

# Reflect to Refine and Sustain Success

Unlocking the Power of Data to Drive Student Success  
GRAD Partnership Community of Practice

Apr 23, 2026

**Share in the chat**

What's a recent mistake that helped you grow?

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Advancing Student  
Success Systems

# The GRAD Partnership for Student Success

## 1 WHAT

Partnering with communities to use high-quality student success systems so that schools are empowered to graduate all students ready for the future.

## 2 WHO



## 3 HOW

- Providing multiple types of technical assistance to schools, districts, and states
- Building capacity of local Intermediaries to support schools/districts
- Developing tools and resources



# Community of Practice Learning Arc 2025-2026



Oct 30

## Deepen Data Conversations with Voice Data

*Harness the power of voice data to understand the problem from the user perspective.*



Feb 19

## Reflect to Refine and Sustain Success

*Evaluate the use and impact of the actions and supports, and decide whether to adopt, adapt, or abandon a strategy*

## Unlocking the Power of Data to Drive Student Success

## Build Shared Mindsets Through Data Conversations

*Have the necessary data-driven conversations to build a learning community with common language, purpose, attitudes and beliefs..*

Dec 11



## Design Strategic Student-Centered Actions

*Turn insights into manageable, impactful actions.*

Apr 23



# Objectives

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Participants will be able to:

- Plan a team data conversation to mine for implications for adult practice.
- Utilize student experience data to strengthen your understanding of the problem before identifying solutions.
- Design solutions and plan action-reflection cycles.
- **Reflect on progress and refine actions for the future.**

# Our Team

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**Sarah Howard**  
Deputy Director



**Lauren Musial**  
Senior Transformation  
Coach

**UChicago  
Network for  
College  
Success**

Proud  
GRAD Partnership  
Organization

# GRAD Partnership Community Members

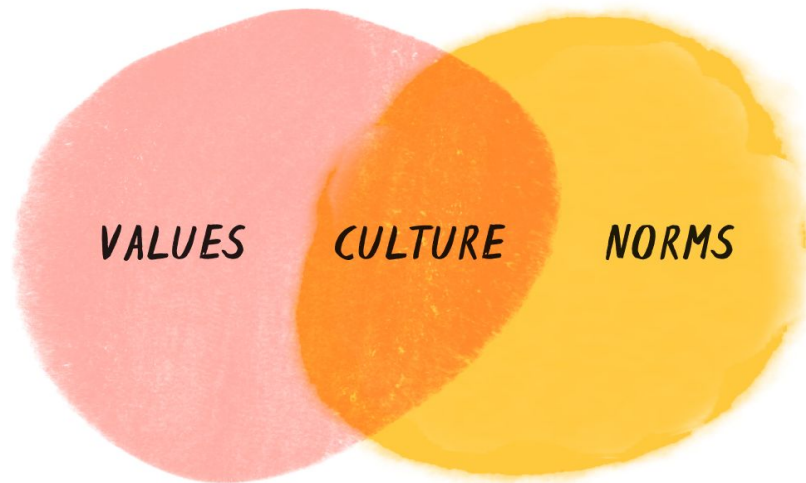
*Welcome!*

In the chat, please share your name, organization, role and location.

SO GLAD  
YOU'RE  
HERE!

# Community Agreements

- **Share to learn:** Share stories and air time
- **Accept non-closure**
- **Use the ideas, keep details in the community**
- **Make room for joy**
- **Turn cameras on in small groups**



**Values** are the beliefs, philosophies, and principles that drive a group.



**Norms** are the ground rules that dictate how people interact.



**Culture** is the interaction between the two; the beliefs and the behaviors of the group.

# Activity Guide

## Link in chat

- Protocols
- Resources

### April 23, 2026 Reflect to Refine and Sustain Success

#### Objectives

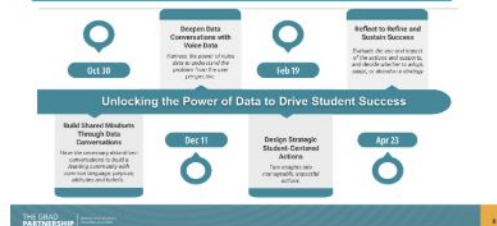
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- **Reflect on progress and refine actions for the future.**

