

# The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Opportunities for High School Improvement

## Summary Table

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The following table provides information on best practices and resources related to the primary funding streams under the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that may be used for high school improvement initiatives.

Funding Stream: Title I, Part A - \$10 billion	
Funding Suggestion	<b>Identify and train highly effective teachers to serve as instructional leaders</b>
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Set explicit academic goals that are aligned with or exceed state standards</li> <li>➤ Focus on a culture of collaboration</li> <li>➤ Embrace broader learning objectives than just their own subject matter and use differentiated strategies to reach students at all levels</li> <li>➤ Interpret student achievement data to make decisions about teaching</li> <li>➤ Recognize student achievement within a context of support</li> </ul>
Related National High School Center Resources	<a href="#">Sustaining the Focus on Secondary School Reading: Lessons and Recommendations from the Alabama Reading Initiative</a> <a href="#">Report on Key Practices and Policies of Consistently Higher Performing High Schools</a>
Other Resources	<a href="#">Principal and Teacher Leadership in Chicago: Continuing Analysis of Three Initiatives</a> (Consortium on Chicago School Research)  <a href="#">Review of Research: How Leadership Influences Student Learning</a> (The Wallace Foundation)
Funding Suggestion	<b>Provide new opportunities for Title I schoolwide programs for secondary school students to use high-quality, online courseware as supplemental learning materials for meeting math and science requirements</b>
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ensure that any online learning opportunities are evaluated for effectiveness</li> <li>➤ Ensure that online learning opportunities are implemented with fidelity</li> <li>➤ Make sure that online courseware and supplemental materials meet the needs of multiple participants including students, teachers, and administrators</li> </ul>
Related National High School Center Resources	
Other Resources	<a href="#">Evaluating Online Learning: Challenges and Strategies for Success</a> (U.S. Department of Education)  <a href="#">A Synthesis of New Research on K-12 Online Learning</a> (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory)
Funding Suggestion	<b>Establish and use longitudinal data systems to drive improvement efforts</b>
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Track student attendance data as well as academic performance data</li> <li>➤ District-level data systems should be easily accessed at the school and classroom level</li> <li>➤ Use data systems as early warning tools to determine who is most likely to drop out</li> <li>➤ Use data systems to match student need to appropriate interventions and to improve instruction</li> <li>➤ Use data systems as an approach to instructional decision-making to influence instruction, early intervention, and learning disability determination</li> <li>➤ Use data systems to track the effectiveness of interventions</li> <li>➤ Data from these systems should be used for progress monitoring applications such as formative assessments</li> <li>➤ Share data gathered with students' parents</li> <li>➤ Ensure that uniform dropout and graduation rates are determined across districts and the state, using longitudinal data systems</li> </ul>
Related National High School Center Resources	<a href="#">Meeting the Needs of Significantly Struggling Learners in High School: A Look at Approaches to Tiered Intervention</a>  <a href="#">Developing Early Warning Systems to Identify Potential High School Dropouts</a>

	<a href="#">National High School Center Developed Early Warning Systems Tool</a> <a href="#">State Approaches to More Reliable and Uniform Dropout and Graduation Data</a> <a href="#">Approaches to Dropout Prevention: Heeding Early Warning Signs with Appropriate Interventions</a>
Other Resources	<a href="#">Using Early-Warning Data to Improve Graduation Rates: Closing Cracks in the Education System</a> (Alliance for Excellent Education) <a href="#">Acting on Data: How Urban High Schools Use Data to Improve Instruction</a> (New Schools Venture Fund) <a href="#">Measuring What Matters: Creating Longitudinal Data Systems to Improve Student Achievement</a> (Data Quality Campaign) <a href="#">Graduation Counts: Compact and Task Force Report</a> (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices)
Funding Suggestion	<b>Provide support for teachers to learn and use these data systems</b>
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ensure schoolwide participation by teachers and support staff to inculcate a culture of data</li> <li>➤ Organize schedules so that teachers have time to collaborate and learn best practice data use from each other</li> <li>➤ Train teachers on how to use data to ensure the early identification of students with learning disabilities</li> <li>➤ Ensure staff buy-in for the use of new data systems</li> <li>➤ Provide ongoing technical assistance and professional development, not just an initial training</li> <li>➤ Principals should regularly meets with each teacher to discuss performance data of students in each class</li> <li>➤ Teachers should use student performance data results for differentiated instructional practices</li> </ul>
Related National High School Center Resources	<a href="#">Sustaining the Focus on Secondary School Reading: Lessons and Recommendations from the Alabama Reading Initiative</a> <a href="#">Meeting the Needs of Significantly Struggling Learners in High School: A Look at Approaches to Tiered Intervention</a> <a href="#">Developing Early Warning Systems to Identify Potential High School Dropouts</a>
Other Resources	<a href="#">Identifying Potential Dropouts: Key Lessons for Building an Early Warning Data System</a> (Achieve) <a href="#">The Value of Reliable Data</a> (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality)
Funding Suggestion	<b>Establish or expand extended learning opportunities for Title I-eligible students in targeted assistance programs, including activities provided before school, after school, during the summer, or over an extended school year</b>
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provide double dosing opportunities for students to give them an opportunity to catch up in coursework and to earn additional credits in a shorter amount of time, such as double-block scheduling and catch-up courses</li> <li>➤ Create structured partnerships with local employers to give students the opportunity to learn outside of the classroom setting</li> <li>➤ Identify struggling eighth graders to take part in appropriate summer programs designed to ease the transition between eighth and ninth grades</li> <li>➤ After-school programs should be challenging and up to rigorous standards</li> </ul>
Related National High School Center Resources	<a href="#">Emerging Evidence on Improving High School Student Achievement and Graduation Rates: The Effects of Four Popular Improvement Programs</a> <a href="#">Managing the Transition to Ninth Grade in a Comprehensive Urban High School</a> <a href="#">Toward Ensuring a Smooth Transition into High School</a>
Other Resources	<a href="#">High School Remediation</a> (Education Commission of the States) <a href="#">Expanding Learning Time in High Schools</a> (Center for American Progress)
Funding Stream: IDEA, Part B - \$11.3 billion	
Funding Suggestion	<b>Obtain assistive technology devices and provide training in their use</b>

Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Teachers must receive training not only on the technology itself but also how to integrate that technology into the curriculum</li> <li>➤ Establish a community of practice around the use of technology in the classroom</li> <li>➤ Take care to plan for how assistive technologies will be integrated into the classroom prior to implementing them</li> </ul>
Related National High School Center Resources	
Other Resources	<p><a href="#">Professional Development on Technology Integration</a> (Center for Implementing Technology in Education)</p> <p><a href="#">Moving Toward Solutions: Assistive and Learning Technology for All Students</a> (National Center for Technology Innovation)</p>
Funding Suggestion	<b>Provide intensive district-wide professional development for special education and regular education teachers that focuses on scaling up, through replication, proven and innovative evidence-based schoolwide strategies in reading, math, writing, and science, and positive behavioral supports to improve outcomes for students with disabilities</b>
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ All professionals should receive this kind of coherent, ongoing support to advance a culture of academic excellence for all students</li> <li>➤ Consider the changing roles for general and special education teachers and what connections can be made between the two</li> <li>➤ Build awareness of importance of identifying postsecondary goals for all students early on in high school and the steps necessary to meet those goals</li> <li>➤ Because many of the most effective strategies in high school improvement for all students originated in the innovative world of special education such as the strategic instruction model, tiered intervention, individual learning plans, and creative use of technology in the classroom, there is much to gain from professional development and collaboration between general education and special education teachers</li> <li>➤ Hire reading coaches that provide schoolwide support to English and content teachers in integrating literacy instruction across the curriculum</li> </ul>
Related National High School Center Resources	<p><a href="#">Meeting the Needs of Significantly Struggling Learners in High School: A Look at Approaches to Tiered Intervention</a></p> <p><a href="#">State and District-Level Support for Successful Transitions into High School</a></p> <p><a href="#">Preparing High School Students for Successful Transitions to Postsecondary Education and Employment</a></p> <p><a href="#">Emerging Evidence on Improving High School Student Achievement and Graduation Rates: The Effects of Four Popular Improvement Programs</a></p> <p><a href="#">New Hampshire's Multi-Tiered Approach to Dropout Prevention</a></p>
Other Resources	<a href="#">Professional Development on Technology Integration</a> (Center for Implementing Technology in Education)
Funding Suggestion	<b>Hire transition coordinators to work with employees in the community to develop job placements for youths with disabilities</b>
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Set clear goals with potential employers</li> <li>➤ Ensure that the job placement opportunities are in line with academic curriculum and learning</li> </ul>
Related National High School Center Resources	
Other Resources	<p><a href="#">Making the Difference: Research and Practice in Community School</a> (Coalition for Community Schools)</p> <p><a href="#">10 Principles of Authentic Community Engagement</a> (KnowledgeWorks Foundation)</p>
<b>Funding Stream: SFSF Formula Grants - \$39.8 billion</b>	
Funding Suggestion	<b>Progress toward rigorous college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable for all students, including English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities</b>
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Assessment systems should be set up in such a way that those systems receive ongoing and adequate long-term financial support and investment</li> <li>➤ Create systems for tracking students across the K–12 and postsecondary education systems and into the workplace</li> <li>➤ Provide guidance on mobilizing communities for support for ELLs</li> <li>➤ Intervene early, when students are developing their college and career aspirations, to link standards to practical experience</li> <li>➤ Schools and LEAs should collaborate with postsecondary institutions and employers to help develop standards and to ease the transition out of high school</li> <li>➤ Create a culture of high standards with consistent, schoolwide messages about the standards needed for postsecondary success</li> <li>➤ Consider interventions and programs to promote successful postsecondary education and employment, such as dual enrollment or early-college high schools</li> <li>➤ Create math and science partnerships with nearby postsecondary institutions to help articulate rigorous standards</li> </ul>

