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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 10, 2025

## **New Data Show Student Success Systems Reduce Average Chronic Absenteeism by 8 Percentage Points and Course Failure Rates by 11 Points Over Two Years**

*Schools Supported by GRAD Partnership Outperformed the Nation in Reducing Chronic Absenteeism*

Baltimore, MD — [The GRAD Partnership](#) today released its [Year Two Impact Report](#), showing that middle and high schools implementing student success systems continue to achieve substantial progress in reducing chronic absenteeism and course failure rates — two strong predictors of high school graduation and postsecondary success. Notably, even though schools supported by GRAD Partnership had chronic absenteeism rates exceeding the national average at the end of the 2021–22 school year, their average chronic absenteeism rates fell below the estimated national rate for the 2023–24 school year.

According to the report, schools that began implementing [student success systems](#) in 2022–23 and continued using them in 2023–24 saw:

- The average **chronic absenteeism rate declined from 29% to 21%** over two years, a 28% reduction
- The average **course failure rate declined from 31% to 20%** over two years, a 32% reduction

In ninth-grade classrooms, where early intervention is especially critical, results also showed meaningful improvement:

- The average **ninth-grade chronic absenteeism rate declined from 31% to 26%** over two years, a 14% reduction
- The average **ninth-grade course failure rate declined from 32% to 22%** over two years, a 31% reduction

These gains come as schools nationwide continue to struggle to recover five years after the pandemic. While the [national chronic absenteeism](#) rate fell from 28% to an estimated 23% over the same two-year period, it remains well above the pre-pandemic level of 15%. Research suggests that [chronic absenteeism has played a major role in slowing academic recovery](#), with [National Assessment of Educational Progress \(NAEP\)](#) scores below pre-pandemic levels in all tested grades and subjects, and two-thirds of American fourth and eighth graders performing below proficiency in math and reading. Findings from the GRAD Partnership impact report demonstrate that student success systems can help reverse those trends by improving attendance, reducing course failure rates, and fostering the conditions needed to support students on a path to adult success.

“This report provides compelling evidence that student success systems can drive measurable progress for students and help schools turn the tide on persistent, post-pandemic challenges,” said Robert Balfanz, Director of the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University, where the GRAD Partnership is housed. “By combining predictive data with input from those who know students best, these systems allow schools to strategically intervene and continuously improve. We’re seeing real results because school teams are empowered to identify trends and act with a shared purpose that centers students.”

Student success systems build on earlier support models—like early warning or on-track systems—by integrating real-time, holistic data with insights from students, families, and educators to deliver the right supports to the right students at the right time. This approach helps schools identify and address emerging challenges quickly and effectively. By also prioritizing student belonging and connectedness, the framework also fosters school-wide initiatives that make school a place where all students thrive and want to be. Student success systems emerged from an unprecedented collaboration among national education organizations that came together to meet urgent student needs in the aftermath of pandemic school closures. Now in its third year, the GRAD Partnership has expanded to over 200 districts across more than 25 states. The initiative is powered by [12 national partners](#) and 15 [local intermediaries](#) working together to help all students graduate high school prepared for lifelong success.

The Impact Report shows the benefits of that collective expertise. It found that a large majority of schools receiving technical assistance from the GRAD Partnership were able to successfully implement student success systems, with 82% achieving solid or strong implementation in their first year, followed by continued progress in year two. Implementation gains were especially pronounced in areas such as combining data with human insights (+22 percentage points) and creating access to holistic, actionable student data (+27 points). These results underscore the effectiveness of student success systems when paired with sustained, high-quality support — demonstrating the GRAD Partnership’s ability to help schools translate research-based practices into meaningful, measurable progress.

“Improving student outcomes at this scale, in such a short time, is only possible through collaboration,” said Patricia Balana, Managing Director of the GRAD Partnership. “The progress in this year’s report reflects the deep commitment of our partners, educators, students, and families working together. We’re proving that with the right systems and support, real change is possible, even in the face of historic challenges.”

[Download the full report here.](#)

### **About the GRAD Partnership**

*The GRAD Partnership is a collaborative, national effort partnering with schools, districts, and communities to use high-quality student success systems so that schools are empowered to graduate all students ready for the future. Its work represents the culmination of more than a decade of research and efforts to develop and validate student success systems involving [12 national education organizations](#). Learn more at [gradpartnership.org](https://gradpartnership.org).*