



Graduation Pathways Strategy

February 25, 2008

Bringing Back the Other Half

Commitment to Graduating All Students

- CPS launched High School Transformation with a commitment to graduate all students and prepare them for post-secondary and employment success
- Department of Dropout Prevention and Recovery was established specifically to address the needs of at-risk and out-of-school youth

Understanding the Problem

- In partnership with Parthenon and with support from the Consortium on Chicago School Research, CPS conducted an in-depth analysis to understand:
 - Scope of the dropout crisis
 - Profiles of at-risk students
 - Current CPS programs that address the needs of at-risk youth

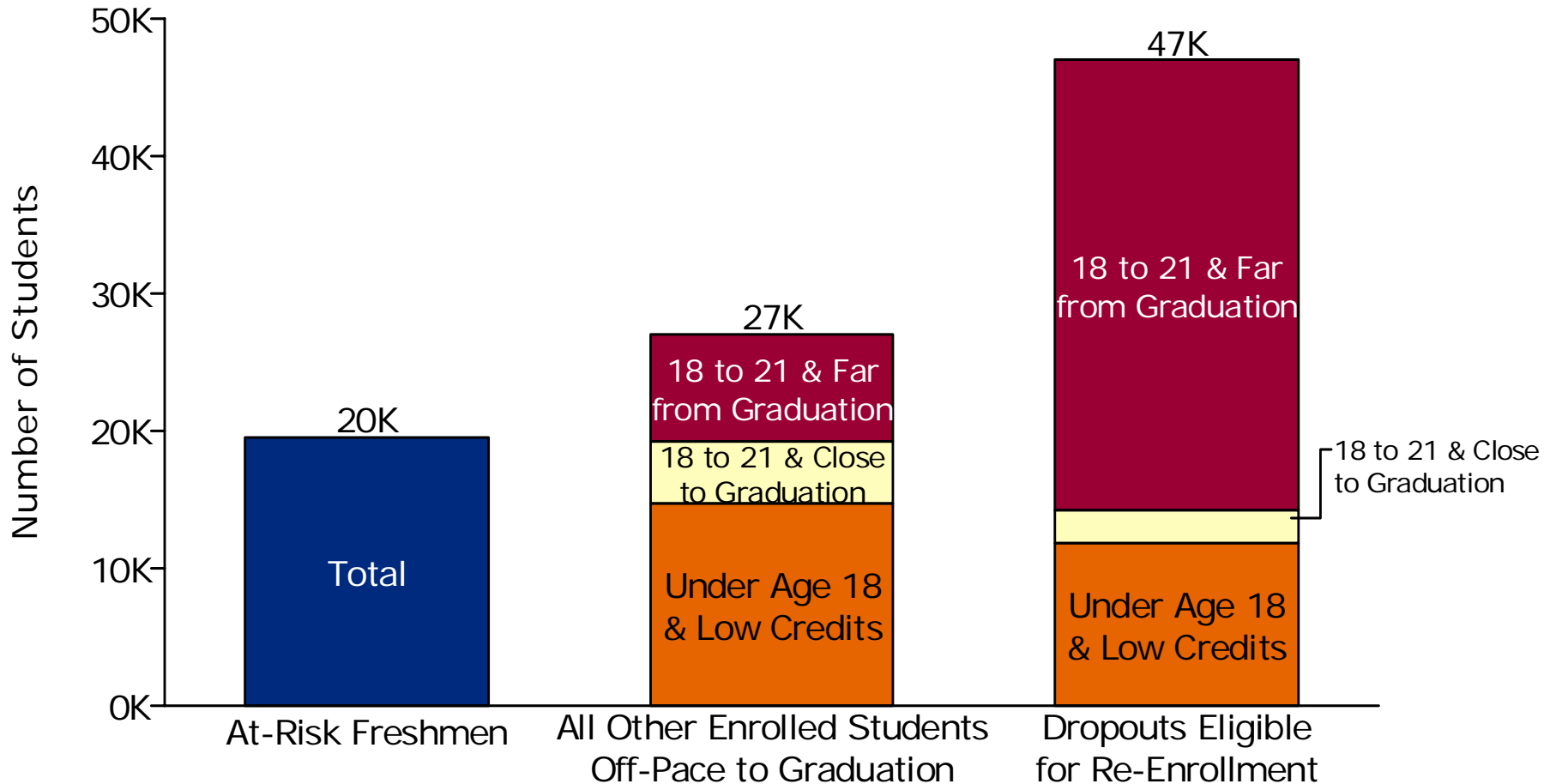
Developing a Strategy

- Building upon the findings, CPS used a data-driven approach to design a new strategy, “Graduation Pathways”
