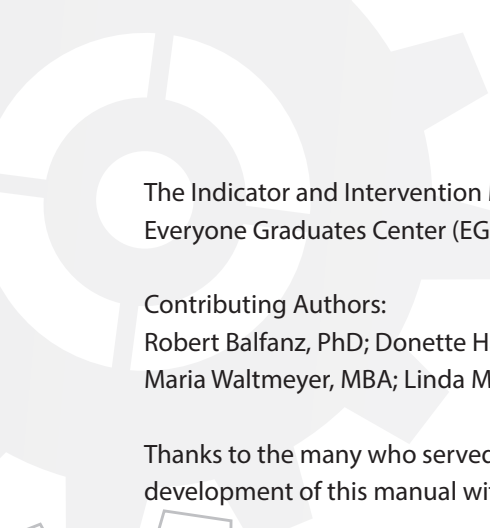


INDICATORS & INTERVENTIONS

A PRACTICAL MANUAL FOR EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS



The Indicator and Intervention Manual was written at Johns Hopkins University (JHU) School of Education for the Everyone Graduates Center (EGC), a program of the Center for the Social Organization of Schools (CSOS).

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Thanks to the many who served as school transformation facilitators in schools nationwide who informed the development of this manual with their experiences.

Special Thanks: Emily Clark, PhD; Ann Maouyo; Amanda Martorana.



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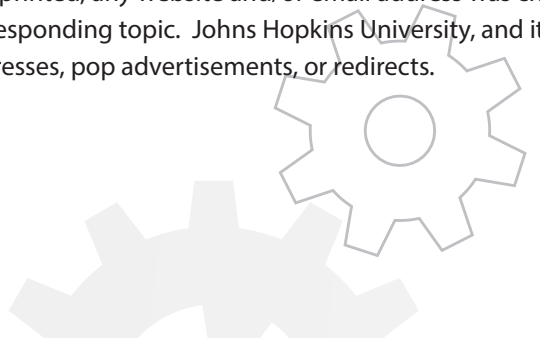


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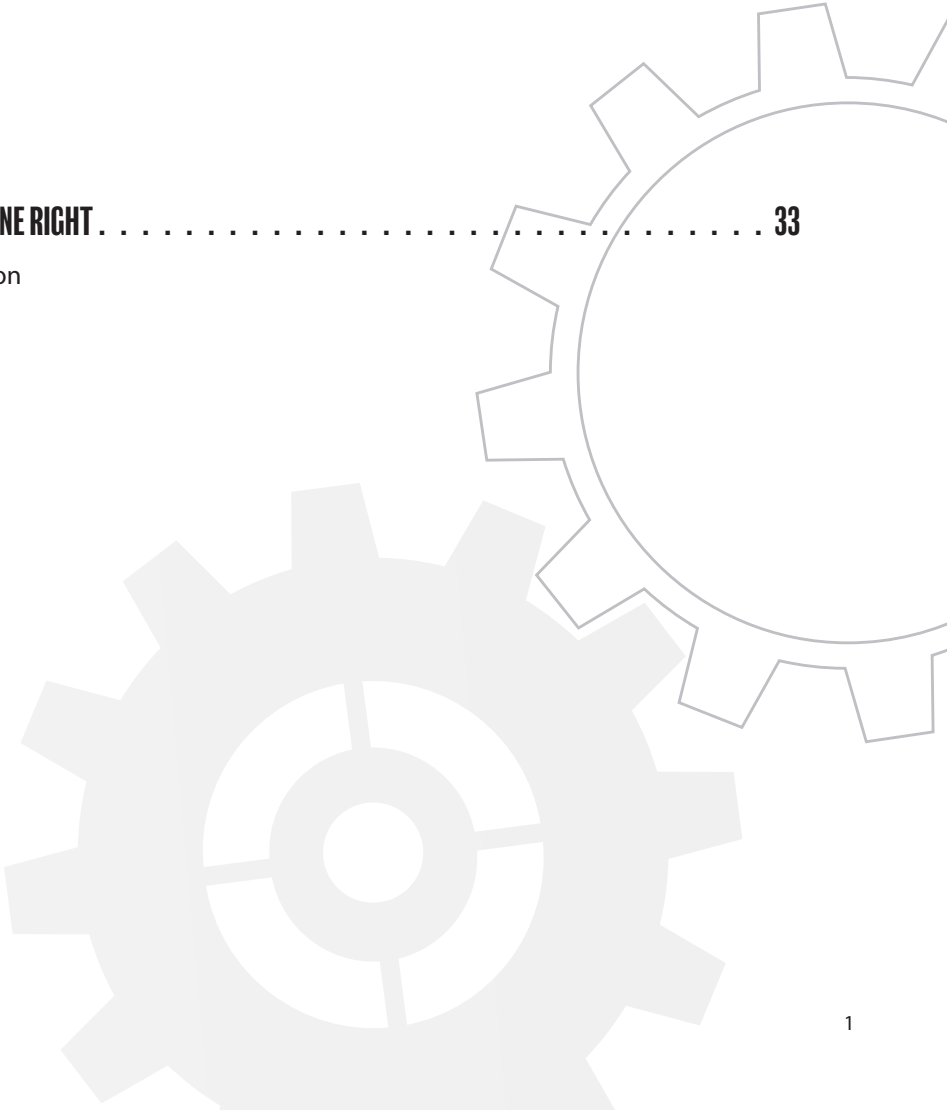
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INTRODUCTION

Early Warning Systems are powerful tools that help keep students on track to high school graduation and postsecondary success. They also help schools improve. The more effective the student support systems, the more they are able to free up the time and energy of teachers and leaders to improve their craft and implement evidence-based practices.

Over the past decade we have learned much about how to implement early warning systems well. This guidebook represents the collective wisdom of experienced facilitators from the Everyone Graduates Center who have worked with scores of schools to help them successfully implement, operate, and sustain early warning systems.

It also captures the wisdom of the many educators in those schools, who learned with us, how to adapt early warning systems to different school environments.

We know that to succeed in high school and graduate prepared for postsecondary success students need to successfully navigate key transition points—from elementary to middle school, the ninth grade, and from 12th grade to a postsecondary institution. We also know that students signal early and often when they fall off-track.

Using a small set of predictive indicators, the **A B C**'s: **A**ttendance, **B**ehavior, and **C**ourse performance – we can identify those students who need some extra supports or help to succeed, in time to effectively provide them.

The work then is to organize the data and human systems needed to make this work, progress monitoring all students against predictive indicators, drawing on human insight and strong relationships with students to understand root causes and developing and continually improving a multi-tier response system—a routine part of school practice.

This guidebook helps show the way.

Robert Balfanz
Everyone Graduates Center Director
Center for Social Organization of Schools Co-Director
Johns Hopkins University School of Education

INDICATORS AND INTERVENTIONS: The EWS Wheel

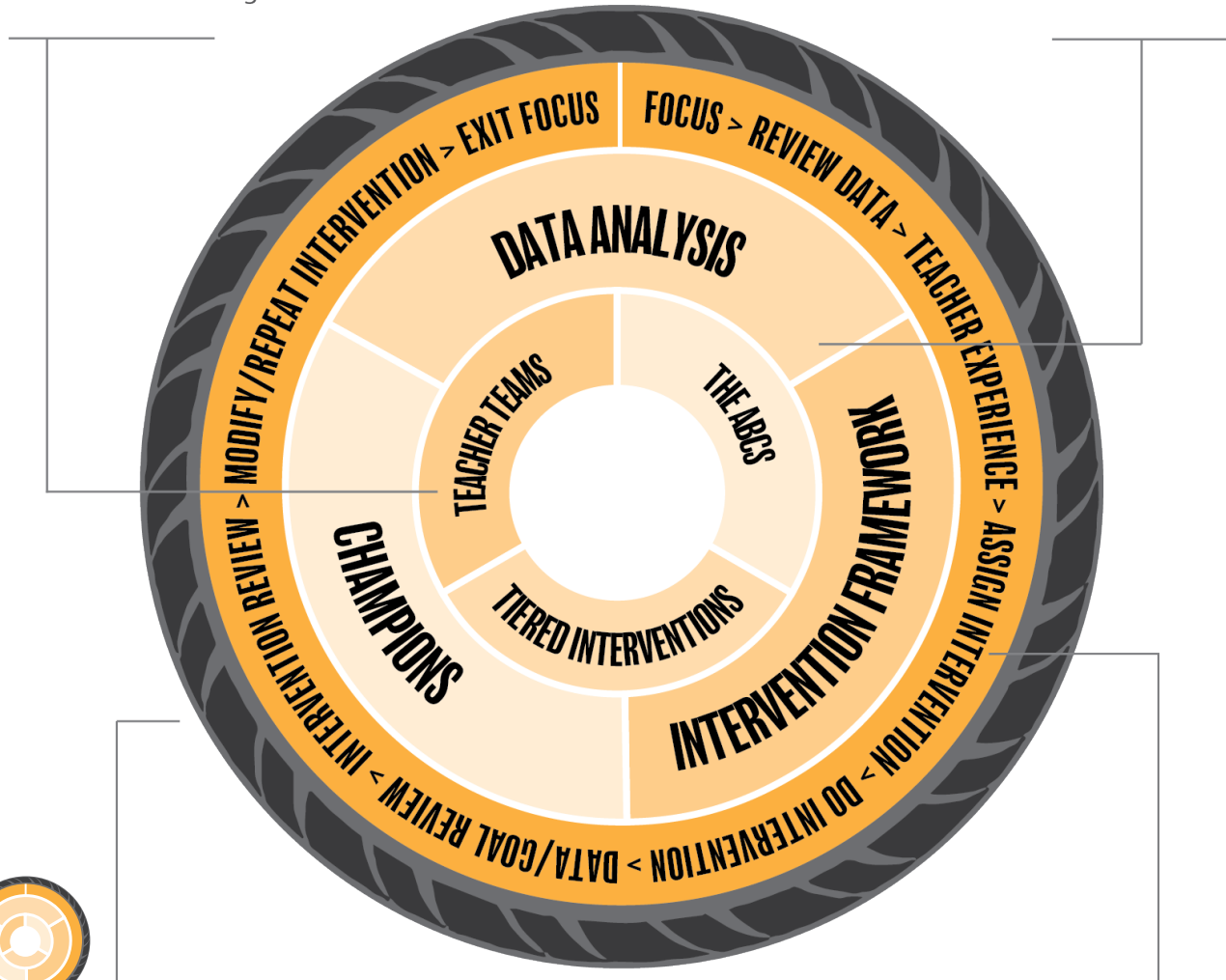
CORE COMPONENTS

Hold the wheel together



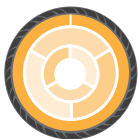
ACTION COMPONENTS

Feed the wheel



BEST PRACTICES

Where the rubber meets the road



THE PROCESS

Gets the wheel spinning





CORE COMPONENTS: Holding the wheel together

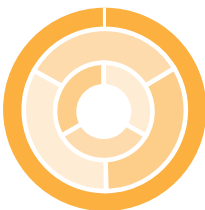
School staff work together to create a multi-tiered system of support to meet the needs of their students. The Early Warning System (EWS) combines the data that accurately identifies students in need with an intervention system that provides teachers access to that data, matches students to appropriate resources, and supports teachers to take action in a reasonable amount of time.

ACTION COMPONENTS: Feeding the wheel

These include

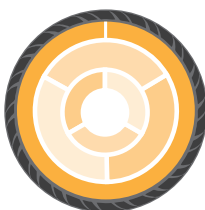
- Building strong whole school interventions for each of the ABCs
- Developing supportive targeted group and intensive one-on-one interventions to augment your school-level preventative actions
- Tracking interventions to see what works, and what doesn't, with individual students

Schools call on students' families, service organizations, and community groups, among others, to serve as a "second shift" of adults for before- and after-school activities, tutoring, mentoring, job opportunities, etc., to keep students on the path to graduation. The ultimate goal is the right support for the right student at the right time.



THE PROCESS: Getting the wheel spinning

The purpose of an EWS is to provide the necessary means to unify, focus, and target efforts to improve attendance, behavior, and course performance (the ABCs). It combines up-to-date student data on the ABCs with a multi-tiered response system to support students. This includes teachers and administrators who have access to this data; time committed to regular meetings for reviewing data and identifying students who are going off-track; the know-how to intervene with students, and the people to make it happen.



