

# Minnesota Recovery Schools

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

The future of Minnesota recovery schools is tentative. The Minnesota Recovery School Task Force, comprised of recovery school leaders is concerned and working to sustain and maintain recovery schools as a viable educational option for students in chemical dependence recovery. The group reviewed data and identified barriers to the future sustainability of recovery schools.

## **UNIQUE FEATURES OF RECOVERY SCHOOLS:**

- Academic services, support for sobriety, continuing care for students recovering from addiction
- Transitional academic settings or education services leading to high school graduation
- Services for students in grades 9-12; In some cases, grades 7-12
- Support for students with co-occurring mental health and chemical dependency and/or juvenile justice involvement and/or special education needs

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION:**

- There are currently 7 recovery schools in Minnesota in 2012-13 school year (loss of 6 schools in 4 years)
- Current enrollment capacity in MN recovery schools in 2012-13 school year is 278 (loss of 212 slots)
- Only 13% of students under 18 years of age had access to a recovery school (MN DHS 2006)
- Only 10.5% of students between 12-17 years of age had access to a recovery school (TEDS, 2006)
- In 2012, less than 7% of students between 12-17 have access to a recovery school. This percentage drops 5% when 18 year olds are added
- Between the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school year, MN lost approximately 52 or 9% of the seats in recovery schools
- Between 2009-2011, MN lost 212 or 43% of the seats in recovery schools

## **RESULTS OF RECOVERY SCHOOL EMPLOYEES/REFERRAL SOURCES SURVEY:**

- Most students attending MN recovery schools do not have access to public transportation
- School districts are not required to transport students to MN recovery schools
- School districts that do transport to MN recovery schools do not get reimbursed
- Many recovery schools students are unable to drive themselves because they do not have a license or have lost the privilege to drive
- Lack of family resources available to transport or are unable to transport because of work schedules

## **FINANCIAL:**

- Many schools cite financial barriers to staying open
- Due to the fluctuating population of recovery school programs, it is difficult to meet a predetermined budget
- LADCs/Social Workers are essential to the operation of recovery schools; more FTEs are required than in similarly sized schools due to the multiple needs of students

## **LACK OF INFORMATION:**

- Many policy makers and stakeholders are still unaware of the existence of recovery schools as a vital part of the education system and the chemical health continuum of care

## **SUPPORTING RESOURCES:**

- "Fostering and expanding the development of recovery schools" 2012 MN State Substance Abuse Strategy
- Recovery schools are listed in the MN Governor's Alternative Education Week Proclamation of 2012
- "Foster the Expansion of Community-Based Recover Support Programs, Including Recovery Schools" 2012 National Drug Control Strategy