WELCOME AND TODAY’S AGENDA

• COVID-19 Solutions Forum 3
  – Preparing for the Return to Schooling: Using and Adapting EWS, On-Track and MTSS Students to Support Students During COVID-19

• Robert Balfanz, Director, Everyone Graduates Center

• Q & A

• Learnings from the Field
  – Frances Dumas-Hines, Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation, IN
  – Carla Gay, Gresham-Barlow School District, OR
  – Tara Madden and Felicia Walker, Talent Development Secondary and New Mexico ECHO EWS project
  – Amy Szymanski, Ohio Department of Education
  – Alexis Urguhart, Compass Academy Middle School, Denver, CO

• Q & A and idea & resource sharing
ORGANIZING OUR DISCUSSION

• We have a large and diverse group of people and organizations participating in today’s call
  – Middle and High School Leaders, K-12 Districts, Higher Ed, Non-Profits, State Dept. of Ed.

• So we can hear from as many as possible, we have muted everyone upon entry, please share ideas and ask questions via the chat function
  – If you are sharing a resource that can be reached via a web link, please share the link in the chat box
  – After the call, we will send out a follow-up email listing resources shared during the session

• After the presentation and discussions from the field, there will be time for Q & A
SUPPORTING STUDENTS UPON THE RETURN TO SCHOOLING IN THE FALL
THREE PART PRESENTATION

• Impact of COVID-19 on Students
• Role EWS, On-Track and MTSS Systems can play in supporting students under COVID-19
• How they can be adapted to have the strongest impact possible
  —Modifying the ABC indicators and their responses
  —Organizing schools to implement them
WHAT DO WE KNOW?
COVID-19 IMPACTS ON SCHOOLS WILL CONTINUE THROUGH NEXT SCHOOL YEAR AND BEYOND

• Many or even most schools will likely experience some combination of in-person, remote, and blended learning conditions, in potentially unpredictable ways

• Economic Impacts will be felt by schools and families throughout the year
THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON STUDENTS WILL VARY

• For some students, it will have been or will be traumatic, as they experience one or more deaths or severe illnesses among close family and friends
• Some will suffer the pain of continued or new abuse
• Others will be experiencing great stress driven by food insecurity, family financial struggles, or other challenging environmental conditions
• Many experience(d) fear of the unknown and uncontrollable
• Some may have been/will be frustrated by significantly interrupted schooling, as they lacked internet access, had to watch and support the learning of younger siblings as their parents worked, or had to work themselves
• Others suddenly unattached from supportive day to day interactions in school may have become disconnected or disengaged from schooling altogether
STUDENTS MAY EXPERIENCE POSITIVE IMPACTS

• At same time as they live through struggles, students may have positive experiences -- as they find value, feel worth, experience agency, in successfully supporting siblings and family or learning in a new ways
• Some may have experience a greater sense of community or support at home or among peers
• Others may have found/find distant or online learning to be a better experience than their prior schooling
• Some may have felt/feel relief from being bullied or teased at school
• Some may have simply enjoyed the freedoms of a less regulated day
THE LASTING IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON STUDENTS WILL DEPEND ON

- Both the nature of student’s COVID-19 circumstances, and how student’s experience and process them.
- Two students could face similar circumstances but experience and process them differently, resulting in different impacts.
- To learn more see Center for Developing Child: “Supportive Relationships and Active Skill-Building Strengthen the Foundations of Resilience”
THIS TELLS US

• All students will likely benefit from thoughtful re-start activities and experiences rather than just starting day 1 as if it was a normal return to school after summer.

• These activities and experience should help student’s process and potentially re-frame the meaning of their COVID-19 experiences, re-connect/connect them to supportive adults and peers, shape schooling as a positive, moving forward experience, not recovery from loss, and begin to re-activate students prior learning.

• The Big Goal -- establish a foundation of trust, belonging, and relationships upon which to build the school activities for the year, however, they enfold.
BEYOND THIS, HOWEVER

• It will be difficult to know which additional supports are needed by each student
• Unless a student’s COVID-19 circumstances and how they experienced them are well-known to adults in the school
• This will likely only be true for small to modest percent of students
• We need a means to figure out which students need what supports and when
HOW EARLY WARNING, ON-TRACK, AND MTSS SYSTEMS CAN BE USED AND ADAPTED TO SUPPORT SUCCESSFUL RETURN OF STUDENTS IN THE FALL
WHAT DO WE KNOW?
WHETHER THEY ARE CALLED EARLY WARNING, ON-TRACK, OR MTSS SYSTEMS, THEY SHARE SOME COMMON APPROACHES THAT CAN STRENGTHEN COVID-19 RESPONSES
COMBINE SCHOOL BEHAVIOR INDICATORS WITH MULTIPLE TIERS OF EVIDENCE-BASED SUPPORT