BEST PRACTICES: Where the rubber meets the road

The contributors to this manual have spent over 20 years working on early warning systems, partnering with more than 50 schools in 10 states. This experience has led to the development and refinement of best practices for turnaround success. These practices have provided schools with the tools and protocols they needed to support their highest needs students. This manual offers an opportunity for you to access them as well.



A CALL TO ACTION: What is an Early Warning System?

Think of a classroom. Imagine standing in front of it, surveying students as they sit at their desks. What is ahead for each one? What if we could predict which students would graduate and which would drop out? Answering three basic questions makes it possible to do so.

- How many of them are showing up on a regular basis? In their seats and on time?
- How many follow classroom rules and norms, and exhibit appropriate behavior?
- How many are able to understand the classwork and complete it?

You can ask these questions at any grade level. Taken together they are the ABCs — **A**ttendance, **B**ehavior, and **C**ourse Performance — and they seem like common sense.

To be successful at anything you need to show up, know how to act, and work hard. These questions can be, and have been, translated into hard data points collected and tracked for each student. With thresholds assigned, we can use that information to identify at-risk students early. These thresholds are as follows:

- **Less than 90% ATTENDANCE**
- **Any office referrals or suspensions for BEHAVIOR incidents; recorded unsatisfactory classroom effort/citizenship grades**
- **A failing COURSE PERFORMANCE grade (especially in math and/or English)**

The ABCs are also a call to action. If we can look at a student's attendance, behavior, and course performance, and know who is and isn't going to graduate, it places the burden on us, as educators, to do something about it.



The right intervention for the right student at the right time.

~ **Dr. Robert Balfanz**

*Director of the Everyone Graduates Center; Co-Director of the Center for Social Organization of Schools
at the Johns Hopkins University School of Education*

To identify these at-risk students, and provide them with the support they need as early as possible, schools and teachers must put forth a coordinated effort. An Early Warning System allows them to identify, intervene, and change outcomes for at-risk students--those who, without support, would probably drop out of school.



THE ABCS	TEACHER TEAMS	TIERED INTERVENTIONS
<p>Research-based predictors of student engagement: Attendance, Behavior, and Course performance drive the process and focus attention on students who, without added help, would probably drop out</p>	<p>Grade level and cross-curricular teacher teams, sharing the same students, and empowered by the administration to act within and beyond their classrooms on behalf of those students</p>	<p>A coordinated system of interventions to meet the needs of the whole school (Tier 1), targeted groups of students with common needs (Tier 2), and individually case managed high needs students (Tier 3)</p>

Each element above builds on the last to create an EWS. When you use this system, you know who needs your help, what needs to be done, and how everyone can work together to reach the common goal.

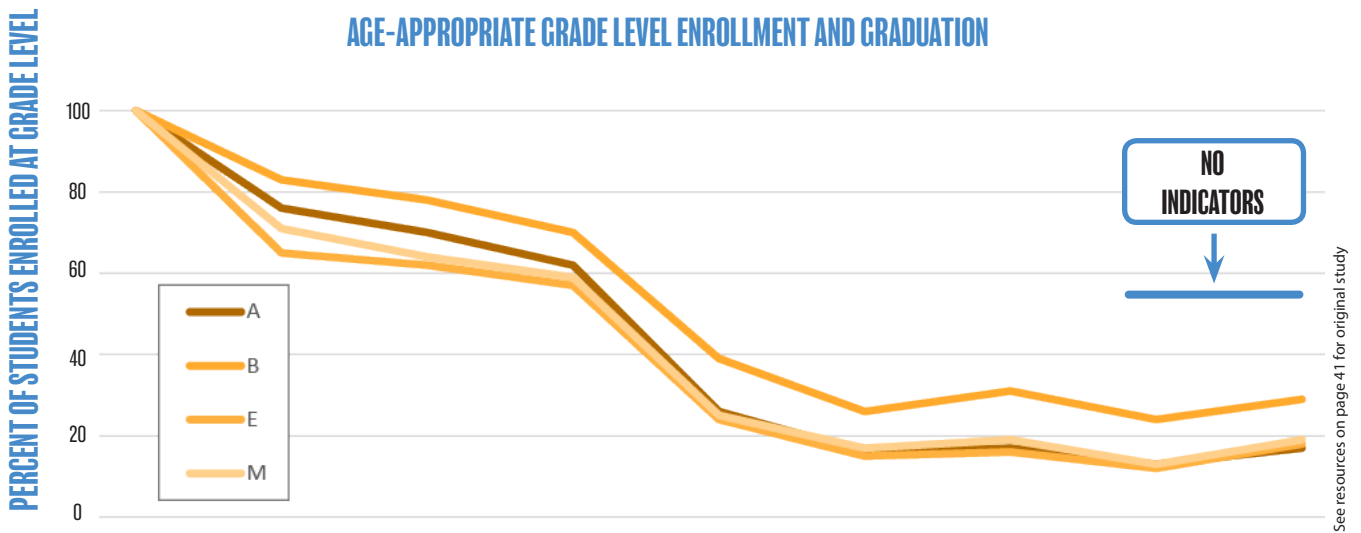
A school-wide system of teacher teams that uses research-based predictors of student disengagement to coordinate and implement tiered interventions.

Begin with the data, the ABCs, and the insight it provides about who needs extra support. Add to this formation and engagement of teacher teams to address those ABCs. Teachers who work together to support students they all share have a much greater chance of doing so effectively. Tiered Interventions, the final component, are coordinated and implemented by those teacher teams to address the ABCs.

THE ABCS: From Ground-Breaking to Sky-Scraping

A student who finishes the 6th grade with less than 80% attendance (A), a poor behavior grade in any class (B), an F in English (E), or an F in math (M), has significantly lower chances than one who shows up, behaves well, and passes his or her classes (the ABCs).*

The graph below, and the groundbreaking research it represents, is the story of the 1996-97 6th grade class (12,000 students) in Philadelphia Public Schools. Almost half had at least one of these indicators (Blue), while the other half didn't (Green); the graph shows where they all ended up. (Note: E and M indicate course failure in English and math respectively.)



	'97	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02	'03	Grad	Grad +1
A	100%	76%	70%	62%	26%	16%	17%	13%	17%
B	100%	83%	78%	70%	39%	28%	31%	24%	29%
E	100%	65%	62%	57%	24%	15%	16%	12%	18%
M	100%	71%	64%	59%	25%	17%	19%	13%	19%

From their last day as 6th graders at the end of the 1996 – 1997 school year, the number of students with indicators who were enrolled at the age-appropriate grade-level gets smaller every year.

- The next school year, 1997 – 1998, only about 3 in 4 students with one or more indicators moved on to the 7th grade. The rest were held back.
- Two years later, in 1999 – 2000, only about 3 in 5 of those who had indicators in 6th grade had reached high school, the 9th grade, when they were supposed to.
- The biggest drop in on-grade-level students occurs between the freshman (2000 – 2001) and sophomore (2001 – 2002) years. Only 1 in 4 students who had indicators in the 6th grade were promoted to the 10th grade on time.
- From that point on, the number of on-track students stays substantially the same: only 1 in 5 student who exhibited indicators in the 6th grade graduated on time or within a year of when they were supposed to.

There is a stark difference between who does and doesn't graduate that is correlated to who did and didn't have indicators in the 6h grade.

A similar difference is observed based on the number of indicators students displayed. Those with just one indicator had a 36% chance of graduation, whereas combinations of two, three or all four indicators were associated with as little as a 1 in 10 chance of graduating. Identifying students with one or more indicators enables us to anticipate 3 out of 5 students who will not graduate with nearly 75% accuracy.

The more indicators a student had (some combination of A, B, E, and/or M) the less likely they were to graduate.

If a student didn't have an indicator, their chances of graduating were nearly twice as good as those who had one or more indicators.

	GRAD + 1
1 indicator	36%
2 Indicators	21%
3 Indicators	13%
4 Indicators	7%
1 or more Indicators	29%
No Indicators	56%

For students from pre-k to 12th grade, whether from urban, suburban, or rural schools, east to west and anywhere in between – some variation of off-track attendance, behavior, or course performance (ABCs) is predictive of dropping out.

The original Johns Hopkins University study presented on the previous page is not the only one showing the importance of the ABCs and recognizing their usefulness to predict who will and will not graduate. The table below shows a small sample of that research.

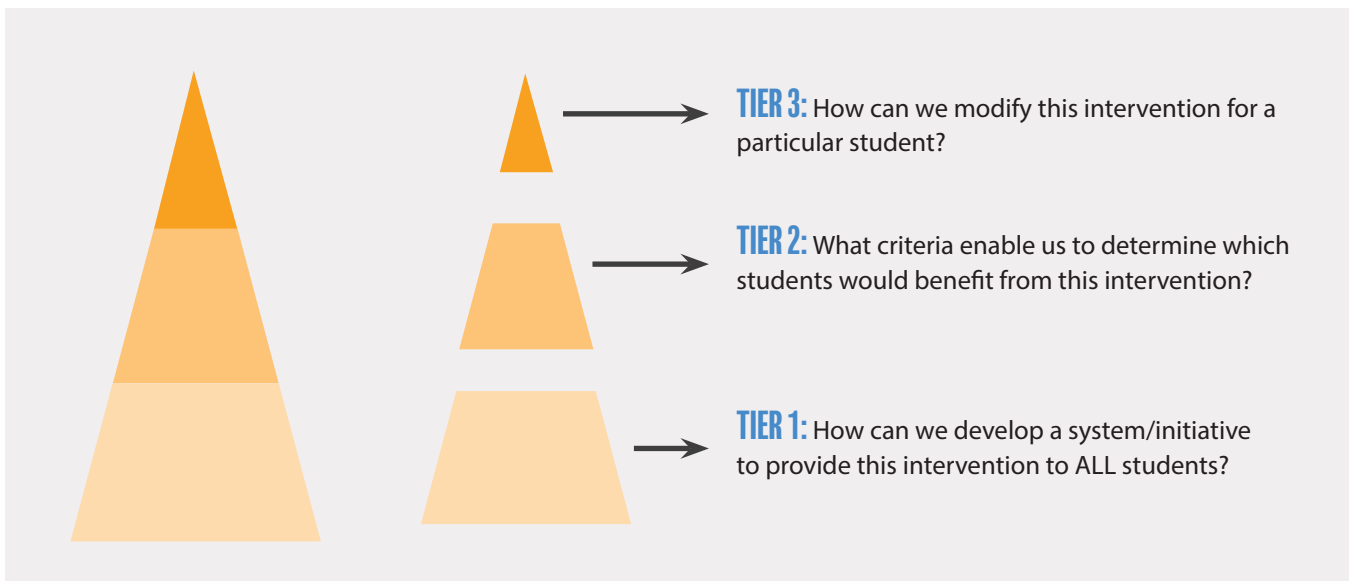
RESEARCH/REPORT TITLE	ORGANIZATION	LOCATION	GRADES	INDICATORS
Developing Early Warning Indicators for the San Francisco Unified School District	Stanford University	San Francisco, CA	8 – 9	AC
Portland Public Schools: From Data and Decisions to Implementation and Results on Dropout Prevention	Bridgespan Group	Portland, OR	7 – 9	AC
Looking Forward to High School and College: Middle Grade Indicators of Readiness in Chicago Public Schools	University of Chicago	Chicago, IL	6 – 8	AC
Getting Back On-Track: Early Warning Indicator Analysis of High School & Post-Secondary Outcomes San Jose Unified School District	Johns Hopkins University	San Jose, CA	9	ABC
The Use of Ninth-Grade Early Warning Indicators to Improve Chicago Schools	University of Chicago	Chicago, IL	9	AC
The Predictive Validity of the Early Warning System Tool [on suburban student dropout rates]	Boise State University	Northwest	6 – 12	AC
Just the Right Mix: Identifying Potential Dropouts in Montgomery County Public Schools Using an Early Warning Indicators Approach	Montgomery County Public Schools	Suburban Maryland	1, 3, 6 & 9	ABC

TIERED INTERVENTIONS: Making the Most of Scarce Resources

Our tiered intervention model is based on the three-tiered model of support developed in the field of public health, and similar to Response-to-Intervention (RTI), which is described as follows:

A rigorous prevention system [that] provides for the early identification of learning and behavioral challenges and timely intervention for students who are at risk for long-term learning problems. This system includes three levels of intensity or three levels of prevention, which represent a continuum of supports. (National Center on RTI)

The EWS intervention model focuses on providing “The right intervention to right student at the right time.” This requires understanding how the interventions can be used at all three levels of the model by asking and answering three questions.



