

OPERATION RESTART

GETTING DROPOUTS BACK ON TRACK



FACT SHEET

HOW GOVERNOR-ELECT CORBETT'S DROPOUT RE-ENGAGEMENT PLATFORM ALIGNS WITH THE OPERATION RESTART PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

Pennsylvania needs a highly-educated and proficient workforce to compete in the 21st century global economy. All young people need a sound academic foundation that prepares them to participate in this new economy. In addition, our current and future employers need a strong pool of qualified workers to prosper, innovate and grow.

But far too many young people drop out of high school in Pennsylvania. Currently, there are nearly 110,000 16 to 24 year olds who have dropped out of school and don't have the education or skills required to secure a job that pays a self/family-sustaining wage.¹ Dropouts earn nearly 40 percent less than a high school graduate with some postsecondary education or an Associate's degree; are more than twice as likely to be unemployed; and are nearly four times more likely to live in poverty.² These Pennsylvania dropouts cost our state and federal economy nearly \$74 million each and every year in publicly-funded assistance programs.³

In addition, there is a significant disconnect between the educational attainment of our workers and the needs of our employers. More than 70 percent of the Commonwealth's jobs require workers with education beyond high school, yet only about half of the workforce currently has any postsecondary education.⁴

Pennsylvania needs public policies to ensure those young people without a secondary degree have access to high-quality education options that leads to a high school diploma or GED plus postsecondary or industry credentials and ultimately, a self/family sustaining wage occupation. To that end, in 2009 Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children launched a statewide dropout re-engagement advocacy campaign called Operation Restart.

Governor-elect Corbett also identified dropout re-engagement as an important economic and workforce development issue for the Commonwealth. In Corbett's *Developing a World-Class Workforce* platform, the Governor-elect outlines his dropout re-engagement policy proposals which closely align with components of the Operation Restart public policy agenda. The chart below specifically outlines this alignment:

Governor-elect Corbett's <i>Developing a World-Class Workforce</i> platform	The Operation Restart dropout re-engagement public policy agenda
Tom Corbett will work to change an outmoded system to eliminate redundancy and needless government waste and improve efficiency and interagency cooperation for the benefit of Pennsylvania employers and jobseekers.	Under the auspices of the Governor's Policy Secretary, convene a cross-departmental workgroup that includes relevant secretaries and/or senior staff to analyze cross-system data and develop a dropout re-engagement strategy to assure high school dropouts have opportunities to re-engage in quality programs that lead to high school and postsecondary credentials.
	Ensure dropout and re-engagement data is measured and reported on by school districts and all other providers of dropout re-engagement initiatives.
	Develop and/or sustain local youth workforce collaboratives supported with state and federal funds to conduct community-wide assessments to analyze the dropout population and create cross-sector comprehensive plans to improve the educational attainment of dropouts.
Tom Corbett will redirect existing funding to be used for the creation of small, recovery-focused programs for over-age and under-credited dropouts – including the use of charter and alternative schools.	Provide dedicated funding for the creation of small, recovery-focused high schools for over-age and under-credited dropouts, including the use of charter and alternative schools.
	Create incentives for school districts to re-engage high school dropouts by providing “bonus aid” over and above the Average Daily Membership (ADM) subsidy for each dropout that is re-engaged.
Tom Corbett will create incentives for Career and Technical Centers to develop and offer re-engagement programs that blend academics, occupational skills and access to part-time employment.	Create incentives for Career and Technical Centers to develop and offer re-engagement programs that blend academics, occupational skills and access to part-time employment. These incentives may also be “bonus aid” over and above the Vocational Daily Membership subsidy.
Tom Corbett is committed to supporting Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) programs to enhance their capacity to meet the needs of high school dropouts by providing additional opportunities through the Distance Learning Project and GED programs to incorporate transitions to postsecondary education.	Support Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) programs to enhance their capacity to meet the needs of high school dropouts by providing additional opportunities through the Distance Learning Project and GED programs to incorporate transitions to postsecondary education.

Governor-elect Corbett's <i>Developing a World-Class Workforce</i> platform	The Operation Restart dropout re-engagement public policy agenda
Create incentives for dropout re-engagement programs to increase the education achievement levels and address the needs of specific populations who drop out of high school at disproportionately high rates. This includes youth aging out of foster care, pregnant/parenting teens, juvenile offenders and English language learners.	Create incentives for dropout re-engagement programs that develop and implement evidence-based, targeted strategies to increase the educational attainment levels and address the needs of specific populations such as youth aging out of foster care, pregnant/parenting teens and juvenile offenders who drop out of high school at disproportionately high rates.
	Amend Pennsylvania's dual enrollment legislation to increase opportunities for high school dropouts to participate by increasing the set-aside for this population and by expanding effective dropout re-engagement models that can participate.
	Assure re-engagement programs are rigorous and require young people to demonstrate proficiency in the core academic standards using common assessments.
	Assure re-engagement programs provide competency-based awarding of secondary and postsecondary credit. Utilize the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Prior Learning Assessment initiative to assess knowledge and skills acquired outside of the classroom for the purpose of granting postsecondary credits.
	Assure that any public policies to make college more affordable for Pennsylvania's young people, including all state and federally funded programs, contain funding for high school dropouts to enhance their educational attainment.
	Establish local/regional re-engagement centers to provide assessment, counseling and referral services to high school dropouts.
	Authorize tax credits for employers who provide part-time employment to former dropouts who have re-engaged.
	Designate local or regional governmental offices, such as County Assistance Offices or CareerLinks, to coordinate support services for dropouts who re-engage.

A strong economic and workforce development strategy for Pennsylvania includes a strategy to re-engage the Commonwealth's high school dropouts in quality education options that lead to a high school and postsecondary or industry credential and ultimately, a self/family-sustaining wage occupation.

¹ U. S. Bureau of the Census, 2006-2008 American Community Survey PUMS (Public Use Microdata Sample) Three-Year File

² U. S. Bureau of the Census, 2006-2008 American Community Survey PUMS (Public Use Microdata Sample) Three-Year File

³ Fogg, Neeta P; Harrington, Paul E.; Khatiwada, Ishwar; Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University; *The Tax and Transfer Fiscal Impacts of Dropping Out of High School in Pennsylvania*; Sept. 2008

⁴ Jobs – U.S. Bureau of the Census and PA Department of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis; Educational Attainment – U.S. Bureau of Census, 2005-07 American Community Survey; Three-Year file