

Blended Learning Offers Promise as a Strategy for Re-engaging Students

Introduction

Each year, approximately 485,000 young people leave high school before graduating.¹ While this undoubtedly constitutes a personal tragedy for most of these youth—indeed, non-graduates are more likely to be unemployed, have poorer health and shorter life expectancies, and get involved in criminal activity than high school graduates²—it also has far-reaching social and economic implications in the form of lost tax revenue, increased use of social services and de facto disenfranchisement.³ Further, by 2020, 68 percent of jobs in the U.S. will require a postsecondary credential.⁴ Currently, employers leave approximately 5 million jobs vacant each year because they cannot find enough skilled workers to fill them.⁵ To underscore the problem, recent estimates show that nearly 6 million 16- to 24-year-olds are neither in school nor employed.

Students disengage from and leave high school without a diploma for many different reasons: academic struggles, personal and/or familial obligations, unsupportive school environments and imperceptible relevance of school to their lives and futures.⁶ The common thread that connects so many young people who leave before graduating is that the traditional high school model simply did not work for them. Whether these former students require efficient means of recovering credit, flexible schedules to accommodate work or family responsibilities, and/or more applied learning opportunities, to re-engage them requires options that are substantively different from the high school programs they left.

Blended learning—education programs that combine in-person and online/virtual instruction and supports—has emerged as a potentially promising practice to meet the needs of young adults looking for a viable on-ramp to a high school credential and a pathway to postsecondary education and the workforce. Blended learning takes many forms, but its underlying tenet is that technology can be used to enhance and expand teaching and learning and create student-centered educational environments⁷—that is, learning environments that are tailored to the student instead of students adapting to the learning environment.

Blended learning has the potential to combine the best of face-to-face instruction, such as interaction with and support from highly qualified educators—as well as opportunities for applied and/or experiential learning and skill development—with the best of online learning, including control over pace and expertly developed content and tools. Still, it is important to note that blended learning in isolation is not the solution to the educational needs of young people, and

“Many of our students were disengaged with school not because of academic ability, sometimes it’s because life got in the way. The traditional schools, because of size and capacity, for the most part don’t have the wraparound services, they don’t have the support services, they don’t have the personnel that’s helping students overcome those barriers, so the student then starts to pull away from the school. And that’s the story that we get over and over again.”

Representative, YouthBuild Providence

variation in the quality of products and/or program implementation may inhibit the realization of the practice’s full potential.

This paper presents a landscape analysis of how blended learning currently is being used as a strategy to serve young adults 16- to 24-years-old who have re-engaged in education (“re-engaged youth”) in an effort to get a high school diploma or equivalency.⁸ The analysis is based on a review of relevant empirical research and interviews with program developers, practitioners and policy makers in the field. While additional, systematic research and evaluation is needed to fully understand the efficacy of blended learning for re-engaged students, this report highlights examples of how blended learning is being used within comprehensive re-engagement strategies to address students’ needs.⁹

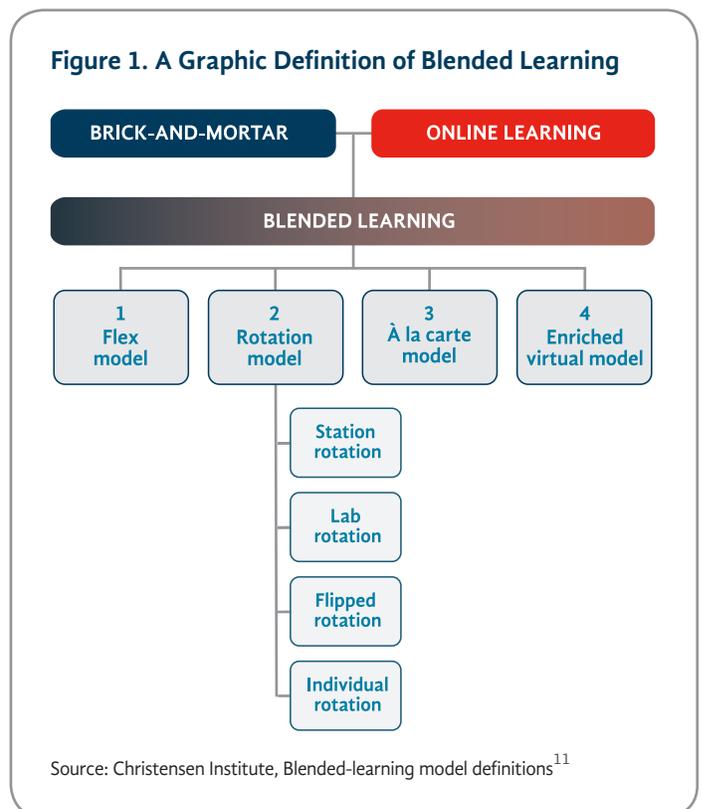
Defining Blended Learning

The Clayton Christensen Institute (Christensen Institute) developed what has become a commonly cited definition of blended learning:¹⁰

Blended learning is a formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online learning with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace and at least in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home.

Further, the Christensen Institute articulated four blended-learning models that encapsulate the majority of programs currently in operation: flex, rotation, à la carte and enriched virtual.

- **Flex model.** The most commonly used, the flex model was designed to support dropout and credit recovery. It relies primarily on online learning and is customizable to students’ schedule and/or pace. However, much of the learning occurs on-site with support from teachers.
- **Rotation model.** The rotation model is comprised of multiple learning modalities—including online learning—among which students move according to a set schedule or the instructor’s discretion. There are four subtypes within the rotation model.
- **À la carte model.** Within this model, students enroll in at least one course that is entirely online while taking the remainder of their courses in traditional, teacher-led classroom settings. This model is commonly used to augment schools’ or districts’ course offerings, such as expanding access to Advanced Placement or other specialized courses.
- **Enriched virtual model.** This model describes experiences in which the whole student population receives a portion of their instruction in online environments and the remainder within a school setting.



Blended Learning and Re-engagement

Blended learning has an established role in re-engaging youths through online credit recovery, which is often accompanied by face-to-face instruction and/or support. While online credit recovery is available to students without in-person interaction, the most effective programs incorporate supportive in-person adults who help keep students on track and provide academic and non-academic assistance.¹² Even when credit recovery is conducted entirely online for some students, it often occurs within the context of a program that includes other means of instruction, including traditional teacher-led classrooms. More recently, there has been movement to broaden the scope of blended-learning practices within the field of re-engagement to play a more substantial role in education programs.