TIER 3: INDIVIDUALIZED INTERVENTIONS

- **Intervention Modification:** Personalizing interventions for high-needs students to ensure they have the most benefit and greatest impact.
- **Data-Driven Discussion:** Using teacher teams to review student data, discuss teacher impressions, and design/modify interventions.

TIER 2: STUDENT GROUPING

- **Intervention Criteria:** Identifying the types of students that would benefit most from receiving each intervention.
- **Student Assignment to Intervention Groups:** Using teacher teams to understand and match the right students to the right groups.

TIER 1: WHOLE SCHOOL

- **Whole School Initiatives:** Ways to get the whole school involved in focusing on the ABCs.
- **System of Best Practices:** Ways to identify and propagate best practices across grade levels, subjects, etc., so as to reach the whole school.

In the implementation of tiered interventions, very few interventions apply to one tier and one tier alone. They necessarily overlap. The examples below demonstrate this at each tier.



Starting with **TIER 1**, every student (100%) in the school, whether currently on or off track for graduation, has access to and receives preventative support.

The Caught You Doing Something Good (CYDSG) campaign is one example. Teachers give students raffle tickets at random times for acting in ways that contribute to academic success. Those tickets are exchanged for an entry into a weekly raffle for prizes. The random nature and the strategic focus on specific behaviors reinforce a culture of success.



In addition to this whole-school climate and culture work, subsets of students (e.g. 30%) are grouped together (**TIER 2**) based on a common factor and participate in either enrichment or intervention activities. Teacher teams develop criteria to assign students to groups and/or group interventions.

For example, all students who miss more than 3 days in a row (criteria) are given CYDSG tickets each day they are present in the two weeks following their third absence. The purpose is to support students in addressing the targeted area of concern (absenteeism).




An even smaller subset of students (10%) receives intensive support (**TIER 3**). Rather than being assigned to an intervention based on a particular factor, these students are provided direct support for all issues they may have.

For example, all of a particular student's teachers may agree on a set of academic behaviors that the student needs to work on, and agree to give extra CYDSG tickets every time they see that student exhibit those behaviors. These students are not excluded from Tier 1 and 2 interventions, but are the focus of more intensive support.

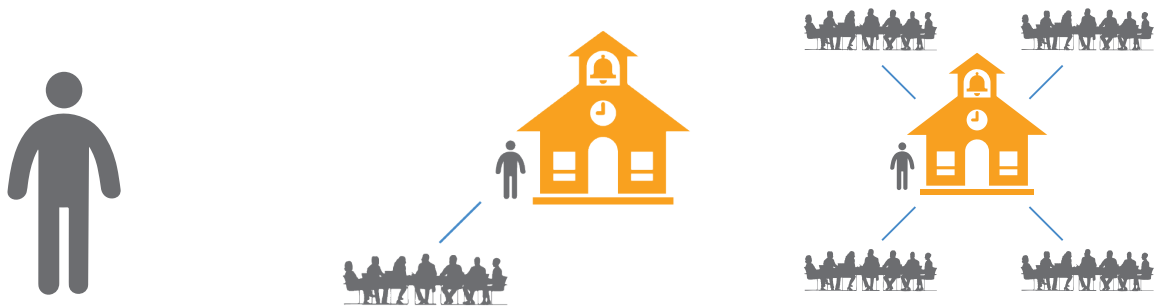


A fully tiered system of interventions and support coordinates the provision of these activities for the most efficient use of resources and delivery of the right level of support to the students that need it.

every  = 1% of the school population

THE TEAM: Everyone Pulling Together

With an understanding of the Early Warning Indicators (EWIs) in hand, we can now determine the scale of challenge facing the school, as well as the level of response needed to meet it through an Early Warning System (EWS) Point Person. Through working with schools and supporting at-risk students for the past 30 years, we have developed a quick guide to determine that need. Each level builds on the previous one.



LESS THAN 25

students with an EWI =
EWS Point Person
that brings in other educators as
needed (*ad hoc*).

25 TO 50

students with an EWI =
Integrated School Level Team
focused on EWIs and guided by the
EWS Point Person.

MORE THAN 50

students with an EWI =
Distributed Teacher Teams,
supported by a school level team, and
guided by the EWS Point Person

AD HOC TEAMS

A single (sometimes duo) EWS Point Person with training in the use of early warning indicators, implementing tiered interventions, and facilitating teacher teams pulls in both school staff and outside resources as needed to support the students that are showing signs they are at risk of dropping out.

INTEGRATED SCHOOL LEVEL TEAM

Can include, among others, building administrators, counselors, social workers, curriculum coaches, school partners (tutors, social workers, etc), and teacher leaders. This team facilitates school-wide instructional goals, coordinates school-wide climate and student achievement initiatives, and supports teachers and teacher teams.

DISTRIBUTED TEACHER TEAMS

Teacher teams are assembled based on grade level and/or content.

Grade Level Interdisciplinary Teams: Student schedules typically include four core subject area classes/teachers as well one or two electives. Scheduling students into cohorts taught by the same four core teachers (and possibly taking the same electives) sets the stage for an interdisciplinary teacher team.

Content Area Teams: Includes teachers who each the same course or share the same subject area. For the former, teams work to horizontally map and plan instruction/assessment. For the latter, teams work to vertically map and plan instruction that flows coherently from one grade level to the next.

Teacher teams are empowered to improve student engagement (the ABCs), and therefore graduation rates, when they




- Are given parameters for action
- Share the same cohort of students
- Have time and space to collaborate
- Have access to their students' data

These components are all crucial to give teacher teams the greatest possibility of success. They know what they should be doing. They know when and where the work takes place. They all know the students they are working with. And, they know how all those students are doing with the indicators.

Two further questions must be answered for teacher teams to be effective.

- Who is present at each meeting?
- What are they doing?

The chart on the right shows who should attend team meetings at the three levels listed on the previous page: an *ad hoc* team where stakeholders are pulled in as needed; a school-level team focused on coordinating interventions through support staff, or teacher teams comprised of teachers who see the students every day.

WHO ATTENDS TEAM MEETINGS?	AD HOC 	SCHOOL 	TEACHER 
EWS POINT PERSON	Always	Always	As Needed
ADMINISTRATORS	As Needed	Always	As Needed
COUNSELORS	As Needed	Always	As Needed
SOCIAL WORKERS	As Needed	Always	As Needed
SPECIAL EDUCATION	As Needed	Always	Always
TEACHER LEADERS	As Needed	Always	Always
CORE CONTENT TEACHERS	As Needed	As Needed	Always
ELECTIVE CONTENT TEACHERS	As Needed	As Needed	As Needed
SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF	As Needed	As Needed	As Needed
OUTSIDE ORGANIZATION	As Needed	As Needed	As Needed

To reach the point of actions to support students, regular participants assume key roles.

- **RECORDER:** Fills out action plans.
- **TIMEKEEPER:** Ensures that time limits for agenda items are respected.
- **FACILITATOR:** Ensures that meeting norms are followed.
- **EVERYONE:** Is prepared to discuss details about their students, is aware of available resources, and is looking for solutions.

These roles foster efficiency during, and continuity between, meetings.



COORDINATION: What Does an EWS Look Like?

EWS CORE COMPONENTS

The previous section introduced core components of an EWS. It starts with a call to action focused on student engagement and based on research around the key indicators of Attendance, Behavior, and Course Performance (the ABCs). Focus on these indicators will enable you to provide the right intervention to the right student at the right time.

To implement an EWS, you must decide who needs to be included and what supports are available to address students' needs.

Teams are a key component of an EWS, whether at the school level (composed of administrators, counselors, teacher leaders, and other support staff), or at the classroom level, comprised of teachers who all work with the same students.

Depending on what the data says, teams identify trends and develop tiered interventions to address whole-school and/or targeted group and individual needs.

EWS ACTION COMPONENTS

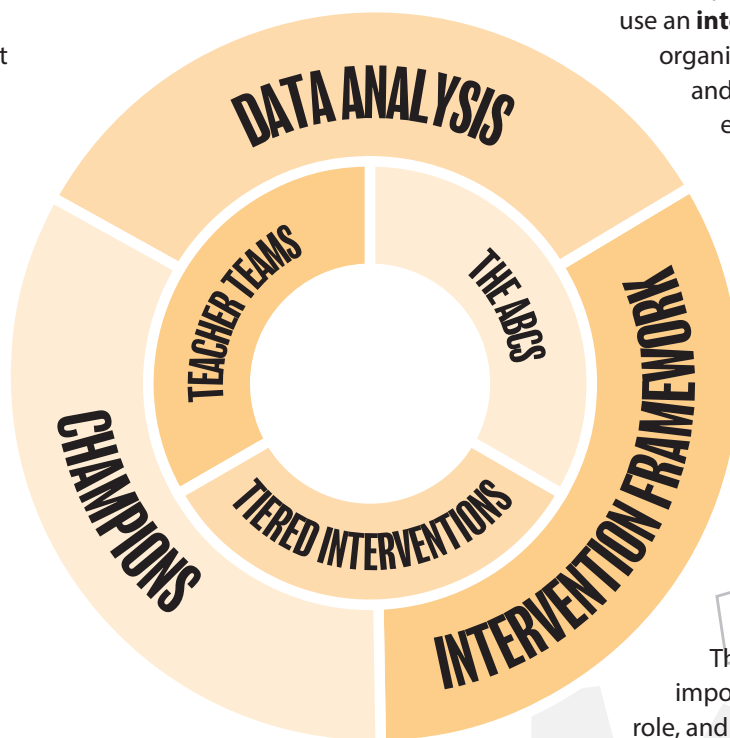
The next section delineates three key action components that an EWS needs to function effectively. These build on the core components previously defined (center of the wheel below) and illustrate how the EWS works (outside of the wheel).

The focus of EWS **data** is the ABCs. How can teams use this data/information to support students, address their indicators, and improve their outcomes?

To achieve improved outcomes, teams use an **intervention framework** to organize their thought processes and to define and implement effective interventions.

An intervention will be ineffective are nothing without a nurturing, caring adult to act as its **champion**. A champion is a member of the EWS team who takes the lead on a specific intervention or in supporting an individual student or group of students.

This section will address the importance of champions, their role, and characteristics of effective champions.



DATA ANALYSIS: Understanding for Action

With more and more data tracked and analyzed in schools, the three rules listed at right will help select data that is useful for action. Data that meet all the criteria listed are considered indicators, while those that miss one or more criteria are viewed as Influencers.

INDICATORS: The ABCs of Attendance, Behavior, and Course performance meet the criteria. They are recorded regularly and reliably in most student information systems. Research has shown that their depiction of students' classroom engagement is predictive of later outcomes. Finally, schools can intervene to improve students' engagement levels as measured by the ABCs and thereby their likelihood of graduating.

	RELIABLE	PREDICTIVE	ACTIONABLE
FAMILY HISTORY	●	●	●
STANDARDIZED TESTS	●	●	●
TEACHER INTUITION	●	●	●
ATTENDANCE	●	●	●
BEHAVIOR	●	●	●
COURSE PERFORMANCE	●	●	●

INFLUENCERS: are data points that do not meet all the criteria of focus data, yet can influence how a student experiences those indicators and ways the school can intervene to improve them. For example, students' family graduation history is both reliable (school records) and predictive (parent/sibling dropout research), but it is not actionable. A school cannot go back in time and change that history. A school can, however, tailor interventions to support students if that history begins to influence their attendance, behavior, and/or course performance.

Data analysis for educators is not the same as data analysis for a university statistics department or a district accountability/research office. Data analysis for an educator, whose full-time job is not crunching numbers, needs to be efficient and action-oriented.

