

BUILDING A GRADUATION NATION-Maryland

**Maryland Dropout Prevention Summit
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Five Steps to SOLVING THE GRADUATION RATE CRISIS

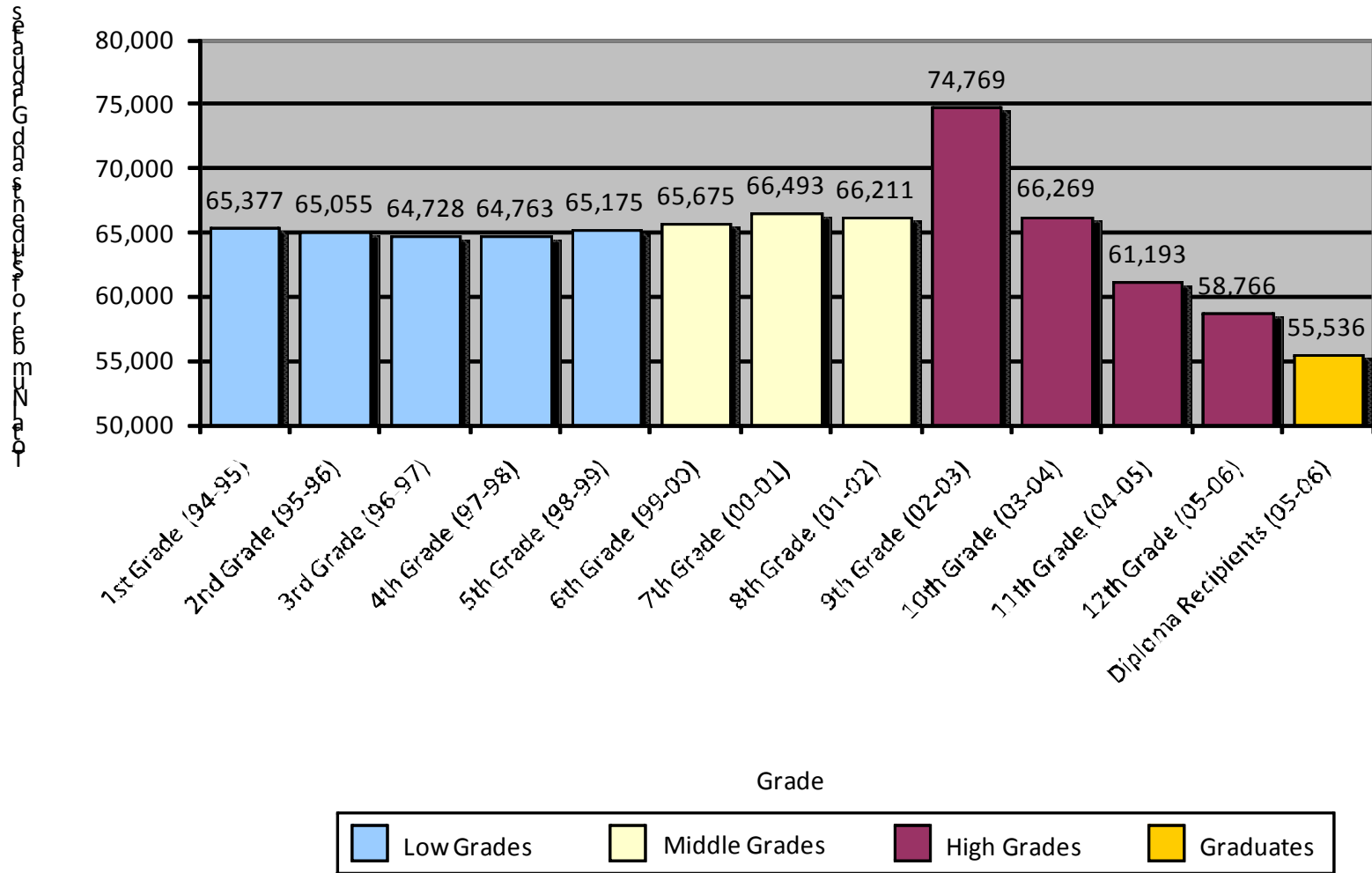
- Know who, when, where, and why students are dropping out
- Transform the secondary schools which most dropouts attend
- Develop comprehensive student support systems (in and out of school)
- Establish supportive policies and resource allocations
- Build community will and capacity



