# Appendix

## Appendix A1 Extent of evidence

	Staying in school		Progressing in school			Completing school			
Intervention name	Number of studies	Sample size (schools/ students)	Extent of evidence <sup>1</sup>	Number of studies	Sample size (schools/ students)	Extent of evidence <sup>1</sup>	Number of studies	Sample size (schools/ students)	Extent of evidence <sup>1</sup>
Accelerated Middle Schools	3	14/848	Medium to large	3	14/848	Medium to large	0	0	na
ALAS (Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success)	1	1/94	Small	1	1/81	Small	0	0	na
Career Academies	1	9/345	Small	1	9/316	Small	1	9/360	Small
Check & Connect	2	nr/238	Small	1	nr/92	Small	1	nr/144	Small
Financial Incentives for Teen Parents to Stay in School	2	nr/1,819	Medium to large	1	nr/913	Small	2	nr/1,819	Medium to large
First Things First	1	16/nr	Small	0	0	na	0	0	na
High School Redirection	3	3/1,634	Medium to large	2	2/732	Medium to large	3	3/1,510	Medium to large
Job Corps	0	0	na	1	105/11,313	Small	1	105/8,597	Small
JOBSTART	0	0	na	0	0	na	1	13/1,941	Small
Middle College High School	1	1/394	Small	0	0	na	1	1/394	Small
New Chance	0	0	na	0	0	na	1	16/2,079	Small
Project GRAD	0	0	na	1	13/nr	Small	1	13/nr	Small
Quantum Opportunity Program	0	0	na	1	11/766	Small	1	11/915	Small
Talent Development High Schools	0	0	na	1	11/nr	Small	0	0	na
Talent Search	0	0	na	0	0	na	2	200+/9,854	Medium to large
Twelve Together	1	9/219	Small	1	9/219	Small	0	0	na

na = not applicable/not studied

nr = not reported

1. A rating of "medium to large" requires at least two studies and two schools across studies in one domain and a total sample size across studies of at least 350 students or 14 classrooms. Otherwise, the rating is "small."

## Appendix A2Targeted population

Intervention name	Students targeted by the intervention	Students in reviewed studies same as full target population?
Accelerated Middle Schools	Middle school students who are behind grade level	Yes
ALAS (Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success)	Middle school students deemed at risk of dropping out; served throughout their three years of middle or junior high school	Yes
Career Academies	High school students; intervention originally served only at-risk students; now serves a more general student population	No. Studies reviewed focused only on at-risk students.
Check & Connect	Middle and high school students deemed at risk of dropping out; served throughout their time in middle or high school	No. Studies reviewed focused only on high school students.
Financial Incentives for Teen Parents to Stay in School	Teen parents receiving cash assistance	Yes
First Things First	Students in elementary, middle, and high schools serving significant proportions of economically disadvantaged students	No. Studies reviewed focused only on high school students.
High School Redirection	High school students who have dropped out or are considered at risk of dropping out	Yes
Job Corps	Economically disadvantaged youth, most of whom lack a high school diploma or GED certificate	Yes
JOBSTART	Young disadvantaged high school dropouts	Yes
Middle College High School	High school students who have dropped out or are considered at risk of dropping out	Yes
New Chance	Young welfare mothers without a high school diploma or GED certificate	Yes
Project GRAD	Serves all students in a participating high school, as well as its feeder elementary and middle schools	No. Studies reviewed focused only on high school students.
Quantum Opportunity Program	Students from high schools with high dropout rates; support provided for four to five years beginning in the ninth grade	Yes
Talent Development High Schools	School-wide reform serving all students in a participating high school	Yes
Talent Search	Low-income middle and high school students; middle and high school students whose parents did not earn high school degrees	No. Studies reviewed focused only on high school students.
Twelve Together	Middle and early high school students; serves a mix of those at high risk of academic failure as well as those at lower risk; services provided for one year	No. Studies reviewed focused only on middle school students.