Approximately two-thirds of those who leave high school prior to graduating eventually attain their diploma or General Educational Development (GED);¹³ many more likely attempt to re-engage. Clearly there is a need for programs that reconnect young adults with their education and a career pathway; and, in fact, the demand for such programs often exceeds supply in many parts of the country. It is also clear that given the diverse factors that drove students out of school previously, a one-size fits-all approach will not work. Students who are re-engaging in their education need options from which to select a program that best suits their lives in the present and goals for the future.¹⁴

States and districts that are actively involved with re-engagement—and a number of re-engagement centers themselves—have begun to explore blended-learning options that may provide a route to a high school credential more aligned with students' needs than teacher-led classroom-based models, and also may augment the capacity of alternative programming to better meet demand. Recognizing that the traditional school schedule and educational environment are not conducive to all students' success, Los Angeles Unified School District officials have expanded blended-learning offerings to increase education options and, therefore, the chance that their off-track students and out-of-school youths can find one that meets their needs.¹⁵

Washington's Open Doors policy is a statewide re-engagement system that provides education and other services to 16- to 21-year-olds who have left school before graduating or who are not on track to graduate by the time they are 21 years old.¹⁶ Among programs that are authorized under the legislation are schools that use blended learning to enable re-engaged youths to work toward a diploma.¹⁷ Still, some educators and policymakers who have limited experience and familiarity with the range of models approach online and blended-learning providers with skepticism, especially with regard to products and services that minimize face-to-face interaction with educators—a type of practice that runs counter to their belief that connections with caring adults are what drives successful re-engagement efforts.¹⁸

Over the past few years, organizations have given more attention to creating and expanding diploma programs as re-engaged youth increasingly opt for an alternative to the GED, which has become more expensive as passing rates have declined.¹⁹ The movement to better align the knowledge and skill requirements for passing the GED with those for a diploma in many cases increases the demand for a diploma—in other words, for a similar investment of time and effort, many students are inclined to pursue the diploma. Oftentimes, blended learning is a more feasible and scalable approach to enhancing diploma programs than traditional classroom-based models.

Literature Review

While there is substantial literature pertaining to online and blended learning, research on the use of blended learning as a re-engagement strategy for students who left high school without graduating is relatively sparse. In particular, experimental studies examining the outcomes associated with blended learning for re-engaged youth are just beginning to emerge.²⁰ The literature to date tends to focus on theories of action and program descriptions, both of which are useful in establishing the landscape of current practice. In addition, the literature pertaining to re-engagement and to online learning offers insights into the potential use and effects of blended learning for re-engaged students.

On the other hand, there is a robust research base on the factors that promote high school graduation, leading to a comprehensive picture of the various and often related factors that influence students' decisions to leave school before attaining their diplomas. For many youth and young adults, the road to disengagement is often marked by one or more of the following barriers to graduation:

- poor academic performance and low levels of school engagement
- suspension or expulsion
- interruptions to school attendance due to personal or family illness
- mobility, sometimes caused by involvement in the foster care or juvenile justice systems
- homelessness
- financial instability that necessitates student employment
- becoming a parent or caring for another relative.²¹

These circumstances are often exacerbated by school climates and/or policies that are insensitive to students' experiences and make it difficult, if not impossible, for them to find balance between their academic pursuits and their lives outside of school.²²

Although not yet thoroughly tested, there is general consensus among authors that the potential benefits of blended learning—including personalization and differentiation of instruction to accommodate various learning styles and academic needs, flexibility in schedule and pace reflective of students' out-of-school obligations, and increased relevance of content to students' postsecondary aspirations—are likely to address many of the challenges that re-engaged young adults face and help them attain their high school credential.²³

Fully online and blended-learning models share many attributes, but there are important differences to note. A key differentiator is the pivotal role of highly-trained teachers and/or other supportive adults in the blended-learning approaches. Students benefit from on-site support from teachers, counselors, advisors and/or mentors who assist with issues ranging from content to technology to postsecondary planning. Indeed, attrition rates from online-only courses tend to exceed those for face-to-face courses due in part to feelings of isolation, which can be amplified without a physical location in which to complete at least some of the course or program requirements.²⁴

Program Overview

Programs using blended learning to provide education services to re-engaged youth generally fall into one of two broad categories:²⁵

- **Alternative education schools or programs** whose primary objective is to help students make progress toward and obtain a diploma; or
- **Workforce or community development programs** that offer high school completion options²⁶—in addition to on-the-job skill development and career technical training, and in a number of cases, opportunities for service and civic engagement—to increase college and career readiness and employability.

The study team identified a sample of programs inclusive of both categories and interviewed 13 executives and administrators representing eight organizations.²⁷ Most of the programs operate flex blended-learning models; however, some provide à la carte and enriched virtual options as well. While interview respondents often mentioned that most of the online components of the curriculum are available to students anywhere and anytime, they also noted that the general expectation is that students will complete their academic work on-site because access to hardware and/or sufficient internet speed may be limited for their students off-site.

Several respondents noted that the primary objective of the academic component is to accelerate students' path to graduation. In other words, offerings are geared toward state or district graduation requirements—focusing on what students need, rather than the universe of core and elective course options²⁸—and most programs do not offer traditional extra-curricular activities.

The duration of the education programs ranges from three months to four years, with variability within programs.²⁹ This range reflects that some program participants enter with very few or even no prior credits, while some need only a handful of courses to complete the requirements for their high school diploma. In addition, the accelerated, competency-based, and/or self-paced options enable some students to progress quickly while others require more time. Table 2 presents the key components of the programs included in this study.³⁰

Table 2. Program Components

Catapult Academy is a network of contract schools that use blended learning to support districts’ dropout prevention and recovery efforts. The schools enroll 16- to 21-year-olds who have left school or are at high risk of leaving school. Graduates receive a diploma from their local district. Catapult Academy currently operates in Florida and Georgia.

PROGRAM REACH: Currently serving about 1,800 students in Florida and 200 in Georgia.

