

# DROPOUT PREVENTION

March, 2011

# Objective

## Dropout Prevention Initiative

All APS students will graduate on time or will continue in school and earn a diploma, as evidenced by:

- Increase of on-time graduates
- Elimination of dropouts
- Continuum of services

# To Achieve These Goals The Dropout Prevention Task Force

Began monthly meetings in April, 2010 with 22 members

- Assistant Superintendents
- Administrators
- Director, Planning & Evaluation
- Director, Pupil Services
- Supervisors
- ESOL-HILT Specialist
- School Social Workers
- Counselors
- Attendance Specialist
- Teachers
- Former Students
- Parent and Community Reps

# Presentation Overview

- Supporting Data – Quantitative and Qualitative
- Reasons That Students Drop Out of School
- Best Practices of Dropout Prevention and Intervention as Found in the Literature
- Present Arlington Public Schools Practices Relative to Dropout Prevention and Intervention
- Areas of Attention and Focus
- Next Steps

Graduation Cohort by Year	Graduation Cohort Report				Dropout Rate
	Cohort	Dropouts	Unconfirmed	Dropouts + Unconfirmed	
2010	1369	149	22	171	12.5%
2009	1320	123	34	157	11.9%
2008	1189	112	37	149	12.5%

Source: Virginia DOE Cohort Report. Cohort: Students who entered the ninth grade for the first time together and were scheduled to graduate four years later.

# Dropouts by Entry School or Program

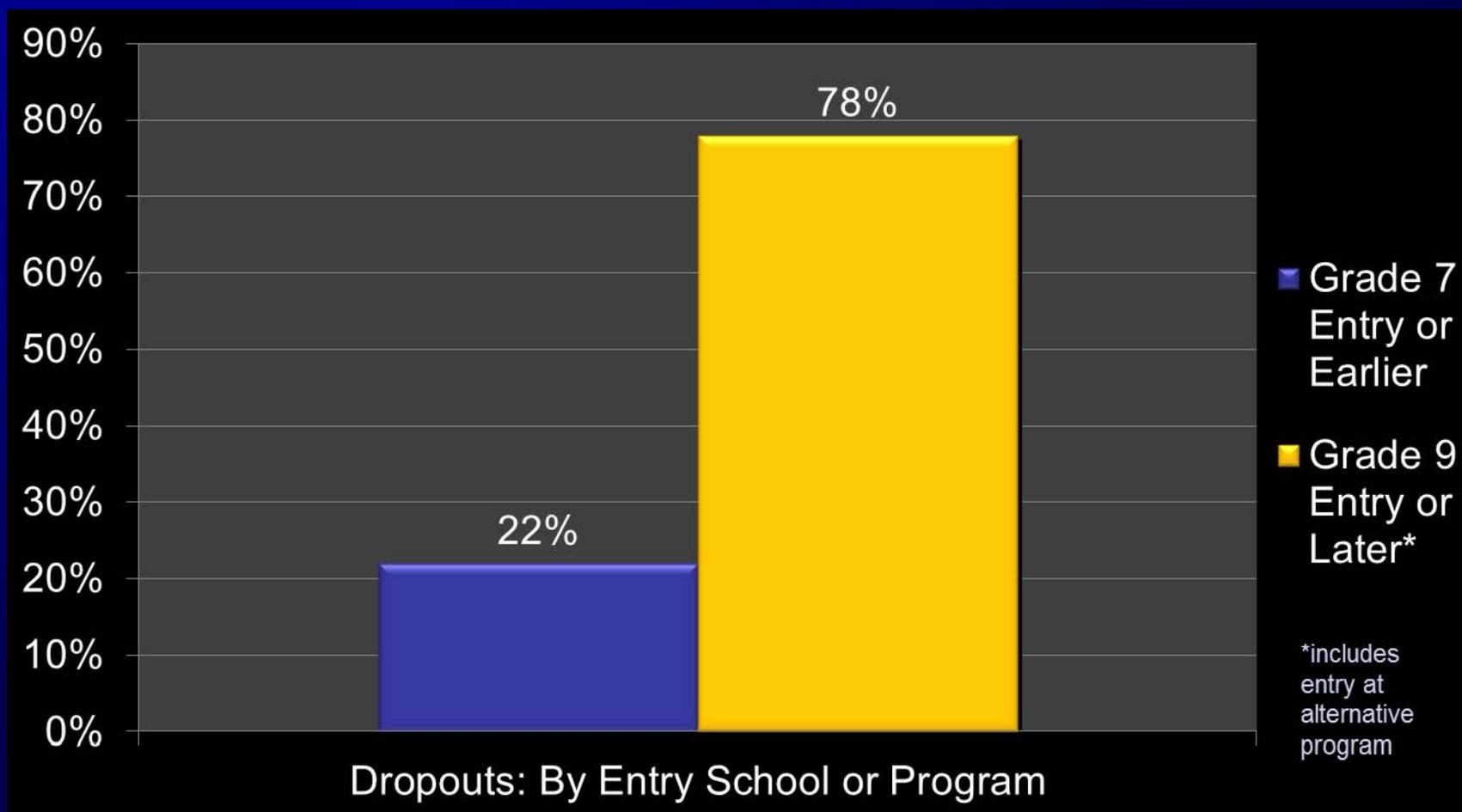
Category	APS Entry School or Program	Entered APS in Grade	Trans. to Alt. Prog.	Graduation Cohort					
				2008		2009		2010	
				N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Elementary or Middle School	7 or earlier	never	10	9%	11	9%	7	5%
2			11 or 12	3	3%	7	6%	14	9%
3			9 or 10	3	3%	10	8%	12	8%
4	High School*	9 or 10	May have attended	35	31%	31	25%	56	38%
5		11 or 12		7	6%	5	4%	2	1%
6	Alternative Program**	9 to 12	n a	54	48%	59	48%	58	39%
	Total Dropouts			112	100%	123	100%	149	100%