DATA FOR ACTION

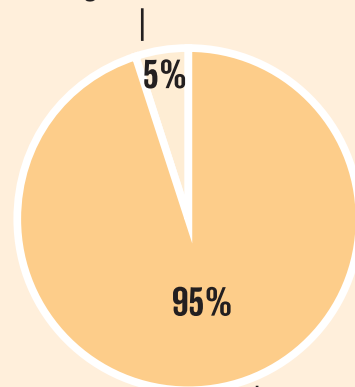
The EWS Team uses data to plan and implement interventions. Data tracking and analysis, however, is not the goal. Several simple rules help identify which data to focus on.

- Not all data is created equal – focus on **RELIABLE DATA**
- Not all data tells the whole story – focus on **PREDICTIVE DATA**
- More is not better – focus on **ACTIONABLE DATA**

DATA AS ACTION

Tracking/analyzing data is not the same thing as using data

Time talking about data



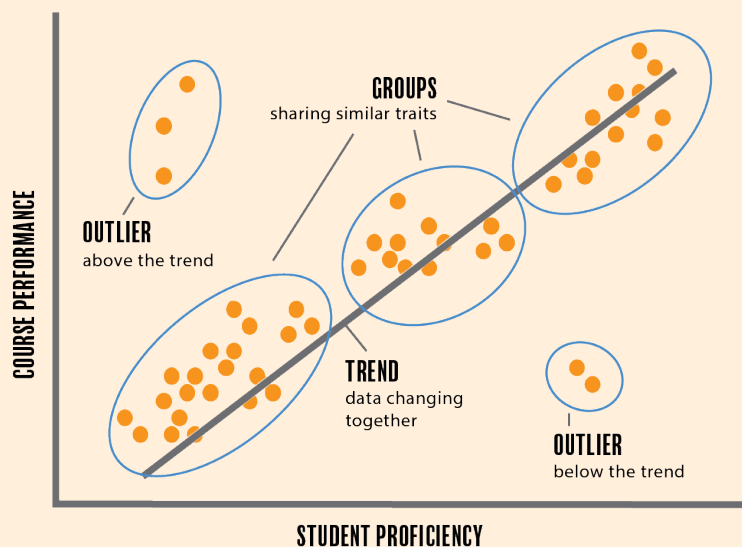
Time using data to act

Using **DATA FOR ACTION** requires understanding the difference between indicators and influencers, and directs educators to interventions and best practices for their student populations so they can target their actions more efficiently. Time devoted to actions, interventions, and best practices should dramatically overshadow time spent analyzing the data itself. For every minute spent analyzing data, 20 minutes should be spent putting what was learned to work for the benefit of students.

3 QUICK DATA ANALYSIS STRATEGIES

These quick strategies get to the most important question: how can we use this information to support students and address indicators?

- **GROUPS:** A data point may share similarities with a few other data points, but not with the rest. What similarities bring them together, and how can we use that information to effect change?
- **TRENDS:** As we compare two different areas of need, we are looking for an overall similarity between all the data points. Is it positive (i.e., as one data point goes up, so does the other)? Or is it negative (as one goes down so does the other)?
- **OUTLIERS:** Identify data points that do not conform to the trends seen in the rest of the data. Whether they are above or below the trend, these data points do not conform to the rest of the data. Outliers serve as teachable moments and can be learned from.



To better illustrate each of the above strategies, let's compare student proficiency (influencer) to course performance (indicator).

Typically, there is a positive trend. As student proficiency goes up, so does course performance. Within that trend, there may be groups of students who share common traits.

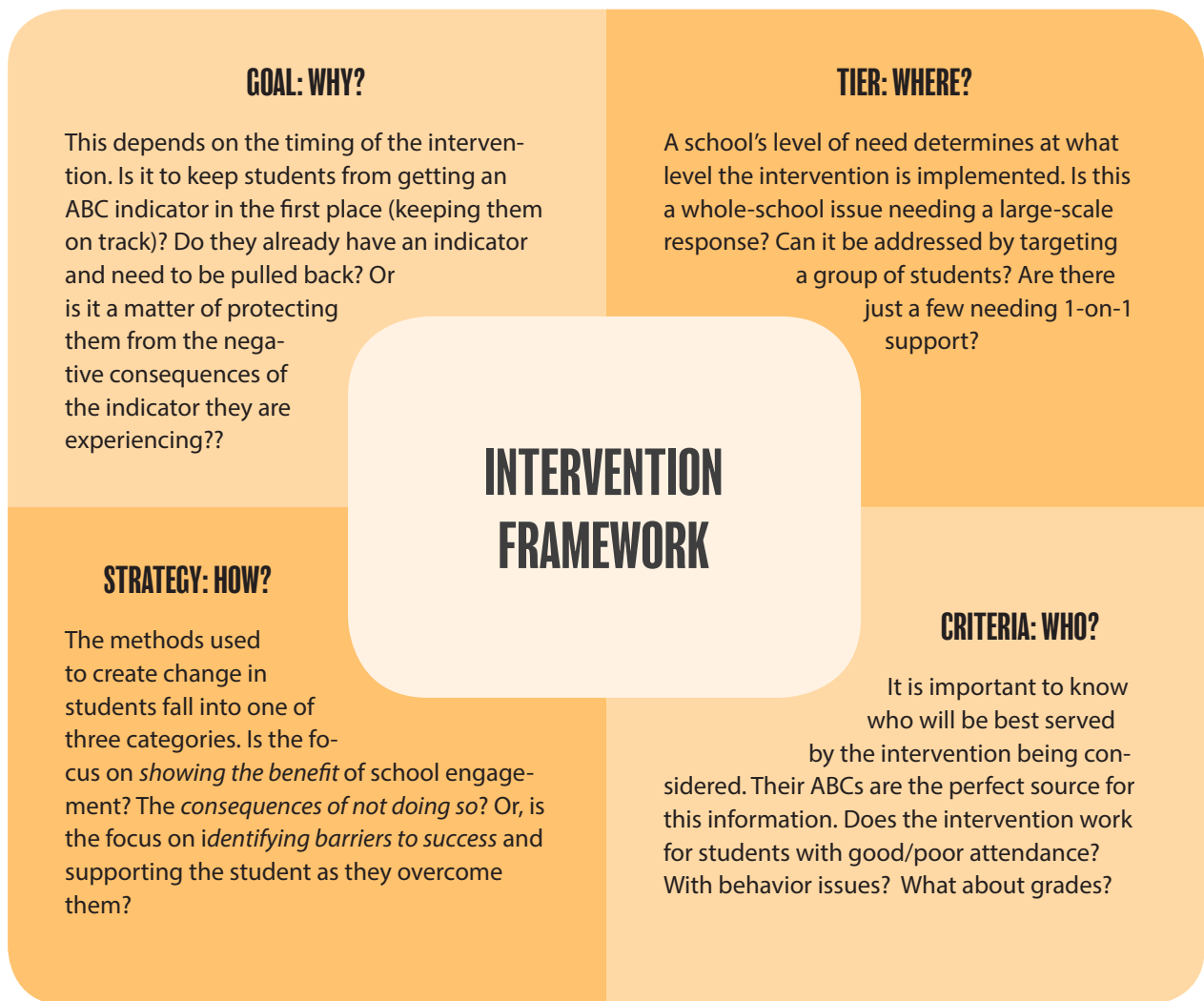
For those who scored low on the tests and are not doing so well, how is their behavior? Did they all miss a day with a key lesson? Finally, there are those students who scored well on the test, but are not doing well in class, and vice versa. Why? How?

See page 36 for developing an EWS spreadsheet that uses not only a student's influencers and indicators, but also the interventions used to support them.



INTERVENTION FRAMEWORK: Tools and Processes

Analyzing data to identify trends, groups, and outliers must lead to action to foster student success (remember: 5% talk and 95% action). The first step is determining what actions to take. Experience in many schools and districts across the country has shown that most successful actions can be understood by considering the four factors identified in the framework shown below.



TAKEN TOGETHER THIS FRAMEWORK —

- the timing and purpose of the intervention
- at what level it will be implemented
- what methods will be used
- the criteria for who will benefit most

— will focus a team's understanding of interventions, so they can design, assign, and implement them for greater impact.

Each of those four factors includes three options that help schools frame their work designing, assigning, organizing, and evaluating interventions.

GOAL	TIER	STRATEGY	CRITERIA
Prevention	Whole School	Potential Benefits	Attendance
Alleviate	Targeted Groups	Consequences	Behavior
Recovery	High Need Individuals	Overcoming Barriers	Course Performance

In many ways it's like fill-in-the-blank. As the school is determining what issues need addressing, and how to address them, they can use the chart above to complete a statement like the ones below.

Starting with the intervention, this statement can help us to determine which types of students an intervention would best support:

“[INTERVENTION] will [GOAL] a/the [TIER] from falling off-track by [STRATEGY] and is best for [CRITERIA]”

EXAMPLE: "A Caught You Doing Something Good Campaign (intervention) will prevent (goal) the whole school (tier) from falling off-track by teaching students the benefit (strategy) of successful behaviors and is best for students who have minor issues with the ABCs (criteria)."

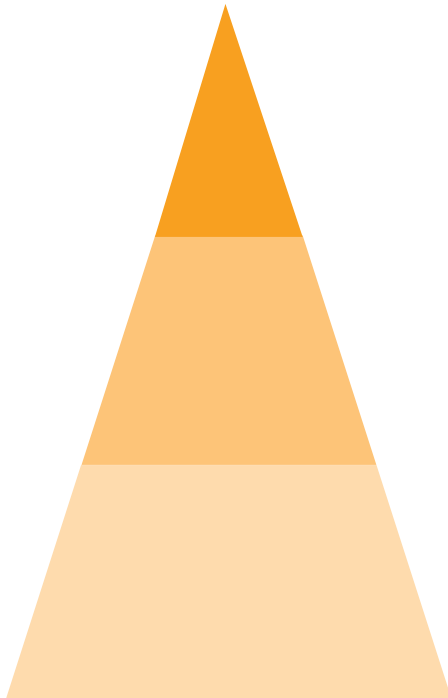
Or, starting with the student or students, the statement below can help determine which interventions would best support that student or students.

“The/A [TIER] needs help [STRATEGY] to address [CRITERIA] so they can [GOAL] from falling off-track.”

EXAMPLE: "A high-needs student ((tier) needs help overcoming transportation issues (strategy) that lead to poor attendance (criteria) so they can keep (goal) from falling off-track."

CHAMPIONS: From Case to Project Manager

Assigning a champion for each intervention/student identifies a point person to coordinate, provide information, and hold the team accountable for their work. All champions have the same goal — improving student outcomes — but their approach to that goal will differ based on the tier and type of the intervention they are championing.



At the top of the pyramid, **TIER 3**, the focus is on supporting and guiding the individual students they are championing. Acting as mentors, they spend time building relationships and trust, and working on individual student issues.

As like the Venn Diagram on the next page illustrates, **TIER 2** targeted group interventions focus on both the intervention and individual students. Champions work to build relationships with the students, but with the goal of providing a specific intervention.

At **TIER 1**, whole-school initiatives that make up the base of the intervention pyramid, champions act like project managers. They focus their attention on the quality of the intervention itself.

GUIDE FOR BEING A CHAMPION

The following quick questions can help champions leading interventions determine fidelity of implementation and ensure that everything possible is done to have as great an impact as possible.

- **FOR ALL TIERS:** How engaged are my students in the intervention? Are they passively going along or are they active participants?
- **FOR TIERS 1 AND 2:** How regularly do I have students engaged? Am I engaging with the same students multiple times or multiple students once or twice?
- **FOR TIER 1:** How many students have I engaged? What is the total number? Or, what is the participation rate?

This is done informally throughout the intervention, but is also used while reviewing the intervention during the follow-up meeting (see pg. 28).

CASE MANAGEMENT

What it means to be a mentor and support a focus list of high-needs students:

- Mentors encourage students, making them feel wanted in school and missed when they are absent.
- They identify (and create as necessary) activities that meet their mentees' needs.
- Mentoring Best Practices: They keep notes, share insights with admin/teachers, celebrate student achievements, attend teacher meetings, and communicate with families.

The stages of mentoring include developing rapport/trust, setting/reaching goals, and bringing closure. It is important to note that mentors cannot be successful if there is not a system in place supporting their work: training new mentors, providing space for conversations, and coordinating communication between mentors, parents, and teachers.