## Appendix A3 Characteristics of interventions

Intervention name	Academic approach	Support services
Accelerated Middle Schools	An additional year of curriculum is covered during a student's one to two years in the intervention	Small class sizes, tutoring, attendance monitoring, counseling, and family outreach
ALAS (Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success)	Regular school curriculum supplemented with special classes on problem- solving skills	Close monitoring of attendance, regular feedback to parents and students on performance, case management, and counseling
Career Academies	School-within-a-school approach operating within a regular high school; coursework organized around a career theme	Internships and mentors from local employers that reinforce the specific career theme of the academy
Check & Connect	Regular school curriculum supplemented with tutoring as needed	Close monitoring of attendance, mentoring, case management, and family outreach
Financial Incentives for Teen Parents to Stay in School	Does not include an academic component	Bonuses and sanctions applied to the welfare grant to encourage school attendance and improved academic performance; case management
First Things First	Theme-based small learning communities, family and student advocate system, and instructional improvements	Students assigned an advocate, typically one of their teachers, who serves as a mentor and a liaison between the school and the student's family
High School Redirection	Alternative high school model focusing on basic skills acquisition, remedial reading instruction, and accelerated credit accumulation	Onsite child care, limited extracurricular activities
Job Corps	Remedial education, GED preparation, vocational training, job placement assistance	Residential living services, counseling, health services, social-skills training, and a biweekly living allowance
JOBSTART	Basic academic skills instruction, GED preparation, occupational skills training, job placement assistance	Training-related support services, such as transportation assistance and childcare
Middle College High School	Alternative high school operating on a college campus; college-preparatory curriculum emphasizing individualized attention and the development of critical thinking skills	Community service opportunities, internships, peer support, and specialized counseling
New Chance	GED preparation classes and a parenting and life skills curriculum, followed by occupational training and job placement assistance	Case management and child care
Project GRAD	Model uses regular school curriculum at the high school level; includes curriculum reforms at the elementary and middle school level focused on reading and math instruction	College scholarships for students performing well academically, six-week academic summer program on a college campus, counseling on college preparation and admissions
Quantum Opportunity Program	Regular school curriculum supplemented with tutoring, computer-assisted learning, and life skills instruction	Case management, mentoring, transportation assistance, child care, and financial incentives to promote participation
Talent Development High Schools	School restructured into small "learning communities," curriculum emphasizes college preparation and reading and math instruction	Ongoing technical assistance and professional development for school staff
Talent Search	Regular school curriculum supplemented with tutoring and study skills assistance	Career exploration, aptitude assessment, academic advising, college campus visits, college and financial aid application assistance, assistance with preparing for college entrance exams
Twelve Together	Regular school curriculum supplemented with homework assistance	Weekly peer support sessions led by trained adult facilitators, college campus visits, social events

## Appendix A4 Summary of statistically significant<sup>1</sup> or substantively important<sup>2</sup> positive findings

	Staying in school		Progressin	g in school	Completing school	
		Findings across		Findings across		Findings across
Intervention name	Positive findings	outcomes	Positive findings	outcomes	Positive findings	outcomes
Accelerated Middle Schools						
Dynarski, Gleason, Rangarajan, & Wood, 1998—Georgia study (randomized controlled trial with differential attrition)	Dropped out of school	ns, Substantively important	Highest grade completed after two years	Statistically significant, Substantively important	na	na
Dynarski, Gleason, Rangarajan, & Wood, 1998—New Jersey study (randomized controlled trial)	None	ns, nsi	Highest grade completed after two years	Statistically significant, Substantively important	na	na
Dynarski, Gleason, Rangarajan, & Wood, 1998—Michigan study (randomized controlled trial with differential attrition)	Dropped out of school	Statistically significant, Substantively important	Highest grade completed after two years	Statistically significant, Substantively important	na	na
<b>ALAS (Achievement for Latinos throu</b>	igh Academic Success)					
Larson & Rumberger, 2005 (random- ized controlled trial)	Enrollment: end of grade 9	Statistically significant, Substantively important	On track to graduate on time: end of 9th grade	Statistically significant, Substantively important	na	na
<b>Career Academies</b> Kemple, 2004 (randomized controlled trial)	Dropped out of school	Statistically significant, Substantively important	Total credits earned Credits earned met graduation requirements	Statistically significant, Substantively important	None	ns, nsi
Check & Connect						
Sinclair, Christenson, Evelo, & Hurley, 1998 (randomized controlled trial)	Dropped out of school	Statistically significant, Substantively important	Credits earned	Statistically significant, Substantively important	None	ns, nsi
Sinclair, Christenson, & Thurlow, 2005 (randomized controlled trial with attri- tion problems)	Dropped out of school	Statistically significant, Substantively important	na	na	None	ns, nsi
Financial Incentives for Teen Parents	s to Stay in School					
Long, Gueron, Wood, Fisher, & Fellerath, 1996 (randomized controlled trial)	None	ns, nsi	None	ns, nsi	None	ns, nsi
Mauldon, Malvin, Stiles, Nicosia, & Seto, 2000 (randomized controlled trial with attrition problems)	Dropped out of school	Statistically significant, nsi	na	na	None	ns, nsi
First Things First						
Quint, Bloom, Black, & Stephens, 2005—Houston study (quasi- experimental design)	None	ns, nsi	na	na	na	na
High School Redirection						
Dynarski & Wood, 1997—Stockton study (randomized controlled trial with control group crossover)	Number of days enrolled: year 1 Number of days enrolled: year 2	Statistically significant, Substantively important	Total credits earned: end of year 4	Statistically significant, Substantively important	None	ns, nsi
Dynarski & Wood, 1997—Wichita study (randomized controlled trial)	None	ns, nsi	None	ns, nsi	None	ns, nsi
Dynarski & Wood, 1997—Cincinnati study (randomized controlled trial)	None	ns, nsi	na	na	None	ns, nsi
						(continue