• Academic and social-emotional behaviors that are predictive of important outcomes (rather than student characteristics) are used to identify students who may be in need of additional supports
• These indicators are paired with a multi-tiered response system that combines whole school/grade prevention activities, with targeted small group supports, and customized one on one or one on few actions
• The goal is strategic response -- acting at the level where given signaling students circumstances the greatest number are positively impacted
COMBINE REAL TIME (OR NEAR REAL TIME) DATA WITH RELATIONSHIP BASED HUMAN INSIGHT

• To be responsive, adults who interact with students need ready and easy access to as near real time data on predictive indicators as possible

• Data, however, is only a signal
  – To know what to do, if anything, with that signal
    • need human insight, from the adults or peers or parents who have positive relationships with the identified student(s), as well as the students themselves
HOW CAN THESE SYSTEMS BE ADAPTED TO SUPPORT STUDENTS DURING COVID-19?
LEAN IN ON PROACTIVE SCHOOL-WIDE RESPONSES THAT EVOLVE

- Develop strong starting plans that address key challenges and modify and adapt as conditions evolve and student needs shift
- In EWS, On-Track, and MTSS lingo, COVID-19 requires strong Tier 1 responses
- Progress monitor students who are not benefitting from school-wide strategies or need more or different supports
ESTABLISH DATA AND HUMAN SYSTEMS THAT ENABLE CONTINUAL PROGRESS MONITORING OF ALL STUDENTS AND ADAPTIVE ASSET-BASED RESPONSES

• For good and bad, COVID-19 was experienced by all students. Moreover, it's not over, and student needs and experiences will evolve as the year progresses
• Under these conditions, EWS, On-Track, and MTSS systems cannot be operated by a lone counselor or even a small student support team
• Means to enable these systems to be used by significant numbers of adults in the school need to be established
• Mindset of the work needs to be proactive and responsive actions, which build on strengths
ESTABLISH MEANS TO ANALYZE IMPACT OF SUPPORTS PROVIDED AND MAKE ADJUSTMENTS AS NEEDED

• No playbook exists on how to meet the diverse set and ever-evolving student needs that each school will face as the result of COVID-19
• That is why a step, often overlooked in traditional uses of EWS, On-Track, and MTSS systems, is more crucial than ever
• Recording the responses/interventions employed for students, checking in on their efficacy, and then making adjustments as needed
• This is how schools build their local knowledge base of what works, for which students, under which conditions
ADAPTING AND EXPANDING THE ABC PREDICTIVE INDICATORS AND RESPONSES UNDER COVID-19
THE ABC INDICATORS AND THEIR RESPONSES UNDER COVID-19

• Attendance (A), Behavior and Social Emotional (B), and Course Performance (C) are very effective predictors of student success

• Nearly all Early Waring, On-Track, or MTSS system uses some version of them

• A number of evidence-based and practice-validated strategies have been developed to improve the ABC’s
The ABC indicators can be modified and extended to provide effective signals of which students may need what supports and when, during COVID-19 -- whether schooling is in-person, remote, or some of each.

Effective strategies to improve them under COVID-19 can be developed.
ATTENDANCE -- FOCUS ON PARTICIPATION

• First work to establish and monitor the most basic level of school presence –
  – Do students have access to learning opportunities?
  – Are students coming to school, establishing online linkages, or obtaining remote learning materials?

• Here the most important data is identifying those students who have minimal or no school interaction

• Leverage social networks to find missing students, use re-start to build connections, and establish means of contact for students who were not found in the spring
ATTENDANCE UNDER COVID-19 (CONT.)

• Since COVID-19, however, *shifts more of the organization of the learning experience to individual/family effort* – the most important metric is participation in learning activities

• This means *assignment or school work completion* may be the *most important Attendance metric* during COVID-19
ATTENDANCE UNDER COVID-19 CONT.

• Key levels of participation can be established
  — Minimal - student missing multiple assignments from multiple teachers or subjects
  — Moderate - student is missing some assignments, from some teachers or subjects
  — Full - student is completing all assignments

• Typically, this information is compartmentalized in teachers gradebooks
• Electronic gradebooks may have the potential to automate this data collection so outcomes for students across all their classes can be readily seen
• Otherwise, online data collection tools (i.e. google docs, etc.) may have to be used, with weekly input
RESOURCES FOR ATTENDANCE UNDER COVID-19

• Attendance Works
  – Addressing Absenteeism and Learning Participation During COVID

• NYC Community Schools
  – Using Success Mentors to Support Participation in Remote Learning
    • https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ihrfVzRpHE5Vo6CrAvcfgD2QjxYVjPWU60nFZhZywA/edit#heading=h.is8a4bx4n5s
BEHAVIOR/SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL 1: FOCUS ON WELL-BEING

• A key extension of typical Early Warning, On-Track, and MTSS systems under COVID-19 will be a schoolwide focus on well-being

• A fundamental pre-condition for productive school behaviors will be a sense of safety and an environment supportive of managing the stress brought on by COVID-19 and its economic and social impacts.