PROJECT MANAGEMENT

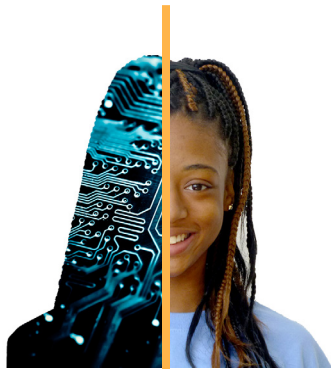
Champions at this level act to initiate, plan, lead, execute, and close out the intervention or initiative. They are expected to

- Track and monitor the intervention's progress, adapting as needed
- Conduct any PD/training for faculty, staff, and any school partners involved with the intervention
- Distribute responsibilities and coordinate among team members as well as any school partners
- Engage in data analysis throughout the intervention on fidelity of implementation and impact on outcomes

It is important for champions to conduct a reflective review after the intervention is complete to determine whether and how it had an impact on student outcomes.

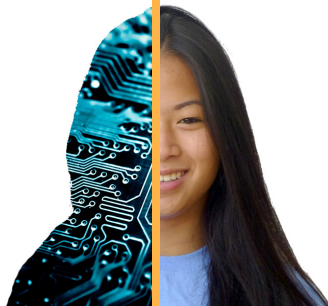


THE PROCESS: What Steps Does an EWS Take?



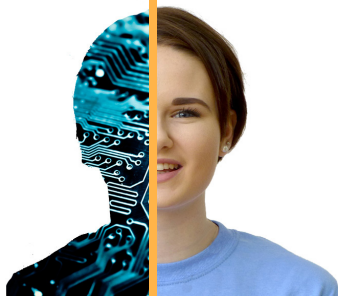
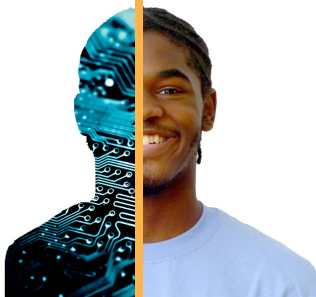
This section will outline a series of steps and strategies that are key to implementing an EWS effectively. They represent a process that connects the core and action components from the previous two sections to the interventions taken to improve student outcomes. After analyzing the data to determine a focus and designing and assigning interventions, teams must carry out those interventions, and, finally, determine their impact.

This process of EWS meetings and the "Nine Steps" brings the core and action components together in a sequence of effective practices.

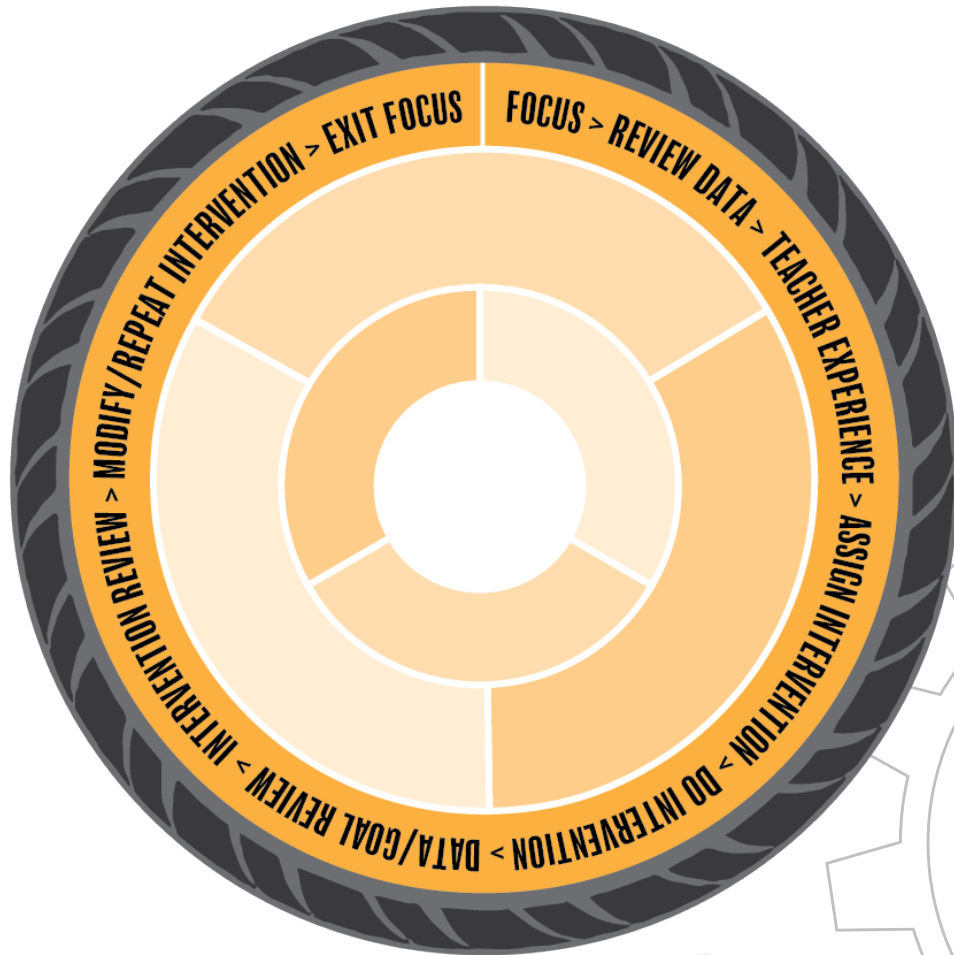


The purpose of the EWS Meeting is to select the appropriate intervention for a single high-needs student, a group of students who share a common concern, or the whole school in a preventative action (pg. 10). The tiered interventions are based on what the data identifies as indicators needing to be addressed (pg 15). After an intervention is assigned and completed, what's next? You never want to "do" an intervention just to say you've "done" something.

This section will specify the steps needed after the intervention has been implemented. Follow-up determines the IMPACT of the intervention. If it's not making an impact, then it may not be something to continue, or it may require modification. Finally, this section will explore the relationship between implementation and impact and provide a matrix to determine the pluses and minuses of implementation vs. impact.



NINE STEPS OF EWS INTERVENTION IMPLEMENTATION



1. Focus
2. Review Data
3. Teacher Experience
4. Assign Intervention
5. Do Intervention
6. Data/Goal Review
7. Intervention Review
8. Modify/Repeat Intervention
9. Exit Focus

INDICATORS AND INTERVENTIONS: Pulling it All Together in a Process

This Process incorporates all three aspects of an EWS. Focusing on the ABCs, school teams (*ad hoc*, whole-school, and/or grade-level) meet to analyze data and design tiered interventions for individual students, student groups, and/or the school as a whole.

STEPS A TO D ARE A LEAD UP

Looking fully at student issues (ABCs) means using data, along with the professional experience of staff members (team), to diagnose the problem and determine the best and most efficient way (tier) of addressing it.

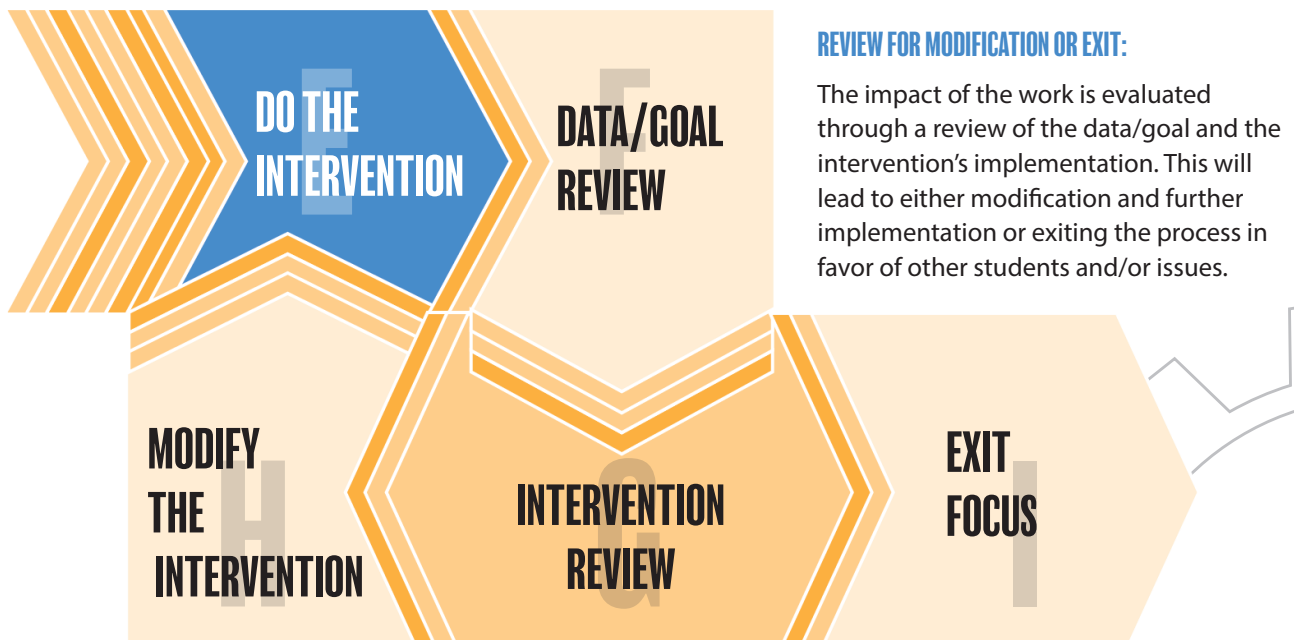


	STEP	DESCRIPTION
A	Focus	Individual student, targeted group, and whole-school (tiered) interventions based on the ABCs.
B	Review Data	Understand both the ABCs and what interventions have been tried in the past, with what success
C	Teacher Experience	Call on school staff to provide context for the data in order to understand what's going on behind the ABCs
D	Assign Intervention(s)	Determine what student(s) need and design/assign intervention(s) to meet that need.
E	Do Intervention(s)	The assigned champion(s) complete(s) the intervention(s).
F	Data/Goal Review	Review the goals of the intervention(s) assigned, whether those goals were met, and what impact the intervention(s) had.
G	Intervention Review	Evaluate performance in completing the intervention(s) as well as how student(s) responded to them.
H	Modify Intervention	If more or different support is needed, modify intervention(s) and/or design new ones.
I	Exit Focus	The issues facing the student(s) have been resolved and are no longer a focus for the EWS Team.

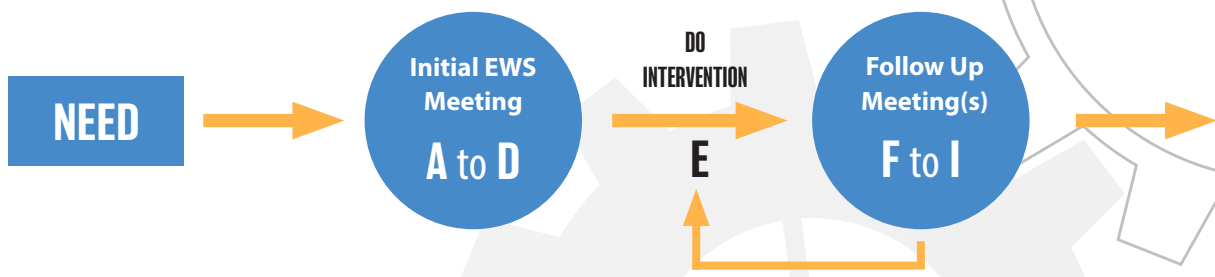
See page 34 for a guide to integrating this process into your school's current meeting and support structures.

It is important to note that this process is not a prepackaged solution. It is not a program to be implemented and set aside, but a system for continuous improvement. It is never finished and is always a work in progress. It requires, and supports, educators determining their own solutions for their own student and school needs.

ACTION: Doing the interventions with full fidelity/effort is the key step in this process. Any prior activity that does not reach this step, does not effect change. Any subsequent activity, if the intervention was not done or done poorly, will be a waste of time.



The EWS meeting protocol developed at Johns Hopkins University provides a space for teachers to engage in this process and to do so as a team discussing students they all share.

