



National Dropout Prevention Center
for Students with Disabilities

**Moving Research into
Practices that Improve
Outcomes for Youth with
Disabilities**

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IDEAS
that Work
U.S. Office of Special
Education Programs

CLEMSON
UNIVERSITY

Actionable Recommendations
from Dropout Prevention
Research

Essential Components

- Recognized impetus for change-
- Leadership Team to keep school completion vested in a place of authority
- Local action team to guide school based implementation
- An early warning system to identify students approaching critical thresholds that place them at risk for dropping out of school

Essential Components

- Processes and opportunities for sustained parental involvement
- **School-wide Interventions** designed to enhance student engagement and a sense of belonging for all students.
- Personalize the learning environment and instructional process (e.g., freshman academies, small learning communities, peer tutors, co-teaching)

School wide Interventions

- **Diagnostic processes** for identifying state, district, school-wide and student-level dropout problems.
- **Rigorous and relevant instruction to help engage students** in learning and provide them the skills needed to graduate and to succeed after they leave school (including academic and career related programs)
- Ongoing professional development to teachers and other core team members expand knowledge and skills in design and delivery of instruction in critical content areas

School wide Interventions

- A safe and orderly school climate where students feel welcome and supported
- Extra curricula activities and programs to promote school bonding for marginalized students
- Support to students who enter critical transitions without adequate skills in reading, math, and other core content

Targeted Interventions

Targeted interventions for a subset of middle and high school students who are identified as at risk of dropping out

Research – based Examples:

- Assignment of adult advocates who serve as monitors, mentors, and or coaches to students who are at risk of dropping out
- Academic support (tutoring, study skills training, strategy instruction, credit recovery, test prep) and enrichment to improve academic performance in core content areas

Targeted Interventions- Continued

Research – based Examples:

- Implement programs to improve students' classroom behavior and social skills, including positive behavioral supports, behavioral contracts and training in problem solving skills.
- Service Learning, Check and Connect, ALAS and other targeted models that provide multiple strategies to help students bond with school
- Discussions during IEP meetings of critical risk factors that place students at risk for school dropout and impact the delivery of FAPE. Critical issues should be addressed as part of the student's IEP

Dropout Prevention Up Close Efforts around School Completion

States and Local Education Agencies – In Action

GraduateFIRST Goals

helping Georgia's students with disabilities stay in school and graduate

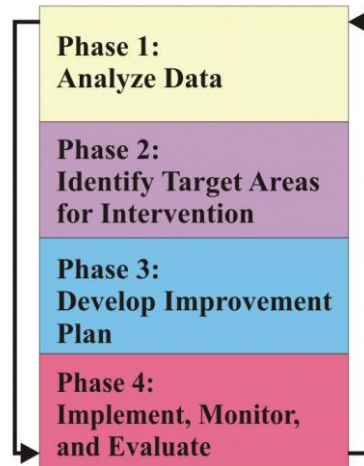
- **Increase graduation rate for students with disabilities who receive a general education diploma**
- **Decrease the dropout rate for students with disabilities**
- <http://www.pioneerresa.org/etc/girs/DrLauraBrown.html>





Successful Framework

- Awareness Training Sessions on Dropout
- Relationship & Team Building
- Coaching & Fidelity Checks
- System and School support of project
- Preventing Dropout
- Celebration of Success



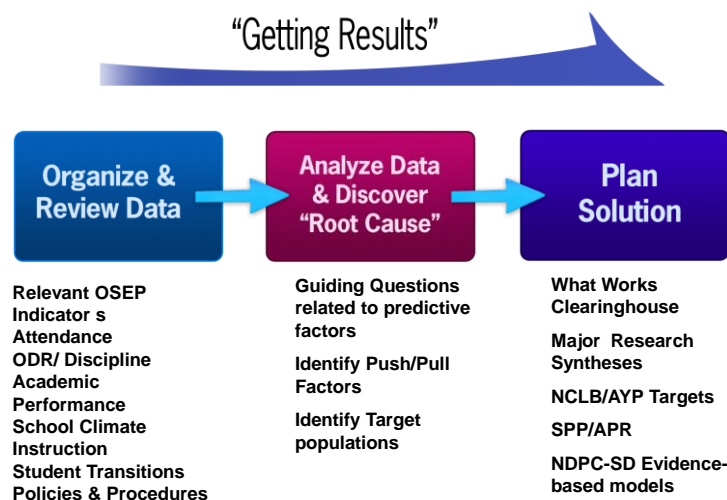
NDPC-SD Dropout Prevention Intervention Framework

- Data analysis
- Matching of needs to evidence-based strategies
- Development of plans and support for strategic implementation
- Monitoring of adult practices and student progress