## **Appendix A4 Summary of statistically significant<sup>1</sup> or substantively important<sup>2</sup> positive findings** (continued)

	Staying	in school	Progressin	ig in school	Completing school	
Intervention name	Positive findings	Findings across outcomes	Positive findings	Findings across outcomes	Positive findings	Findings across outcomes
Job Corps						
Schochet, Burghardt, & Glazerman, 2001 (randomized controlled trial)	na	na	None	ns, nsi	Earned a high school diploma/GED	Statistically significant, Substantively important
<b>JOBSTART</b> Cave, Bos, Doolittle, & Toussaint, 1993 (randomized controlled trial)	na	na	na	na	Earned a high school diploma/GED	Statistically significant, Substantively important
Middle College High School						
Dynarski, Gleason, Rangarajan, & Wood, 1998 (randomized controlled trial)	None	ns, nsi	na	na	None	ns, nsi
New Chance						
Quint, Bos, & Polit, 1997 (randomized controlled trial)	na	na	na	na	Earned a high school diploma/GED	Statistically significant, nsi
Project GRAD						
Snipes, Holton, Doolittle, & Sztejnberg, 2006 (quasi-experimental design)	na	na	None	ns, nsi	None	ns, nsi
Quantum Opportunity Program						
Schirm, Stuart & McKie, 2006 (randomized controlled trial with differential attrition)	na	na	None	ns, nsi	None	ns, nsi
Talent Development High Schools						
Kemple, Herlihy, & Smith, 2005 (quasi- experimental design)	na	na	Total credits earned: end of year 2 Enrolled in 10th grade: end of year 2	Statistically significant, nsi	na	na
Talent Search						
Constantine, Seftor, Martin, Silva, & Myers, 2006—Texas study (quasi- experimental design)	na	na	na	na	Earned high school diploma/GED	Statistically significant, Substantively important
Constantine, Seftor, Martin, Silva, & Myers, 2006—Florida study (quasi- experimental design)	na	na	na	na	Earned high school diploma/GED	Statistically significant, Substantively important
Twelve Together Dynarski, Gleason, Rangarajan, & Wood, 1998 (randomized controlled trial with differential attrition)	Dropped out of school	ns, Substantively important	None	ns, nsi	na	na

ns = not statistically significant nsi = not substantive

nsi = not substantively important na = not studied

1. According to WWC criteria, if an intervention finds a statistically significant effect, there is less than a 5% chance that this difference is due to chance. The level of statistical significance was calculated by the WWC and, where necessary, corrects for clustering within classrooms or schools and for multiple comparisons. For an explanation about the clustering comparison, see the <u>WWC Tutorial on Mismatch</u>. For the formulas the WWC used to calculate statistical significance, see the <u>Technical Details of WWC-Conducted Computations</u>.

2. For rating purposes, the WWC considered the statistical significance of the findings and the magnitude of the effect, also called the effect size. An average effect size is the sum of all the effect sizes of the student outcomes in a study in a single domain divided by the number of those outcomes. The WWC considers an average effect size across all student outcomes in one study in a given domain to be substantively important if it is equal to or greater than 0.25.