- The new strategy is based on the philosophy that “one size does not fit all”
- The new Department of Graduation Pathways will build upon the existing portfolio of options to ensure that resources are available to meet the differentiated needs of individual students

Graduation Pathways is an integrated approach to address the needs of our at-risk students. It aims to provide the resources necessary to create meaningful options and target individual student needs. To this end, Graduation Pathways will serve as a safety net to catch our off-track, at-risk students and get them back on the path toward high school graduation

What Is The Problem?

CPS At-Risk Student Population, 2005-06

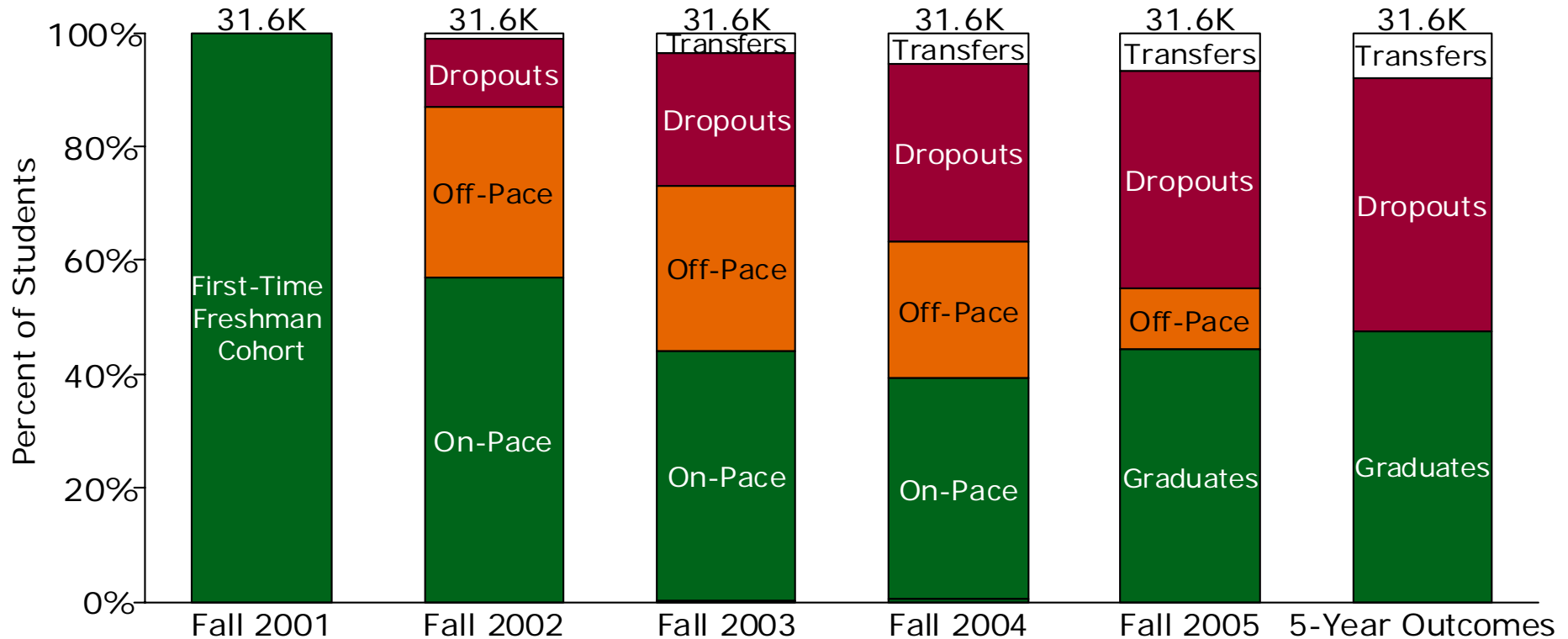


The scale of the problem is large, encompassing almost 100K Chicago youth

What Is The Problem?

