



Research Brief

Twilight Schools

Question: What is known about successful afternoon and evening educational programs, such as Twilight Schools?

Summary of Findings:

More and more schools are recognizing that the traditional school structure and schedule does not meet the needs for all their students, and are looking toward alternative approaches to re-capture students who are not morning people, and consequently have attendance issues, students who need to work to support themselves, students who have dropped out, etc.

For example, John H. Francis Polytechnic High School in Sun Valley, California, offers a variety of types of classes outside the regular school day. They include Saturday classes, and after and before school classes. Because of their special schedule 4X4 plan, it may include a period 1 or period 4 class. Their school refers to these intervention classes as Beyond the Bell Classes. The Young Adult Education Program in Arlington Heights, Illinois, offers high school credit classes in the evening to serve at-risk students who have left the regular day school. Students earn a diploma from the high school in their attendance area. They found that with a minimum investment they were able to graduate a high percentage of their students.

This isn't a new idea. Schools have been struggling with what to do with students at-risk of not completing a traditional program for a long time. In a 1966 study, Neylan and Verner looked at attendance patterns in adult evening classes in a British Columbia urban school. Data suggest that course content has a direct relationship to motivation. Courses from which immediate benefit is gained are best attended. As a course lengthens beyond 10 sessions, loss in attendance accelerates, the rate of loss varying with the type of course. Although the data provide no measure of the influence on attendance of the instructional process, the very poor pattern of attendance in academic courses indicates the need for major changes.

A popular modern approach is the "Twilight School," a component the Talent Development High School Model. The Talent Development High School Model is a comprehensive reform model designed by the Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk (CRESPAR), a collaborative effort between Howard and Johns Hopkins Universities. The Model is intended for large high schools facing serious problems with student attendance, discipline, achievement scores, and dropout rates. The model includes organizational and management changes to establish a positive school climate; curricular and instructional innovations to prepare all students for high-level courses in math and English; parent and community involvement to encourage college awareness; and professional development to support the recommended reforms. It often includes a strong component of career preparation. One district implementing the Model found that for first-time ninth-grade students, Talent Development produced substantial gains in academic course credits and promotion rates and modest improvements in attendance. This increase was about three times the level of increase in similar schools in the district. The CRESPAR site states, "To date, project interventions in our targeted schools have resulted in improvements in students' standardized test scores and attendance as well as increased family involvement in students' school and home learning experiences."

Within the Talent Development Model, there are several types of Supplemental Learning features available, including the Twilight School, a program for students with attendance problems, or otherwise at risk. Central High School, in Newark, New Jersey, describes their program this way: The Twilight School is a program designed to help school staff better meet the needs of students of having difficulty adjusting to high school or controlling their behavior. It is an alternative educational program nested within the regular comprehensive high school for students demonstrating severe and persistent behavioral and attendance problems that inhibit their ability to be successful in a typical classroom. Consistent with the philosophy of the Talent Development High School, the main objectives of the Twilight School include the following:

- **to provide** troubled students an opportunity for academic success in a positive, inviting learning environment;
- **to improve** the learning environment and overall school climate;
- **to reduce** the number of short- and long-term suspensions by providing additional disciplinary options;
- **to provide** students who were expelled from other high schools and those reentering the school system from juvenile justice agencies a smoother transition back into school;
- **to teach** students coping skills and strategies to self-regulate their behavior; and
- **to monitor and mentor** students making the transition from the Twilight School to regular day school program.



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Online Resources:

(Note: ERIC documents can be found by going to <http://www.eric.ed.gov/> and entering the ERIC ID#)

Beyond the Bell

John H. Francis Polytechnic High School
12431 Roscoe Blvd, Sun Valley, CA 91352
Tel: (818) 767-4860
Fax: (818) 771-0452

Intervention programs are classes that help your child practice the basic foundation skills of reading, writing and mathematics. All the programs listed below are part of the Intervention Programs. These classes occur outside the regular school day, they include Saturday classes, after and before school classes. Because of our special schedule 4X4 plan, it may include a period 1 or period 4 class. Our school refers to these intervention classes as Beyond the Bell Classes.

http://www.polyhigh.org/beyond_the_bell.jsp

Evening Classes for At-Risk Kids Cost Only a Little, but They Help a Lot.

Davis, Susan J.;

American School Board Journal, v176 n11 p33 Nov 1989

The Young Adult Education Program in Arlington Heights (Illinois) offers high school credit classes in the evening to serve at-risk students who have left the regular day school. Students earn a diploma from the high school in their attendance area. On a bare-bones budget, the program graduates approximately 65 percent of its enrolled students.

ERIC #: EJ398965

Johns Hopkins University Talent Development High School Model

The Talent Development High School Model is a comprehensive reform model for large high schools facing serious problems with student attendance, discipline, achievement scores, and dropout rates. The model includes organizational and management changes to establish a positive school climate; curricular and instructional innovations to prepare all students for high-level courses in math and English; parent and community involvement to encourage college awareness; and professional development to support the recommended reforms.