	<p>➤ Communicate assessments of schools and districts to community members in user-friendly formats</p>
Related National High School Center Resources	<p><a href="#">Eight Elements of High School Improvement: A Mapping Framework</a></p> <p><a href="#">Report on Key Practices and Policies of Consistently Higher Performing High Schools</a></p> <p><a href="#">Emerging Evidence on Improving High School Student Achievement and Graduation Rates: The Effects of Four Popular Improvement Programs</a></p> <p><a href="#">Striking the Balance: Career Academies Combine Academic Rigor and Workplace Relevance</a></p> <p><a href="#">Evaluating the Impact of Interventions that Promote Successful Transitions from High School</a></p> <p><a href="#">Preparing High School Students for Successful Transitions to Postsecondary Education and Employment</a></p> <p><a href="#">Improving Literacy Outcomes for English Language Learners in High School: Considerations for States and Districts in Developing a Coherent Policy Framework</a></p> <p><a href="#">Findings from the Early College High School Initiative: A Look at Best Practices and Lessons Learned Regarding a Dual Enrollment Program</a></p>
Other Resources	<p><a href="#">Making College and Career Readiness the Mission for High Schools: A Guide for State Policymakers</a> (Achieve)</p> <p><a href="#">Policies to Improve Instruction and Learning in High Schools</a> (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices)</p>
Funding Suggestion	<b>Establish pre-K to college and career data systems that track progress and foster continuous improvement</b>
Best Practices	<p>➤ Focus attention of data on the ninth grade year to help identify early potential high school dropouts through the use of on-track indicators</p> <p>➤ Use these systems in order to generate the most useful and accurate graduation and dropout data</p>
Related National High School Center Resources	<p><a href="#">Developing Early Warning Systems to Identify Potential High School Dropouts</a></p> <p><a href="#">National High School Center Developed Early Warning Systems Tool</a></p> <p><a href="#">State Approaches to More Reliable and Uniform Dropout and Graduation Data</a></p> <p><a href="#">Approaches to Dropout Prevention: Heeding Early Warning Signs with Appropriate Interventions</a></p>
Other Resources	<p><a href="#">Measuring What Matters: Creating Longitudinal Data Systems to Improve Student Achievement</a> (Data Quality Campaign)</p> <p><a href="#">The Next Step: Using Longitudinal Data Systems to Improve Student Success</a> (Data Quality Campaign)</p>
Funding Suggestion	<b>Making improvements in teacher effectiveness and in the equitable distribution of qualified teachers for all students, particularly students who are most in need</b>
Best Practices	<p>➤ Provide incentives for highly qualified teachers to work in underserved schools</p> <p>➤ Establish fair and reliable evaluation systems that help teachers improve</p> <p>➤ System should be put in place to identify and train highly effective teachers as instructional leaders</p> <p>➤ Establish a system that allows for teacher collaboration</p> <p>➤ Provide strong ongoing professional development opportunities rather than one-time-only workshops on a topic or skill</p> <p>➤ Ensure that each school's most experienced and successful teachers are instructing students at a variety of levels</p>
Related National High School Center Resources	<p><a href="#">Eight Elements of High School Improvement: A Mapping Framework</a></p> <p><a href="#">Report on Key Practices and Policies of Consistently Higher Performing High Schools</a></p>
Other Resources	<p><a href="#">Using Student Engagement to Improve Adolescent Literacy</a> (Learning Point Associates)</p> <p><a href="#">The Link Between Teacher Quality and Student Outcomes: A Research Synthesis</a> (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality)</p>
Funding Suggestion	<b>Provide intensive and effective interventions for the lowest performing schools</b>
Best Practices	<p>➤ Provide support for individual learning plans for all students and create an on-line system for these plans.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Give support for career guidance to help students focus their coursework options</li> <li>➤ Invest in high-quality online courses as supplemental learning materials to help students meet core content requirements</li> <li>➤ Provide ongoing training opportunities for teachers to help them identify and address academic achievement problems</li> <li>➤ Include tutoring and intensive counseling</li> <li>➤ If using comprehensive reform models such as Talent Development and High Schools that Work, ensure that they are well implemented and utilized as designed</li> <li>➤ Implement extended class periods together with special catch-up courses, high-quality curricula aligned with high standards, and training for teachers in those curricula</li> <li>➤ Identify issues regarding disproportionality such as the over-identification of minorities in special education or the under-identification of minorities in gifted programs and take the steps necessary to resolve these unfair imbalances</li> </ul>
