

## **Why Students Drop Out** **Amy M. Azzam, 2007**

“We should see dropouts not as problems to be solved, but as potential to be fulfilled”.

This article asked high school drop outs (ages 16-25) why they did not finish high school.

### **Reasons**

- Bored with school
- Missed too many days and could not catch up
- Spent time with people who were not interested in school
- Had too much freedom and not enough rules in their lives
- They were failing
- Personal reasons (need to get a job or take care of family members)
- Earlier schooling had poorly prepared them for high school

71% of those asked said their parents were not actively involved. Only one fifth responded that their parents were “very” involved in their schooling.

The same students also suggested 5 things that high schools can do to improve students’ chances of completing school. Leaders of adult education programs can also find benefit to these suggestions.

- 1) Make school more engaging by engaging in real-world, experiential learning. Students want to see the connection between work and school.
- 2) Improve instructional support for struggling learners. Need better teachers, smaller classes, more individualized instruction, more tutoring, and extra time with teachers.
- 3) Improve school climate with more supervision and classroom discipline.
- 4) Ensure that students have a close relationship with at least one adult in the building. Students want to be able to approach an adult they feel comfortable communicating with.
- 5) Improve communication between parents and schools.

Further suggestion: Develop a district-wide early warning system for tracking absenteeism. Provide more support for those students.