NON-ACADEMIC SUPPORTS	CAREER DEVELOPMENT	STAFFING	TECHNOLOGY	SUCCESSSES
<p>Three-tiered comprehensive support system.</p> <p>Tier 1 (all students)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student leadership council • Virtual graduation coaches who regularly analyze student academic histories to ensure students are on most efficient path to graduation • Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) <p>Tier 2 (approx. 1/3 of students)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment personnel who also serve as “success coaches” to help identify and remedy student needs/barriers to graduation; do home visits; do parent outreach to keep students on track <p>Tier 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring program in development • Curriculum for students with behavioral issues • Referrals to outside agencies (e.g. substance abuse, homelessness, mental health, etc.)—referral system build into student information system 	<p>Industry Certification Exam preparation and testing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional director (principal) • Assistant principal • Lead teacher • Minimum of 2 adults per site • 1 teacher and 1 paraprofessional for every 50 students (minimum) • Virtual teachers • At least 1 counselor per district • College and career manager • PBIS director • Operations manager 	<p>APEX Learning</p>	<p>Over the past three years, more than 750 students have earned high school diplomas or certificates of completion.</p>

Ednovate³¹ is a charter management organization that emphasizes personalization and student-centered educational experiences through blended learning. Schools serve first-generation college-going students from areas where students do not typically have access to high quality schools. Ednovate’s goal is to equip all students with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in college and to “instill a sense of purpose” that drives positive multigenerational change.

PROGRAM REACH: Ednovate currently operates two high schools, and will open a third in fall 2016. The model is designed to serve 460 students in each school across grades 9-12.³²

NON-ACADEMIC SUPPORTS	CAREER DEVELOPMENT	STAFFING	TECHNOLOGY	SUCCESSSES
<p>Twice-daily advisories with the same advisor for all four years.</p>	<p>Currently, students complete performance tasks and volunteer hours. As schools increase capacity, they plan to incorporate additional career development activities, including internship programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Assistant principal • Dean of culture • Office manager • Office assistant • 5 teachers (English, math, reading, science, PE) • Two special education teachers • Full-time social worker/counselor 	<p>CANVAS learning management system, Google docs, Google apps. Non-academic systems include DeansList for tracking merits and demerits and Hapara for monitoring Chromebooks in class.</p>	<p>One of the schools will graduate its first class in 2016. As of 12/21/15, over 50% of the graduating class had been accepted to college. Annual retention rate is approximately 94%.</p>

Job Corps³³ is a Congressionally-funded program that provides education services and vocational training to economically disadvantaged 16- to 24-year olds across the country. Approximately 74% of Job Corps participants enter the program without a high school diploma.³⁴ Program sites offer both diploma and high school equivalency options, and diploma options may include online programs with in-person instructional support, as well as partnerships with charter schools, school districts, and community colleges.

PROGRAM REACH: There are 125 Job Corps centers nationwide serving approximately 60,000 young adults.

NON-ACADEMIC SUPPORTS	CAREER DEVELOPMENT	STAFFING	TECHNOLOGY	SUCCESSSES
Job Corps is a residential program. Extended Training Day programs focus on developing life- and soft-skills and building confidence.	Job Corps offers training in more than 100 vocational areas across all sites. Individual program sites typically offer 8 to 15 vocational options in various industry clusters.	Sites aim for student-teacher ratios between 12:1 and 15:1. Certified instructor in every classroom (math, reading, or dual certified).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penn Foster and New Learning Resources for online diploma options. • Aztec Learning • Achieve3000 	Approximately 60% to 70% of students who enter diploma programs obtain their diploma within two years.

Magic Johnson Bridgescape is a charter school network that uses blended learning to educate students 16- to 21-years-old who are re-engaging or are at high risk of dropping out.

PROGRAM REACH: Thirteen academies, each enrolling about 200 students, operate across five states.

NON-ACADEMIC SUPPORTS	CAREER DEVELOPMENT	STAFFING	TECHNOLOGY	SUCCESSSES
Family outreach manager connects students and families to services, assists with immediate need for housing, food, and/or clothing.	Goal is to prepare students equally for postsecondary education and employment. The Ohio sites use Career-Based Intervention (CBI) ³⁵ through partnerships with local community colleges and other community organizations. Employed students receive elective credit for work. In the process of building out CTE programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified teacher for each core subject • Paraprofessional • Intervention specialist • Program director • Family outreach manager • Office manager • School counselors 	EdisonLearning eCourses	In 2011-12, the five sites in Ohio graduated 64% of eligible students ³⁶ and had a 73% year-to-year retention rate. ³⁷

Polk County uses Penn Foster’s Dropout Retrieval Solution to educate students who want to re-engage in their education and obtain a diploma.

PROGRAM REACH: Average enrollment is 250 students.

NON-ACADEMIC SUPPORTS	CAREER DEVELOPMENT	STAFFING	TECHNOLOGY	SUCCESSSES
Would like to hire a social worker. Currently partner with community organizations for additional supports and services.	Partnership with CareerSource Polk. Students have access to all of Penn Foster’s career technical course offerings. The program also has articulation agreements with two local technical colleges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25:1 student-teacher ratio • Two administrators • Certified district teachers for each subject • Mentors/coaches • Guidance counselor • Clerical staff 	Penn Foster Dropout Retrieval Solution	Average completion rate is about 80%, and 270 students graduated in 2014-15.

SIATech is a network of charter schools serving 16- to 24-year-olds who have not achieved a high school diploma. SIATech started as an exclusive partner to Job Corps, locating high schools at Job Corps sites. Schools now offer services to non-Job Corps participants, and some operate as community schools in Florida under the name MYcroSchool.

PROGRAM REACH: The network includes 22 schools in four states, serving 2,500 students.

NON-ACADEMIC SUPPORTS	CAREER DEVELOPMENT	STAFFING	TECHNOLOGY	SUCCESSSES
Trauma-informed instruction	Job Corps sites offer students career development and vocational training. SIATech currently is developing a Career Pathways program through its California Career Pathways Trust Grant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Certified teacher for each core subject: math, English, science, social science • Counselor • Community liaison • Certified virtual instructors supplement when searching for qualified face-to-face teachers 	ANGEL Learning management system Transitioning to Schoology (Fall 2016) Uses Customized ConTech Curriculum specifically designed for SIATech's unique population Program embeds the learning of high-end technical skills and industry standard software applications into the core content area coursework	Since 1998, SIATech has graduated over 14,000 students who had previously dropped out.

YouthBuild USA is a network of community development programs that enable low-income 16- to 24-year-olds to complete their high school education and develop career development skills³⁸ by building affordable housing and assets in their communities. Participants spend 50% of their time in education programs, 40% at construction sites, and 10% in leadership development and service. Participants may pursue their GED or diploma, and YouthBuild offers both traditional face-to-face and blended-learning diploma options.

PROGRAM REACH: 260 programs in 46 states served approximately 10,000 participants in 2014.