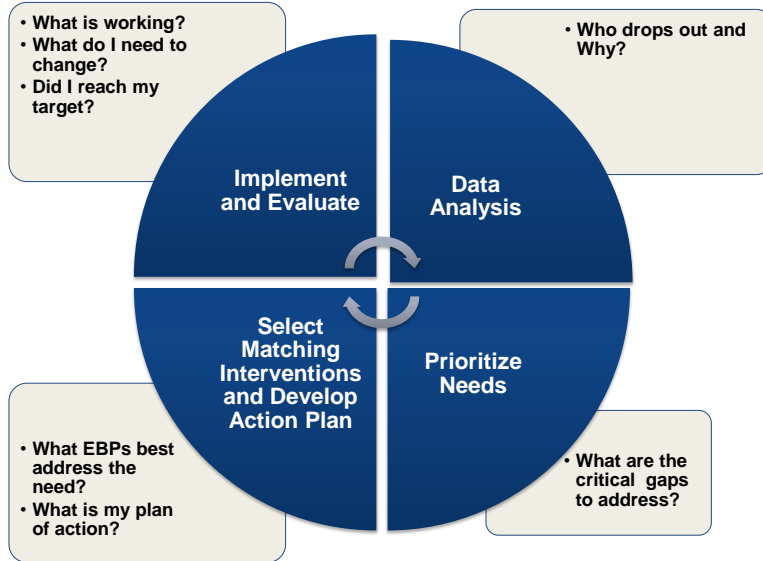
Program Development & Support

- Promote and facilitate the implementation of evidence-based strategies that :
 - Promote school attendance
 - Promote academic success
 - Promote prosocial behaviors
 - Promote a positive school climate
 - Increase student engagement
 - Increase parental involvement

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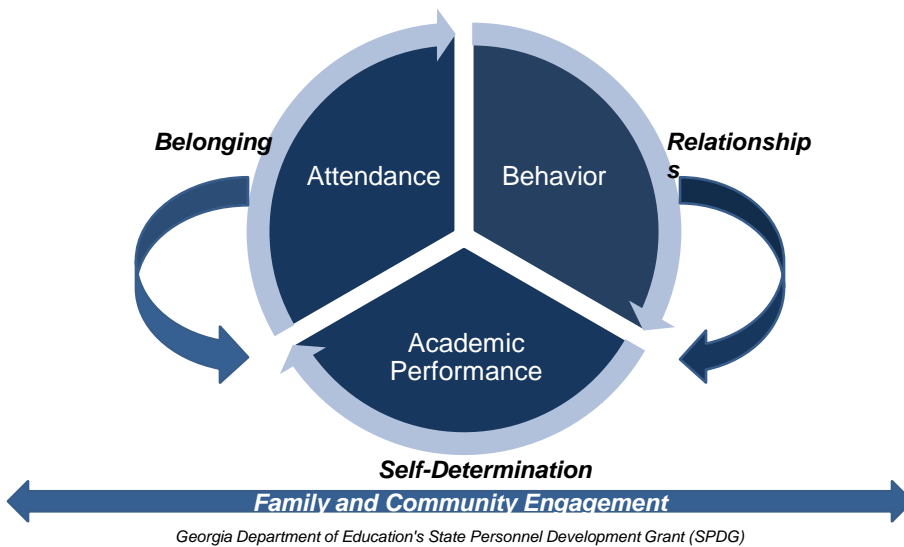