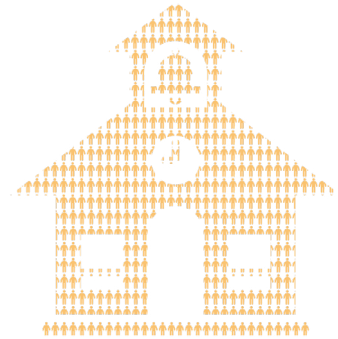
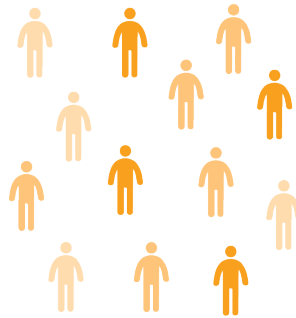


It also enables teachers to continuously improve their practice as educators, as they determine a need, go through cycles of diagnosis, implementation, evaluation, modification, and then hopefully exit focus on that student/issue as the need is no longer as pressing as others just entering the process.

How this process is carried out— determining the focus before the initial EWS meeting, the meeting itself, ensuring interventions are implemented for the greatest benefit to the students, and the follow-up meeting — is explained in greater detail using a single student (tier 3) as an example on the following pages.

INITIAL MEETING: Steps A to D

It is important to note at this point that this process, steps A to I, works at all three tiers. The individual student success meetings (tier 3) are the backbone of the EWS process, and will be used on the next few pages to describe the process. Teacher teams, however, can broaden their impact by also discussing targeted groups of students that share common issues (tier 2), and whole school initiatives designed to affect all students (tier 1).



TIER 3

Focused on diagnosing the issues facing high risk students and assigning/designing appropriate interventions.

TIER 2

Focused on finding students best suited for currently available interventions and designing interventions for common issues facing multiple students.

TIER 1

Focused on identifying whole school trends in the data, assigning/designing initiatives that would benefit all students, and creating organizational structures to build capacity and sustainability.

As schools go through the EWS process, the focus of the conversation may change at each tier, but the overall goal does not. "Providing the right intervention to the right student at the right time" remains at the center of the process for all three tiers. No matter how good our responses are when students slide off-track, we can't reach our goals by simply intervening one student at a time.

If I have 75 students suffering from the same problem, I can't expect to be successful by trying to solve that problem 75 different times.

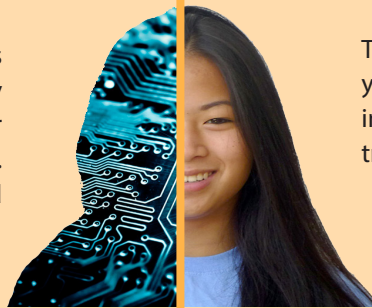
~ **Johann Liljengren**
Johns Hopkins University

The first step in that process, finding your focus (A), is done through data analysis: grouping data points, searching for outliers, and identifying trends (pg 12). It is with those procedures that individual high need students, groups of students that share common issues, and whole school problem areas are identified. This identification process can be done by the whole team, or a subset of data leaders with the task of creating the agenda before each whole team meeting.

Once a focus is identified, the initial meeting then moves to review why that student or issue affecting multiple students became a focus (B), how all the teachers are effected by it (C), and what can be done (D).

REVIEW THE DATA (1 - 2 MIN)

Identify which off-track behaviors the student is exhibiting. Identify data supporting identification for intervention (from EWI report). Examine the data is examined and share information about the student's strengths and challenges with the team.



TEACHER EXPERIENCE (3 MIN)

Team members succinctly (monitor your airtime!) provide additional information about why off-track indicators may be present. Team members share student strengths and information on interventions that have worked with the student in the past.

DESIGN/ASSIGN INTERVENTIONS (2 - 3 MIN)

This includes consulting a resource map, deciding who will champion, setting a date for follow-up conversation, and determining communication with the family. The team determines the frequency of the intervention. If it is tutoring, will that occur daily or weekly? If it is home contact, will it occur once or as needed? The duration of the intervention must also be determined. Setting a realistic timeline for the intervention to work is paramount for its success. Set a goal or multiple goals for the student. These goals should be SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-sensitive.

The above process is repeated for each of five or six students during a 45 minute meeting.



DOING THE INTERVENTION: Step E

The implementation stage, the actual work itself, is the most important component of any early warning system. As we mentioned earlier, “Any prior activity that does not reach this step, does not effect change. Any subsequent activity, if the intervention was not done or done poorly, will be a waste of time.” The Best Practices section of this manual (pages 32-39) offer suggestions to ensure effective implementation.

A well implemented EWS that adheres to those Best Practices will serve as a net to catch and support students if they fall off-track. As illustrated on the page to the right, each tier of support reinforces the next, particularly as students’ needs increase. The net operates at its best when interventions are done not in isolation, but with all tiers coordinated through the EWS process.

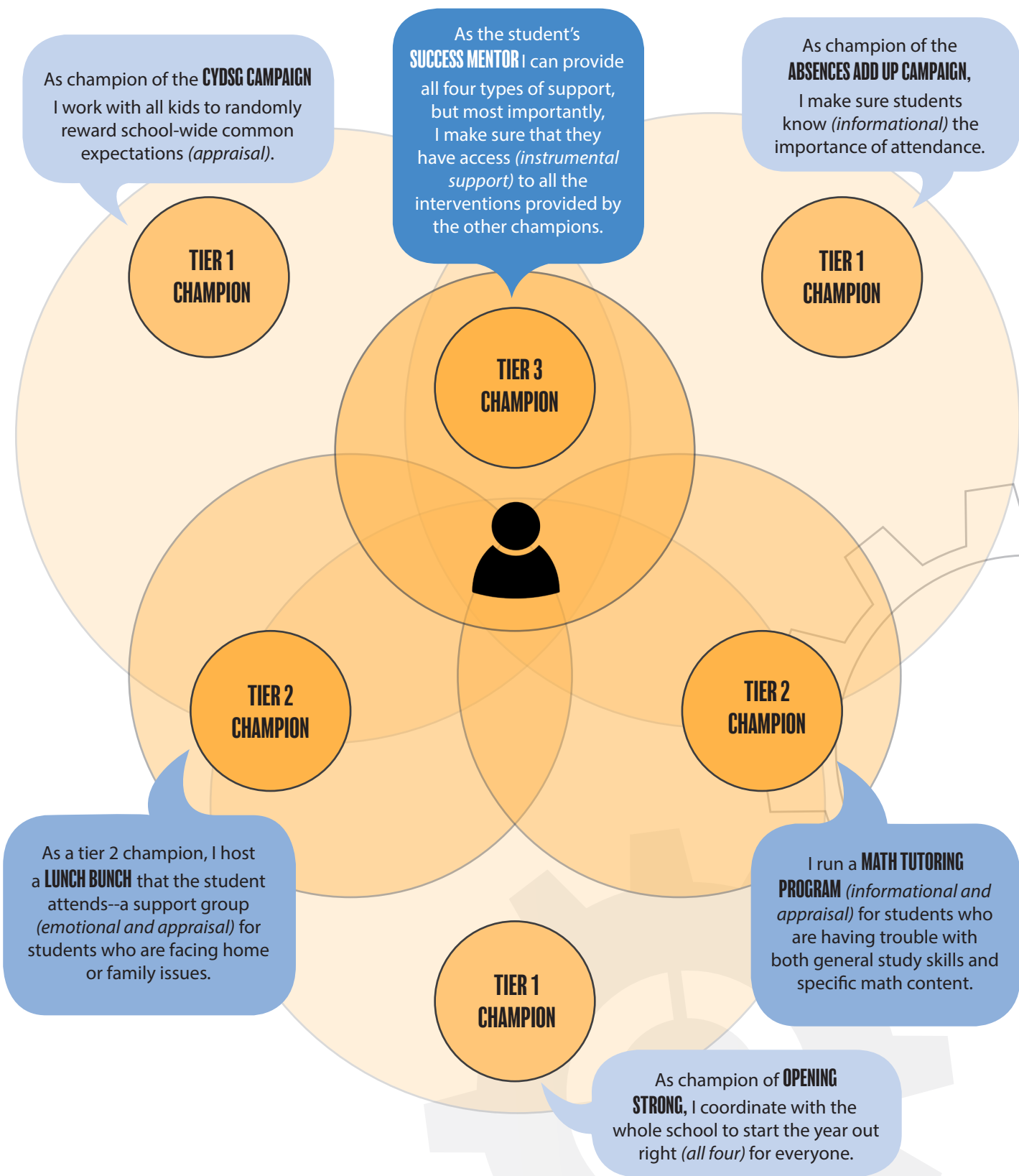
This net cannot be constructed theoretically, but must meet the needs of the students it is intended to support. A great resource showing ways the system can support their highest-needs students is the America’s Promise “Don’t Quit on Me” report. It presents several former students who didn’t make it to graduation day, and how they might have been supported until they did. Participants noted four kinds of help that they were looking for help but that did not materialize.

- **EMOTIONAL:** someone that made them feel comforted and cared about when needed; someone they felt they could trust.
- **INFORMATIONAL:** someone who provided advice on key life issues like passing classes, dealing with home issues, or getting a job.
- **APPRAISAL:** someone who offered positive, yet honest, feedback for the student to use “for self-regulation,” pointing out specific strengths as well as (kindly) pointing out areas for growth.

INSTRUMENTAL: actual tangible resources to help the student overcome personal, home/family, community, and other challenges, such as social services, transportation, introductions to potential employers, etc.

By pairing such supports as these with the EWS tiered intervention plan, a network of champions conducting interventions can, in the most efficient way possible, “provide the right intervention to the right student at the right time.” As the report from America’s Promise points out, “Young people are more likely to graduate if they have access to a web of supportive relationships.” It also highlights the importance of at least one caring adult to anchor each student and provides access to other supports available.

For an EWS, that “anchor” would be a tier 3 champion, working one-on-one and providing all four types of support, with an emphasis on the instrumental. Such intensive support reinforces and directs the student to the best targeted support groups and whole-school initiatives.

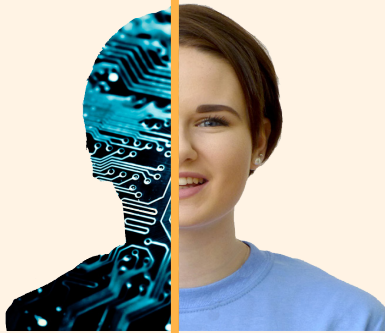


FOLLOW-UP EWS MEETING: Steps F to I

Following up on the intervention and its impact is crucial to the EWS process. Each student/intervention champion can use the data to determine whether the intervention was successful. This follow-up occurs during a regular EWS meeting and usually takes 3 - 7 minutes for each student/intervention.

DATA/GOAL REVIEW (1 - 2 MIN)

To determine whether the student(s) reached the team's impact goals, they review the data.: the current attendance, behavior, and course performance of the student(s) compared to data from when the student(s) became a focus. What was the goal? What interventions were put in place to help the student(s) be successful?



INTERVENTION REVIEW (3 MIN)

The team evaluates the quality of the intervention. Was it fully implemented as intended? Were there barriers to implementation? If barriers were overcome, how? Was the goal met for the student(s), and does the team believe the interventions were crucial to the student(s) meeting those goals?

CONTINUE AND/OR MODIFY (3 - 4 MIN)

If the student(s) did not respond to the intervention, the intervention was not done to fidelity, or if the student(s) made progress but the indicator is still evident, the interventions themselves or the intervention plan should be modified.

How can the interventions be changed for better implementation fidelity? What new interventions can be added to increase impact? What interventions need to be replaced because they weren't effective?

EXIT FOCUS LIST (1 - 2 MIN)

The team/champion arranges a time to meet with the student(s) to discuss their growth and celebrate the success achieved.

The team/champion explains that they will continue to monitor the student(s), and reassures them that extra support will be available for them if needed.

If another indicator presents itself, the process begins again with the awareness of what was successful for the student(s) for the previous indicator.

Remember, the focus of this process is to quickly determine whether there is improvement, whether the interventions were the cause of that improvement, and whether the student(s) should continue to receive support or be exited from the process. A more in-depth analysis of the particulars of each case may be carried out to improve the process, but is not done here.