NON-ACADEMIC SUPPORTS	CAREER DEVELOPMENT	STAFFING	TECHNOLOGY	SUCCESSSES
Life skills courses, "Mental Toughness" program, trauma awareness, social-emotional learning. Programs focus on leadership development opportunities and competencies, with emphasis on community and national service opportunities. YouthBuild Providence: ³⁹ Partners with nonprofits/ social service agencies to "help overcome life barriers." Community health center for preventative and other care.	Developing participants' workforce skills is central to the program model. YouthBuild Providence: Industry partners for job placement and career exploration. Postsecondary partners in range of industries. Penn Foster's career technical course offerings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student-teacher ratio is 14:1 across sites in accordance with the performance standards • Director • One certified math/ science teacher • One certified English/ social studies teacher • Contracted teachers for other academic courses (e.g. languages) • Two construction teachers 	YouthBuild Providence uses Penn Foster for its blended- learning diploma program. 6 sites participating in the SRI study are using ALEKS (Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces). Garfield Jubilee YouthBuild program in Pittsburgh became the first site to use Career Online High School.	In 2014, 77% of participants obtained their high school equivalency credentials, high school diplomas, and/ or industry-recognized credentials. ⁴⁰

Findings: Making Blended Learning Work Well

The findings presented below represent the convergence of existing research with the information obtained through interviews with blended-learning program providers. As noted previously, the evidence regarding blended learning as a strategy to educate re-engaged students is relatively thin and is supplemented here with the broader research literature about blended learning and re-engagement. These findings focus on emerging blended-learning practices that hold promise for supporting re-engaged youths. Each of the findings reflects a belief that blended-learning approaches should take a youth-centered approach. That is, the promising practices that we delineate recognize the authentic lived experiences of re-engaged youths and employ strategies and practices that are most useful for a given youth in achieving his or her educational and life goals.

Blended-learning strategies work best when they align with the needs of re-engaged youths.

Though not thoroughly tested, the potential benefits of blended learning can reasonably be expected to address many of the academic, social and financial needs of re-engaging students and help them to attain their high school credential.⁴¹ Here, we focus on how blended environments can support differing learning styles, motivations and life schedules.

Online components can be customized to differing learning styles; for example, by providing students with options for content delivery that best suit their learning needs (e.g. text, video, applied practice).⁴²

This type of differentiation is far more difficult in a traditional classroom, where one teacher is responsible for delivering instruction to a class of diverse learners within specific parameters for pace, sequence and assessment. Instructors can leverage online modalities to monitor students' progress in real time, assessing and intervening before students fall irreparably behind.⁴³ Teachers also can provide positive feedback and recognition of incremental achievement in this context, encouraging progress and motivating students. In addition, some students may be more comfortable engaging in conversations and asking questions in an online environment than face-to-face with their peers.⁴⁴

Many blended-learning programs are competency-based, allowing students to demonstrate mastery of knowledge and skills and progress at their own pace, often enabling them to complete courses in less time than is possible in a traditional classroom.⁴⁵ For students (particularly those who are significantly over-age) who seek their diploma or equivalency to gain entry into the workforce, accelerating time to completion helps to fortify and sustain their motivation to complete their degree. Several program respondents and study authors highlighted that the online components of blended learning further enable students to develop skills and habits that better prepare them for postsecondary success.⁴⁶

Technology skills and digital literacy have increasingly become fundamental components of what it means to be college and career ready in the 21st century. One respondent noted that the way technology is used in blended-learning programs can go beyond familiarizing students with word processing, general computing and electronic communication and begin to show students how to use technology to become creators, critical thinkers and more effective leaders. In addition, opportunities to work independently help students become more adept in self-regulation and time management.⁴⁷

Blended-learning programs that offer students control over time, place and pace of instruction often enable re-engaged youths to create a schedule that is compatible with their responsibilities outside of school. Students who have substantial obligations outside of school often find it difficult, if not impossible, to attend school from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. They may have conflicting work schedules or children in their care during those hours. They may need to attend medical or other appointments with a parent or grandparent.

A number of the programs included in this study offer flexible schedules that recognize that many of their students cannot feasibly commit six or more hours a day, five days a week. Schedules varied across programs, in part because many program sites are given autonomy to set their own schedules in accordance with their students' needs. With the exception of the enriched virtual models offered by SIATech, most programs had defined sessions—Magic Johnson Bridgescape Academy and Catapult Academy each offer four- to five-hour morning and afternoon blocks—but give students discretion to select the session that works best for them. In addition, program staff will make accommodations for individual students who cannot attend either session. SIATech South Bay Independent Study keeps its building open and staffed from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and students may come and go according to their own schedules—with regular check-ins with instructors built in. The program's principal noted that in the future he hopes to expand the hours to include evenings and weekends, providing students with more options.

When programs operate on a more traditional schedule, respondents indicated that they work with students to alleviate the non-educational commitments that might otherwise impede regular attendance. For example, YouthBuild Providence, which does not offer flexible scheduling,⁴⁸ helps students secure resources—such as childcare—that enable them to consistently attend the program. In Polk County, Florida, students who rely on district-provided transportation are subject to the district bus schedule and therefore have less discretion over timing, but the program is otherwise flexible with regard to arrival and departure times.

Workforce/career development organizations build job and life skills in addition to educational competencies. The education components of the workforce/career development organization tend to be more structured than other components. Indeed, these programs usually require a full-time commitment from students, though they often have employment opportunities and/or stipends for training built in, and some offer housing as well. For example, YouthBuild is a full-time program in which participants spend 50 percent of their time in educational programs, 40 percent in construction⁴⁹ and the remaining 10 percent in leadership development and service. Job Corps is a residential program that divides participants' time between educational and vocational training, as well as recreational and other activities geared toward developing confidence and social skills.

“ [They] were not successful in the traditional setting, so my thought going into it at the very beginning was that I don't need to build something that is going to mimic or look like what they were not successful in, and how do we create something...that would hopefully meet their needs and be flexible. Online does all that... but what I found was that if you sit students that have not been successful in the traditional setting in front of a computer and turn them loose without a lot of support, their success rate isn't that great.”

Representative, Polk County Public Schools

Blended learning can support more comprehensive re-engagement efforts.

