

December 19, 2008

Project Description

The California Dropout Research Project (CDRP) was established in December 2006 to produce new and useful research to inform policymakers, educators and the general public about the nature of the dropout crisis in California and help the state develop a meaningful policy agenda to address the problem. To date the project has produced a series of 15 Research Reports and Policy Briefs addressing four facets of the issue: (1) the measurement and incidence of dropping out; (2) the educational, social, and economic costs of dropouts for individuals and the state; (3) the short-term and long-term causes of dropping out; and (4) possible solutions. It has also produced 10 Statistical Briefs that address more specific questions about the nature of the problem. In addition, the project's Policy Committee—composed of researchers, policymakers, and educators—issued a report on February 27, 2008 with a series of recommendations on what schools, districts, and the state should do to improve California's high school graduation rate.

The 41 publications have been distributed in print to all superintendents and legislators in California and have been downloaded more than 20,000 times from the project website. The project has also generated media attention via 20 television clips on major California news channels, 30 articles and editorials in the state's major newspapers, and three op-ed articles. The project is directed by Russell W. Rumberger, Professor of Education, UC Santa Barbara (dropouts@lmri.ucsb.edu).

The project has received funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, and the Walter S. Johnson Foundation. For more information, visit the project website at: www.lmri.ucsb.edu/dropouts/.

California Dropout Research Project Policy Committee

Jean Fuller

Assemblywoman, Assembly District 32
California State Assembly

David Gordon

Superintendent of Schools
Sacramento County Office of Education

Marqueece Harris-Dawson

Executive Director
Community Coalition

Rowena Lagrosa

Superintendent of Schools
Moreno Valley Unified School District

Lorraine McDonnell

Professor, Political Science
UC Santa Barbara

Gary Orfield

Professor of Education Law, Political Science, and Urban Planning;
Co-Director, The Civil Rights Project /
Proyecto de Derechos Civiles
UC Los Angeles

Darrell Steinberg

Senator, 6th Senate District
California State Senate

Research Reports and Policy Briefs

1. **The Economic Losses from High School Dropouts in California** (*August 2007*)
by Clive Belfield and Henry Levin
2. **The Return on Investment for Improving California's High School Graduation Rate** (*August 2007*) by Clive Belfield and Henry Levin
3. **Does State Policy Help or Hurt the Dropout Problem in California?** (*October 2007*)
by Thomas Timar, Manuelito Biag, and Michael Lawson
4. **Can Combining Academic and Career-Technical Education Improve High School Outcomes in California?** (*November 2007*) by Patricia Clark, Charles Dayton, David Stern, Susan Tidyman, and Alan Weisberg
5. **Student and School Predictors of High School Graduation in California** (*December 2007*) by Russell Rumberger and Brenda Arellano
6. **California Schools that Beat the Odds in High School Graduation** (*December 2007*)
by Miguel Socias, Lenay Dunn, Thomas Parrish, Mari Muraki, and LaRena Woods
7. **Alternative Pathways to High School Graduation: An International Comparison** (*January 2008*) by Stephen Lamb
8. **Giving A Student Voice to California's Dropout Crisis** (*March 2008*) by Margaret Bridges, Stefan Brauckmann, Oscar Medina, Laurie Mireles, Angeline Spain, and Bruce Fuller
9. **Building System Capacity for Improving High School Graduation Rates in California** (*April 2008*) by Jonathan Supovitz
10. **Improving California's Student Data Systems to Address the Dropout Crisis** (*May 2008*) by Georges Vernez
11. **Struggling to Succeed: What Happened to Seniors Who Did Not Pass the California High School Exit Exam? (CASHEE)** (*June 2008*) by Shane Jimerson, Michael Furlong, Jill Sharkey, Erika Felix, Mary Skokut and James Earhart
12. **Can Middle School Reform Increase High School Graduation Rates?** (*June 2008*) by Jacquelynne S. Eccles
13. **Middle School Predictors of High School Achievement in Three California School Districts** (*June 2008*) by Michal Kurlaender, Sean F. Reardon, and Jacob Jackson
14. **What Factors Predict High School Graduation in the Los Angeles Unified School District?** (*June 2008*) by Marisa Saunders, David Silver, and Estela Zarate
15. **Why Students Drop Out of School: A Review of 25 Years of Research** (*October 2008*) by Russell W. Rumberger and Sun Ah Lim

Policy Committee Report

Solving California's Dropout Crisis (*February 2008*) by Russell W. Rumberger

Selected Statistical Briefs

2. **Why Students Drop Out of High School: Comparisons from Three National Surveys** (*May 2007*) by Susan Rotermund
10. **What Happened to Dropouts From the High School Class of 2004?** (*September 29, 2008*) by Russell Rumberger and Susan Rotermund