• Since communities and school populations will have different COVID-19 circumstances and experience and process them differently, school-wide survey data on well-being will be important

• Just search for “Student Well-Being Surveys” to find multiple options
FOCUS ON WELL-BEING (CONT.)

• Advice from the Field -- Student Sense of Safety supported by Communication, Consistency, and Control

• Advice from National Child Traumatic Stress Network on Supporting Students dealing with economic impacts of COVID-19
In addition to addressing safety and stress, a strong sense of school connection or belonging is essential to student success under COVID-19 (and in general).

Fortunately a good set of metrics is available which schools can track without extraordinary effort.

Students have high odds of strong connection to school when:

- There are two or more adults who they believe know them and care about them as a person.
- They are affiliated with a peer group supportive of their identity.
- They are engaged in pro-social activities i.e. helping others directly or indirectly.
- They believe their school is a welcoming place.

For more information on how to build school connection when schooling is remote:

- [http://new.every1graduates.org/keeping-secondary-school-students-connected-to-school-when-schooling-is-remote/](http://new.every1graduates.org/keeping-secondary-school-students-connected-to-school-when-schooling-is-remote/)
BEHAVIOR/SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL 3: BUILDING RESILIENCE THROUGH HOPE AND PURPOSE

• Gallup Student Poll Survey defines Hope in a strong way as, “The ideas and energy students have for the future. Hopeful students are positive about the future, goal-oriented and can overcome obstacles in the learning process, enabling them to navigate a pathway to achieve their goals.”
• Its finds the Hopeful students are nearly 3 times as likely to succeed at school as Discouraged students
• Mindset of Schooling and Early Warning, On-Track, and MTSS systems in 2020-21 needs to be about working towards a positive better future building on strengths, not recovery from loss
• Hope as defined by Gallup is built through trusting, supportive relationships with adults, and belief that there is a pathway to a better future and outcomes
• See the questions Gallup asks and national responses here
COURSE PERFORMANCE: FOCUS ON BUILDING SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS (IN-PERSON, REMOTE, AND BLENDED)

• From our friends at Turnaround for Children – The Importance of Relationships, Routines, and Resilience

• “Relationships” are the “active ingredient” in any environment – classrooms included – because they boost oxytocin – the love/trust hormone – and activate the learning centers of the brain. In fact, trust is the antidote to stress and relationships are the medium through which we experience trust.”

• Routines - “Our brains are prediction machines that like order and knowing what is coming next. When our environments are orderly the brain is calmer and able to learn”.

• Resilience is positive adaptation during or following exposure to adversities “Building resilience is likely the most important task we have, for ourselves and our kids” Pam Cantor and Kate Felson

• Tips on how to build these can be found at
  - https://www.turnaroundusa.org/the-three-rs-relationships-routines-resilience/
SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS UNDER COVID-19 (CONT.)

• From our friends at the PERTS Engagement Project - The Importance of

• **Teacher Caring.** Students engage more deeply in their work when they feel like their teacher likes them and cares about them as a person.

• **Feedback for Growth.** Students learn more effectively when their teacher recognizes and encourages their progress, and offers supportive feedback to help them improve.

• **Meaningful Work.** Students are more motivated to learn when they can see how their classroom experiences relate to their lives outside of school.

• PERTS has developed evidence based guidance on these elements of engagement and a very short set of student survey questions (5 to 10 minutes) which help teacher teams establish baseline and test improvement strategies rather learning is occurring in person, remotely, or a blend

  – [https://www.perts.net/engage](https://www.perts.net/engage)
  – [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fTtcdudVc4fd5WYPTakAtYyVT3MVJ3tYnU_zTJJYjRo/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fTtcdudVc4fd5WYPTakAtYyVT3MVJ3tYnU_zTJJYjRo/edit)
COURSE PERFORMANCE 2: BUILD SCHOOL SUCCESS SKILLS AND RESILIENT OUTLOOKS

• Since COVID-19 shifts more responsibility for learning to students, it will be important to build student school success skills and resilient outlooks

• Recent research is beginning to identify a sub-set of social-emotional skills most directly tied to course performance, they include
  – Growth Mindset
  – Goal Setting
  – Self-Management/Regulation
  – Productive Persistence/Stereotype Threat

• Depending on student age, relatively modest school experiences or instruction have been shown to make a difference
COURSE WORK 3: HIGH SCHOOL GRADES AND COURSE CREDIT

- Bring Chicago in here
- Or is this where work in high school still need to track course grades, and credit and importance of students getting good grades in challenging courses—what is COVID-19 equivalent?
COVID-19 AND POSTSECONDARY PATHWAYS

• COVID-19 further accelerates and magnifies a twenty year shift in the function of high schools
• High schools have moved from an endpoint for many and then some, to a launching point towards adult success for all
• Current societal function of high schools is not just to develop and signal the attainment of a core body of knowledge and essential academic skills — (i.e. graduation requirements for high school diploma)
COVID AND POSTSECONDARY PATHWAYS (CONT.)

