

**A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO STEM THE DROPOUT CRISIS
AT FOUR ST. LOUIS PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS**



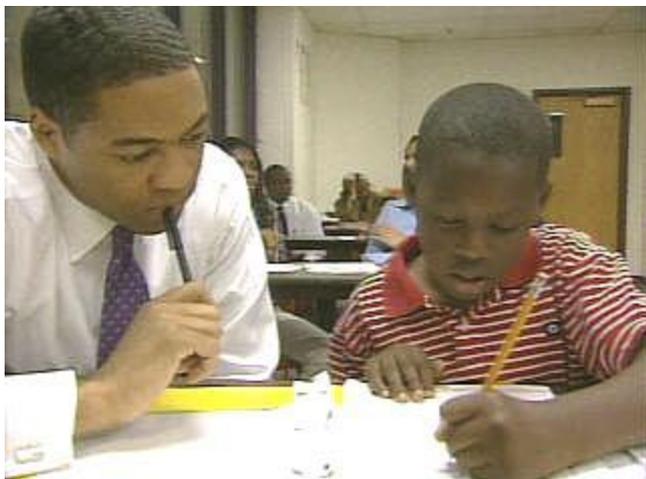
REACH OUT ST. LOUIS!

Innovation In Education From The Mathews-Dickey Boys' & Girls' Club



REACH OUT ST. LOUIS!...

A CONTINUATION, NOT A BEGINNING



A Tutoring Session At Mathews-Dickey

Since Martin Mathews co-founded the club for young people with Hubert “Dickey” Ballentine in St. Louis back in 1960, education has always been the focal point around which the athletic activities have spun. The *Computer Literacy Instruction* and *Volunteer Tutorial* programs were put in place to help public school youngsters in grades kindergarten through 12 succeed in the classroom. And “The Sky is the Limit” and “Maleness to Manhood Workshop Series” have helped hundreds of students improve their educational skills, stay out of trouble and pursue their dreams.

So it came as no surprise that when news reached Mathews’ desk of the severity of the high school dropout crisis nationally, he initiated a search immediately to find a solution.

Isaac Bruce, a 16 year veteran of the NFL and 14 year St. Louis Ram, was called upon to serve as the face of the program in an effort to generate awareness for this “silent epidemic”. It became clear to Bruce that until people were aware there is a problem, nothing will be done to fix it.

In May 2008, “*Reach Out St. Louis!*” was founded as a comprehensive plan to stem the dropout crisis. The focus was on assembling and integrating a wide range of community resources designed to tackle dropout problems from both an educational and social services perspective. This approach was in keeping with the recommendations of noted researcher Robert Balfanz of the Center for Social Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University. In his landmark work, “*What your Community Can Do to End its Drop-Out Crisis,*” Balfanz says, “your community needs to develop a strategic dropout prevention, intervention, and recovery plan that focuses community resources, efforts, and reforms at the key points where and when students fall off the path to high school graduation.” The community needs “to gather the human and financial resources needed for a comprehensive and sustained campaign...”

This is the essence of “*Reach Out St. Louis!*”

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO STEM THE DROPOUT CRISIS AT FOUR ST. LOUIS PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS



Reach Out St. Louis! Identifies, engages, organizes, and integrates community resources which are necessary to address and resolve the educational and social services issues which contribute to, and exacerbate, the high school dropout crisis. **Reach Out** is independent of, but works with, the public school system. This approach is recommended by Robert Balfanz, researcher for the Center for the Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University.

Reach Out St. Louis! assigns a *Resources Director (RD)* to the Principal of each target high school. The *RD* is directly connected to a suite of community services ranging from tutoring to family counseling. The Principal calls on the *RD* to intervene with any student whose need for specific services is identified by the Dropout Early Warning System (DEWS), or any person who works directly with the student or his family.

All interventions and resulting solutions to problems are logged by the *RD* in the **Reach Out St. Louis!** Archives, and available only to a restricted list of persons on a “need to know” basis. Phase I of the program works with students in grades 6-12, coordinating the target high school and the feeder middle schools.

Reach Out St. Louis! Is managed by the Mathews-Dickey Boys’ & Girls’ program in St. Louis, Missouri.