#### Community Agreements

- We, not me: Share stories and air time
- Accept non-closure
- Chatham house rule: Use the ideas, keep details in the community
- Share to learn
- Make room for joy

#### Community of Practice Learning Arc 2025-2026



# Student Success System

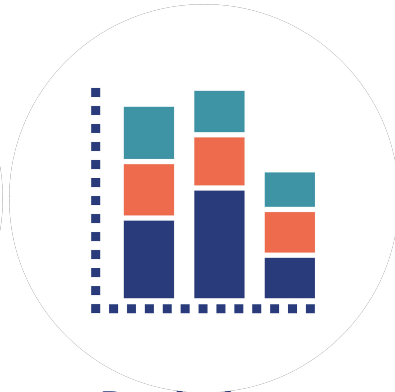
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- A way to organize a school community to help address **school-wide** achievement patterns and school culture issues, increase school connectedness and a sense of belonging among students, and meet **individual** student needs.
- Combines a focus on building strong **relationships** with real-time, actionable, holistic **data**, result in strategic improvement **actions**, and are shaped by student-centered **mindsets**.

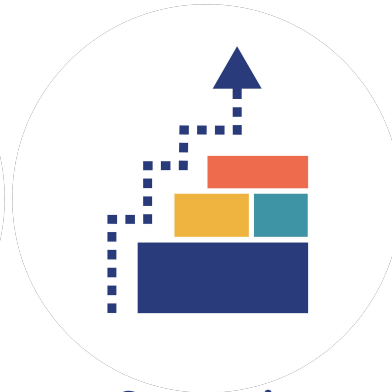
# Four Components of Student Success Systems