## Appendix A5 Methodology

Eighty-four studies on 22 dropout prevention interventions were classified for the strength of their design. To be fully reviewed, a study had to be a randomized controlled trial or a quasi-experimental design with evidence of equating between the treatment and comparison groups.

#### **Eligibility Screens and Evidence Standards**

Quasi-experiments eligible for review include those equating through matching or statistical adjustment, regression discontinuity designs, and single case designs. No studies based on the latter two types of designs were identified for the dropout prevention review. The WWC is currently developing evidence standards for regression discontinuity designs and single case designs.

The review considered the properties of measurement instruments, the percentage of students, classrooms, or schools in the study sample that were not included in the reported results, and any sample characteristics or events that might serve as alternative explanations for the observed effect. For details please see the <u>WWC Evidence Standards</u>. Long-term outcomes were preferred over short-term outcomes in the WWC's analysis of intervention effects.

The research evidence for interventions that have at least one study meeting WWC evidence standards with or without reservations is summarized in individual intervention reports posted on the WWC website. See <a href="http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/">http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/</a>. So far, 23 studies of 16 dropout prevention interventions meet evidence standards with or without reservations. The lack of evidence for the remaining interventions does not mean that those interventions are ineffective; some interventions have not yet been studied using a study design that permits the WWC to draw any conclusions about their effectiveness. And for some studies, not enough data were reported (such as descriptive statistics of the findings) to enable the WWC to confirm statistical findings.

#### **Rating of effectiveness**

Each dropout prevention intervention that had at least one study meeting WWC standards with or without reservations received

a rating of effectiveness in at least one outcome domain. The rating of effectiveness aims to characterize the existing evidence base in a given domain. The intervention effects based on the research evidence can be rated as positive, potentially positive, mixed, no discernible effects, potentially negative, or negative.

The rating of effectiveness takes into account four factors: the quality of the research design, the statistical significance of the findings, the size of the difference between participants in the intervention and the comparison conditions, and the consistency in findings across studies (see the <u>WWC Intervention</u> <u>Rating Scheme</u>).

The level of statistical significance was reported by the study authors or, where necessary, calculated by the WWC to correct for clustering within classrooms or schools and for multiple comparisons. Because of these corrections, the level of statistical significance as calculated by the WWC may differ from the one originally reported by the study authors. For an explanation, see the <u>WWC Tutorial on Mismatch</u>. For the formulas that the WWC used to calculate statistical significance, see <u>Technical Details of WWC-Conducted Computations</u>. If the average effect size across all outcomes in one study in a single domain is at least 0.25, it is considered substantively important, contributing toward the rating of effectiveness. See the technical appendices of the dropout prevention intervention reports for further details.

#### **Extent of evidence**

The evidence base rating represents the size and number of independent samples that were assessed for the purposes of analysis of the intervention effects. A "medium to large" evidence base requires at least two studies and two schools across studies within one domain, and a total sample size across studies of at least 350 students or 14 classrooms. Otherwise, the evidence is considered to be "small." The WWC is currently working to define a "large" evidence base. This term should not be confused with external validity, as other facets of external validity—such as variations in settings, important subgroups of

Appendix A5 Methodology (continued)

students, implementation, and outcomes measures—were not taken into account for the purposes of this rating.

#### **Improvement index**

The WWC computes an improvement index for each individual finding. In addition, within each outcome domain, the WWC computes an average improvement index for each domain and each study and a domain average improvement index across studies of the same intervention (see the <u>Technical Details</u>

of WWC-Conducted Computations). The improvement index represents the difference between the percentile rank of the average student in the intervention condition and the percentile rank of the average student in the comparison condition. The improvement index can take on values between -50 and +50, with positive numbers denoting results favorable to the intervention group. Unlike the rating of effectiveness, the improvement index is based only on the size of the difference between the intervention and the comparison conditions.

#### WWC Topic Report Dropout Prevention

## Appendix A6 Meets WWC standards

#### **References** Accelerated Middle Schools

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#### **Check & Connect**

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#### Financial Incentives for Teen Parents to Stay in School

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#### WWC Topic Report Dropout Prevention

#### Appendix A6 High School Redirection

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## Meets WWC standards with reservations Accelerated Middle Schools

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