

Letter: Alliance calls for expanded federal investment in local schools

February 25, 2007

In "High school dropouts could boost state economy" (February 11), Gus Mancuso, principal of Lincoln High School in Wisconsin Rapids, says that schools alone cannot solve the dropout crisis. We at the Alliance for Excellent Education could not agree more. We strongly believe that the federal government, working to support the efforts of local communities, needs to become a more active partner in reforming America's high schools.

Nationwide, nearly one-third of students do not graduate from high school on time, and another one-third do not graduate ready for college and the modern workplace. Yet federal assistance generally does not reach low-performing high schools, leaving them without the resources needed to ensure that students are prepared to succeed in an increasingly competitive global economy. An expanded investment in locally-driven, proven reforms would go a long way towards bringing our schools into the 21st Century.

To help ensure that Wisconsin and other states see the economic gains that will accompany higher graduation rates, congress should provide for an invigorated federal role in transforming our high schools to make every child a graduate prepared for success in college, work, and life.

Bob Wise, President, Alliance for Excellent Education, Former Governor, West Virginia (2001-2005), Washington, D.C.