THE HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT EPIDEMIC IN AMERICA

A significant piece of America's high school education system is broken, and the resulting problem is growing progressively worse. According to America's Promise Alliance, nearly one-third of U.S. high school students drop out before graduating. That is one student every 26 seconds; about 7,000 students dropping out every school day. In fact, the United States is now the only industrialized country where young people are less likely than their parents to earn a diploma, according to a report citing data compiled by the international Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.



Demographically, nearly 50 percent of minority students do not graduate. They are products of schools that researcher Robert Balfanz calls “*dropout factories... no more than 60% of students who start as freshmen make it to their senior year.*” He says there are approximately 2,000 such “*dropout factories*” in the country. About 80 percent of these schools are located in 15 states...mostly in northern and western cities and throughout the southern states. Some 73 percent of all African American dropouts; 66 percent of all Hispanic dropouts; and 81 percent of all Native American dropouts come from these schools, according to Balfanz*.

According to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the **St. Louis City Public School System in 2007 had a total of 3,789 students drop out, a startling 210% increase from 1,221 in 2006.** The Black dropout rate as a percent of total enrollment was almost three times that of White students.

Principal Types Of Dropouts

According to the landmark study, “*The Silent Epidemic*” by John Bridgeland, there are four principal types of dropouts:

Life Events.....(Forces outside of school) pregnancy; need to work; too little parental involvement; incarceration

Fadeouts.....Bored...see no correlation between school subjects and getting a job. (Most of these students do okay in school)

Pushouts.....Disciplinary problems; disruptive. Encouraged to withdraw, transfer, or are dropped from the rolls

Failing In School.....Too far behind in credits...have unmet social-emotional needs. Most leave after repeated failures. Asking for help through poor attendance; acting out; or course failure

***One-third of all dropouts are lost in the 9th grade. About 40% of 9th graders in cities with the highest dropout rate repeat 9th grade**

THE HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT EPIDEMIC IN AMERICA



Roosevelt High School, St. Louis, MO...2008 Dropout Rate 38.7 %

Crime and America's Dropout Crisis

High school dropouts are three and one-half times more likely than high school graduates to be arrested, and more than eight times as likely to be incarcerated. Across the country, 68 percent of state prison inmates have not received a high school diploma.

According to researchers, 10 percentage-point increases in graduation rates have historically been shown to reduce murder and assault rates by approximately 20 percent. Increasing graduation rates by 10 percentage points would prevent over 3,000 murders and nearly 175,000 aggravated assaults in America each year, and the country would save over \$15 billion every year, including almost \$10 billion in reduced crime costs alone.

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids: a bipartisan anti-crime organization of over 4,000 law enforcement leaders and crime survivors nationwide.

Missouri would see crime-related savings and additional revenue of about \$147 million if graduation rates increased by just five percent



THE HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT EPIDEMIC IN AMERICA



Beaumont High School, St. Louis, MO

2008 Dropout Rate 33.7%



Sumner High School, St. Louis, MO

2008 Dropout Rate 42.2%

▪ If Missouri dropouts from the class of 2007 had earned their diplomas, the state's economy would have benefited from an additional \$5 billion in income over the students' lifetimes.

EFFECT ON THE ECONOMY

- Each class of dropouts cost the nation more than \$200 billion in lost wages, tax revenues, and spending for social support programs
- The yearly cost to educate a student is \$9,644; the cost to incarcerate a person is \$22,600
- A high school dropout earns on average \$9,200 less a year than a graduate, and about \$1 million less over a lifetime
- Jobs requiring only a high school diploma will grow by just 9% by the year 2008, while those requiring a bachelor's degree will grow by 25%
- 4-of-10 dropouts receive some type of government assistance
- Reducing Missouri's dropout rate by 10% a year will earn \$191 million in crime-related savings; and additional state income by \$103 million.



Vashon High School, St. Louis, MO

2007 Dropout Rate 21.1%

REACH OUT ST. LOUIS...HOW YOU CAN HELP!



The high school dropout crisis affects each of us and there are many ways to get involved. Reach Out St. Louis is looking for tutors, mentors, and counselors. If you have time to volunteer, call Mathews-Dickey Boys & Girls Club at 314-382-5952 and ask for Reach Out St. Louis. Your time will go far in helping us make a change!