

GRADUATION COUNTS

The student graduation rate in American high schools is not a recent concern for school and legislative personnel.

In fact, for the past thirty years school reform efforts have targeted high school graduation as an area necessary for improvement. During the last three decades federal legislation including, *A Nation at Risk* (1983), *No Child Left Behind* (2002), and most recently *The Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015) have set forth guidance to increase graduation rates.



THE POWER OF A DIPLOMA

The urgency and commitment to addressing the dropout crisis is prompted by the unfortunate consequences associated with harsh realities of not earning a high school diploma. In the most recent *Building a Grad Nation* report authored by the National Center for Educational Statistics at the U.S. Department of Education, the reasons for urgency is clear:

- If the graduation rate increased to 90 percent for just one cohort of students, the country would see a \$7.2 billion increase in annual earnings and a \$1.1 billion increase in federal tax revenue.
- High school graduates are more likely to be employed, make higher taxable income, and aid in job generation.
- High school graduates earn a national average of \$8,000 more annually compared to high school dropouts.



THE POWER OF A DIPLOMA

- High school graduates are less likely to engage in criminal behavior or require social services.
- High school graduates have better health and longer life expectancy.
- High school graduates are more likely to vote. During the 2012 presidential election, 4 percent of people who left high school without graduating voted compared to 24 percent of youth with only a high school diploma and 37 percent with a college degree.
- High school graduates contribute to America's national security because students that leave high school without a diploma are not qualified to serve in the military.
- The nation's economy depends on skilled labor. Business leaders report difficulty in finding enough qualified employees with the skills, training and education to meet their company's' needs.



STOPPING THE DROPOUT EPIDEMIC

Supporting 9th Grade Transition

- Ninth Grade Academy
- Ninth Grade Prep Course

Supporting Diverse Learners

- Mental Health Services
- Academic and Behavioral Supports
- Mentorships

Credit Recovery Opportunities

- APEX is a competency- based online resource utilized in a prescriptive manner to ensure that students demonstrate mastery of the standards failed in the face to face course.
- The district currently has 39 slots accessible to district students.
- Completion of the course is done in a blended format which provides the students with the opportunity to access the course from home, but also face to face contact daily with a staff member.

