

## HOW TO...

# Have School Staff Serve as Success Mentors

### THIS SHOWS HOW TO:

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|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.1: Create positive school climate.     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.1: Support "Success Mentors." | <input type="checkbox"/> 3.1: Communicate with families.         | <input type="checkbox"/> 4.1: Host the weekly Student Success Summit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.2: Implement a tiered attendance plan. | <input type="checkbox"/> 2.2: Offer incentives.                     | <input type="checkbox"/> 3.2: Partner with community.            | <input type="checkbox"/> 4.2: Use attendance data.                   |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> 3.3: Connect to Task Force initiatives. |  |

### THE BASICS

Everyone in a school seeks to build supportive relationships with students, serve as positive role models, and encourage regular attendance. For many schools, teachers, deans, family workers, administrators and others can be Success Mentors, too. The Success Mentor's two main roles are 1) to personalize attendance by acknowledging each day the student is in school and 2) to take time to understand the underlying causes of absenteeism and begin to address them. The Success Mentor's performance goal: to improve the mentee's attendance - by making the student feel more noticed, celebrated, and supported at school.

Success Mentors attend (or are represented at) weekly Principals' Student Success Summit meetings to share any best practices or challenges and to present a summary of how students are doing.

School-based Success Mentors can:

- Collaborate with teachers to create individual plans for mentee students; list academic strengths and goals. Get feedback weekly from all teachers. Use as a tool for regular meetings with the student.
- Tutor students, help them with organizational skills.
- Conduct group or one-on-one counseling or morning drop-in homework time (with breakfast!).
- Connect mentees to school - get them into clubs, teams, or after school programs.
- Organize recognition activities or attendance celebrations.

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### HERE'S WHAT HAS BEEN TRIED

Principal designated 6 school staff, each of whom mentored 10 kids each.

Nearly everyone in a middle school mentors 1-3 students each, starting with incoming 6th graders. The school works with feeder schools to get the names of students who would be good for the program. The teachers meet with the students once a week (in the morning or during lunch) and have monthly mentoring events (trips, festivals, special dinners). Mentors stay with their mentees through 8th grade.

A select group of teachers and guidance counselors serve as success mentors in a high school. They track their students' attendance daily, outreach to the student and family to find out what's causing absences, and participate in the Principals' Weekly Student Success Summit meetings.

All teachers stand outside their classrooms as children enter in the morning to greet them. If students were absent the day before, they are warmly welcomed back and asked, in a friendly way, why they were out.