Dropout Prevention Framework

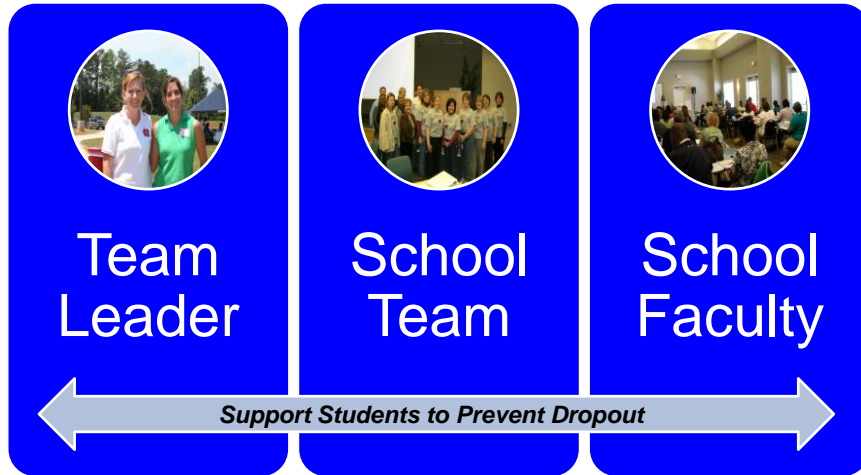


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GraduateFirst

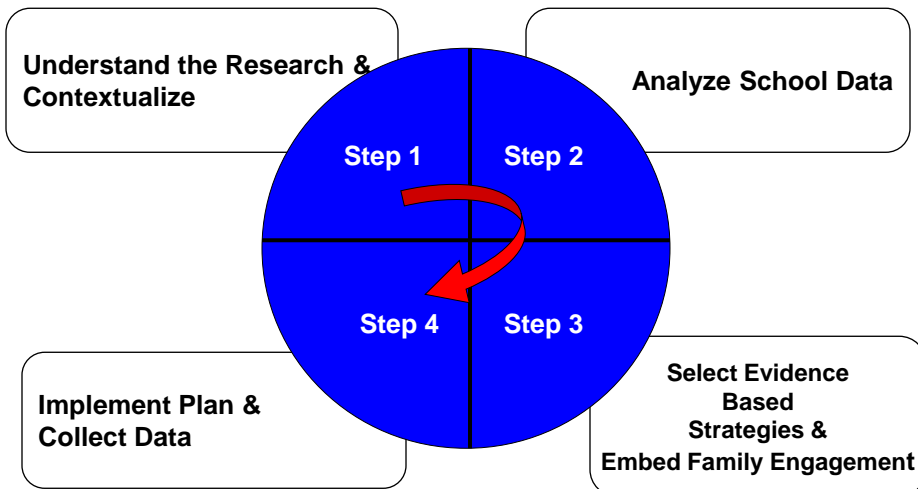


Collaboration Coaches



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School Teams



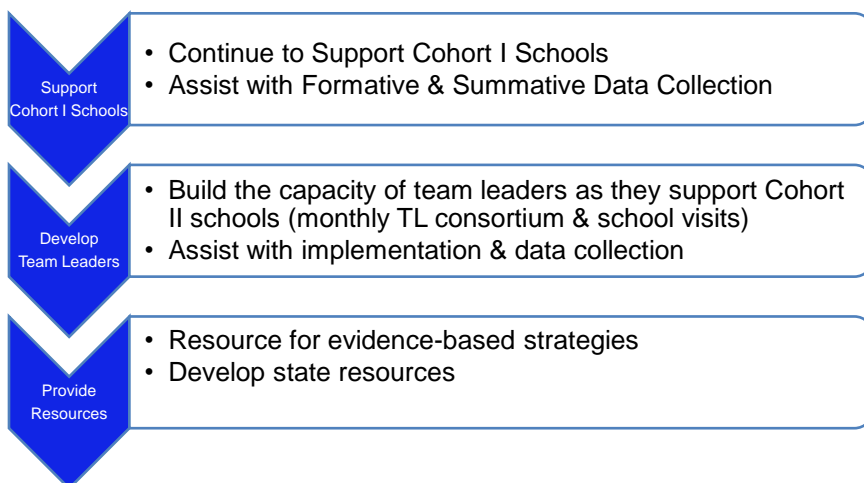
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Roles and Responsibilities

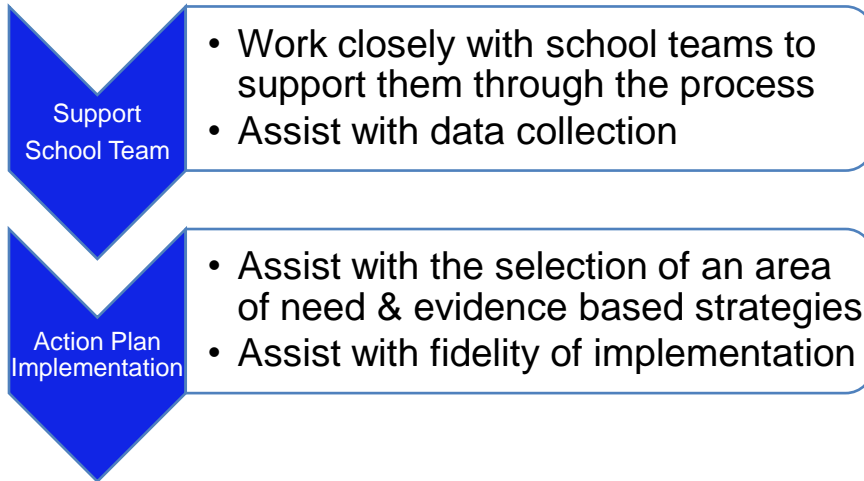
- Identify Students with High Risk Factors
- Develop Graduation Team(s) to Generate Support
- Implement School-wide Support and Interventions
- Provide Direct Service and Case Management