Student Progression Through High School

Progression of 2001-02 First-Time Freshman Cohort



9th grade is critical; most students who fail to graduate fall off-track in the first year of High School

How Do We Identify At-Risk Students?

Identifying Segments Among First-Time 9th graders

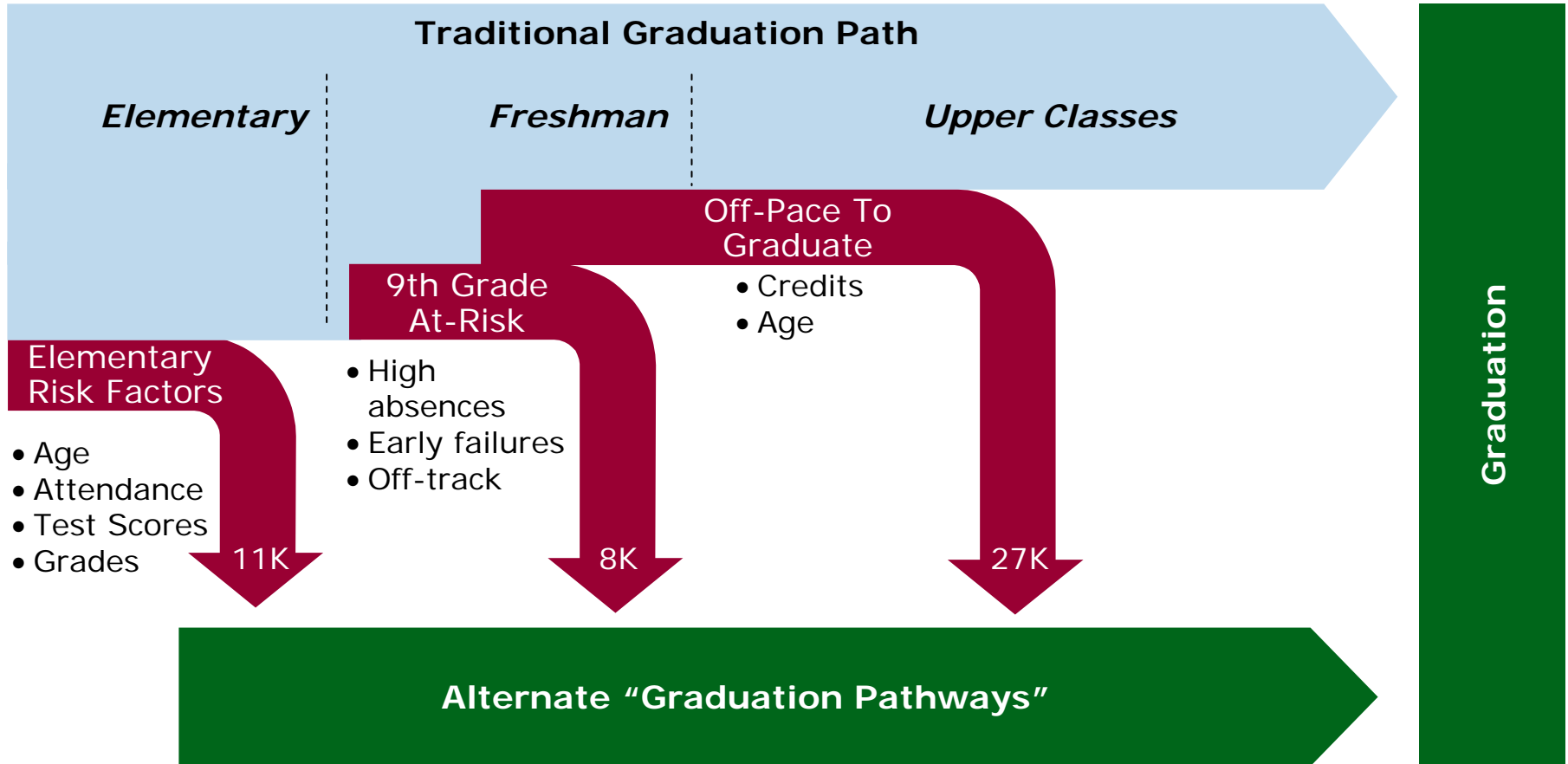
	Overage At Entry	High Absences Fall Semester	High Course Failures Fall Semester	High Failures / Low Credits Spring Semester	All Other Students
Description:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age 15 or over in fall of 9th grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students missing more than 10 days of school in the fall of 9th grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students failing 2 or more core courses in the fall of 9th grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students with fewer than 5 credits or 2+ core semester failures by the end of 9th grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remaining students in cohort who do not fall into previous four segments
Number of Students: (<i>'05-'06 Cohort</i>)	11.2K	3.7K	1.8K	2.8K	15.4K
Five-Year Graduation Rate: (<i>'01-'02 Cohort</i>)	27%	19%	34%	39%	75%
Timing of Identification:	Before 9 th Grade	During First Semester	End of First Semester	End of Freshman Year	End of Freshman Year



