



There's a crisis in America's high schools.
We're working to make every child a graduate.

Issues

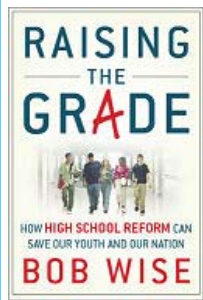
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ONLINE LEARNING: A SOLUTION TO THREE LOOMING CRISES IN EDUCATION

Released on February 16, this brief tells how using online technology in today's secondary school classrooms can strengthen the teacher workforce, improve student outcomes, and allow states to do more despite flat education budgets.

Download [The Online Learning Imperative](#).

RAISING THE GRADE



ALLIANCE PARTNERS

WEBINAR

LOWEST-PERFORMING H.S.

NEWS

LIVE WEBINAR: Economic Benefits of Reducing the Dropout Rate Among Students of Color



On Wednesday, July 7, from 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. (EST), the Alliance for Excellent Education is hosting a live webinar on the release of its latest findings from a dramatic new study, *The Economic Benefits of Reducing the Dropout Rate Among Students of Color in the Nation's Forty-Five Largest Metropolitan Areas*. The city-by-city findings include the growth in jobs, home ownership, levels of spending and investment, and car sales that would likely result from cutting the high school dropout rate among students of color in half.

"Census projections indicate that America will become a minority-majority country by the middle of the century," said Bob Wise, president of the Alliance and former governor of West Virginia, "but a recent report found that minorities accounted for nearly 49 percent of U.S. births in the year ending July 1, 2009. "According to our report, if the nation's education system does not start serving students of color better today, all Americans will feel the difference in their wallets. That means that for all of us, the best economic stimulus package is a high school diploma."

During the webinar, a brief presentation about the findings will be followed by an interactive conversation with experts using questions submitted by participants from around the country.

[Register and submit questions for the webinar online ...](#)

Find the Lowest-Performing High Schools in Your State



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One in three high school students do not graduate and just 12 percent of the nation's high schools produce nearly half of the nation's dropouts. Within these lowest-performing high schools (sometimes known as "dropout factories"), just 60 percent or fewer of entering freshmen progress to their senior year three years later.

[Prioritizing the Nation's Lowest-Performing High Schools](#)

a recent issue brief from the Alliance for Excellent Education, notes that the lowest-performing high schools are located in every state; in urban, suburban, rural, and small-town America; in large high schools and

small. Their one unifying characteristic is that they disproportionately serve our nation's poor and minority students.

In an era of diminishing financial resources, it makes good economic sense to target the nation's lowest-performing high schools and focus attention, commitment, and resources on improving them, the brief argues. Directing strategic efforts to turn around these schools could significantly reduce the nation's dropout rate.

"When emergency medical personnel arrive at an accident scene, they immediately deliver treatment to the most severely injured, [said Bob Wise, president of the Alliance for Excellent Education and former governor of West Virginia](#). "Similarly, the nation must focus its attention on the lowest-performing schools with the largest number of 'victims' in the national dropout crisis. The fact that these schools are so widespread and contribute so greatly to the national dropout crisis dictates making them an essential focus of any federal effort to improve the graduation rate."

While not a graduation rate, a school's "promoting power" is a good indicator of how well schools are educating their students. See how high schools across the country perform by going to the [Promoting Power database](#). **High schools with promoting power less than 60 percent make up the nation's lowest-performing high schools.**

Wise: Byrd Taught Me Something Every Time I Met With Him

Special to Roll Call by Gov. Bob Wise
June 29, 2010

Sen. Robert Byrd (D) was one of those rare individuals who always taught me something new even after 25 years of working together. Whether he was speaking to 500 people or conducting a quiet meeting in his office with three or four, there was always a lesson to carry away. And usually the lesson was relevant at many levels. The anecdote about a famous Roman general also carried a direct application to the topic at hand.

[More Alliance in the News...](#)

Unemployed? This Might Explain Why

Motley Fool
June 29, 2010

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JUN 28 2010 ISSUE

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THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION BY BOB WISE



HIGH SCHOOLS IN YOUR STATE

Choose a state and find out more about education statistics in your area.



ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL HIGH SCHOOL



Learn about the Ten Key Elements that every high school should have in place to ensure that all of its students are successful.

