

# DIPLOMAS NOW

An Innovative School Turnaround Model to Address America's High School Dropout Crisis

**DIPLOMAS NOW** is an innovative school turnaround model that unites three experienced nonprofit organizations to work with the nation's most challenged middle and high schools to deliver the right interventions to the right students at the right time.

## ■ AMERICA'S DROPOUT CRISIS IS REAL

- High school graduation rates in America's 50 largest cities average 50 percent
- Nearly four out of ten African American, Hispanic and Native American students in U.S. public schools fail to graduate on time
- Half of the nation's yearly high school dropouts (500,000) come from just 12 percent of the nation's high schools (1,700)

## ■ THE EARLY WARNING SIGNS ARE KNOWN

Innovative research conducted by Johns Hopkins University's Center for Social Organization of Schools and the Philadelphia Education Fund shows that up to 75 percent of America's high school dropouts can be identified between 6th and 9th grade by the presence of one or more of three different off-track indicators: poor attendance, poor behavior and course failure in English or math.

## ■ STRATEGIC EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION THAT WORKS

Diplomas Now pairs evidence-based, comprehensive school reform with national service teams to provide tutoring, mentoring, monitoring and engagement activities at the required scale, and integrated student supports for the highest need students.

Diplomas Now unites three organizations – City Year, Communities In Schools and Talent Development – each one with years of experience in youth service and third-party evidence of impact on helping students succeed. The Philadelphia Education Fund also serves as a national technical assistance partner. The partners complement each other and also collaborate well with local education reform efforts.

Diplomas Now works closely with school administrators and teachers to identify off-track youth and develop, implement and sustain comprehensive, targeted and customized strategies to get them back on track. Diplomas Now is deliberately designed to incorporate, complement and accelerate the impact of other promising and innovative efforts that aim to boost post-secondary success.

## ■ DIPLOMAS NOW LEAD PARTNERS



**City Year** is an AmeriCorps program that unites diverse young leaders for a year of full-time service. City Year corps members are “near peer” role models who are trained to work in underserved schools to provide targeted academic and school-wide interventions to help students get on track and stay on track to graduate.



**Communities In Schools** is one of the nation's leading dropout prevention organizations, offering both school-wide prevention services as well as highly specialized and intensive interventions via case managed student supports and referral to outside support agencies.



**Talent Development** is a program at Johns Hopkins University that specializes in research and comprehensive school reform models to address off-track indicators and improve student achievement. Talent Development middle and high school programs specialize in organizational, instructional and teacher support reforms designed to make the whole school more effective.



The Diplomas Now initiative is funded with generous support of \$5 million from the PepsiCo Foundation. The Foundation is committed to developing sustainable partnerships and programs in underserved regions that provide opportunities for improved health, environment and education. Since the 1950s, PepsiCo has been dedicated to funding educational programs and PepsiCo Foundation currently has more than \$12.5 million committed to this cause.