When designing a blended-learning model or incorporating technology into education programs for re-engaged youths, it is essential to consider how the program aligns with the organization's mission and meets the needs of the students it serves.⁵⁰ In other words, there should be a direct relationship between program components and the specific challenges facing the targeted student population, as well as the educational organizations and institutions responsible for serving them.⁵¹ As discussed previously, blended learning possesses a number of qualities that make it an attractive educational option for re-engaged students. But, for many programs, blended learning is one component of a comprehensive strategy to remove barriers to college and career readiness. As is generally true for effective re-engagement strategies, the provision of wraparound services and social supports is integral to student success.⁵²

Beyond blended learning, the programs involved in this study offer an array of services and supports to their participants, including counseling, food and housing assistance, access to health care, transportation and sometimes more. For example, Magic Johnson Bridgescape Academies in Ohio have family outreach managers who connect families with these types of services and address students' non-academic needs. Most of the programs engage in numerous community partnerships to ensure the availability of services that their students require.

Further, most of the programs subscribe to a positive youth development (PYD) model, which has been described as:

An intentional, pro-social approach that engages youths within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances youths' strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths.⁵³

The chance that a young person will thrive in education and in life increases when the strengths and competencies of the young person are aligned with the assets in that young person's life (schools, programs, family, peers and the broader community).⁵⁴ Blended learning often fits within a PYD model, because it can be tailored and responsive to students' specific academic needs in ways that tend to be infeasible in fully online or traditional classroom-based models.

Most of the blended-learning programs we studied also have a career development component that may be central to the organization's mission or an elective course option. From offering industry certification to providing credit for work experience to employing a college and career manager, these programs recognize that a diploma or other credential is not the end goal for their participants, but rather a springboard to further education, training and gainful employment. Some certification programs are available online, facilitating their incorporation into blended-learning models. And flexible schedules allow students opportunities to engage in job shadowing, internships and other work experiences.

Teachers and other staff are essential, but technology can augment their effectiveness.

All of the program respondents emphasized that technology is not a replacement for high-quality instructors and supportive adults, and that the relationships between the teachers and students are what make the models work. When used effectively, technology augments teaching and learning provided through these relationships. In both the extant literature and responses from those interviewed, the study team identified a critical theme: effective educators and support staff play a critical role in successful blended-learning programs for re-engaged youth. In addition to motivating students and holding them accountable, as well as providing instruction and assisting students with the acquisition of content knowledge and skills, adults are charged with a range of responsibilities, including helping students to secure services that enable them to attend their programs regularly; providing college and career counseling, exposure, and experiences; and practicing trauma-informed instruction.⁵⁵

Blended learning can facilitate these roles for adults by using online instruction and tools to deliver a portion of the content, allowing teachers to prioritize individual student needs and target their efforts on meeting them. Students need to feel comfortable and safe

“ [Our model is a] high tech, high touch learning environment that is blended to meet the needs of a slightly older population, and also meet the students who have been out of school for a significant period of time. So we concentrate on re-engaging students, on showing them a pathway, creating an individual learning plan, and we watch the acceleration of their learning take place as they become trusting of the environment and actually believing that they can graduate and get a job that will help them to support their families and have the kind of life that we all want to have.”

Representative, SIATech

sharing information about themselves and their lives that will help teachers and program staff best serve them, while also knowing that they can rely on those adults for support, guidance and information. These types of supportive connections between students and school staff are a necessary component of efforts to re-engage students and keep them on track.⁵⁶

The primary distinctions between fully-online and blended-learning programs include the existence of a physical learning location and the availability of adults who are trained to assist students with their studies. While there are examples of programs in which the latter may consist of proctors responsible for behavior management and technology support, many re-engaged students need more than this to gain the full benefits of the model. At the very least, they may need someone to help them to stay on track. In many cases, experienced educators are on hand to clarify and reinforce content, provide individual and small group instruction, facilitate projects and applied learning opportunities, and assist with postsecondary planning. In fact, many programs rely on multiple staff members to fill these roles.

Many re-engaged students would say that they previously had few teachers and others in school who invested in their success and were willing to work through the many challenges they faced. Yet these types of supportive relationships are integral to overcoming the barriers that lead to disengagement.⁵⁷

Program planning, implementation and quality assurance are key to ensuring student success.

Blended-learning programs must be carefully planned, and implementation and fidelity to the model need to be closely monitored to promote effectiveness. Further, measures of program quality and expectations for student outcomes need to be codified and programs assessed against them so that program providers know whether their students have the competencies to succeed in school and life.

While anecdotal evidence suggests that blended-learning models are showing promise with re-engaged youth, there is no consistent metric against which to measure program performance. Further, the literature cautions against products that set a low bar for obtaining credits and do not prioritize student learning or skill acquisition.⁵⁸ Both Magic Johnson Bridgescape Academy and Polk County use learning platforms that prohibit students from taking tests multiple times (in an attempt to guess their way to course completion) without face-to-face intervention.

Even measuring graduation rates can be difficult. Unlike typical cohort graduation rate calculations, re-engaged youth come to programs at different points in their educational trajectories and at different ages. One young person could come in with no credits, while another comes in needing only a final course or two to complete a degree. In some programs, such as YouthBuild and Job Corps, a young person might begin on a path toward high school graduation but then decide to receive an equivalency. There is no consensus on how to account

“ We use blended learning, but we don’t believe that the computer can replace good instruction. We still have a certified, high-quality teacher in every classroom who’s creating content and leading students through their work.”

Representative, Ednovate

“ ...[W]e want blended learning to support engagement and not take away from it...We really think about engagement, whole group instruction, what it means to create learning environments that look and feel like where the young person is going to spend time either in college or career, and online can supplement that. And if it’s good online, competency-based, user-friendly, adaptive to where the learner’s at, then that’s a huge advantage to integrate into the classroom... to allow for differentiation in ways that we think matter...For all of the diploma options, we’re trying to get to a place where online and blended learning is supplemental and supports good instruction work in ways that we believe in.”

Representative, YouthBuild USA

for this kind of fluidity between programs, or about how each program should be “credited” for promoting positive student outcomes. Some advocates have called for one-year cohort rates or other alternative methods for calculating educational success.

A number of the programs included in this study initially introduced their blended-learning models as pilot programs, working with small numbers of students to test the efficacy of the model within the organization. In one case, school administrators shadowed students throughout the pilot to experience the model first-hand. Based on student feedback and performance, the pilot programs were implemented more broadly.

YouthBuild, SIATech, and Catapult Academy provide illustrative examples for setting expectations and monitoring sites’ adherence to them. YouthBuild programs are guided by a set of program design standards for required and recommended programming approaches. Similarly, programs work toward a clear set of performance standards. Program design and performance standards are democratically created with YouthBuild USA, program directors in the field and young leaders. Standards are updated regularly and apply equally to programs implementing education programming in-person and in blended learning environments.