**Student-Centered Mindsets**



**Real-Time, Actionable, Holistic Data**

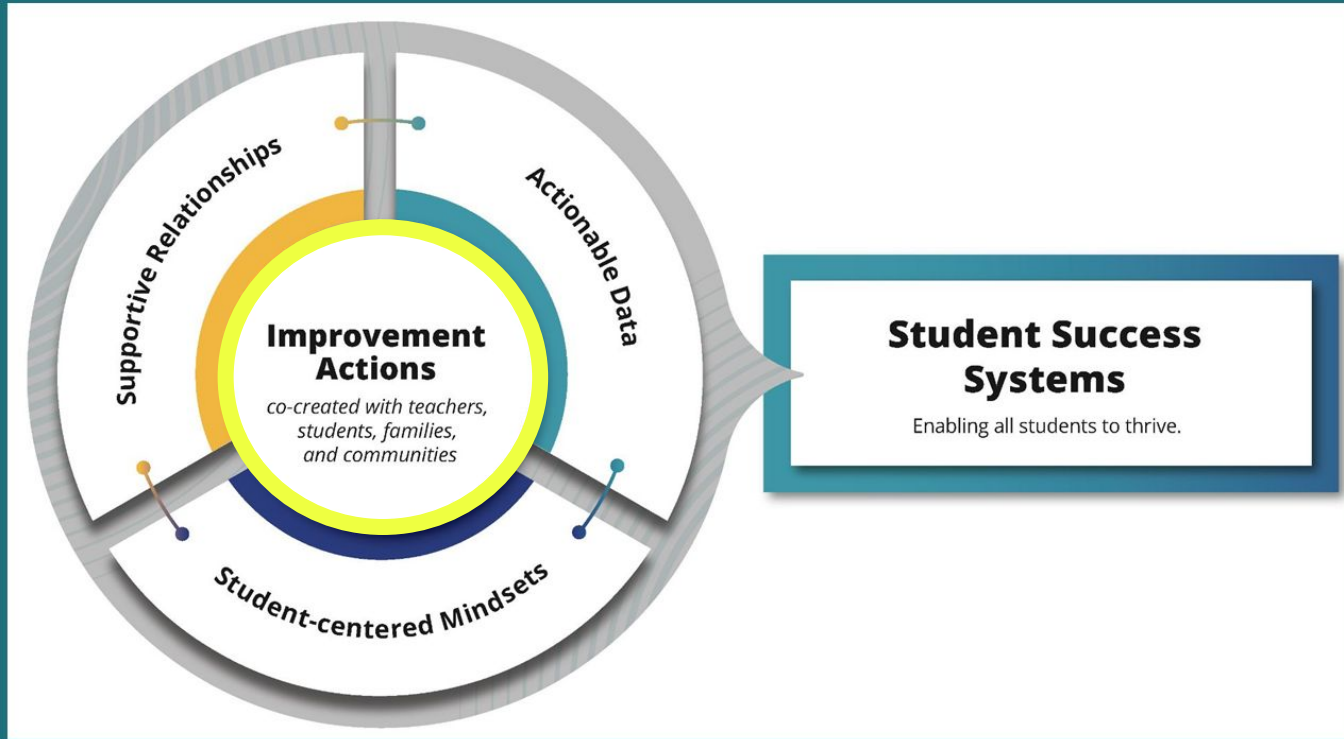


**Strategic Improvement Actions**



**Strong, Supportive Relationships**

## Enabling Conditions



# Defining Reflection

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**The intentional practice of pausing to think deeply about our experiences, beliefs, and actions in order to learn and grow**

# Why is Reflection Important?

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- Interrupts the habit of moving from one action to the next without fully understanding what's working and why
- When we take time to reflect, we improve faster and more deeply than by simply doing more
- This is where the real learning happens!
- Allows us to lead with our whole selves

# Behaviors & Attitude for Reflection



**Intentional  
meeting  
preparation**



**Use of Tools  
& Protocols**



**Model  
Vulnerability**



**Mistakes are  
learning  
opportunities**



**Curiosity,  
humility, and  
generosity  
are valued**



**Embrace  
slowing down**

**Share your reflection sentence in the chat:**

**A behavior or attitude already present in our work is...**

**A behavior or attitude that could be easy to integrate into our work is...**

## Pair Convo: What Could Shift?

*What would it look like to intentionally build in reflection into your routines consistently?*

*What attitude would support you?*

## Pair Convo: Debrief

Drop in the chat something that sparked your thinking from your conversation.

Add a reaction or comment to 1 other person's chat.



