

DROP OUT PREVENTION & CREDIT RECOVERY



A PATH TO SUCCESS FOR EVERY STUDENT

One of life's most celebrated milestones is watching a young person cross the stage at high school graduation. If that student has overcome obstacles to earning their diploma, the feelings of joy and pride are multiplied.

This might include a young mother who walks across the stage and poses for a photo with her smiling baby or a young man who needs a second, third, or fourth chance to succeed. For some students, the definition of "success" might not include a high school diploma, says Dean Manke, director of Invictus High School, describing a former student who has stayed in touch and now owns a professional car detailing business.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

If the COVID-19 pandemic taught us anything, it's that traditional classroom-based learning isn't the best fit for every student. We also know that students who struggled before the pandemic are at increased risk of dropping out, so connecting them with a program that meets their needs is more important than ever. "These aren't bad kids who couldn't make it," says Manke, "they are just kids, often who have experienced trauma, who are struggling to succeed in a regular classroom environment."

Invictus' programs emphasize flexible, self-paced learning, mentoring, peer groups, mental health services, and academic plans that allow each student to define his/her own goals. Many dropout prevention and recovery programs are based on the Career-Based Intervention model, with a focus on career exploration, employment skills, and work-based learning.

A PATH FOR EVERY STUDENT

Following COVID-19, Cleveland Metropolitan School District adopted a new student-centered Vision for Learning designed to give students more flexibility and control of their learning. This includes personalized learner pathways and recognizing that traditional K-12 education does not meet the needs of every child.

Cleveland public schools that offer an alternative route to graduation include: Castle High School, Frederick Douglass, Invictus High School, Lake Erie International High School, Old Brook High School, Promise Academy, and Regent High School. [Links to each, address? or page?]

QUESTIONS TO ASK

If your student/family is considering a dropout prevention or credit recovery program, the questions below can help you find the best fit school.

- What is the school's approach to education?
- What kinds of support are available to meet student's academic needs?
- How does the school handle student behavior challenges?
- Are there social-emotional and mental health supports available?
- How do you keep students engaged in the school community?
- What kind of programs takes place on campus?
- How do they work with students to set and achieve personalized goals?
- Are lessons completed in person, online, or both?
- How do they personalize student learning?
- What kind of planning do you provide for after graduation?
- Are there specialists (counselors, etc.) available at the school?
- How does the school communicate with families?