KNOW WHO, WHEN, WHERE AND WHY STUDENTS ARE DROPPING OUT



Class of 2006 Grade Enrollments and Graduates for Maryland Public Schools



MARYLAND'S GRADUATION CHALLENGE

- Class of 2006-19,000 more 9th-graders than diplomas
- Class of 2006-3,000 more 12th-graders than diplomas



4 MAIN TYPES OF DROPOUTS

- Life events (forces outside of school cause students to drop out)
- Fade Outs (students do OK in school but stop seeing a reason for staying)
- Push Outs (students who are or perceived to be detrimental to others in the school)
- Failing in school, schools/community failing to enable students to succeed



To find out how many of each there are in your Community

- Conduct a transcript analysis of students who dropped out last year. How many credits shy of graduation were they? How old were they?
- Interview students this year who are chronically absent-most students who dropout are chronically absent the year before
- For the Class of 2009 examine attendance, suspensions, and course failure patterns in the 6th to 10th grade. How many students that did not graduate on time, had poor attendance, got into trouble, and/or failed multiple courses?



**EACH REQUIRES A DIFFERENT
STRATEGY**



FAILING TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL

- In high poverty environments, these students typically constitute the majority of dropouts
- Are easily identifiable using data routinely collected by schools
- Can be identified at key junctures of secondary school when their odds for success are about to take a turn for the worse
- Often persist in school for a long time before dropping out, despite years of struggles



MAJOR FINDING

- Students in high poverty school districts who successfully navigate grades 6 to 10 on time and on track, by and large, graduate from high school (75% or higher grad rates)
- Students in high poverty school districts who struggle and become disengaged in the early secondary grades and particularly those who have an unsuccessful 6th and/or 9th grade transition do not graduate (20% or less grad rates)



STUDENTS ARE KNOCKED OFF COURSE IN THE EARLY SECONDARY GRADES BY THE ABCS

Attendance

Behavior

Course Failure



EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS AND PROVEN MODELS EXIST



**WHAT WE FACE
IS A GIANT ENGINEERING
CHALLENGE OF GETTING THE RIGHT
INTERVENTIONS
TO THE RIGHT STUDENTS
AT THE RIGHT TIME
WITH THE REQUIRED INTENSITY**