# Team Example

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# Context

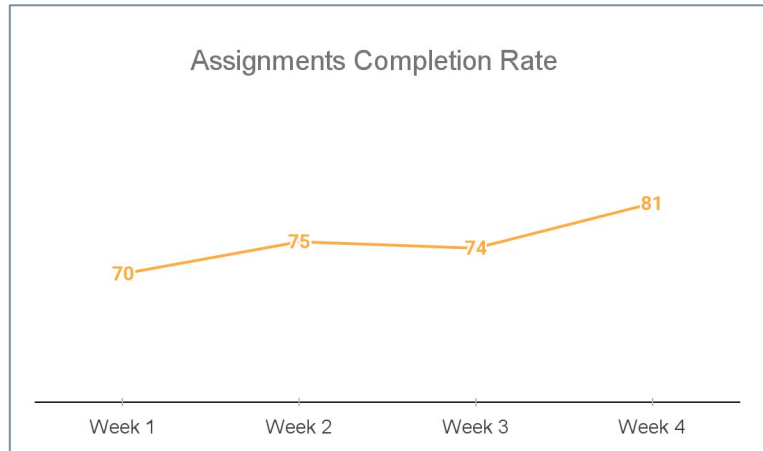
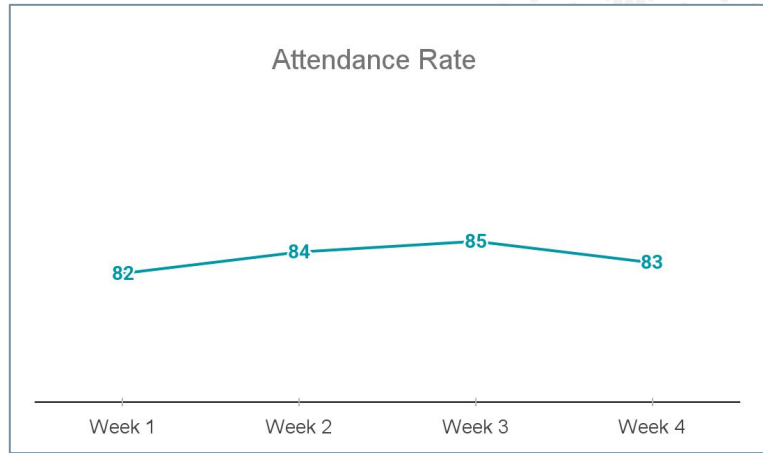
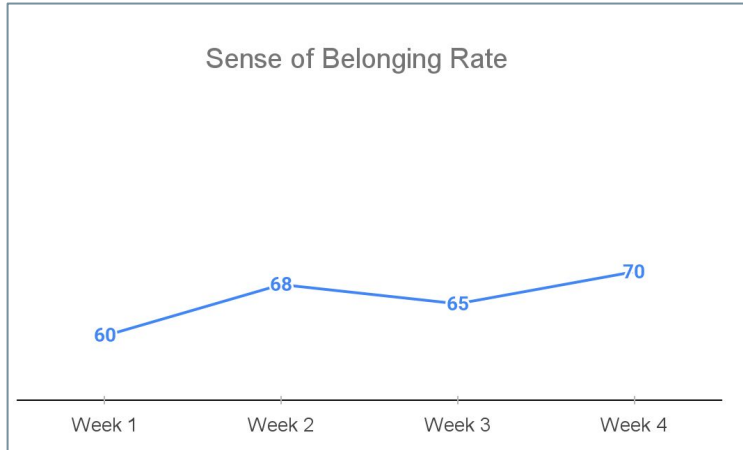
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- Team of 9th grade teachers
- Goal: Improve classroom attendance, engagement & students' sense of belonging
- Change Idea: Last 5 minutes of class, prompt students to answer:
  - What is an example of something you found valuable in today's lesson?
- Timeframe: 4 weeks

# Reflection Example

<p>What did you notice about how students engaged with the routine/action?</p> <p>What did you learn about your students?</p>	<p>What moments in the routine/action revealed students' assets &amp; strengths—academic, cultural, social, or otherwise?</p>	<p>Did your prediction come true? Why or why not?</p>	<p>What signs or outcomes told you that you were seeing success?</p> <p>What does the data tell you about what's working?</p>	<p>What are you most proud of in your process?</p> <p>What are areas of growth?</p>
<p>Students engaged meaningfully. Many chose to discuss with a partner or a friend, which encouraged collaboration and deeper conversation. Some students who are usually quiet felt more comfortable sharing in this format, especially when paired with someone they trusted</p> <p>I learned that students value having a say in their learning and appreciate when their feedback is taken seriously. Their responses revealed a range of learning preferences, from hands-on activities to group discussions to quiet reflection time.</p>	<p>When students shared reflections in pairs or small groups, their social-emotional strengths stood out. They listened to each other with empathy, and some even translated or rephrased ideas for peers who needed more support. I also noticed students drawing from their cultural experiences to explain what resonated with them in the lesson.</p>	<p>Yes, my prediction mostly came true. Students did show up more often, participated more, and complete more work. I believe this happened because they felt seen and heard, and the routine gave them a sense of ownership over the classroom environment.</p>	<p>I saw increased attendance and class participation. Students were more likely to raise their hands, contribute to discussions, and stay after class to clarify ideas. The monthly survey on belonging also showed an uptick in students saying they felt part of the classroom community.</p> <p>The survey results, combined with attendance and assignment completion rates, suggest that students feel more connected to the classroom environment. The qualitative data from their exit reflections gave insight into what teaching strategies were resonating most, helping me tailor instruction.</p>	<p>I'm proud that I created a space where student voice is not only heard but integrated into future lessons. It felt like a shift from teacher-led to co-constructed learning, and that empowered both me and my students.</p> <p>I need to build more consistency in incorporating feedback into lesson planning. I also want to ensure that all students, especially those less vocal, have equitable opportunities to share and influence classroom decisions. More intentional scaffolding and check-ins may help with this.</p>