SIATech, like a number of the programs included in this study, allows individual sites to exercise a considerable amount of autonomy to be responsive to participants. However, there are a number of “non-negotiable” components and practices, including the core academic curriculum, classroom setup and IT requirements. All students must have access to all approved courses across schools. All teachers and school leaders receive consistent training and share an understanding of the expectations for effective teacher-student interaction. Sites must demonstrate adherence to these practices to become and remain certified as SIATech schools.

Catapult Academy begins its engagement with school districts by mining relevant data (e.g. graduation rates and reasons for departure), then identifying problems and concerns to develop appropriate solutions. Once operating in a district, Catapult Academy relies on its parent company’s (Catapult Learning) office of education quality to review sites with respect to the uniformity and quality of the program and the professional development that teachers are receiving. This type of review serves as a “check and balance” to ensure that implementation is consistent across sites and aligned with established quality standards.

Several program respondents noted the need to strike an appropriate balance between autonomy and consistency across their multiple sites. The very purpose of the models is to be responsive to participants’ needs. However, to gain traction as a viable educational strategy, increased effort must be made to understand which blended-learning practices—and under what conditions—produce the best outcomes for program participants. To this end, Adams and Associates serves as a knowledge management hub for its Job Corps centers, able to observe and disseminate effective practices across its network.

Some education policies are incongruous with the blended-learning context.

A number of the programs included in this study are charter schools, allowing for some flexibility with regard to district policies that may be inconsistent with the blended-learning model (e.g., charter schools have autonomy over schedule, staffing, budgets and curriculum, allowing them to implement a blended-learning model that is responsive to the students they serve). For these programs and others, however, there arguably is a need to evaluate federal and state education policies within the context of blended-learning models, especially for re-engaged students.

For example, a news story in Ohio early last year “exposed” discrepancies between enrollment and attendance figures during unannounced attendance checks at a number of the state’s charter schools.⁵⁹ Among those charter schools was

a Magic Johnson Bridgescape Academy campus—a blended-learning program for re-engaged students—which operates a flexible schedule that includes a choice between two daily sessions. Program administrators expect approximately half of their enrolled students to be present in the building at any given time. The school’s superintendent provided the following written statement in response to the auditor’s findings:

The head count observed by the auditor is very consistent with the data that the school has provided to [the Ohio Department of Education]...The Auditor of State’s report is based on a flawed premise: it assumes that enrollment at a school will equal its daily headcount. In reality, attendance rates at schools that serve high school dropouts, including Capital High School, average about 50% of enrollment. It needs to be remembered that this is not a traditional school program—it is a program specifically designed for students who are considered at risk for [not] graduating. Their life’s circumstances often times require them to interrupt their educational process, and we continue to strive to provide them assistance and guidance as they work to complete their high school education.⁶⁰

Indeed, attendance and seat-time requirements may become largely irrelevant in many blended-learning models, or at least highly variable.⁶¹ However, a handful of states fund schools based on average daily attendance (ADA), which becomes incredibly complex within the context of flexible schedules and unconventional attendance expectations. Funding can be further complicated when local policy does not require school districts to re-enroll students who are over the maximum compulsory attendance age after an interruption to attendance classifies them as a dropout.⁶² This constitutes a large proportion of the student population in education programs targeting re-engaged youth and young adults, yet there is no state or district funding to support their re-engagement. In addition, competency-based education policy, which also requires relaxation of policies regarding instructional hours, is integral to the advancement of blended learning in the re-engagement context.⁶³

Some districts have found ways to incorporate blended-learning options for re-engaged youth into their offerings, either by developing their own programs or by contracting with providers that operate some or all of the program components. Catapult Academy is one such provider, which operates state-funded contract schools in a number of school districts in Florida and Georgia. While subject to state accountability systems, Catapult Academy works with individual districts to determine the metrics upon which contract renewal will be based, indicators that are more relevant to the program goals and students they serve, and which may diverge from standard policy. In other words, Catapult works with district administrators to determine what success will look like and how to assess whether the program is effective in helping students make progress toward graduation.

“We’re being held to the same standard that traditional high schools are being held [for cohort graduation rates]. And so it’s difficult when you have students who have dropped out of those traditional schools who are operating way behind their cohort, to get them to graduate with their class. Sometimes if I have a 20-year-old, well you’re two years out of your cohort, there’s no way that I’m going to be able to catch you [up] because you’re already remarkably behind. And so we often take the hit for that, but better take the hit for that than not have a student complete their high school diploma.”

Representative, Magic Johnson Bridgescape Academy

The majority of respondents noted that traditional accountability measures do not necessarily reflect program goals and/or the targeted student populations. Specifically, most believe that measures related to re-engagement, learning gains, progress toward a credential, and postsecondary indicators and/or outcomes are more relevant to their models than standard measures of achievement. Likewise, the 4-year (or even 5-year) cohort graduation rate does not coincide with the typical realities of re-engagement efforts.

Accountability and funding have a number of implications for re-engagement, posing various incentives and disincentives for districts to retrieve students who have left school and for external organizations to fill service gaps for youths and young adults who wish to return to their education after an interruption. For example, how students factor into a school or district's dropout and graduation rates—and how these measures are weighted against others, such as performance on state tests—may influence the extent of districts' prevention and recovery efforts.

Polk County Public Schools in Polk County, FL came up with a way to offer re-engaged youths educational services while bypassing some of the policy issues and questions that might pose challenges to re-engagement. Rather than re-enroll students in the district, students enter an independent blended-learning school operated by the district in partnership with Penn Foster.⁶⁴ As such, program participants can earn their diploma without passing Florida's statewide assessment. Since they remain removed from their original Polk County cohort, students who graduate from the program are not counted toward the districts' graduation rate. The program is funded by the state and therefore must comply with state requirements pertaining to class size, certified teachers, enrollment in a brick-and-mortar school and attendance. Attendance is the only one of these that tends to pose challenges, and the program does serve students for whom it does not receive state funding due to their inability to meet the requirements.

“The high school online programs, there's nothing wrong with them—they're definitely quality—but we wanted to ensure that students aren't just going through the program, clicking on certain buttons just to get through it. We feel we needed a more comprehensive program which would allow us to assess their actual aptitude...So, using a blended learning approach, A) we feel we provide the student with more value, and B) we feel we're able to provide a better assessment of students' needs through the whole program, instead of just sitting them in front of a computer...”