Four discrete segments of at-risk freshmen emerge based on when the system can identify them and their needs—collectively these four segments account for over three quarters of eventual CPS dropouts

What Should We Do About It?

Building Alternate Pathways to Graduation



The traditional path to graduation is not working for half our students; We need a portfolio of options to ensure that resources are available to meet the differentiated needs of individual students

Developing a “Graduation Pathways” Strategy

Four Strategic Solutions

	Prevention	Early Intervention	Credit Recovery	Re-Enrollment
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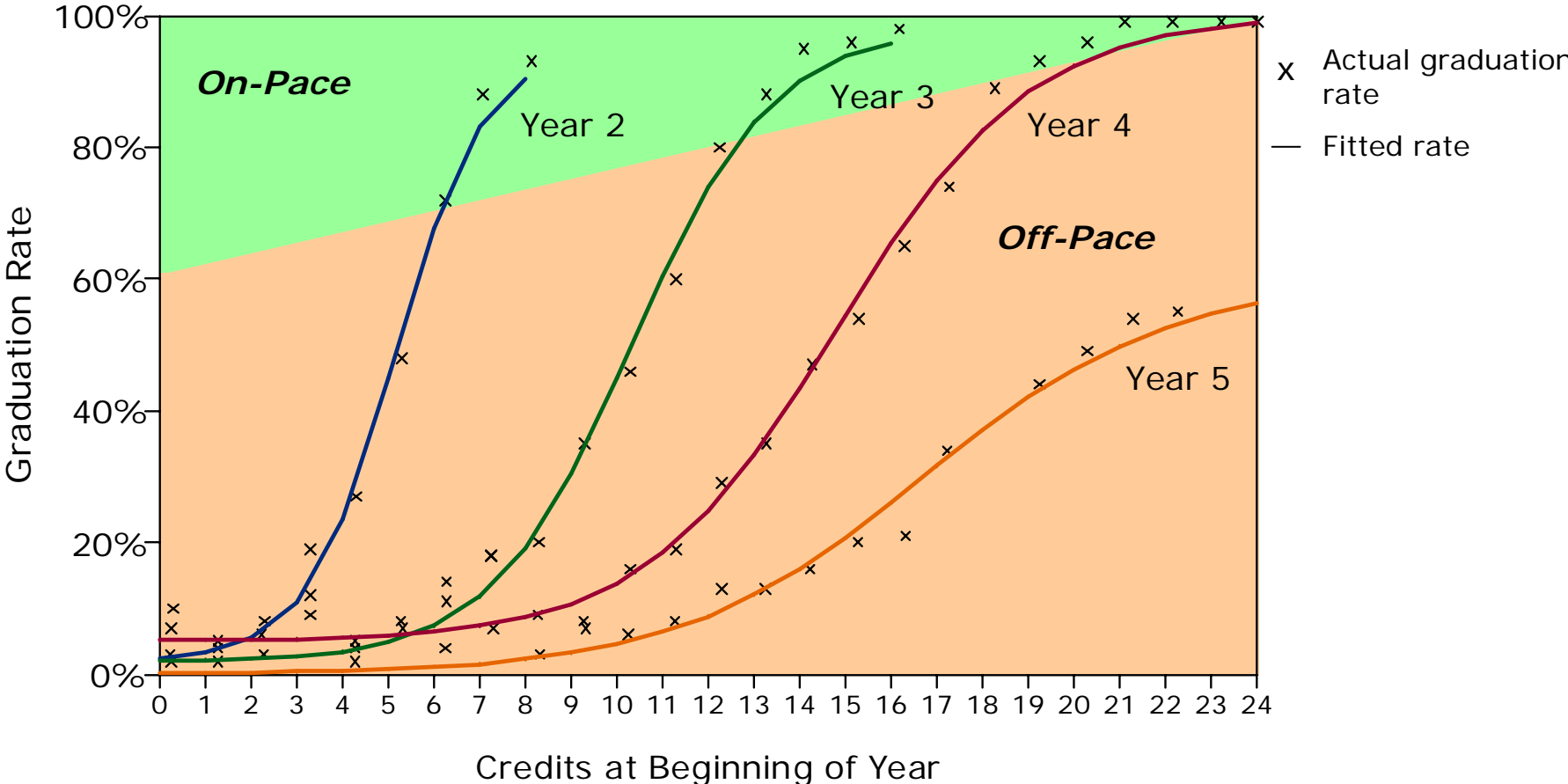
Time Frame:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8th grade through first semester of 9th grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9th grade 1st and 2nd semester 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After 1st semester 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anytime before age 21
Purpose:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify students at high risk of falling off-track • Keep students engaged and on-track to graduation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent students from failing courses and falling off-track 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer credit recovery in an traditional or alternative school setting • Keep students enrolled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide means to a high school diploma for out-of-school youth or severely off-track students • Both alternative and tradition schools
Student Profile:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolled at CPS • Overage students (15 years or older entering high school) • Elementary school performance concerns (grades, test scores, attendance) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolled at CPS • Low attendance during freshmen year • Failed mid-term/formative tests • Discipline issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolled at CPS • Behind on credits • Off-track after freshman year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dropped out of high school • Potential CPS disciplinary action or involved with Department of Corrections (DOC)