\*Includes Wakefield, Washington-Lee, Yorktown and H-B Woodlawn.

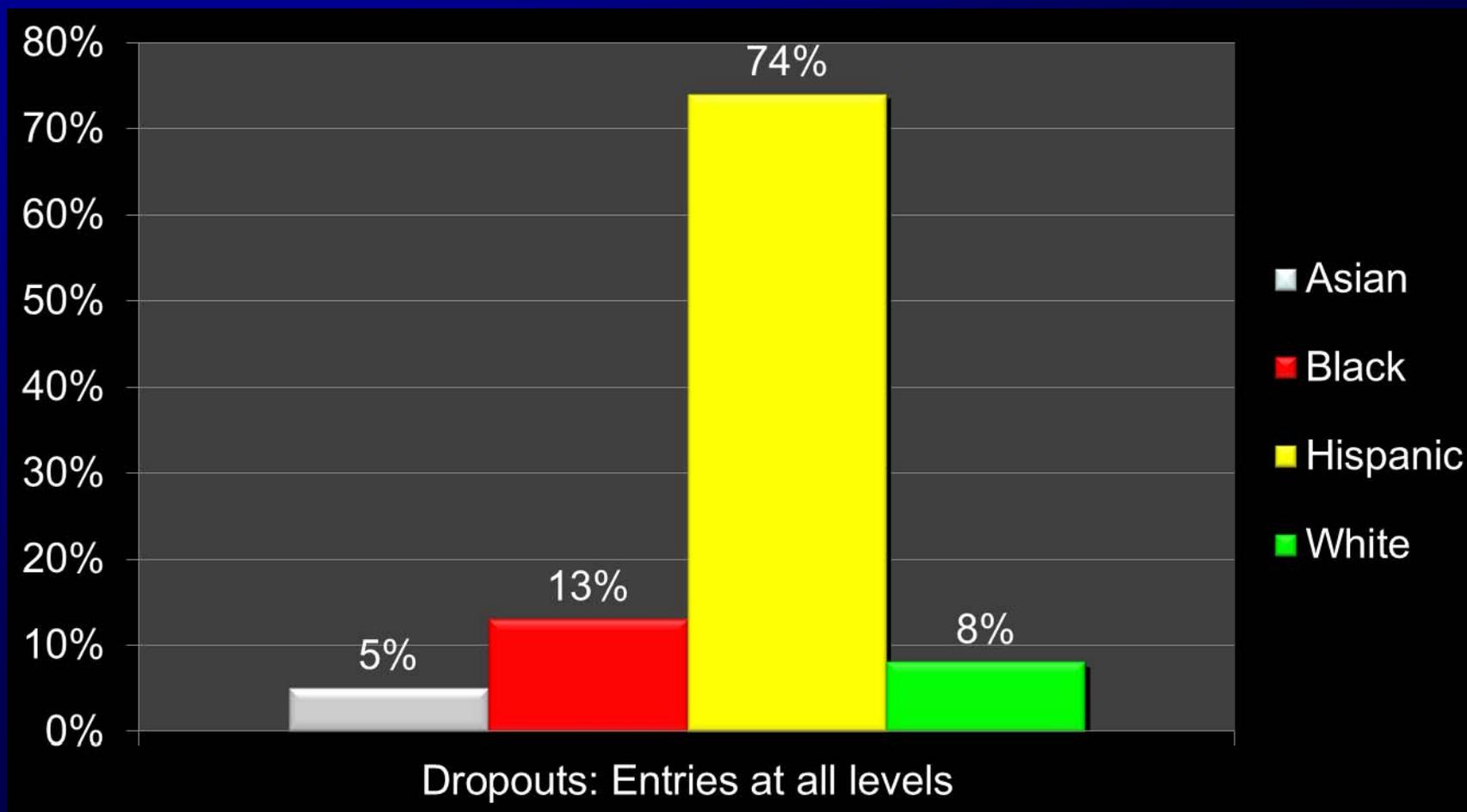
\*\*Includes Arlington Mill, Langston, Carter Center (limited to full-time students), New Directions, Parenting Teens, and the ELT program at H-B Woodlawn.

Note: Percentages are based on this total and rounded to the nearest whole number.

