

# Alternative Education and Dropout Prevention

**National Dropout Prevention Center** - “Every Student Can Learn” - If every school board member, school administrator, teacher, parent, community and business leader believes that statement, then Alternative Schooling, is not an option in America-it is an absolute requirement in every community... **Alternative Schools also offers school and community leaders the opportunity to fulfill their legal responsibility to provide equal access to education for all students.**

## Do Alternative Education Programs Prevent Dropouts?

- Alternative Education Programs increase diploma completion by an average of 15.5%.
- Interviews with students at risk of dropping out suggest that students stay in alternative high schools because they provide safe spaces physically, emotionally, and psychologically; foster a sense of community; affirm students’ racial/ethnic identities; and use flexible disciplinary systems based on discussion and conflict resolution.
- Despite the inclusion of schools most at risk students, according to the National Center for Education Statistics - students from Alternative School Programs have a graduation rate 8% higher than traditional high school students.

## Cost of Dropouts to Society

- Half of Americans on public assistance are High School Dropouts.
- One high school dropout cost taxpayers through assistance programs \$292,000.
- A High School dropout will earn \$9,400 less per year than a student with a high School Diploma, this over \$300,000 per lifetime. (Loss in tax revenue as well)
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that the unemployment rate of high school dropouts is 47% higher than graduates.
- Crime Statistics
  - 75% of all Crimes are committed by high school dropouts.
  - 75% of State prison inmates are high school dropouts.
  - 59% of Federal prison inmates are high school dropouts.

**Return on Investment** - The average cost of educating students in Alternative Education programs is 10,000-12,000 dollars. However, Alternative Education programs produce benefits of \$89,000-\$129,000 per participant according to the Alliance for Excellent Education.

## Real Impact on Real Students - Is It *Really* Worth the Savings??