

WHY IT WORKS: WRAPAROUND/INTEGRATED STUDENT SUPPORTS



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PARTNERSHIP FOR
Student Success

The Partnership for Student Success focuses on five evidence-based student support roles that can result in gains in reading and math, high school and college graduation rates, reductions in chronic absenteeism, and improved student well-being and mental health. Program implementors can utilize this information to access relevant research, data, and resources to support and, when needed, make the case for implementing these evidence-based supports.

What are Wraparound/Integrated Student Supports?

Wraparound or integrated student supports are an approach by schools to address students' barriers to being fully engaged and learning in school. To meet students' and families' needs, wraparound/integrated student support models typically include partnerships with community organizations that provide wraparound services, including housing, food assistance, medical and behavioral health care, and extended learning opportunities (among other supports). Site coordinators coordinate wraparound/integrated student supports and enable schools to build strong connections and systems with community health, mental health, and social service providers. An integrated student supports strategy ensures that individualized support to students are aligned to schoolwide goals and work within a system of support. Oftentimes, coordinators put school climate plans and multi-tiered systems of support into action.

In many schools, these supports are delivered through a community school strategy. The Learning Policy Institute describes community schools strategy as one that transforms a school into a place where educators, local community members, families, and students work together to strengthen conditions for student learning and healthy development. As partners, they organize in- and out-of-school resources, supports, and opportunities so that young people thrive.¹

Integrated student supports strategy is an essential element of the Community Schools framework. It can also be implemented outside of a Community Schools strategy to complement Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), School Climate and/or School Turnaround strategies.

¹ Community Schools Forward: [Framework: Essentials for Community School transformation](#). (n.d.). National Center for Community Schools.

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Why Implement Wraparound/Integrated Student Supports?

According to a 2017 report from the Learning Policy Institute, integrated student supports (ISS) provided by community schools are associated with a number of positive student outcomes. Young people receiving such supports, including counseling, medical care, dental services, and transportation assistance, often show significant improvements in attendance, behavior, social functioning, and academic achievement.² For example, New York City Department of Education data released during the fall of 2019 indicates that over the five years covering the academic years 2013-14 through 2018-19, New York City community schools decreased chronic absenteeism by 9.6%, nearly 20 times the citywide decrease of 0.5%.³ Further, a 2023 study examining the long-term relation between an ISS intervention and postsecondary enrollment and completion for predominantly low-income students of color found that students who received ISS in elementary school had a higher probability of enrolling in postsecondary education and, for those enrolled students, those who received ISS in elementary school had a higher probability of completing postsecondary education than the comparison group.⁴

Communities In Schools (CIS), a national organization providing wraparound/integrated student supports in partnership with 29 states and DC, has continuously demonstrated evidence suggesting positive effects of CIS on students in high-poverty schools:

- **Improved Attendance:** Multiple studies indicate that CIS positively impacts student attendance. The Challenge Schools⁵ initiative found that CIS schools had 13% lower odds of being chronically absent compared to non-CIS schools. Even with a general decline in attendance during the pandemic, enrollment in a CIS school was associated with a lesser decline in attendance for all students and specific subgroups such as Black, Latino/Hispanic, and economically disadvantaged students. Similarly, an evaluation of the whole-school impact of CIS found that CIS significantly increased elementary school attendance.⁶ Research in Texas elementary schools showed that CIS improves average attendance by 0.46 days per student annually (i.e., 46 additional days attended for every 100 students).⁷

² Maier, A., Daniel, J., Oakes, J., & Lam, L. (2017). [Community schools as an effective school improvement strategy: A review of the evidence](#). Learning Policy Institute.

³ Quinn, J., & Martin J. Blank. [Twenty years, ten lessons](#). (2022, November 10). NYU Steinhardt.

⁴ Pollack, C. et al. (2023). [Long-term effects of integrated student support: the relation of an elementary school intervention with postsecondary enrollment and completion](#). Applied Developmental Science, 28(4), pp. 488–510. doi: 10.1080/10888691.2023.2240232.

⁵ American Institutes for Research (2023). [CIS Challenge Schools data analyses](#). [Memorandum]. Communities In Schools.

⁶ Somers, M. & Haider, Z. (2017). [Using integrated student supports to keep kids in school: A quasi-experimental evaluation of Communities In Schools](#). MDRC.

⁷ Goldman, B. & Gracie, J. (2025). [Every day counts: Absenteeism and the returns to education in high poverty schools \[Unpublished manuscript\]](#). Harvard University.

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- Non-Academic Outcomes: A randomized controlled trial of CIS case management found significant positive effects on students' reports of having caring adults, the quality of their peer relationships, school engagement, educational attitudes, and the belief that education has value.⁸ Champions across various districts emphasized the value of CIS in building strong relationships with students and families, fostering a sense of belonging in school, and even deepening family engagement.⁹
- Graduation Rates: Studies show that high schools that implement CIS experience increases in on-time graduation rates. One evaluation of the impact of CIS on school-wide outcomes found that CIS improved schools' graduation rates by 7.5% above what would be expected without CIS at the school (the equivalent of an estimated 55 additional graduates per school, on average).¹⁰ Another study estimated that CIS's impact on attendance increases graduation rates in high-poverty high schools by .5 percentage points, which would close nearly 7% of the gap in graduation rates between high- and low-poverty schools.³
- Long-Term Economic Benefits: Emerging research suggests that CIS can have significant long-term economic impacts. One study estimated that students attending a school with CIS for four years earned, on average, \$1,500 more in annual income at age 30 than students who attended schools not served by CIS.¹¹ This effect is larger for students from low-income families and appears to be driven by a reduction in non-employment and an increase in the probability of having a low-paying job. The study also projects that each student exposed to four years of CIS is expected to pay an additional \$9,000, on average, in income tax between ages 18-65 as a result of higher earnings, which compares favorably to the program's costs.

⁸ Parise, L., Corrin, W., Granito, K., Haider, Z., Somers, M., & Cerna, O. (2017). [Two years of case management: Final findings from the Communities In Schools random assignment evaluation](#). MDRC.

⁹ Vasudevan, D. S., Rikoon, S., Swanlund, A., Allen, L., Panagoulas, P., Osher, D., & Syvertsen, A. (2025). Communities In Schools (CIS) national annual learning brief: Findings from the Year 1 CIS Learning Cohort evaluation. American Institutes for Research.

¹⁰ Somers, M. & Haider, Z. (2017). [Using integrated student supports to keep kids in school: A quasi-experimental evaluation of Communities In Schools](#). MDRC.

¹¹ Goldman, B., Gracie, J., & Porter, S. R. (2025). [Can individualized student supports improve economic outcomes for children in high poverty schools? \[Unpublished manuscript\]](#). Harvard University.

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Wraparound/Integrated Student Support Resources

- [Learning Policy Institute](#) (webpage containing research on community schools from the Learning Policy Institute)
- [National Guidelines for Integrated Student Supports](#) (webpage containing national guidelines, an action guide, and a related policy brief and practitioners' brief from Boston College)
- [AIR Community Schools Case Studies](#) (community schools case studies from AIR)
- [IEL Guide](#) (a playbook for building a community schools system from the Institute for Educational Leadership)
- [Communities in Schools](#) (webpage containing data and research from Communities in Schools)

This brief was developed by the Partnership for Student Success at the Johns Hopkins University Everyone Graduates Center and Communities In Schools in July 2025.