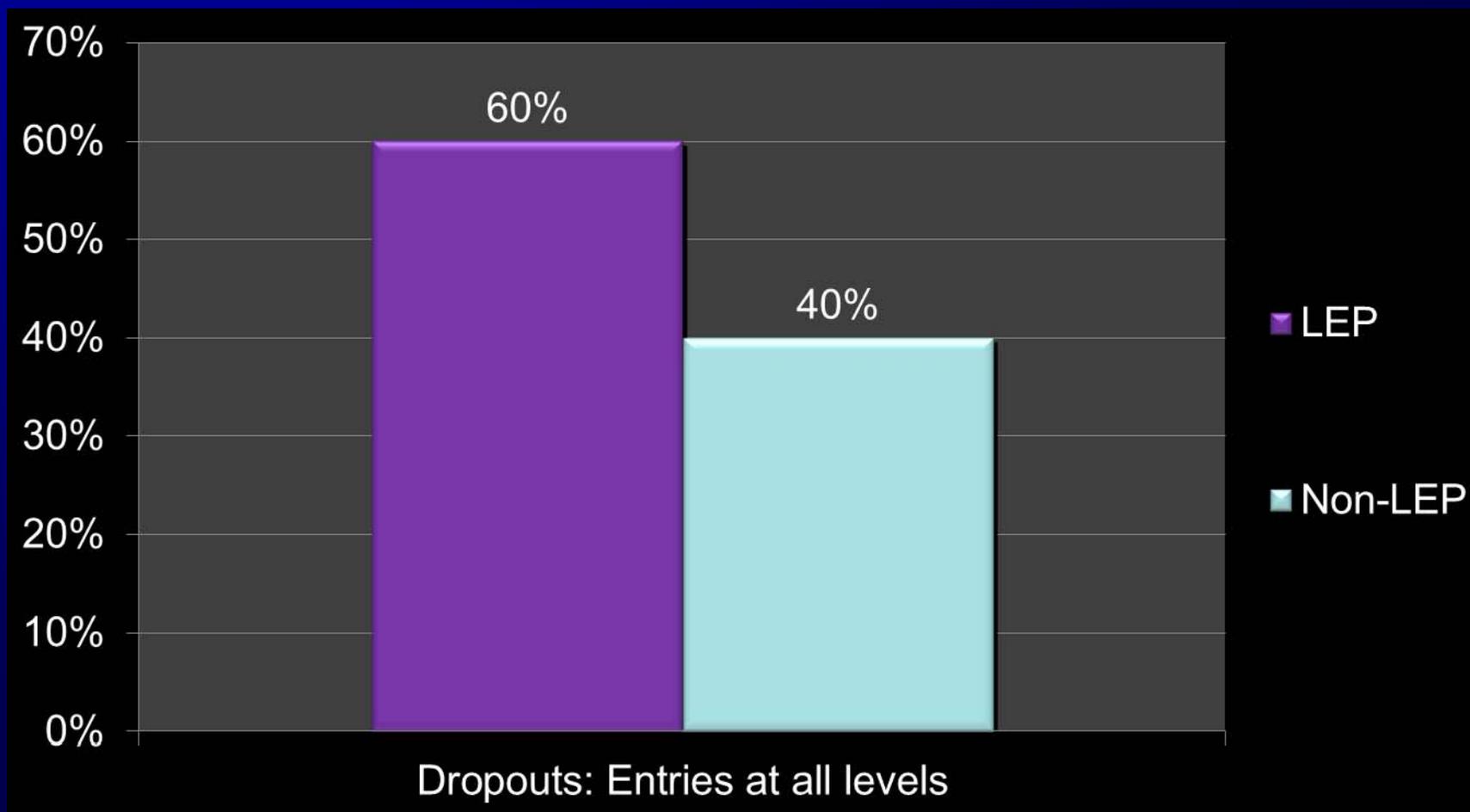
# Dropouts by Entry Level 2010 Cohort



# 2010 Cohort Dropouts Includes Entries at All Levels



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# Research on Reasons Students Drop Out of School: School-Related

- Course Failure – Behind in Credits
- Over Age and Under Credited
- Attendance Issues
- Low Expectations
- Perception that Some Teachers Do Not Care
- Lack of Relevance to Students' Lives
- Lack of Connection to School
- Boredom

# Research on Reasons Students Drop Out of School: Life Issues

- Need for Employment
- Parenting
- Health Issues
- Substance Abuse
- Court Involvement

# Dropout Prevention Best Practices As Found in the Literature

- **Data**

A system-wide, comprehensive and reliable database that is user friendly and allows for informative reports to be produced

- **Early Diagnosis**

An early warning system based on indicators of success/failure for particular groups of students

# Dropout Prevention Best Practices As Found in the Literature

- **Attention to the Critical Transition Years**  
The times when students move from one level, one school, one school system, and/or one country to another
- **Positive Relationships & Connectedness to School**  
Student feelings relative to his/her connectedness to school and/or ability to have positive interactions with the people in the school

# Dropout Prevention Best Practices As Found in the Literature

- **Real World Connections**

The student's ability to see the connection between school study and his/her life experiences, present and future

- **Opportunities for Completion**

Based on the realities of his/her existence, the student's ability to see realistic opportunities for academic success and graduation from high school

# Dropout Prevention Best Practices As Found in the Literature

- **Leadership, Responsive Teaching & Accountability**

Administration and teacher support of quality curriculum and instruction and of high expectations and rigor for all students

- **Counseling Access**

A student's ability to see/meet with a person in a counseling position who closely follows the student and is in regular contact with the student

# Dropout Prevention Best Practices As Found in the Literature

- **Community Engagement**

A close working relationship with the community and its agencies

- **Parental Engagement**

Good communication and a partnership between and student's parents/guardians and the school

