

Increasing our High School Graduation Rate ***A priority issue for our community***

An educated workforce is critical to improving the economic vitality and quality of life in Greenville County. Achieving that goal requires citizens with at least a high school education and the ability to pursue additional training and education.

High school dropouts impose a high cost on our community: lower income and economic growth and higher social and public service costs due to crime, incarceration, drug & alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy and poverty.

Social and public service costs

- *Dropouts in Greenville County are 2.5 times more likely to be unemployed and twice as likely to live in poverty*
- *High school dropouts are 3.5 times more likely than high school graduates to be arrested and 8 times as likely to be in jail or prison.*
- *75% of state prison inmates did not complete high school.*
- *It costs more than twice as much per year to incarcerate a prisoner in our state (\$15,156) and in our county (\$18,367) than to educate a student in Greenville County (\$6,896).*
- *40% of young-adult dropouts receive some type of government assistance.*
- *Higher rates of illness among high school dropouts cost communities an average of \$100,000 in health care costs for each dropout.*

Reduction in income and economic growth

- *The average annual salary of a dropout is \$9,700 less than for a high school graduate. On average, lifetime earnings are \$390,000 lower.*
- *In areas where 30% of workers have less than a high school education, the median income is \$12,600. This compares to an income of \$35,700 where only 10% of workers did not complete high school.*
- *Converting last year's dropouts to graduates would have increased personal income in South Carolina by \$8.3 billion over the life of these students.*
- *85% of today's jobs and almost 90% of the fastest-growing, high-wage jobs will require not only a high school diploma but some higher education.*
- *American business spends more than \$60 billion each year on training, much of that on remedial reading, writing, and mathematics.*