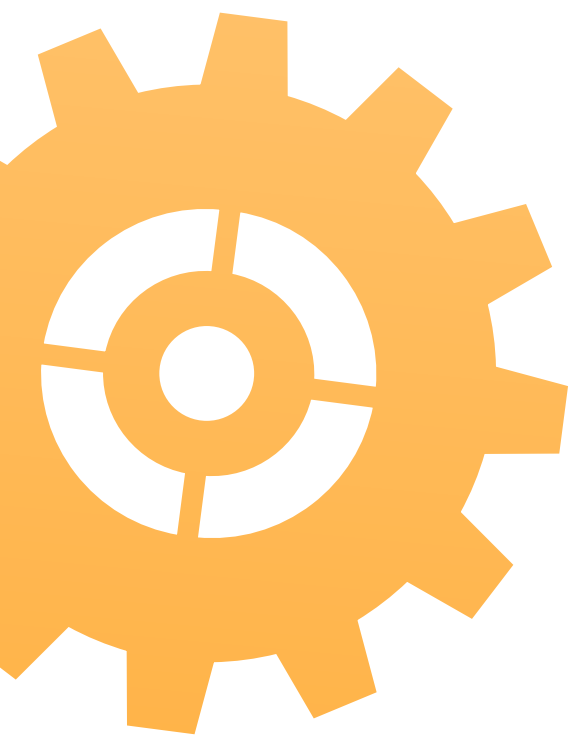
Conducting the data/goal review and intervention review answers two questions. First, "How well did we do our work?" And, second, "Did it work?" Answering these questions indicates whether the issue (which may affect one or multiple students) has been resolved and can be removed from the team's focus, or if more work is needed.

Answering these questions will identify the status of the situation relative to the matrix below.

HIGH IMPACT	<p>Exit from FOCUS and monitor for signs of sliding.</p> <p>Conduct a deeper analysis to determine other possible reasons for the impact seen and why the interventions may or may not have been the cause.</p>	<p>Exit from FOCUS and monitor for signs of sliding.</p> <p>Record intervention as a part of the school's resource map that can be used again for similarly situated students.</p>
	<p>Continue current interventions, but with greater fidelity; modify the current interventions for greater impact; and/or modify the entire intervention plan with additional supports.</p>	<p>Modify the current interventions for greater impact; and/or modify the entire intervention plan with additional supports.</p> <p>Conduct a deeper analysis to understand why the interventions did not have the impact hoped for.</p>
LOW IMPACT	LOW FIDELITY	HIGH FIDELITY

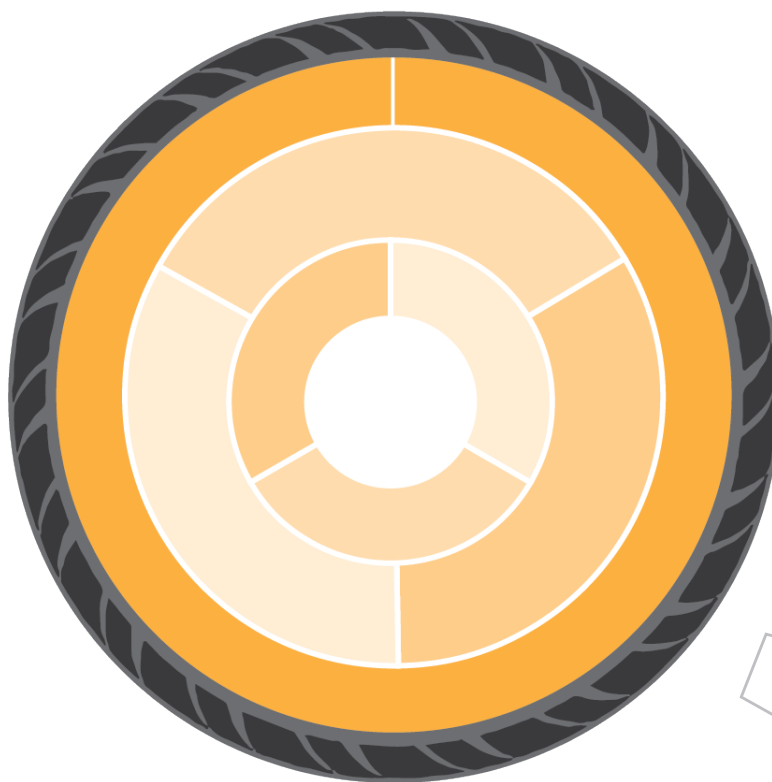
IF THE GOAL WAS NOT MET: New or modified interventions and goals can have the same champion, or new champions can be selected. These interventions are then implemented to fidelity for the stated amount of time in the new/existing goals. This process can be repeated until a satisfactory outcome has been achieved.

IF THE GOAL WAS MET: The student or issue is no longer a focus for the EWS team unless a new indicator becomes evident through the monitoring process. Removing a student, or students, from focus due to a successful recovery is the goal of an EWS.



RESOURCES: What are Some EWS Best Practices

EWS is a proven strategy that helps schools increase student achievement and engagement, if done correctly. Several best practices are listed below; two key ones, the EWI Spreadsheet and a Resource Map, are highlighted on the following pages. The goal of each best practice is to provide “the right intervention to the right student at the right time.”



- **EWS RUBRIC:** determine fidelity of implementation and next steps
- **TIERED ACTION PLANNING:** coordinate interventions so each tier reinforces the others
- **INTERVENTION REVIEWS:** determine impact
- **CELEBRATIONS:** reinforce positive behaviors for both students and faculty
- **VISUAL DISPLAYS:** make EWS visible through bulletin boards, charts, and graphs
- **OPENING/CLOSING STRONG:** get students excited and keep them engaged
- **STUDENT VOICE:** encourage student buy-in
- **REPORT CARD CONFERENCES:** develop student ownership and goal-setting
- **RESOURCE MAP:** a collective menu of possible tiered interventions at your school
- **EWI SPREADSHEET:** a document that captures student ABCs and connects the data to interventions



EWS MEETING INTEGRATION: Making EWS an Integral Part of the School

The EWS process should be integrated into what the school is already doing. It is NOT an additional meeting. Existing structures can be streamlined using this process to help higher functioning teams focus on student success, moving toward 5% talk and 95% action.

STEPS TO INTEGRATION

1. COMPLETE A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- What meetings are currently being held and what is the purpose of these meetings?
- Who attends which meetings?
- Are current meetings accomplishing their intended goals?
- How are students who are off track identified?
- What is the current process for working with the students who are off track?
- What is the process for referring students for an IEP or 504 plan?
- Do teachers and staff look at data to find trends? If so, how?
- Do teams meet to review and evaluate student work?

2. INTEGRATE MEETINGS

- Determine the school's essential goals
- Determine what meetings have a defined purpose and are essential to support goals
- Determine what meetings can be combined to be more efficient
 - Example: EWI and Special Education/504 meeting process
 - Example: Grade level meetings
- Create a master schedule to support essential meetings

3. IMPLEMENT MEETINGS: weekly or bi-weekly

- Train facilitators on the meeting purpose, protocols, expectations, agendas, and accountability
- Conduct meetings
- Debrief meetings as needed

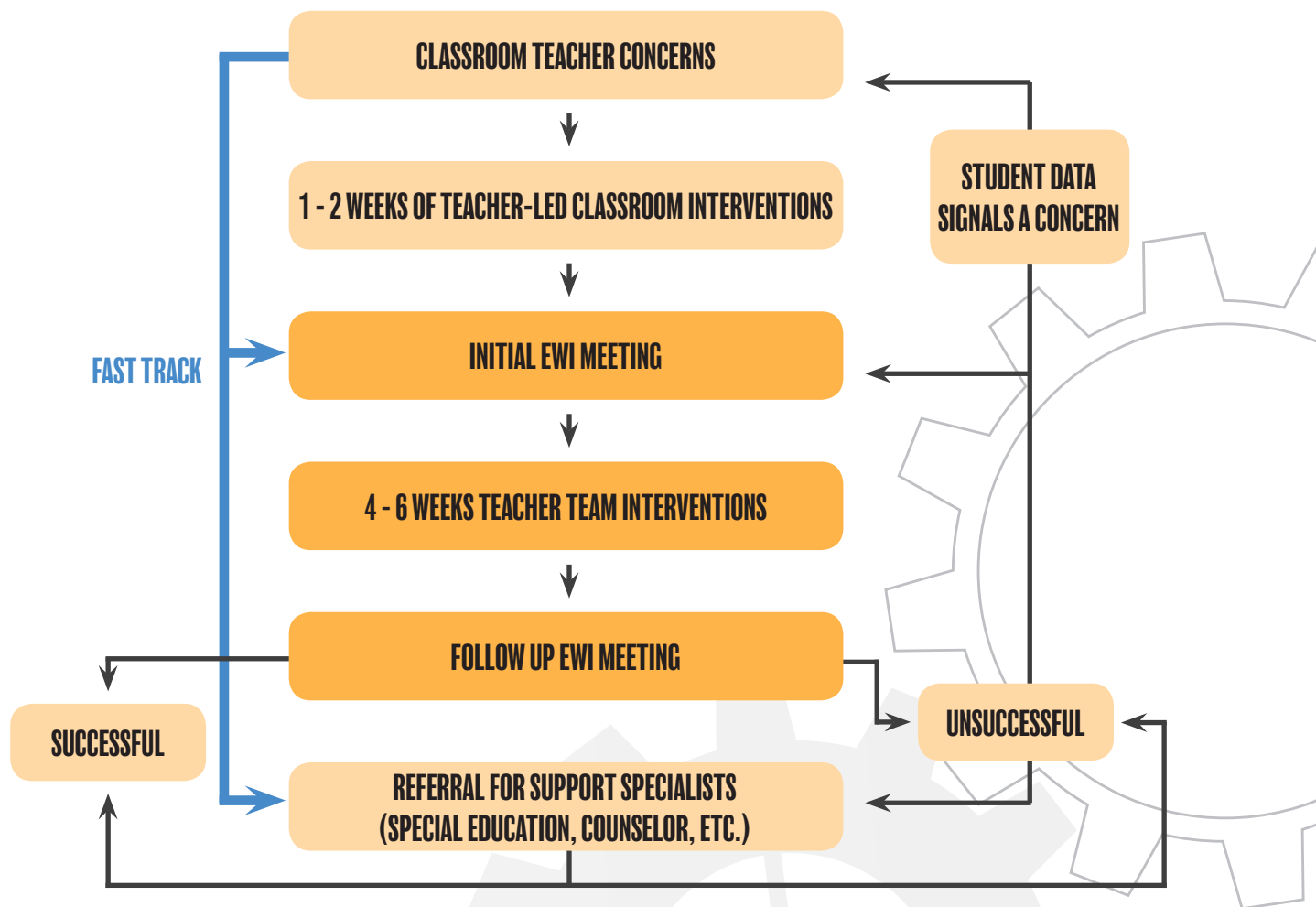
4. REVIEW PROGRESS: quarterly

- Is progress being made toward goals?
- Has the goal been met?
- Does the goal need to change? If so, what is the new goal?
- What are the barriers to success and how can they be overcome?

When integrating EWS into existing protocols, students can be identified in two ways: either the teacher or the data identifies the need for an intervention. Once the need is identified, the process continues with classroom interventions and an EWI Meeting.

The team uses the EWS process to provide interventions for four to six weeks (see the EWS pacing guide below). If the intervention is successful, the student is removed from the process. If the intervention is unsuccessful, the team can repeat the process or refer the student to student support specialists, for example special educators, counselors, or social workers.

There are some students who, due to the severity of their situations, can be placed on a fast track to the EWI Meeting and/or student support specialists.



Integrating the EWS process with existing processes will enhance the school's success, increase staff support, and streamline meetings to make them more efficient and effective.

THE EWI SPREADSHEET: The Data at the Center of the Process

Students who show up, act appropriately, and do their work have a greater chance of matriculating each year, and eventually graduating, than students who do the opposite. The former are engaging in school, while the latter are checking out.

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS (EWI)	INDICATOR FLAG	COLLEGE AND CAREER READY (CCR)
Student is currently unsuccessful in school; without intervention, this will most likely result in the student dropping out.	This color coding of the data is designed to catch the user's eye and convey a sense of urgency.	Student is developing a track record of school success that will most likely continue into postsecondary life.