# Data Collected



# Your Turn in Trios!

Based on the team's reflection & data, decide on a next step.

What worked, for whom, and under what conditions? And how do you know?

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The image displays three line charts arranged in a 2x2 grid (with the bottom-right cell empty). Each chart tracks a different metric over a four-week period. The x-axis for all charts is labeled 'Week 1', 'Week 2', 'Week 3', and 'Week 4'. The top-left chart, 'Sense of Belonging Rate', shows a blue line starting at 60, rising to 65, dipping to 63, and ending at 67. The top-right chart, 'Attendance Rate', shows a teal line starting at 82, rising to 84, peaking at 85, and ending at 83. The bottom-left chart, 'Assignments Completion Rate', shows an orange line starting at 75, rising to 78, dipping to 77, and ending at 81.

Metric	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Sense of Belonging Rate	60	65	63	67
Attendance Rate	82	84	85	83
Assignments Completion Rate	75	78	77	81

**Trio Convo**

- 3 min to read table and charts above
- Four rounds - 3 min each
  - What was the impact of trying these actions/interventions?
  - What worked, for whom, and under what conditions? And how do you know?
  - What are we learning about students?
  - Recommend next step:

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**Share in the chat or aloud...**



***How is this process similar or different to how you currently reflect with your team?***

# Key Mindset Shifts

## ✘ Instead of:

- Did it work? Should we keep this?
- Quick decisions without reflection.



## ✔ Shift to:

- What are we learning?
- What should we try next and why?
- Deep understanding & student-centered.



# Leadership Moves for Reflection

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- Facilitate conversations that encourage openness & curiosity, rather than defensiveness
- Model vulnerability
- Modeling listening strategies
- Building shared norms for how teams talk about data
- Creating space for reflection at the end of meetings
- Continuous Action - Reflection Cycles

Share in the chat...



*What is one possible next step you  
are now considering?*

**Drop it into the chat!**

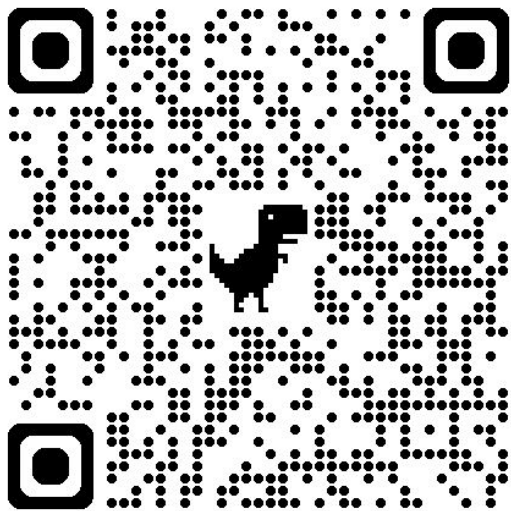
# Closing Moves

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# Share Your Feedback!