Representative, Adams and Associates/Job Corps

Recommendations for Future Research

While blended learning shows promise as an educational strategy for re-engaged youths, additional research is needed to better understand its efficacy in adequately preparing graduates for successful transitions to postsecondary education, training and/or employment. In addition, a deeper dive into program and student characteristics that are associated with positive outcomes can help to inform policy and practice, leading to an expanded number of viable pathways to high school completion and beyond.

Researchers should:

- **Compare student outcomes for blended learning and other diploma options.** Programs that offer participants different avenues to a diploma (i.e. a teacher-led, classroom-based option and a blended-learning option), provide an opportunity to examine the efficacy of each in producing desired student outcomes with respect to college matriculation, persistence and completion; employment status and income; and civic and community engagement. Likewise, such studies could attempt to determine which program components have the greatest impact on student outcomes, as well as which student characteristics, if any, are best suited for each diploma option.
- **Study the relationship between student outcomes and performance on traditional and alternative accountability measures.** Multiple interview respondents indicated that traditional accountability measures miss the mark in assessing the performance of blended-learning models used to educate re-engaged youths. However, to make informed decisions about which accountability measures might be more appropriate, it would be helpful to know how schools and students fare on current state accountability measures and how they fare on proposed alternative

measures. Most importantly, analyses should be conducted to see whether and how various accountability measures correlate with longer-term student outcomes. In other words, standards and accountability measures should be predictive of the outcomes desired for the specific student population, or at least serve as reasonable intermediate outcomes.

- **Explore issues related to teacher effectiveness in blended-learning programs for re-engaged youth.** Given the emphasis that the literature and interview respondents place on the importance of competent and supportive educators to successful blended learning programs for re-engaged youth, it would be valuable to gain an understanding of the factors that promote teacher effectiveness in these educational settings. For example, research could examine the types of training necessary to adequately prepare teachers for the blended learning environment, as well as document promising instructional strategies and use of tools and resources.
- **Conduct a cost analysis of blended-learning models.** While this report did not tackle the issue of the costs associated with various blended-learning models, it is an area that warrants additional attention. A better understanding of costs would help to inform conversations about funding for programs geared toward re-engaged youths. Several articles highlighted potential cost-savings or the ability to “do more with less” using blended learning,⁶³ but a number of program respondents indicated that their models are expensive—largely due to the plethora of non-academic supports and services that they provide.

However, it would be valuable to policymakers and practitioners to have a better sense of how the costs of the education component in blended-learning models compares with that of face-to-face models within programs that provide similar levels of wraparound supports to re-engaged youths. Providing information about the costs of programs relative to the outcomes they yield would be more valuable still.

- **Investigate the extent to which employers are utilizing blended learning to offer employees pathways to high school completion and workforce advancement.** As employers struggle to fill middle-skill jobs, tapping into the potential of the nearly 6 million out-of-school and unemployed youths may increasingly become an attractive investment.⁶⁶ Indeed, in 2015, 29 major companies joined the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative, an employer-led coalition to develop additional “pathways to economic prosperity for opportunity youth and connect employers to the talent pipeline they seek.”⁶⁷ In addition, some companies offer online diploma completion programs to existing employees.⁶⁸ However, there is limited information regarding the extent to which employers are engaging in the types of comprehensive education and workforce training for re-engaged youths that blended learning models offer. The alignment of employer and re-engaged youths’ needs could provide opportunities yet to be explored and offers an area for additional examination. To this end, Adams Associates serves as a knowledge management hub for its Job Corps centers, able to observe and disseminate effective practices across its network.

Conclusion

When a student disengages from school and ultimately makes the decision to leave before achieving a diploma, it usually is safe to assume that the educational environment or the student's personal life—and often a combination of the two—posed barriers to graduation. However, many of these young adults aspire to a high school credential and need only to find a program that acknowledges and accommodates their complex lives in order to succeed.

The literature and programs discussed in this report indicate that blended learning has the potential to address many of the challenges that re-engaged students face by providing personalized, flexible and supportive educational options. While a variety of blended-learning models may be viable for a wide range of students, special consideration must be made to the development and implementation of programs designed to serve students who are re-engaging in their education after struggling significantly in traditional high schools.

For example, blended-learning programs serving this student population ought to:

- Facilitate regular attendance, either through flexible schedules or assistance in managing out-of-school obligations.
- Provide ample time for students to complete online work on-site, in case access to devices and/or adequate internet speed is limited elsewhere.
- Give students control over pace in order to accelerate when appropriate or spend more time when necessary.
- Accommodate and be responsive to different learning styles.
- Enable instructors to monitor student progress in real time and intervene promptly.
- Have sufficient staff capacity to foster meaningful and supportive student-adult relationships and provide academic instruction and intervention, college and career counseling and planning, and mentoring.
- Offer wraparound services to address non-academic factors that impede academic progress.

In summary, the academic and non-academic components of blended-learning programs must align with and be responsive to the specific needs of re-engaged youths to remove barriers to educational success.