Based on the research outlined in the section on the ABCs, the data shows how many days missed, how severe and how frequent behavior issues were, and exactly what grades are predictive of which student outcomes. However, as the chart below demonstrates, not having any EWI indicator flags is not the same as being on a college- and career-ready pathway.

	EWI	FLAG	CCR
ATTENDANCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average Daily Attendance Average Class Attendance 		95 - 100%	YES
	NO	90 - 95%	NO
	YES	85 - 90%	
		0 - 85%	
BEHAVIOR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of referrals or suspensions Number of unsatisfactory behavior marks in core classes 	NO	0	YES
	YES	1	NO
		2	
COURSE PERFORMANCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average grade in core courses (math, ELA, science, social studies) Grade in any class required for promotion (high school) Grade in math/ELA (middle school) 		A or B	YES
		C	NO
	NO	D	
	YES	F	

BASIC STUDENT INFORMATION that grows vertically with each new student

EWI DATA grows horizontally with each new quarter and is flagged based on the **INDICATOR YARDSTICK**

ID	Enroll	Last Name	First Name	Grd Lvl	Gndr	ELL	Eth	SPED	CCR -> EWI ->	Yr			2015			2015			2015			
										60%	58%	47%	47%	37%	43%	52%	100%	50%	25%	30%	22%	26%
										Ar	Bhvr	ELA	Math	Sci	Soc	EWI2	Art2	Bhvr2	ELA2	Math2	Sci2	Soc2
391938	Y	Robinson	Howard	05	M	N	H	Y		94%	5	C	D	C	B	0	0	99%	1	C	C	B
244308	Y	Evans	Jerry	06	M	N	H	N		95%	0	B	A	B	A	0	0	100%	0	B	A	A
237902	Y	Gutierrez	Monica	05	F	N	H	N		95%	0	A	B	B	A	0	0	100%	0	D	C	C
398713	Y	James	Sally	05	F	N	H	N		95%	5	B	C	B	B	0	0	100%	0	C	B	A
289962	Y	Walsh	Tammy	05	F	N	M	N		98%	1	B	D	B	A	0	0	100%	0	C	B	A
314014	Y	Rodriguez	Bobby	05	M	N	H	Y		98%	20	F	A	C	B	1	0	100%	10	C	D	C
244530	Y	Mitchell	Peter	05	M	N	H	Y		99%	4	C	D	B	B	0	0	100%	2	D	D	C
339424	Y	Guerrero	Tasha	06	F	N	H	N		91%	48	F	F	B	F	2	0	100%	9	F	D	C
308895	Y	Garrett	Cecilia	06	F	N	H	N		94%	2	B	B	B	A	0	0	100%	0	D	A	C
383708	Y	Sanchez	Eugene	05	M	Y	H	N		100%	0	D	C	C	B	0	0	100%	0	D	A	C
301677	Y	Campbell	Andrew	05	M	N	H	N		97%	2	C	C	B	B	0	0	99%	1	C	B	B
290867	Y	Baker	Jose	06	M	N	H	N		97%	5	B	B	B	B	0	0	99%	0	B	C	C
311271	Y	Byrant	Jeremy	05	M	Y	H	N		99%	48	F	F	F	F	1	0	100%	3	F	B	D
234373	Y	Schultz	Jan	06	F	N	H	N		98%	5	B	B	B	A	0	0	100%	0	B	B	B
293779	Y	Patterson	Ronald	05	M	N	H	N		98%	0	C	B	D	B	0	0	99%	0	B	B	C
274415	Y	Osborne	Lena	05	F	N	H	N		96%	0	A	A	A	B	0	0	100%	0	B	B	C
390365	Y	Henderson	Donald	06	M	N	H	N		95%	12	C	D	C	C	0	0	100%	2	C	D	B
235128	Y	Green	Eain	06	F	N	H	N		93%	2	C	D	D	B	0	0	100%	0	D	C	C

DEMOGRAPHICS: Turn them into codes to save space.

BEHAVIOR: This example uses a count of the number of office referrals.

ENROLLMENT: Keep unenrolled students on the list by marking them "N."

ATTENDANCE: It's best to use percent present, but a count of absences also works.

STUDENT ID: Provide a unique identifier for each student.

COUNT OF INDICATORS: This example uses attendance, behavior, and math/ELA grades.

COURSE PERFORMANCE: Even though only math/ELA are used for EWIs, all core classes are displayed to provide context.

RESOURCE MAP: Tools and Processes

A critical step in implementing an EWS is to map out the resources currently available to students in your school, using the intervention framework (pg. 16). The goal is to have one listing of all the people, resources, and strategies at hand to provide support to students in your school, and a menu of options to choose from as needed.

This map should be both well-structured and responsive to school needs. As issues arise, a coordinated response can be developed by pulling from the resource map, activating or intensifying currently available interventions, and deploying them as needed. At the same time, if issues arise and there is a need that the resource map does not address, the team has a responsibility to develop new resources to meet that need.

INTERVENTION	GOAL	TIER	STRATEGY
Describing what it is, how it is best completed, and who would be the one doing it.	What outcomes is the intervention intended to produce?	What is the scope of the intervention?	How will the intervention support the needs of the students?
EXAMPLES			
Weekly tardy to class reflection/support circle done with the Truancy Coach	Recovery	Targeted group	Using all three strategies
Daily behavior check-in and check-out for individual students done by the student’s mentor teacher	Alleviate the issues and/or recover	High-needs students	Overcome any barriers
Lunch tutoring group for specific subject area needs held by subject area teachers	Keep and/or bring back good performance	All students	Overcome any barriers

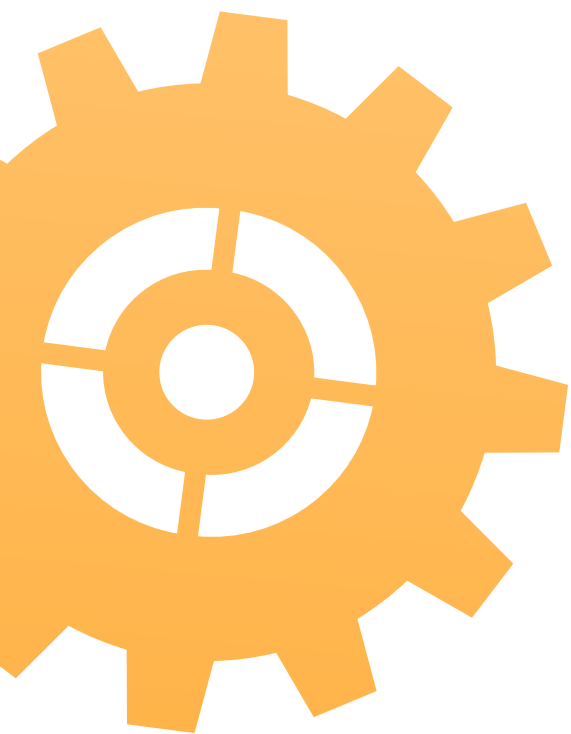
A resource map allows you to maximize the impact of critical resources - time, person power, and funding - on student success.

A few guiding principles when developing your resource map

- Use what is currently available and operating, rather than what you'd like to see, as your starting point, and then move on to filling in gaps in supports.
- Create your map as a team, pulling in resources/strategies from multiple educators with differing roles in the school.
- Build on already existing relationships between students and staff.
- Focus your map on building toward student strengths.
- Make sure to include interventions at all levels. Do not focus entirely on individual student interventions.

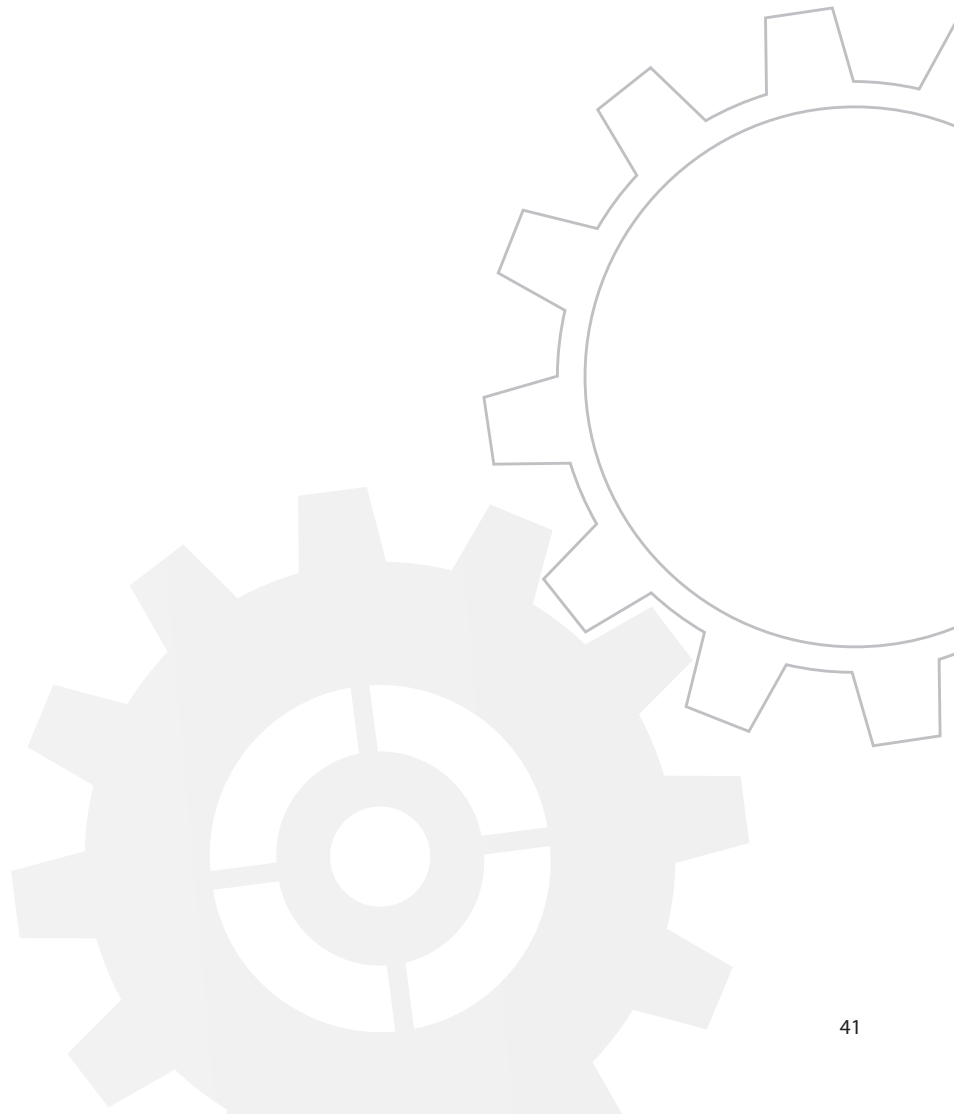
ATTENDANCE	BEHAVIOR	COURSE PERFORMANCE
What type of attendance patterns characterize the best student for this intervention?	What type of behavior issues should a student have or not have to benefit the most from this intervention?	At what level of proficiency and/or effort should the student display to benefit the most from this intervention?
EXAMPLES		
Students who are late to class multiple times in the past two weeks	Able to work in groups; does not act out or distract others	N/A
Should have good attendance; may be late to school or tardy, but best if showing up regularly and on time	Depends on the needs of the student and the focus of the check-in/check-out; behavior issues are not violent	Not relevant to the intervention; behaviors may or may not be leading to poor effort or proficiency
Student should have good daily attendance; lateness is not a concern for this group because it meets at lunch	Meant for students who work well in small groups or one-on-one	Designed for students with low proficiency, but who are willing to put in effort

It is useful to identify resources both internal and external to the school that you can access to support students.



RESOURCES/CITATIONS

- Balfanz, R., Herzog, L. & Mac Iver, D. J. (2007). Preventing student disengagement and keeping students on the graduation path in urban middle-grades schools: Early identification and effective interventions. *Educational Psychologist, 42*, 223-235.
- Page 16 adapted with permission from author Paul Verstraete "Building/Expanding an Early Warning System." New Mexico Early Warning Systems Regional Summit. March 13, 2017. Centennial High School, Las Cruces, New Mexico.





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