<https://tinyurl.com/GPCOP25-26>



## Grad Partnership Community of Practice (SY25-26)

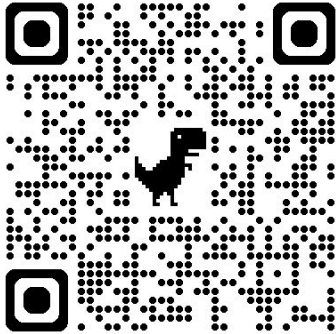
Thank you for being part of our community - and for offering honest feedback and input to create engaging community meetings.

# Stay Connected!

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Find us on:

- LinkedIn (The GRAD Partnership)
- X (@GRADpartners)



**Subscribe** to our newsletter for the latest CoP details!





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# Lowering Armors

*Dr Luke Wood —  
We, Not They*



## NCS Core Values of Practice Driven Data

Data strategy is a **social process** – the data is only as good as the **learning that supports it.**

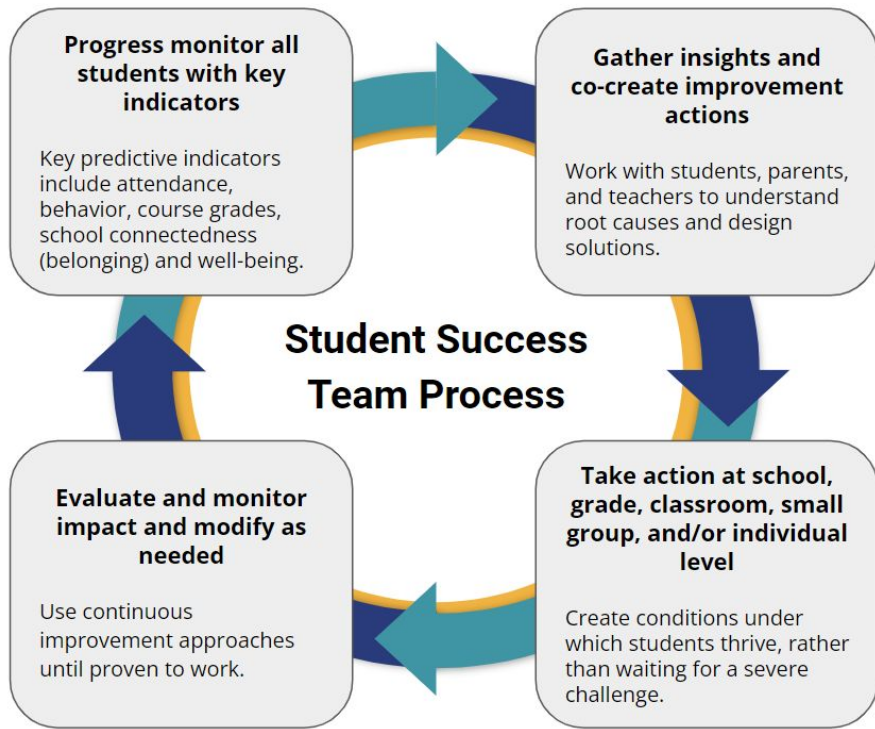
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# Student Success Teams

- A group of adults who work together on a **regular basis** to implement, **continually improve** a student success system
- School community effort: school leaders, teachers, counselors



# Student Success Teams


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- Elements of successful teams:
  - Regularly scheduled time to work together during the school day on - minimum bi-weekly basis
  - Easy access to key, timely data
  - Clearly defined roles and responsibilities
  - Empowered to take action, advocate for changes to school practice and policy.
  - Shared set of norms that support continual reflection and improvement

# Year One Impact

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After one year of implementing student success systems, schools saw **reductions in chronic absenteeism** and **fewer course failures**



Data from the GRAD Partnership's first year show that implementing **student success systems** can help schools deliver supports that help meet the post-pandemic needs of all students, increase course performance & reduce chronic absenteeism.