Endnotes

1. Stetser & Stillwell, 2014
2. U.S. Census Bureau, 2012
3. Americans who do not graduate from high school are less likely to vote. (CIRCLE, 2012)
4. Jobs for the Future: <http://jff.org/initiatives/preparing-for-college-and-career>
5. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistic, 2015
6. Center for Promise, 2015
7. Horn & Staker, 2011; Nolan, Prestin & Finklestein, 2012
8. This study was funded by Penn Foster. The study was designed by the Center for Promise research team, and all interpretations of the findings are our own.
9. This report does not reflect an exhaustive compilation of programs using blended learning to educate re-engaged youth, but rather aims to provide a jumping off point for gaining a better understanding of current practice and how some blended-learning models are helping re-engaged youth complete their high school education.
10. Christensen, Horn & Staker, 2013
11. The definition and models pertain to blended learning in general, and are not specific to programs that serve re-engaged youth. The Christensen Institute provides additional information and resources regarding blended learning—including a database of existing programs—on its Blended Learning Universe (BLU) website: <http://www.blendedlearning.org/>.
12. Plummer, 2012
13. National Center for Education Statistics, 2004
14. Bloom, Thomson & Ivry, 2010
15. Interview with a representative from the National League of Cities
16. <http://www.k12.wa.us/GATE/SupportingStudents/StudentRetrieval.aspx>
17. Example: Kent School District' iGrad Academy, which provides an alternative path to a diploma using blended learning (<http://www.kent.k12.wa.us/Page/3671>)
18. Interview with a representative from the National League of Cities
19. The new test that was introduced in 2014 is computer-based and aligned to the Common Core standards, and is geared more toward college readiness than career readiness.
20. MDRC currently is conducting a random assignment study of YouthBuild that—while not specifically evaluating the effects of blended learning—will examine the effects of various program components across sites; two of the study sites operate blended-learning models (MDRC, 2015). SRI Education also is in the process of implementing a study of literacy and math outcomes for participants in adult basic education programs using online learning technologies. Programs using blended-learning models to educate re-engaged young adults are included in the study sample. (<https://www.sri.com/work/projects/technologies-adult-basic-literacies-evaluation-table>)
21. Hammond, Smink & Drew, 2007; Center for Promise, 2014
22. Center for Promise, 2014
23. Bertrand, Allen, & Steinberg, 2013; Center for Promise, 2014
24. Schaeffer & Konetes, 2010
25. One charter management organization operates high schools that serve a more typical urban student population, focusing on first-generation college students. However, the characteristics of their blended learning model are relevant to the scope of this report.
26. In several cases, the study team conducted separate interviews with representatives from the national organization and representatives from individual program sites within that organization. One interview was conducted with three respondents from the same organization. For organizations that offer participants multiple academic options, including diploma and GED completion, we focused on the options that utilize one or more of the blended learning models described above. In all cases, these options yielded a high school diploma.
27. In addition to formal interviews with district and program developers, leaders and staff, the study team engaged in several conversations with knowledgeable stakeholders who provided additional insights.
28. While the academic programs intend to help students fulfill their core requirements, some blended-learning programs enable students to explore a variety of courses through their online course catalogues.
29. While the total program duration may be longer, this report focuses on the amount of time it takes for participants to complete their high school diploma.
30. The study team interviewed a respondent from one national organization who provided information relevant to educating re-engaged youth; however, the interview did not yield information specific to blended learning. Therefore, this organization is not represented in Table 2.
31. Ednovate does not educate re-engaged youth; however, the structure of the schools' blended-learning models and focus on personalization, engagement, and college and career readiness are relevant to this report.

32. Only one of the two operating schools is at capacity; the other opened in fall 2015 serving 9th grade only. New schools add a grade each year until they reach full enrollment.
33. The study team interviewed a representative of Adams and Associates, Inc., which operates local, state, and federal government programs serving children and youth, including 18 Job Corps centers. Adams and Associates' Job Corps sites serve approximately 6,000 students nationwide. The findings represent the practices of this particular contractor; however, all Job Corps centers are guided by a common set of policies and requirements: <http://www.jobcorps.gov/Libraries/pdf/prh.sflb>.
34. <http://www.adamsai.com/JobCorps.html>
35. CBI is a career-tech program for Grade 7-12 students who are ages 12-21 and identified as disadvantaged (academically, economically or both) and experiencing barriers to academic and career success: <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Career-Tech/Career-based-Intervention-CBI>.
36. This figure represents the percentage of students who graduate within seven years of initially starting high school.
37. <http://magicjohnsonbridgescape.com/about-us>
38. YouthBuild traditionally has focused on construction-building trades, but now also offers pathways in healthcare, green energy, customer service, and technology.
39. YouthBuild Providence is among a subset of YouthBuild USA sites that offers a blended learning diploma option, and was therefore included in this study.
40. <https://www.youthbuild.org/our-impact>
41. Ferdig, 2010
42. Ferdig, 2010; Nolan, Preston & Finklestein, 2012
43. Ferdig, 2010
44. Bauernschmidt, 2013
45. Bertrand, Allen, & Steinberg, 2013; Powell, Roberts & Patrick, 2015
46. Watson & Gemin, 2008; Hanover Research, 2011; Nolan, Preston & Finklestein, 2012; Bauernschmidt, 2013
47. Watson & Gemin, 2008; Nolan, Preston & Finklestein, 2012
48. Students attend school during traditional school hours, five days a week.
49. YouthBuild has traditionally focused on construction, but recently has begun creating pathways to other industries, such as healthcare, IT and customer service. Participants earn a stipend, wage or living allowance for work performed within the program.
50. Bauernschmidt, 2013
51. Ferdig, 2010; Bauernschmidt, 2013
52. Bloom, Thomson & Ivry, 2010; Center for Promise, 2014
53. <http://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development>
54. Zaff, Donlan, Pufall Jones, Lin & Anderson, 2016
55. SIATech is partnering with an expert in the field to provide professional development to instructors and program partners to support students who have been victims of violence.
56. Center for Promise, 2014; Center for Promise, 2015
57. Center for Promise, 2015
58. Powell, Roberts & Patrick, 2015; Watson & Gemin, 2008
59. <http://myfox28columbus.com/news/local/spot-checks-finds-issues-with-attendance-records-at-charter-schools-10-10-2015>
60. Ibid
61. Christensen, Horn & Staker, 2013
62. Maximum compulsory age ranges across states from 16 to 18 years old.
63. Powell, Roberts & Patrick, 2015
64. Penn Foster is the diploma-granting entity for graduates, rather than the district or the state. Penn Foster's Dropout Retrieval Solution is accredited nationally by the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC) and regionally by the Commission on Secondary Schools of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.
65. Horn & Staker, 2011; Watson & Gemin, 2008
66. Jobs for the Future, 2015
67. <http://aspencommunitysolutions.org/100kopportunitiesinitiative/>
68. For example, McDonald's offers online diploma completion at no cost to employees through the Archways to Opportunities program.

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About the Center for Promise

The Center for Promise is the research institute for America's Promise Alliance, housed at Boston University's School of Education and dedicated to understanding what young people need to thrive and how to create the conditions of success for all young people. The Center's work will add to the academic exploration of these issues and help give communities and individuals the tools and knowledge to effectively work together to support young people.

www.AmericasPromise.org/CenterforPromise

The Five Promises

All young people in America should be able to say that they can count on:

Caring Adults—parents and family members, teachers, mentors, coaches and others who believe in, challenge and nurture them.

Safe Places—spaces at home, in school, in the community and online where they feel safe and have opportunities to learn, explore and grow.

A Healthy Start—the right nutrition, exercise and medical care starting with their first years so they can thrive in school and in life.

Effective Education—to develop knowledge and real-world skills so they can fully participate in our economy and our democracy.

Opportunities to Serve—to share their time and talents with others, build their character and competence, and contribute to the civic life of their community.

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- Catapult Academy
- Catapult Learning
- Corps Network
- Ednovate
- Magic Johnson Bridgescape Academy
- National League of Cities
- Polk County Public Schools
- SIATech
- SIATech Imperial Beach & South Bay Independent
- SIATech Inland Empire
- YouthBuild Providence
- YouthBuild USA