

# ABCs of Dropping Out



## Kansas dropouts are not just a school problem...

- During the 2016-2017 School Year, 3,608 Kansas Public School students dropped out of school.
- That means that **19** students drop out every day of the school year.
- Each high school dropout costs the nation approximately \$292,000 in lost earnings, taxes and productivity over the course of their lifetime - which means that the 2016-17 dropouts cost us approximately **\$1 billion**.
- Dropouts are also more likely than their graduating peers to:
  - Be in prison.
  - Get divorced.
  - Live in poverty.
  - Be unemployed.
  - Have poor health.
  - Utilize public assistance.

## Who are Kansas' dropouts?

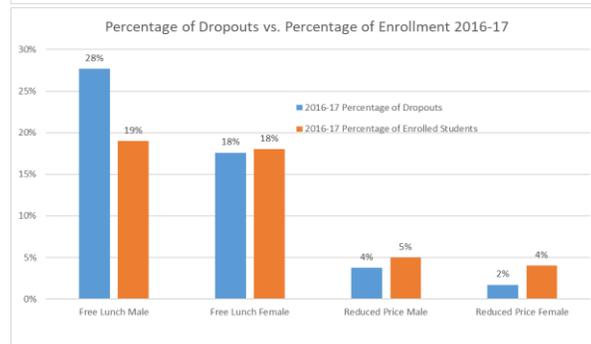
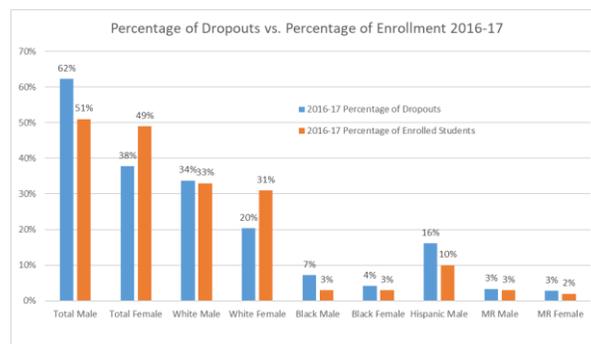
Kansas dropouts come from all racial and ethnic backgrounds, socio-economic classes, language backgrounds, from special education and general education. Statistically, a higher percentage of dropouts are male (62 percent). African American males (7 percent) and Hispanic males (16 percent) have higher rates of dropping out as well. Males from lower socio-economic backgrounds, as identified in free lunch numbers, account for 28 percent of Kansas' dropouts.

## Why do students drop out?

- Missed too many days of school.
- Thought the GED would be easier.
- Was getting poor grades/failing school.
- Did not like school.
- Could not keep up with the schoolwork.
- Pregnancy.
- Work.
- Thought they could not complete the coursework.
- Could not get along with teachers.
- Did not feel they belonged.

Source: Dalton, Glennie, Ingels, and Wirt (2009)

## Dropouts are **EVERYBODY'S** problem!



## The ABCs of dropout prevention?

Dropping out of school is not a singular event, but the culmination of a process of disengagement with school. When trying to identify students that are at risk of dropping out of school, there are three broad areas that can predict early (often by third grade) those students that may be off track to graduate.

### Attendance

This is not simply unexcused absences or truancy. Chronic Absenteeism, or missing more than 10 percent of the possible days of school in any period, is a strong predictor of students that are at risk of not graduating with their peers and/or dropping out of school.

### Behavior

Detentions, in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, citizenship grades and/or office discipline referrals can all be predictors of students who are at risk of dropping out. Each school should choose the behavior(s) and frequencies that are locally relevant and predictive if possible. Johns Hopkins research suggests that two office referrals in a quarter, or six in a year, would mean a student is off track and at-risk of dropping out.

### Coursework

These indicators could be state exams, universal screeners your school already uses, course grades, acquisition of credits or GPA. Choosing a locally significant predictor is preferred, but research shows that not reading on grade level in third grade, failing either math or English in middle school, and failing any class (especially a core subject) in ninth grade are all highly predictive of students who are at risk of dropping out or not graduating with their peers.

## Adopt an Early Warning System (EWS) to identify those students who are falling off track.

Using the data that you are already collecting to identify those students who are at risk based on the ABCs can help provide interventions as early as possible to get students back on track for graduating with their peers. The sooner the intervention is started, the better chance it has of being effective. For more information on Early EWS and interventions for the ABCs, please go to the Graduation page on the KSDE website. [www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Career-Standards-and-Assessment-Services/CSAS-Home/Graduation-and-Schools-of-Choice/Graduation-and-Dropouts](http://www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Career-Standards-and-Assessment-Services/CSAS-Home/Graduation-and-Schools-of-Choice/Graduation-and-Dropouts)

The most important aspect of your EWS is finding out the **WHY**, selecting the most appropriate intervention and having a trusted, caring adult form a **RELATIONSHIP** with the student!

What is the most important thing schools can do to keep students in school?

Make sure each student has a relationship with a trusted, caring adult in your building!

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