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# Year One Impact

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- **Chronic absenteeism declined by an average of 5.4 percentage points** during the first year of student success system implementation.
  - 9th grade: 5.9 percentage point decline
  - One-quarter of grades had declines of at least 8 percentage points.
- **Course failure rate** (failing one or more courses) **declined by average of 5.0 percentage points**
  - 9th grade: 9.2 percentage point decline
  - 9th grade with solid implementation: 14.4 percentage point decline

# Year Two Impact

- Schools working with the GRAD Partnership to implement student success systems are able to **meaningfully reduce their students' course failures and rates of chronic absenteeism.**



By combining predictive data with input from those who know students best, student success 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.

**Dr. Robert Balfanz**

Director

Everyone Graduates Center, Johns Hopkins University

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# Year Two Impact

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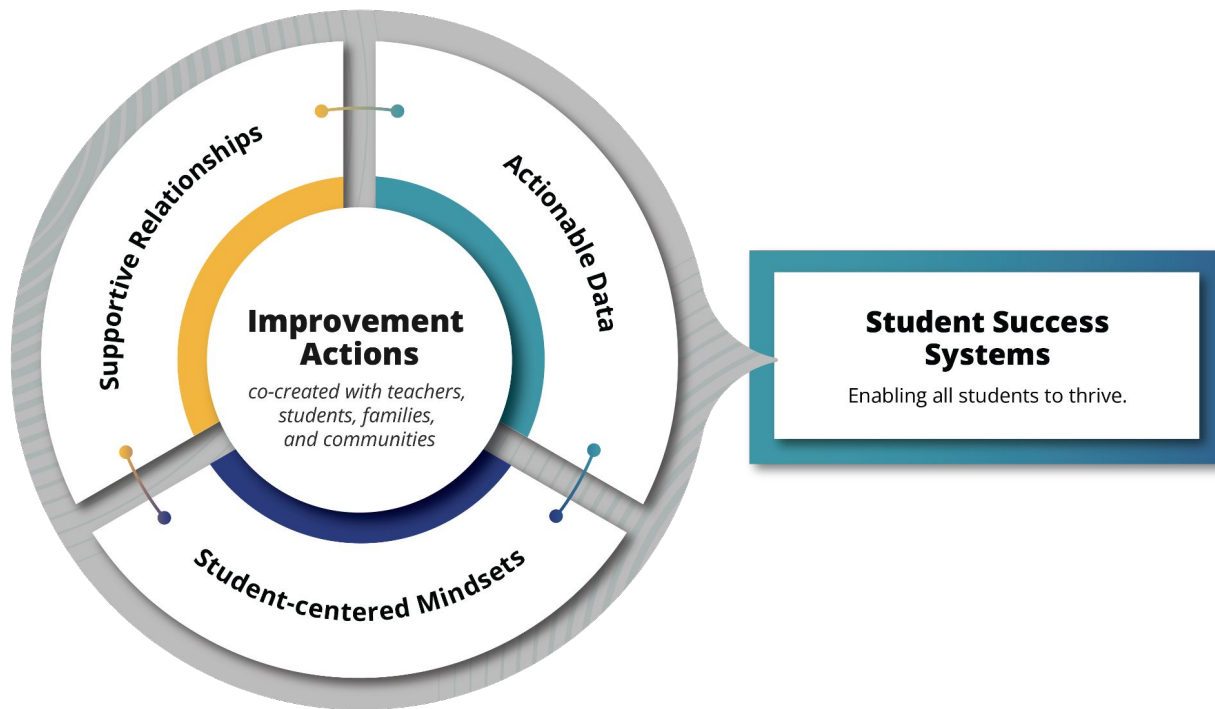
- **Chronic absenteeism declined by an average of 8 percentage points** after two years of implementing student success system.
  - 29% at baseline to 21% at end of year two (28% decline)
- **Course failure rate** (failing one or more courses) **declined by average of 11 percentage points**
  - 31% at baseline to 20% at end of year two (32% decline)
  - Similar improvement across high school, middle school and 9th grades

# Organizations

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# Four Components of Student Success Systems



# Student Success Systems are Next Generation Early Warning /On-Track Systems

A unified system that integrates, extends, and increases the capacity of existing student support efforts, including early warning, on-track, and multi-tiered support systems.