- **Identification and Evaluation of Prevention and Intervention Strategies**

# Graduation Support

Strategies & Initiatives	Best Practices										
	Data	Early Diag	Trans	Posit Relatio	Real World	Comp Opps	Lead & Teach	Couns	Comm	Parent	Strat Ident & Eval
Data System	X										
Grade 9 Houses			X	X		X					
T-9			X			X					
Foundations 2.0			X	X		X					
Stepping Up				X				X			
Intake Center			X								
Career Center					X	X					
ESOL/HILT			X			X		X		X	
MS TA Program				X				X		X	
Cohort Progam				X				X			
PreK Program		X									

# Graduation Support

Strategies & Initiatives	Best Practices										
	Data	Early Diag	Trans	Posit Relatio	Real World	Comp Opps	Lead & Teach	Couns	Comm	Parent	Strat Ident & Eval
Alt Education				X	X	X					
Special Classes						X					
Tutoring						X					
Sp Ed Programs			X			X				X	
Prof Develop							X				
Cultural Comp				X			X		X	X	
Safe Environs				X							
Counseling Staff								X			
IAT								X		X	X
DHS Therapists								X	X		

# Present Arlington Public Schools Practices Relative to Dropout Prevention

- Student information data system that provides dropout prevention information
- Ninth-grade house programs, T-9 program, Foundations 2.0, Stepping Up program
- Intake Center
- Career Center Opportunities

# Present Arlington Public Schools Practices Relative to Dropout Prevention

- ESOL-HILT program that is being adapted to better meet the needs of English language learner (ELL) students
- Teacher advisory programs
- Special programs relating to a variety of student interests and needs
  - Cohort programs
  - Pre-K programs

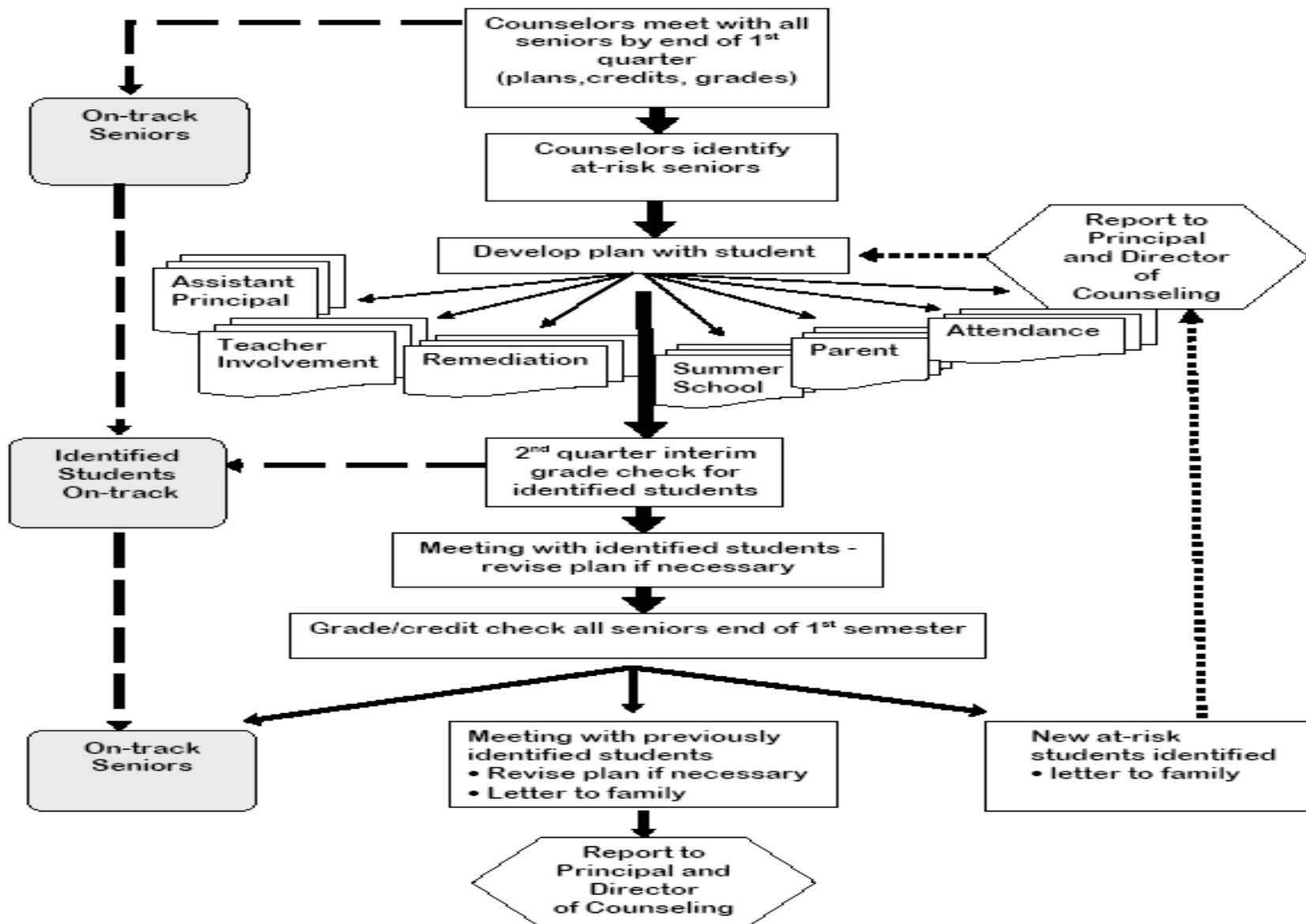
# Present Arlington Public Schools Practices Relative to Dropout Prevention