Developing a “Graduation Pathways” Strategy

Understanding Student Needs Based on Age & Credits

Graduation Patterns for Age-Credit Combinations

(14 yr old first-time freshmen)

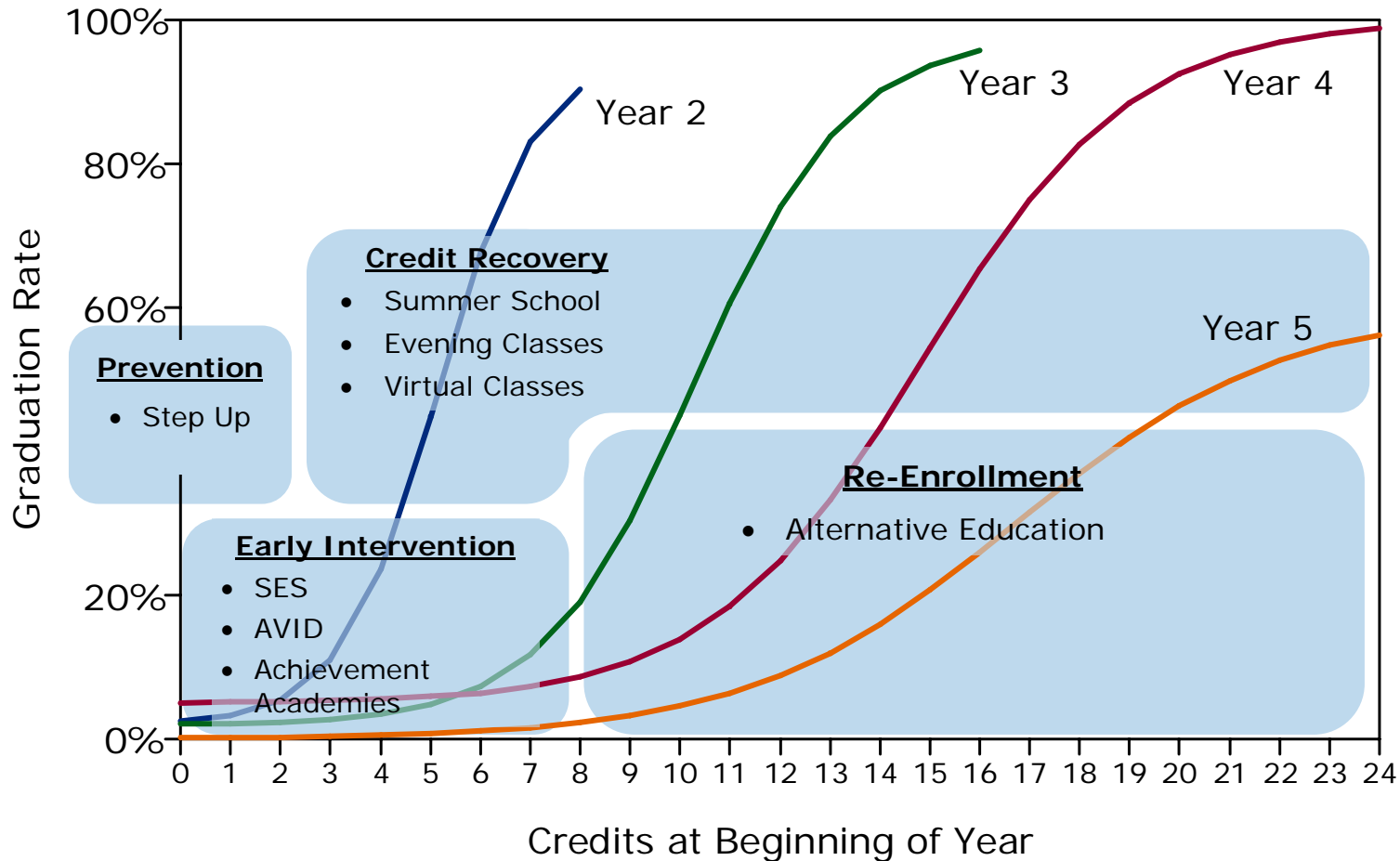


Understanding the impact of credit accumulation helps the district target the right interventions to the right students at the right time

Developing a “Graduation Pathways” Strategy

Targeting Each Component of Graduation Pathways

Target Population by Age-Credit Combinations



Targeted Programs and Schools: Prevention

Small Autonomous Schools

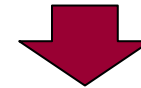
- Small Autonomous Schools enroll a maximum of 500 students and have a thematic focus



- Analysis of schools opened since 2004 shows significantly higher on-track and forecasted graduation rates versus those large neighborhood schools serving similar populations

Step Up to High School

- Step-Up is a voluntary 4-week summer program designed to help 8th graders make the transition to high school more effectively