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Many people struggle to comprehend gross domestic product, seasonally adjusted factory orders, and LIBOR. But the unemployment rate makes sense to everybody. It's simple: when you want a job but can't find one, you're a member of the unemployed -- a nice, clean, percentage number reported monthly by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. But the reported number can be misleading if you're using it to compare it to your personal circumstances. It's the average unemployment rate in a nation where inequality, for better or worse, runs rampant. If you're young and jobless, increasing your marketable skills through education is probably the single best way to defeat unemployment. On that note, Bob Wise, president of the Alliance for Excellent Education, gets the last word: "[T]he best economic stimulus is a high school diploma."

[More Alliance in the News...](#)

Austin school district misses federal target, officials say

American-Statesman (TX)

June 28, 2010

The Austin school district is unlikely to meet federal academic improvement standards for a second year because of unsatisfactory performance on state exams by special education students, district officials said Monday. The prediction is based on preliminary data, and district officials said a report being compiled by district staff was not immediately available. The federal school accountability ratings, which are being reworked this year, are usually announced in August. ... "The even money in Washington is that NCLB won't be changed this year," said Bob Wise, president of the Washington-based Alliance for Excellent Education and a former governor of West Virginia. Wise, whose group is pushing for reauthorization this year, said: "Whatever benefits NCLB has brought, and I think it has been very important to shine a light on problems, it doesn't provide adequate remedies to do something about them. It's a bit like a compact disc in an iPod world."

[More Alliance in the News...](#)

WEBINAR

PRESS RELEASES

ESEA RECOMMENDATIONS

WEBINAR: Can School Improvement Grants Save the Nation's Lowest-Performing High Schools?



On July 1, the Alliance held the second in its series of interactive webinars on what is happening in Washington, DC on education reform. During the webinar, Ann Whalen, special assistant to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, and Alliance Vice President of Federal Advocacy Phillip Lovell discussed the role that School Improvement Grants (SIG) can play in turning around the nation's lowest-performing schools.

In its blueprint to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), currently known as No Child Left Behind, the Obama administration intends to target SIG grants to the lowest-performing 5,000 schools, including the 2,000 high schools with graduation rates below 60 percent.

Mr. Lovell and Ms. Whalen discussed School Improvement Grants, whether Congress would consider alternative approaches to school turnaround as it works to reform NCLB, and what a different system of high school reform could look like. They also answered additional questions submitted by webinar viewers.

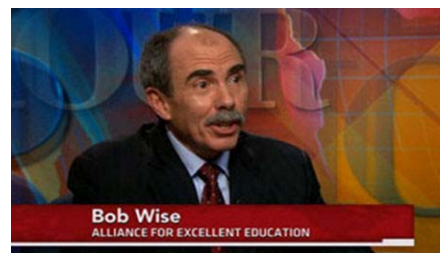
[Watch the complete video or download audio from the webinar.](#)

STATEMENT FROM GOV. BOB WISE ON THE RELEASE OF THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Cutting the High School Dropout Rate Means Economic Gains for West Virginia Metro Areas

New Resource from Alliance for Excellent Education Highlights Need for Common Standards and Assessments in All Fifty States

Alliance Offers Recommendations to Congress on ESEA Reauthorization



On March 15, the Obama administration released its blueprint to overhaul the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, currently known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Later that week, Alliance President Bob Wise appeared on the [PBS NewsHour](#) to discuss the blueprint.

On March 26, the Alliance made [recommendations to the U.S. Congress](#) in reaction to the Obama administration's blueprint. Specifically, the Alliance called for an ESEA reauthorization that would: 1) Codify the goal of graduating all students from high school on time, ready

for college and careers; 2) Hold states, districts, and schools accountable for achieving the goal of college and career readiness; 3) Support state- and district-led school improvement systems that are data driven; differentiate reforms and interventions to meet the specific needs of districts, schools, and students; and address the lowest-performing secondary schools; and 4) Strengthen federal investment in secondary schools, including a formula-based funding stream to turn around low-performing secondary schools as proposed by the Graduation Promise Act.

[Read more about the Alliance's ESEA recommendations](#) or [download the Obama administration's blueprint.](#)