Related National High School Center Resources	<p><a href="#">Dropout Prevention for Students with Disabilities: A Critical Issue for State Education Agencies</a></p> <p><a href="#">Emerging Evidence on Improving High School Achievement and Graduation Rates: The Effects of Four Popular Improvement Programs</a></p> <p><a href="#">State-Level High School Improvement Systems Checklist</a></p> <p><a href="#">Improving Literacy Outcomes for English Language Learners in High School: Considerations for States and Districts Developing a Coherent Policy Framework</a></p>
Other Resources	<p><a href="#">The Impact of State Intervention on “Underperforming” School in Massachusetts: Implications for Policy and Practice</a> (Education Policy Analysis Archives)</p> <p><a href="#">Enhancing School Reform through Expanded Learning</a> (Learning Point Associates)</p>
<b>Funding Stream: Education for Homeless Youth - \$70 million</b>	
<b>Funding Suggestion</b>	<b>Ensure that homeless youth have equal access to free and appropriate education</b>
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Hire mental health professionals to go into the community to seek out and connect with homeless youth; hire school-based mental health professionals as well</li> <li>➤ Provide intensive curriculum in reading, writing, and math</li> <li>➤ Collaborate with local postsecondary education institutions to give students an opportunity to learn about postsecondary education and to make the idea more concrete</li> </ul>
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Other Resources	<p><a href="#">The Impact of State Intervention on “Underperforming” School in Massachusetts: Implications for Policy and Practice</a> (Education Policy Analysis Archives)</p> <p><a href="#">Enhancing School Reform through Expanded Learning</a> (Learning Point Associates)</p>
<b>Funding Stream: Enhancing Education through Technology - \$60 million</b>	
<b>Funding Suggestion</b>	<b>Improve student achievement through the use of technology in schools</b>
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provide opportunities for students at all achievement levels to take online coursework through virtual high schools</li> <li>➤ Provide ongoing professional development to teachers and administrators on how to integrate technology into the classroom</li> <li>➤ Provide students with mobile computing platforms to allow them to engage in learning wherever they are</li> <li>➤ Use Web 2.0 applications and media to connect to students and to provide them with various ways to access information interactively, visually, and audibly</li> <li>➤ Provide an ILP online program for all students</li> </ul>
Related National High School Center Resources	
Other Resources	<p><a href="#">Laboratories of Reform: Virtual High Schools and Innovation in Public Education</a> (Education Sector)</p> <p><a href="#">Checklist for Evaluating Online Course</a> (Southern Regional Education Board)</p> <p><a href="#">Selected National Findings: Speak Up 2008 for Students, Teachers, Parents and Administrators</a> (Project Tomorrow)</p>
<b>Funding Stream: Statewide Data Systems - \$250 million</b>	
<b>Funding Suggestion</b>	<b>Design, develop, and implement statewide, longitudinal data systems to efficiently and accurately manage, analyze, disaggregate, and use individual student data</b>

Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ensure schoolwide participation by teachers and support staff to inculcate a culture of data</li> <li>➤ Organize schedules so that teachers have time to collaborate and learn best practice data use from each other</li> <li>➤ Train teachers on how to use data to help identify properly students with learning disabilities</li> <li>➤ Ensure staff buy-in for the use of new data systems</li> <li>➤ Provide ongoing technical assistance and professional development, not just an initial training</li> </ul>
Related National High School Center Resources	<p><a href="#">Developing Early Warning Systems to Identify Potential High School Dropouts</a></p> <p><a href="#">National High School Center Developed Early Warning Systems Tool</a></p> <p><a href="#">State Approaches to More Reliable and Uniform Dropout and Graduation Data</a></p> <p><a href="#">Approaches to Dropout Prevention: Heeding Early Warning Signs with Appropriate Interventions</a></p> <p><a href="#">Dropout Prevention for Students With Disabilities: A Critical Issue for State Education Agencies</a></p>
Other Resources	<p><a href="#">Longitudinal Data Systems: Vital for High School Redesign</a> (National Association of State Boards of Education)</p> <p><a href="#">The Next Step: Using Longitudinal Data Systems to Improve Student Success</a> (Data Quality Campaign)</p>