- Alternative education programs offering a variety of paths to graduation
- Special classes and tutoring opportunities for students in danger of failing
- Special education services and programs
- Ongoing professional development
- The Cultural Competence Initiative
- Physically safe environments

# Present Arlington Public Schools Practices Relative to Dropout Prevention

- Counseling staff that includes attendance specialists, substance abuse counselors, social workers, school psychologists, minority achievement coordinators, school psychologists, and HILT special needs counselors and resource assistants
- Intervention assistant teams (IAT) across all schools
- DHS school-based mental health therapists

# AT RISK SENIORS



# New Initiatives

- Formation of the dropout prevention task force
- Elimination of transitional English for LEP students in the HILT program
- Principals receiving monthly attendance and dropout reports and follow up with staff
- Cultural competence initiative
- LEP Caucus Issue #3 stating the need to change the way “On-Time Graduation Rate” is calculated

# Areas of Particular Attention and Focus

- Data service/early-identification warning system
- Targeted attention to groups of students with the highest dropout rates
- Communication within and between schools and departments, between APS and the community

# Areas of Particular Attention and Focus

- Flexibility and opportunities for completion
- Continued analysis of curricular materials and instructional practices
- Counseling services
- Systemization of processes and procedures
- Knowledge and understanding of the diverse communities that we serve

# Areas of Particular Attention and Focus

A comprehensive identification and evaluation of existing dropout prevention and intervention strategies, perceived gaps in those strategies and potential additional programs, practices and/or policies

# Next Steps

- Work with the Mid-Atlantic Equity Center to put next steps into a framework
- Provide the blue ribbon commission with the completed interim task force report for analysis and recommendations
- Receive comments and recommendations from the blue ribbon commission

# Next Steps continued

Continue to collect longitudinal data necessary for:

- Identification of risk behavior
- Prediction of potential student-related issues
- Matching students to prevention and intervention strategies
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of prevention and intervention strategies
- Expansion of current efforts to monitor and track student patterns and progress

# Next Steps continued

- Determine short- and long-term action items based on the task force report, with a timeline for completion
- Beginning with dropout prevention and intervention practices at the high school level, address such practices down through the middle and elementary grades
- Specifically address the issue of students who are over age and lacking credits

Thank you