents support (pregnant youth to have more alternatives).
- Specialized teaching methods (less lecture and independent work/team work) and more technology teaching.
- After-school/holiday breaks/weekend school and activities.

Several child advocates from The Multi-Agency Alliance for Children (MAAC), including foster care alumni



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- GED Opportunity in traditional school setting (allow students to attend GED classes at preferred/specific location and attend HS for extra-curricular office).
- Individualized self care (self esteem/relationship building/etc.).
- More Extra-curricular activities (besides sports, more arts).
- Parent workshops.
- Parent – child workshops.

Several child advocates from The Multi-Agency Alliance for Children (MAAC), including former foster care alumni



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Survey of people in Georgia that work with foster care, homeless, and/or children that live in residential facilities: What are the top things you will tell someone aiming to help these students graduate and succeed?

- School stability (even in the face of placement instability).
- Understanding/flexibility of school personnel.
- Foster parent willingness to interact with schools.
- DFCS communication with schools (where possible, without violating confidentiality).
- Review the letter and spirit of the Fostering Connections Act. (The Act covers responsibilities for DFCS and LEAs).

David Meyers, Fanning Institute at the University of Georgia



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Survey of people in Georgia that work with foster care, homeless, and/or children that live in residential facilities: What are the top things you will tell someone aiming to help these students graduate and succeed?

- Youth do not understand the credits they need in core areas in order to graduate.
- Youth need to understand the difference of a block schedule versus a traditional schedule.
- Youth need an educational advocate.

Cindy Simpson, Ed.S., Chief Operating Officer | Director of Program Development | CHRIS Kids (Residential Facility)



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Survey of people in Georgia that work with foster care, homeless, and/or children that live in residential facilities: What are the top things you will tell someone aiming to help these students graduate and succeed?

- ❑ Use a good educational assessment tool to identify weaknesses and then help youth find resources to close the gap in barriers to graduation.
- ❑ Help youth understand the direct connection between a high school diploma/GED in order to motivate them. More than 90% of all jobs in U.S. now require a H.S. diploma or GED.
- ❑ Make sure youth are aware of the need to get the waiver forms in order to have fees waived for ACT/SAT and college applications.
- ❑ Identify potential college-bound youth and help them sign up for SAT/ACT starting as sophomores, so they can study and improve scores.

Echo Garrett, President, The Orange Duffel Bag Foundation



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Survey of people in Georgia that work with foster care, homeless, and/or children that live in residential facilities: What are the top things you will tell someone aiming to help these students graduate and succeed?

- Help them identify technical schools/colleges much earlier during high school so that they qualify for every scholarship and financial resource available and have realistic, attainable goals for after graduation.
- Remove barrier of having to have paper waiver to apply for ACT/SAT and college applications. Get a computer code that youth in foster care can use to get all fees waived.
- Identify any college or technical school-bound youth and partner with a caring adult to assist with FAFSA, school applications, scholarships and other resources.

Echo Garrett, President, The Orange Duffel Bag Foundation



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Survey of people in Georgia that work with foster care, homeless, and/or children that live in residential facilities: What are the top things you will tell someone aiming to help these students graduate and succeed?

- School district leadership should be very thoughtful regarding block versus traditional scheduling. Many times students lose credits moving from one school to another, even in the same school district.
- Flexibility with restrictions to participate in extra curricular activities. Many students have appointments with case workers and court dates that may affect school attendance.
- System wide or school wide foster care child advocate.
- School stability.

Kristin Sanchez, Independent Living Program Coordinator, Georgia Department of Family & Children Services



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Survey of people in Georgia that work with foster care, homeless, and/or children that live in residential facilities: What are the top things you will tell someone aiming to help these students graduate and succeed?

- Youth need a mentor/someone to keep them accountable within the high school (a teacher, a coach, etc.). It is also beneficial to set goals with this person.
- Extra curricular activities are very important. I believe the more activities a foster youth is involved with, the better he/she will do academically.
- Youth stability in their high school. The more a foster youth is transferred between different high schools, the harder it becomes for them to stay on course.
- Youth in high school need to visit more technical/associate/bachelor college campuses. This gives major motivation and something to work toward.

Mason McFalls, Morgan Stanley Smith Barney, Wealth Management - former foster care youth



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Survey of people in Georgia that work with foster care, homeless, and/or children that live in residential facilities: What are the top things you will tell someone aiming to help these students graduate and succeed?

- Education for the school personnel on these youth. *(You may contact GYOI if you need someone to present at a system level or even school level.)*
- Advocate at the school or at system office for them in addition to their case workers *(strongly voiced by the youth)*.
- More flexibility and understanding in transferring of credits and graduation requirements - for the school personnel, youth and case workers.
- Updated and current IEPs *(also strongly voiced by the youth on Facebook)*.
- As much school stability as possible.

Victoria Salzman, Georgia Youth Opportunities Initiative – collected responses from current homeless and foster care youth



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Take a few minutes to discuss the following with your colleagues:

- Does your LEA currently collect data that could assist with the strategies presented in the slides above?
- Do you know the person in your LEA who uses data to generate:
 - School plans
 - Individual graduation plans?
- How do your responsibilities apply to addressing the needs of academically vulnerable students.



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