THREE STEPS TOWARD ACHIEVING THIS



STEP 1

COMPREHENSIVE, SYSTEMATIC
AND SUSTAINED WHOLE
SCHOOL REFORMS THAT
ADDRESS ATTENDANCE,
BEHAVIOR, AND COURSE
PERFORMANCE

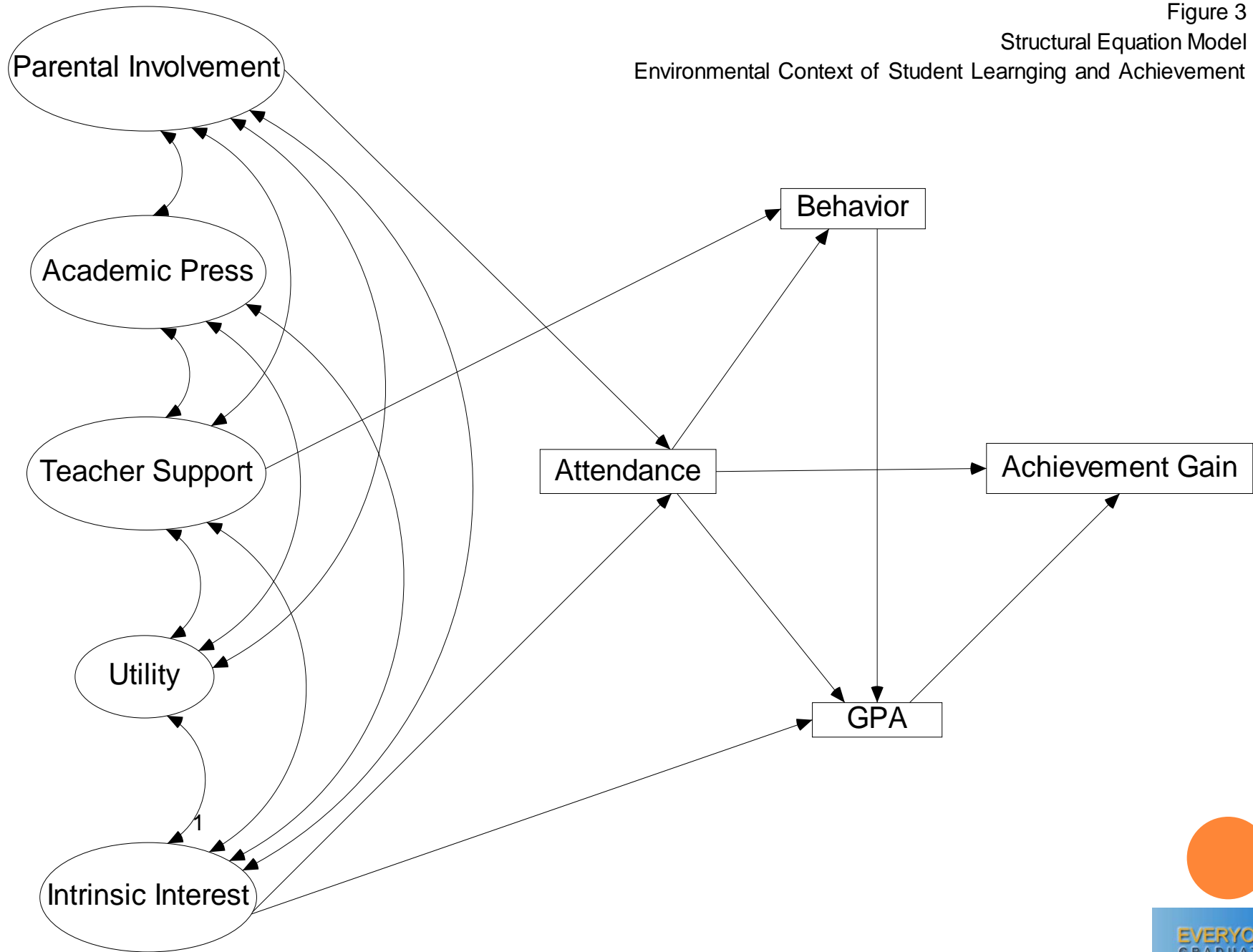
- Limited reforms or partial implementation will lead to limited or partial success



Figure 3

Structural Equation Model

Environmental Context of Student Learning and Achievement



AT EACH KEY TRANSITION CONSIDER BOTH ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL NEEDS

- Elementary Grades-Basic Academic Skills and Knowledge and socialized into the norms of schooling in a joyful manner
- Middle Grades - Intermediate academic skills (reading comprehension and fluency, transition from arithmetic to mathematics) and a need for adventure and camaraderie
- High School - Transition to adult behaviors and mind set and a path to college and career readiness, as well as the right extra help for students with below grade level skills



STEP 2

LINK EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS TO INTERVENTIONS

- Need to be able to respond to the first signs that a student is falling off track
 - students in grades 6-10 who are chronically absent, show mild but sustained misbehavior, or fail courses need intervention and attention
- Systematically apply school-wide preventative, targeted and intensive interventions until student is on-track
- Great place to use national service organizations (Americorps) to provide mentoring, tutoring, homework support, and managing attendance and behavior programs at the needed scale for an affordable price
- Need integrated student support providers to bring in and monitor case-managed professional supports for the most in need students



STEP 3

ASK-ARE EXISTING POLICIES AND PRACTICES SUPPORTIVE OF GRADUATION FOR ALL

- Attendance, grading, suspension, grade promotion, and credit policies can implicitly and explicitly, knowingly and unknowingly enable or work against graduation for all
- Need to conduct a policy audit at school, school district, and state levels



FADE OUTS

- Not easy to predict but don't usually constitute the majority of dropouts.
- Sometimes leave as late as the 12th grade only a few credits shy of graduation.
- Often regret dropping out soon after they do. Many call it the worst decision of their lives.
- Substantial numbers try to re-enter educational system.
- Often need rapid credit acquisition opportunities linked with work opportunities.
- Many need stronger college and career linkages to drive home the connection between high school graduation and future success.



