

INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENTS AT RISK OF DROPPING OUT

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Students dropping out has always been a grueling problem in the education system, an issue that our country still tries to control and lessen.

A study released by the US Agency for International Development in November 2021 showed that the number of out-of-school youth in the Philippines during the pandemic rose from 16.9% in January 2020 to 25.2% in April 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic certainly had a huge impact on the rates, as the Department of Education implemented a new normal setting in response to the crisis. Despite the more convenient and accessible Online and Modular Learning Modality, the number of dropouts had increased.

As teachers, principals, and school personnel, what can we do to address this problem? An article entitled How to End the Dropout Crisis: 10 Strategies for Student Retention by Roberta Furger suggests strategies that schools and communities may implement to end the problem.

Engage and Partner with Parents. It is empirical for the school to work with parents to ensure the well-being of the student both at home and at school. Especially in the new normal setting where students in the Online and Modular Learning Modality will be supervised by the parents instead of the teachers. Engagement and partnership between the school and parents ensure that the students are encouraged to study well, and prevent the risk of dropping out.

Cultivate Relationships. Trust is the foundation of a teacher-student relationship. Students need to have reliable teachers they trust who they can ask for guidance and encourage them to stay in school. Once the teachers gain the students' trust, they may be

more willing to open up and inform the teachers of their circumstances, and eventually prevent the risk of more dropouts.

Pay Attention to Warning Signs. Dropping out of students have various factors, and have tell-tale signs before it happens. As teachers, we must be sensitive to these signs in order to take immediate action. One of the most obvious warning signs would be consecutive absences. Teachers implement visitations to students with these cases to understand their situation more and communicate, not only with the student, but also with the parents.

Make Learning Relevant. Another possible reason for students not attending classes may be boredom or disengagement. To ensure that this will not happen, teachers must keep the lessons interesting, so that the students will look forward to going to classes. Both teachers and students must work together to find out what interests them, to incorporate with the lessons.

Raise the Academic Bar. The implemented K-12 curriculum, with the added two years in high school, was at first faced with hesitancy and qualms. However, as the years into the curriculum passed, the students who graduated from K-12 proved to have more skills equipped for the work environment. Raising the academic bar doesn't only give the students more challenging lessons, but also engaging them to continue studying.

The Department of Education may implement other strategies to use to decrease and eventually end the dropout rates of students in the Philippines. It will be a tough problem to solve, but it isn't impossible to overcome.

References:

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