

Characteristics of Grade 6 Potential Dropouts

There is evidence that potential dropouts can be identified as early as Grade 6; some argue that the characteristics are apparent even earlier.

The Grade 6 Potential Dropout:

- . . . is likely to possess at least two of the following characteristics: be over age, have established patterns of poor attendance, have failed or currently is failing either math or English/LA and/or demonstrates various types of behavioral issues.
- . . . is more likely to be male than female and be African-American or Hispanic than Caucasian.
- . . . is likely to have limited home support; may be experiencing physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse. If female, sexual abuse is more likely than if male.
- . . . is likely to have repeated at least one grade in Grades K-5.
- . . . is likely to have a reading deficit that has not been diagnosed and/or corrected.
- . . . is likely to demonstrate problems in managing time, work loads and deadlines.
- . . . is likely to be slowly becoming disengaged from school; some call this behavior “disconnecting” from school; some call it becoming alienated from school.
- . . . may be showing early signs of clinical depression.

- . . . is likely to feel and talk negatively about school and his/her teachers.
- . . . is likely NOT to be receiving special education services.
(Note: This statement can be debated. Some policy analysts report it to be true; however, it was reported by the US Department of Education in its 23rd annual report to Congress on the implementation of IDEA that more than 1/3 of LD students and close to 50% of ED and BD students drop out. Some argue that the discrepancy exists because there has been over identification of minorities in special education classes. There seems to be agreement that 25-30% of special education students do drop out.)

For additional information, see:

Balfanz R. & Herzog, L. (2006, May). *Keeping middle grades students on track to graduation: Initial analysis and implications*. PowerPoint presentation. Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Education Fund and Johns Hopkins University with support from the William Penn Foundation.

Bridgeland, J., Dilulio Jr, J., & Morison, K. (2006, March). *The silent epidemic: Perspectives of high school dropouts*. A report by Civic Enterprises in association with Peter D. Hart Research Associates for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, pp. 1-35.
www.civicerprises.net

Thornburgh, N. (2006, April 17). Dropout nation. *Time*, 167(16), 30-40.