Develop Relationships with Parents/Guardians, Community Organizations, and Other Resources

Roles of Collaboration Coaches

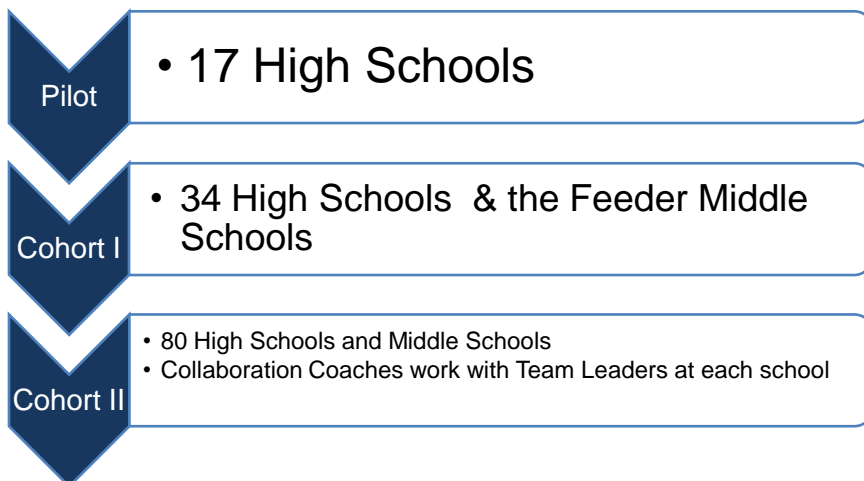


Roles of Team Leaders



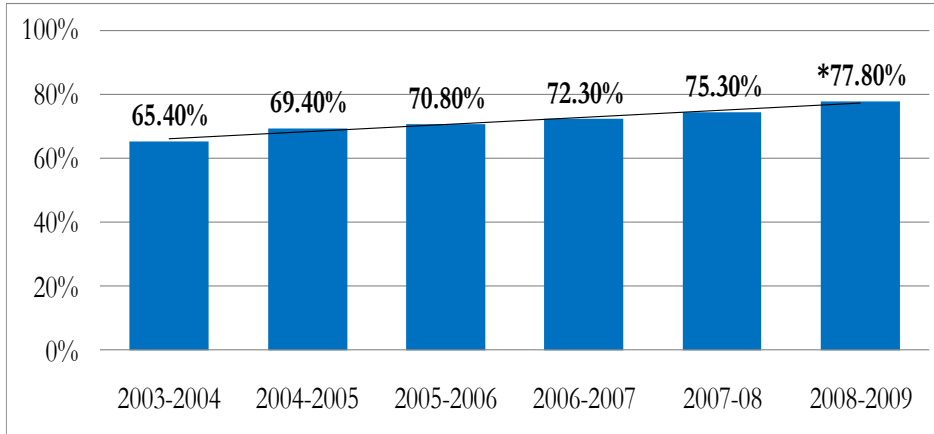
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Changes in GraduateFIRST



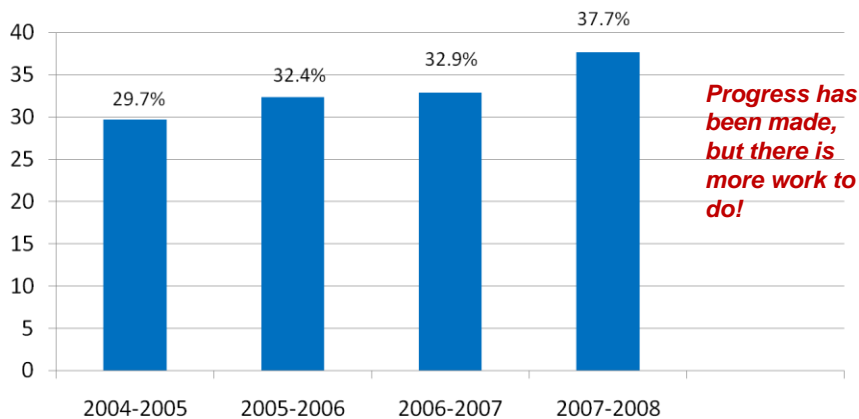
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Georgia's Graduation Rate



*Denotes preliminary graduation rate prior to summer graduates

Students with Disabilities Graduating with General Education Diploma





- 1st Pilot school in 2006-07 school year
- 2007- 08 Platinum Award for Meets & Exceeds
- 90% SWD in co-taught classes
- AP Challenge School- AYP classes strategically include Youth with IEPs
- Major focus on instruction to close achievement gap