<http://www.csos.jhu.edu/tdhs/index.htm>

CRESPAR Talent Development Project

CRESPAR (The Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk) is a collaborative effort between Howard and Johns Hopkins Universities. Concepts and models of Talent Development, the cornerstone of the Center's programmatic efforts, are built on the premise that all students can succeed with a demanding school curriculum and a high-expectations approach. The traditional function of schooling must be redirected from that of classifying, sorting, and weeding out students, to maximizing every child's potential for academic development. The school is reconceptualized as a service-providing institution, and the teachers as essential service providers, whose mutual task is to prepare our nation's children for productive participation in their communities and society at large.

<http://crespar.law.howard.edu/talentdevelopment.html>

The Talent Development High School Model: Context, Components, and Initial Impacts on Ninth-Grade Students' Engagement and Performance

James J. Kemple, Corinne M. Herlihy

For first-time ninth-grade students, Talent Development produced substantial gains in academic course credits and promotion rates and modest improvements in attendance. The percentage of ninth-graders completing a core academic curriculum increased from 43 percent on average before the implementation of Talent Development to 56 percent after implementation began. This increase is about three times the level of increase in similar schools in the district. Promotion rates in the Talent Development schools increased by just over 6 percentage points, while they fell by 4 percentage points in the comparison schools. Improvements in ninth-grade course credits earned, promotion, and attendance were strongest in the first three schools to begin using Talent Development, and these schools sustained improvements into the second and third years of implementation.

<http://www.mdrc.org/publications/388/overview.html>



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The Talent Development Model

The Talent Development Model is a program based on specialized courses of study organized around specific career areas. These features are used to make the education relevant to the students within the context of each career academy. Students often work in Small Groups and engage in Peer Tutoring. The model uses Flexible Grouping within the classroom to place the students in different groups and encourages the use of Heterogeneous Groups. Diagnostic Procedures are used to measure student success. Should a student fall behind, several types of Supplemental Learning features are available, including the Twilight School (a program for students with attendance problems), after-school tutoring, and summer enrichment.

<http://www.ncrel.org/csri/resources/ncrel/models/twoj.htm>

Finding Safety in Small Numbers.

McPartland, James; Jordan, Will; Legters, Nettie; Balfanz, Robert;
Educational Leadership, v55 n2 p14-17 Oct 1997

A large Baltimore high school has shown how personalizing relationships and focusing the curriculum can turn around an unsafe school and create a climate conducive to learning. The school adopted the Talent Development model, which created six smaller units or academies. Instead of suspending or transferring ill-behaved students, Patterson established an alternative, afterhours Twilight School to help them resolve their problems.

ERIC #: EJ551998

Patterns Of Attendance In Adult Night School Courses.

Neylan, Margaret S.; Verner, Coolie;

A study was made of attendance in adult evening classes in a British Columbia urban school. Class records from the year 1963-64 were studied, the 266 courses (with 5240 registrants) varying in length and subject content. Subject categories were -- academic (33 sessions long), a replication of a preadult learning situation, which provided credit toward a high school diploma, vocational (10 or 20 sessions), and general (mostly 10 sessions). The mean percentage loss in attendance was 30 percent, academic courses declining from 95 to 47 percent, vocational from 91 to 55 percent, and general courses from 92 to 71 percent. Data suggest that course content has a direct relationship to motivation. Courses from which immediate benefit is gained are best attended. As a course lengthens beyond 10 sessions, loss in attendance accelerates, the rate of loss varying with the type of course. Although the data provide no measure of the influence on attendance of the instructional process, the very poor pattern of attendance in academic courses indicates the need for major changes. Equivalency courses for adults need to be designed specifically for them, instead of duplicating day preadult programs. Tables show attendance by courses and subject areas. This article was published in "Canadian Education And Research Digest," September 1966.

ERIC #: ED011623

Schools with Twilight Schools

Central High School

Pre-Engineering & Career Academies

Mr. Gregory W. Stewart, Principal

100 Summit Street

Newark, New Jersey 07102

(973) 733-6897

Fax: (973) 733-8212

<http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/central/>

<http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/central/twilight%20school.htm>

Teaneck High School

100 Elizabeth Avenue • Teaneck, NJ • 07666 Phone: 201.833.5400 • Fax: 201.833.5403

<http://www.teaneckschools.org/schools/th/specprog/twilite.html>



The Principals' Partnership
<http://www.principalspartnership.com>
Sponsored by Union Pacific Foundation

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Twilight School - Thomas A. Edison High School/John C. Fareira Skills Center

151 W Luzerne St.
Philadelphia, PA 19140
215-324-9440

Twilight School is unique because it starts at 2:40 PM and runs for three hours every day. Twilight gives the students a flexible schedule that allows them other daytime options. Twilight also gives hope to students who thought their goals could not be reached. There are two keys to the success of this program: students who make an effort to attend, and a dedicated staff which makes a real difference in their students' lives. The Twilight Program is making a difference!

<http://www.philsch.k12.pa.us/schools/edison/twilight.html>

Submitted Date: 1/23/2006 By: Mike Muir, Maine Center for Meaningful Engaged Learning

<http://www.principalspartnership.com>

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