



## What is Diploma Plus?

Diploma Plus (DP) is a **nationally recognized education model** that provides a **rigorous, relevant, and student-centered alternative** for youth who have been underserved by the traditional education system. DP is an alternative in the best sense of the word; its role is to **transform our students' learning experiences so they will achieve success in high school, college, and careers**. DP Schools are primarily located in **urban areas** and serve **students who are over-aged and under-credited, re-entering high school, or at risk of dropping out**.

## What Are Diploma Plus Successful Elements?

**The Diploma Plus Model is built around Four Essentials for success.**

- Performance-Based Education Approach
- Supportive School Culture
- Future Focus on College and Careers
- Effective Supports for Teachers and Schools

**The DP model has three phases** – the Foundation Phase, the Presentation Phase and the Plus Phase. In all three phases, students work on **projects and assignments with clearly defined competency expectations and content objectives** based on state and local content standards and larger DP competencies. Students are **promoted or graduate as soon as they have demonstrated these goals and passed state requirements**, regardless of the amount of time they have spent in the phase. They also compile, present, and defend a **portfolio containing their best work** across subjects. Students in the Plus Phase are also participating in **internships, college courses, and community action projects** in order to support their transition to life after high school.



I've accomplished a lot more here in a year than I did in my last school in three. If it weren't for this opportunity, I don't believe I ever would have gone back to school. Now I can achieve my dreams for college and a good career.

-Diploma Plus Student, MA



Diploma Plus is made possible through the generous support of:



the James Irvine foundation



Carnegie Corporation of New York

Jane's Trust (of Massachusetts)

**Indianapolis:** The Mind Trust  
Central Indiana Educational Service Center

**Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning**  
**Participating School Districts**

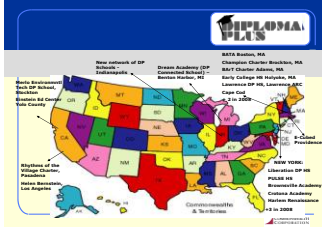
*For more information about Diploma Plus please contact the appropriate office:*

National and New England Networks  
Commonwealth Corporation  
(617) 727-8158 or 413/320-7218

New York City Network  
DP NYC Office  
(212) 732-7224

California Network

Indianapolis  
The Mind Trust  
(317) 822-8102



### Diploma Plus – Growing to Meet the Need

- ✓ Begun in 1996 with two Boston programs serving 100 students, Diploma Plus has since worked with **twenty-eight programs and alternative small high schools enrolling over 12,000 students.**
- ✓ Diploma Plus currently has 23 DP schools or programs: **in New York City, Providence, Indianapolis, and Benton Harbor, and in six Massachusetts and three California cities.**

### Improving Graduation Rates and Post-Secondary Options

- ✓ **84%** of DP students in the Plus Phase (their last year) **graduate.**
- ✓ **82% of DP graduates** across all sites were accepted into and **planning to attend college** (an equal number for 2 or 4 year schools)
- ✓ All Plus Phase students complete **college exploratory activities**, including many who **take college courses at partnering colleges**



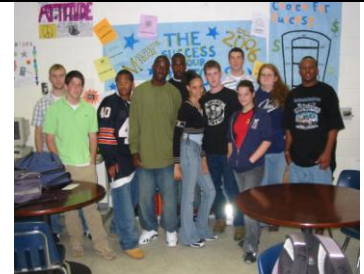
### Improving Student Engagement and Career Preparation

- ✓ When compared to schools with a similar student population, DP schools tend to have **higher attendance rates, retention rates, and passing rates on state tests.**
- ✓ All DP students **participate in career development activities**; Plus Phase students have completed thousands of **internships** in career interest areas.

### Building Valuable Experiences for Our Youth

When surveyed about the impact of their DP experience, **a high percentage of students reported that DP had:**

- ✓ improved their academic performance
- ✓ engaged them in career planning
- ✓ increased their interest and prepared them for college entry
- ✓ addressed their individual academic needs
- ✓ given them leadership opportunities



### Nationally Recognized

- ✓ Named to the **Promising and Effective Practices Network (PEPNet)** of the National Youth Employment Coalition and US Department of Labor
- ✓ **Co-sponsor of “Our America,” a Town Hall discussion between the presidential candidates and low income young adults**, hosted by MTV and YouthBuild USA and supported by the Gates Foundation
- ✓ **President Barack Obama**, in his “Plan for Lifelong Success through Education” includes **Diploma Plus as one of two “Evidence-Based Models to Help Students Graduate”** worthy of replication.

### Diploma Plus: Proven Success

**“Diploma Plus’ success at engaging at-risk youth and providing them with an education is proven,** especially in comparison with the historical performance of traditional schools that do not have Diploma Plus’ unique educational approach, strict performance targets, and support structures.”

The Parthenon Group, from analysis of outcomes of DP Schools as part of the Gates Foundation funded Diploma Plus Strategic and Business Plan, September, 2006