Improvement Strategy

- Strategic implementation of evidence based strategies/ practices:
 - Instructional design and delivery
 - Professional development
 - Policy review/revision
 - Improving school climate

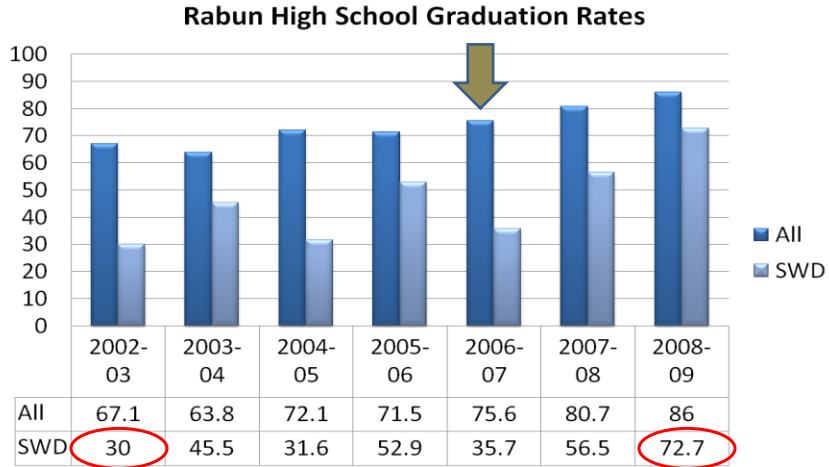
RCHS Dropout Survey

- Each year dropouts are contacted individually by Graduation Coach to participate in a survey about why they left school and what would have improved their chances of staying in school

Effective Instruction Design & Delivery

- Effective Teaching Practices (Learning Focused Strategies)
- Differentiated Instruction in every classroom
- Tiered instructional support
- Ongoing professional development

Success of GraduateFIRST



Northeast High



Cecil County Public Schools

Northeast High School

Goals:

- Improve the graduation rate
- Lower the dropout rate
- Prepare students for successful entry into higher education and/or the workforce



Northeast High School

Performance Target- Increase graduation rate at NEHS by 3% per year for three years running to meet the state target

Focus Areas:

- Data utilization for early warning systems
- Attendance, Behavior, Course Completion
- School climate
- Student and family engagement



Data Utilization

- Compiled the data
- Analyzed and triangulated the data
 - Demographics
 - Assessment
 - Processes
- Determined push/pull factors
- Finalized targeted list of at-risk SWD
- Identified research-based interventions for action plan

Promoting School Attendance

Policy & Procedure Reviews

Attendance Monitoring

Attendance Incentives

- Reward those students who have ***perfect*** attendance
- Reward those students who have ***improved*** their attendance

Increasing Pro-social behaviors

Positive Referrals/Incentives

- Reinforcements for academics and behavior modification
- Waffle House Breakfast
- Josten's Renaissance program
- Bonus Bucks awarded based on class work, grades, behavior infractions (grant funded)

Academic Interventions

Unit Organizers

- Provide training for teachers to utilize unit organizers in their classroom and in planning lessons

Peer Tutoring

Catch Up Center (Intervention Room)

Professional Development

School Climate -Promoting Student Voice



Teen Talk

- Provide positive atmosphere to teach how to relate to others
- Provide positive atmosphere to promote positive family relationships
- Provide vital information for pregnant students

School Climate

Displaying of Student work/ Show cases

- Display exemplary student work
- Display clubs
- Display Student of the Month
- Display positive student news



Student of the Month

- Reward students for exhibiting characteristics each month



School Climate

Improving Building Aesthetics

- New school sign in front of school
- Cafeteria improvements
- Courtyard remodeled
- Murals (painted by students)



Northeast High School Stats

Total enrollment (Gr. 9-12) = 1,084

SpEd enrollment = 116

	05-06	06-07	07-08	
All student graduation		77.29	77.64	↑
Special Ed graduation		34.20	61.54	↑
All student dropout	4.68	5.50	5.97	↑
Regular Ed dropout	3.36	4.22	5.62	↑
Special Ed dropout	13.25	13.66	8.33	↓

Final Thoughts.....

- **If**
 - We engage students on all levels with school and learning,
 - Provide effective instruction and monitor student performance,
 - Follow-up with students and families when warning signs of disengagement emerge, and
 - focus on a coordinated set of effective transition services and programs for all youth with disabilities...
- **Thenit is possible to positively influence students toward the successful completion of school and improved post-school outcomes.**



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“Helping Youth with Disabilities Stay in School and Graduate”