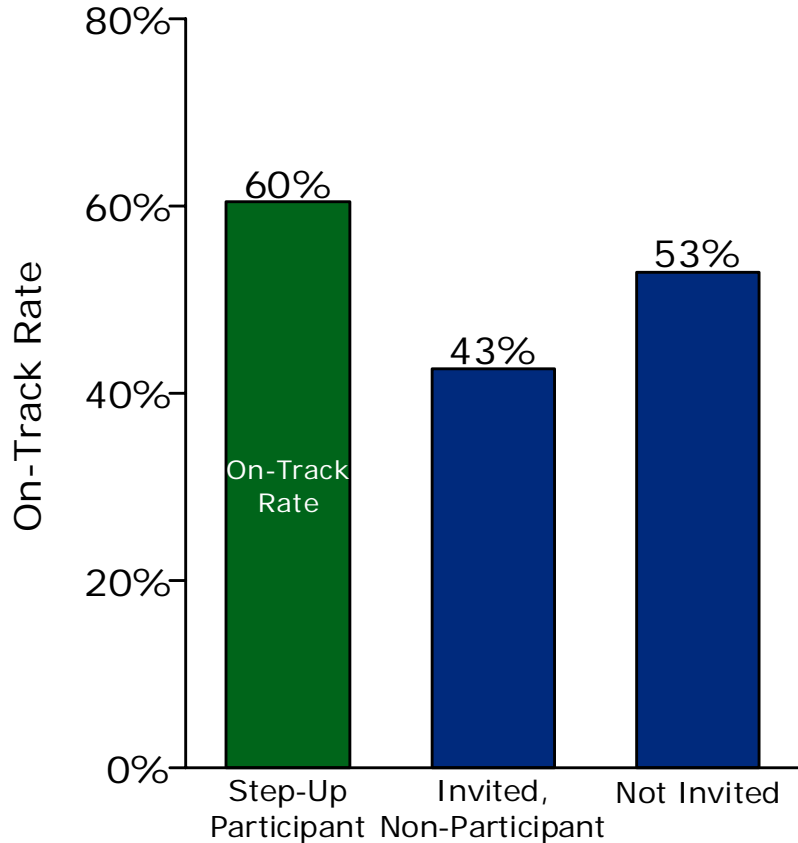


- Students who participate in Step Up have higher on-track rates and lower drop-out rates than their peers who were eligible but did not participate

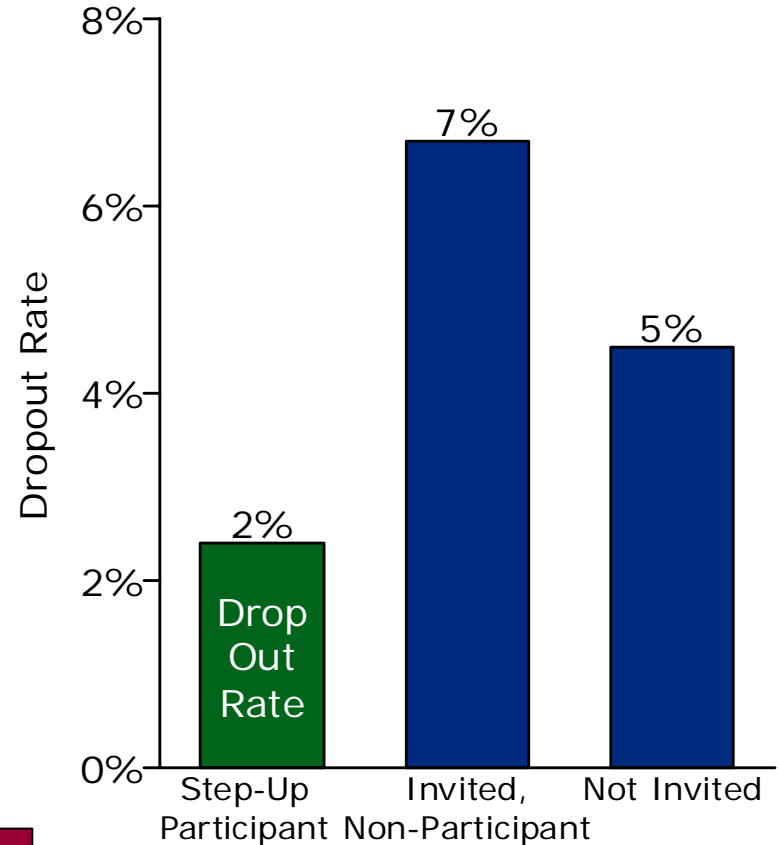
Analysis: Prevention Strategy – Step Up

On-Track and Dropout Rates

On-Track Rates, '05-'06



Academic Year Dropout Rate*, '05-'06



The on-track rates among those participating in Step Up are significantly higher than those of non-participating students; drop-out rates are also lower

Targeted Programs and Schools: Early Intervention

Achievement Academies

- Achievement Academies serve elementary school students who
 - Have not been promoted from 8th grade to high school
 - And will be 15 or older as of Dec 1st
- The 2-year program provides integrated counseling and instruction based on the John's Hopkins Talent Development Model
- Students are granted their 8th grade diploma and are re-integrated into their neighborhood school after two years

AVID

(Advancement via Individual Determination)

