



TRANSITION PROGRAMS DROPOUT PREVENTION AND RE-ENGAGEMENT SERVICES

WHAT ARE TRANSITION PROGRAMS?

All students go through transitions in their educational careers, from moving up a grade, to moving to a different school, or utilizing special education services. Transition programming such as counseling and mentoring, family outreach, community engagement and post-secondary and workplace readiness training all help support students through periods of transition.

WHY FOCUS ON TRANSITION PROGRAMS?

Comprehensive transition programming includes, but is not limited to, providing social and academic support for students in three significant periods of transition:

1. **Students Accessing Special Education Services**

Transition programs for students in special education help prepare students with disabilities to gain access to the supports and services necessary to become as independent as possible. The transition planning process includes helping students successfully move from school to post-secondary education and training, independent living and employment, based on a student's abilities, needs and goals.

2. **Students Progressing to New Grade Levels**

Ninth grade transitions are incredibly significant. Freshmen frequently demonstrate a decline in academic achievement and attendance and students fail ninth grade than any other grade of high school. Assisting middle school students and their families with successfully negotiating their transition to high school through outreach like academic support, mentoring, and post-secondary and workplace readiness programming and make the difference between dropping out and graduation.

3. **Students Moving Schools**

Highly mobile students such as homeless youth, migrant students and youth in foster care are often most at risk during these transition periods. Student mobility rates are significantly increasing in Colorado and the research shows that mobile students are more likely to fall behind academically and have higher dropout rates during their periods of transition from school to school.

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

National research demonstrates that students who complete their ninth grade year on-time are almost four times more likely to graduate from high school than

Colorado Facts and Figures for Transition Programs

- In 2016, over 97,000 students in Colorado received special education services.
- In 2015, the ninth grade dropout rate in Colorado was 1.1%, an improvement from the 2014 rate of 1.3% and 2013 rate of 1.5%.
- In 2015, the mobility rate of migrant students in Colorado was 32.4%, the mobility rate for homeless youth in Colorado was 39.8% and the mobility rate for students in foster care in Colorado was 55.4%.



those who do not. Comprehensive transition programs that support students in their transition from middle school into high school lead to significantly lower course failure and dropout rates than those high schools that do not offer such programs. In addition, offering transition programs across all grade level transitions from elementary, middle, and high school can benefit all students.

Accelerated middle school programs (i.e., self-contained academic programs used in many states including Colorado to help struggling middle school students), have been found to keep students in middle school and positively transition to high school.

Once in high schools, research recommends that schools provide more rigorous and relevant instruction to engage students in learning and help them through transitions. In addition, schools can try to provide students with skills to serve them after they leave school through post-secondary and workplace readiness programming including, job training, career awareness, college exposure activities, life skills, problem-solving skills, interpersonal skills, and vocational training.

Transitions References and Materials:

[Dropout Prevention Best Practice Guide References](#)

[Dropout Prevention Resources](#)

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/bpguide-transition>