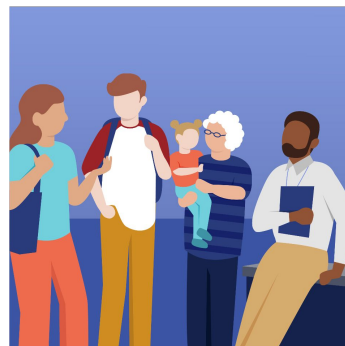
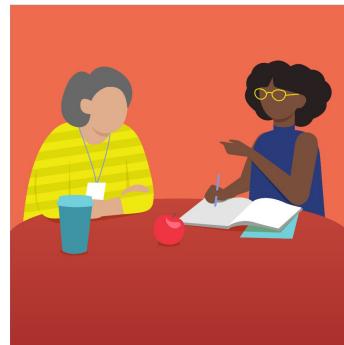
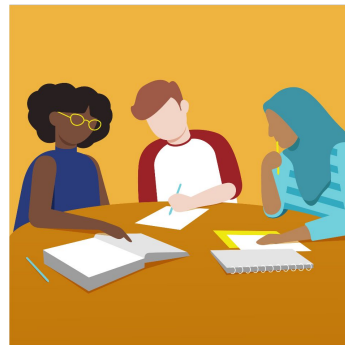


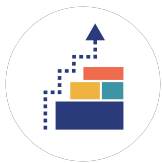
Engaging and supporting all students so they can graduate on a pathway to postsecondary success



# | Strong, Supportive Relationships

- Supportive relationships in all directions:
  - School adults to students
  - Students to students
  - School adults to parents/caregivers
  - Staff to staff
- Reflected at every level of the school system, from individual relationships, to classrooms, grades and departments, schools, and across the school district





# | Strategic Improvement Actions

- Use data & insights to **progress monitor all students** to identify:
  - **Patterns and trends** that can inform action
  - **Underlying (root) causes**
- Identify, develop, and implement **strategic and effective actions and supports** to address root causes.
- Evaluate the impact of the actions, and use **continuous improvement** approaches to modify or change them as needed.

*Supported by professional learning, frameworks, and/or protocols that enable teams of adults who know students well to **work collectively** on a **frequent, planned cadence** throughout the school year*

# Our Communicating Partners

 <p>AASA The School Superintendents Association</p>	 <p>Attendance Works</p>	 <p>Children Now</p>
 <p>CIVIC</p>	 <p>Coalition on Adult Basic Education</p>	 <p>Colorado Youth for a Change</p>
 <p>Data Quality Campaign</p>	 <p>Education Resource Strategies</p>	 <p>Education Strategy Group</p>
 <p>Florida Association of School Administrators</p>	 <p>National Association of State Boards of Education</p>	 <p>National Education Association</p>
 <p>National Education Equity Lab</p>	 <p>National Rural Education Association</p>	 <p>United Way of North Central New Mexico</p>

# Our Advisory Council

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## Edward Anderson

Executive Director, OnTrack Greenville

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## Mark Dunetz

President, New Vision for Public Schools

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## Elizabeth Kirby

Superintendent, Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District

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## Amy Szymanski

Secondary Transition and Workforce Development, Ohio Statewide Specialist, State Support Team #1

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## Kaaren Andrews

National Director, Center for High School Success

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## Zakiya Smith Ellis

Principal, Education Counsel, Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough

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## Risa Sackman

Director U.S. Education, FHI 360

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## Daniel Velasco

CEO, Ensemble Learning

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## Catalina Cifuentes

Executive Director, Riverside County Office of Education

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## Carla Gay

Executive Director, Innovation and Partnership, Gresham-Barlow School District

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## Candace Standberry-Robertson

Director of College and Career Strategy, Orleans Parish School Board

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# Lorem Ipsum

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# Lorem Ipsum



## Lorem Ipsum

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