- AVID is a 4-year program designed to help underachieving middle and high school students prepare for and succeed in colleges and universities
- Offered as an elective class which meets during the regular school day

SES Tutoring

(Supplemental Educational Services)

- SES is an after-school tutoring program targeting low income students (defined by NCLB)
- Aimed at improving student ISAT scores



Early intervention programs have positive impact on those who participate—however availability and participation rates are lower than total demand

Targeted Programs and Schools: Credit Recovery

Virtual Classes

- Virtual classes are available to all high school students at participating schools
- Aimed at serving a wide range of students:
 - Students at risk
 - Students with disabilities
 - Students with limited English proficiency
 - Gifted students
 - Students pursuing advanced career and technical skills

Evening School

- Evening school is available during the academic year by quarter or semester
- Targets active and inactive students
 - Need additional credits to meet graduation requirements
 - Students 16 years old who need additional credits to be placed in the appropriate grade
 - Students in need of a flexible class schedule

Summer School

- Summer school is aimed at 9-12th graders needing to recover core subject credits to fulfill promotion or graduation criteria



Credit recovery programs are most valuable to students needing flexibility or who are moderately off-track

Targeted Programs and Schools: Re-Enrollment

Alternative Education

- Alternative Education consists of four programs
 - SAFE schools
 - Youth Connection Charter Schools (YCCS)
 - ALOP
 - SMART (Saturday Morning Alternative Reach-Out and Teach)



Alternative Education targets out-of-school youth and students with disciplinary issues with opportunities to continue their education

Freshmen Connection

An Enhanced High School Articulation Program for All Students

Investigation Day

- City-wide 8th grade “Shadow Day” to introduce students to the high school environment and experience
- All 8th graders will be invited to participate on May 29th

Summer Enrichment Programs

- All incoming freshmen can participate in one of four orientation programs:
 - Summer Bridge
 - Step Up
 - Jump Start
 - GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness to Undergraduate Programs)
- Program content includes:
 - Academic support
 - High school orientation
 - Study, time management and team-building skills
 - College/career activities
 - Expanded afternoon activities

Developing Alternate Graduation Pathways

Matching Students with Resources

On-Track Labs

- Six CPS schools were selected to participate as an On-Track Lab and have been charged with developing a comprehensive strategy to keep freshman on-track and improve their performance during the 2008-2009 school year:
 - Michelle Clark
 - Phillips
 - Kelvyn Park
 - Robeson
 - School of the Arts
 - Kenwood
- While there is no one prescribed model, each lab will develop a strategic plan combining prevention, early intervention and credit recovery strategies and focus on the following:
 - Smooth transition into high school
 - Improved attendance
 - Improved academic performance
 - Early and intermediate grade/credit recovery efforts
 - Personalized school experience
 - Improved levels of engagement

The Department of Graduation Pathways will use the lessons learned to inform long-term strategies that will ultimately improve district-wide graduation rates and prepare our students for the future

Developing Alternate Graduation Pathways

Matching Students with Resources

Youth Engaged in Schools (YES) Initiative

- CPS is one of 5 districts funded by the Department of Labor to participate in a 2 year program aimed at:
 - Improving employment/education outcomes for at-risk youth and juvenile offenders
 - Reducing youth involvement in gangs and youth violent crime
 - Decreasing the drop-out rate among juvenile offenders
- Combines elements of prevention and early intervention for at-risk youth and re-enrollment and transition support for juvenile offenders exiting detention facilities
- Five CPS schools were selected to participate in YES early intervention and prevention activities:
 - Hirsch
 - Fenger
 - Manley
 - Clemente
 - Dyett

This initiative will provide insights regarding the impact of the YES strategies on improving the education and employment outcomes of youth most at risk of being involved in gangs and committing juvenile offenses

Graduation Pathways

Summary of Findings

- **The problem is large!**
- **Our students' test scores continue to rise, the graduation rate is improving and more CPS students are going on to college**
- **However, we must continue to raise expectations for our students and leaders**
- **CPS cannot address these issues alone**
- **We need to leverage the expertise of all of you**



How do we work together to improve outcomes?