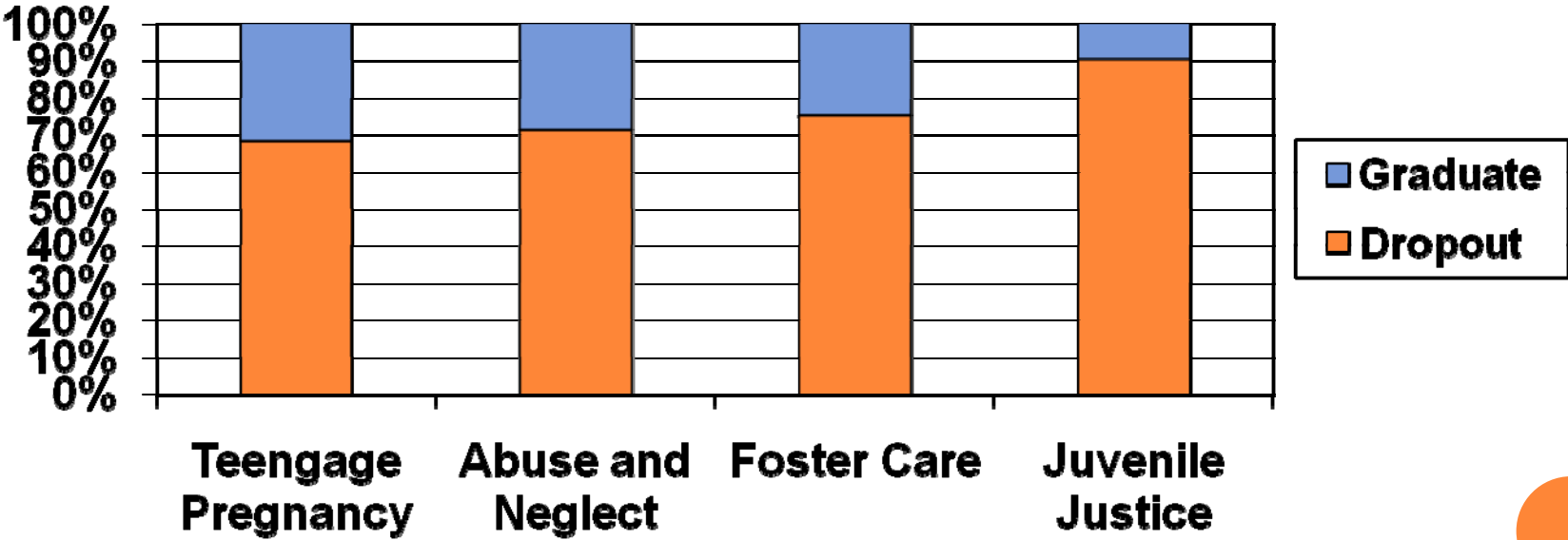
LIFE EVENTS

- Often have very low graduation rates
- Need second chance opportunities and enhanced social supports to overcome life event



IN LARGE CITIES THE SOCIAL SAFETY NET IS NOT WORKING

Dropout and Graduation Rates for Philadelphia Students Involved with Social Service Agencies- Class of 2000



FINAL STEPS:

1. RESOURCE ALLOCATION

- Need to integrate all youth development efforts toward keeping students on the graduation path college and career ready
- Need to make sure that sufficient resources-human, social, and financial-are available to provide the scale of student supports required
- Need to make data based decisions on resource allocation; need to take degree of educational difficulty into account as well as number and concentration of students in need of which supports



FINAL STEPS:

2. COMMUNITY COMPACTS

- Communities bear the costs of the dropout crisis. they need to be part of the solution
- Need a 5 to 10 year commitment
- Need to bring together multiple sectors
- Need data based plans and on-going evaluation



TO LEARN MORE

* VISIT Everyone Graduates Center Website at www.every1graduates.org

*READ “WHAT YOUR COMMUNITY CAN DO TO END ITS DROPOUT CRISIS”

* USE “GRAD NATION GUIDEBOOK” FROM THE AMERICA’S PROMISE ALLIANCE

* E-MAIL

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