• Now high schools also have to provide guidance, support, experiences, and connections that get students from high school to postsecondary schooling or training, and puts them on a pathway to get a combination of education and work experiences that result in a family supporting wage.

• Thus, a key strategy to not only build hope during COVID-19 for high school students but also keep them on track to postsecondary and career success, will be to track and respond to emerging needs with their postsecondary preparation activities, experiences, and milestones in grades 9 - 12.

• Also essential to work to insure that the COVID-19 disruptions of 2020-21 does not leave rising seniors without a postsecondary placement, each seniors progress towards this needs to be tracked as well, and plans made to provide supports.
PUTTING ALL THE PIECES TOGETHER:

ORGANIZING SUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO INSTITUTE SCHOOL-WIDE SUPPORTS, PROGRESS MONITOR ALL STUDENTS ON ADAPTED ABC INDICATORS, AND BE RESPONSIVE AND ADAPTIVE AS THEIR NEEDS EVOLVE
ORGANIZE TEAMS OF ADULTS WITH SUB-SETS OF STUDENTS THEY KNOW

- Since COVID-19 impacts all students in one way or another, the response can not be the responsibility of only a few people
- Organize groups of adults who know sets of students in common into COVID-19 response teams
- This likely will be by grade level but other organizations are possible
- Draw on all staff/adults who intersect with these students -- teachers, coaches, counselors, non-profit partners -- as the extended support team
- Provide them time in the schedule to meet about their students on a regular basis
STUDENTS AS CO-DESIGNERS

• One of the best guides to student’s circumstances under COVID-19 and how they have experienced and process them, is students themselves
• Put student voice at the center of COVID-19 response efforts
• First, build trust through supportive relationships focused on student and family well-being
• Then, build engagement by establishing participatory structures including (at high school level) being members of COVID-19 response teams
• Regularly survey students on both evolving impacts of COVID-19 on their lives, and utility of responses school is engaging in
UPDATE AND ADAPT RESOURCE MAPS

• EWS, On-Track, and MTSS systems typically develop resource maps, which show available whole-school, targeted group, and one on one or one on few responses are available at the school and sometimes district level.

• They need to be update and adapted for COVID-19 response based on some of the evidence-based ideas shared here and in other venues as well as student, teacher, and community input.

• They should show for each indicator and area of focus what is available for each tier of COVID-19 response and then made available to the COVID-19 response teams.
STRATEGIC USE OF COMMUNITY PARTNERS

• Effective COVID-19 response is a tall order, it will be hard especially in the most impacted communities for school’s to driven and implement needed responses alone

• Work with existing community partners, to leverage their assets in support of the School COVID-19 response plan

• Integrate their connections to students, and resources into the multi-tier response system

• Proactively ask community partners how their supports can continue if schooling becomes remote again

• If needed increase community partners who can
  1. provide, physical and mental health supports, and others who can
  2. form supportive relationships with students
CULTURALLY AND SITUATIONALLY RESPONSIVE

• The circumstances of COVID-19 and how they experience them may differ for students and their families from those of some or most of the school staff.

• Structural inequities in access to healthcare, wi-fi, food and medicine, comfortable shelter, the ability to shelter vs. the need or requirement to keep working, or even just a quiet place to do schoolwork will impact the students and families of many schools.

• Prior work on responding to students and families in need demonstrates the importance of key mindsets among responders, including empathy, absence of blame, seeking to listen and understand, a sense of shared humanity, and practical support without pity.

• NYC Community Schools resource on Talking with Students about COVID-19
  https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Y_Ya8ywDs-sBQVjgBMIbRYQB4grFmFJvP3jABHgYnZs/edit#heading=h.wq7rcll86zsi
INSIGHTS FROM THE FIELD
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Q & A AND BROADER INSIGHTS FROM FIELD
IN CONCLUSION

• Send your follow-up ideas and thoughts to rbalfanz@jhu.edu

• We will send out:
  – a recording of the session
  – a copy of the slides
  – a list of references and materials shared today

• If you would like an attendee list, please email info@pathwaystoadultsuccess.org

• Be well, thank you, and onwards