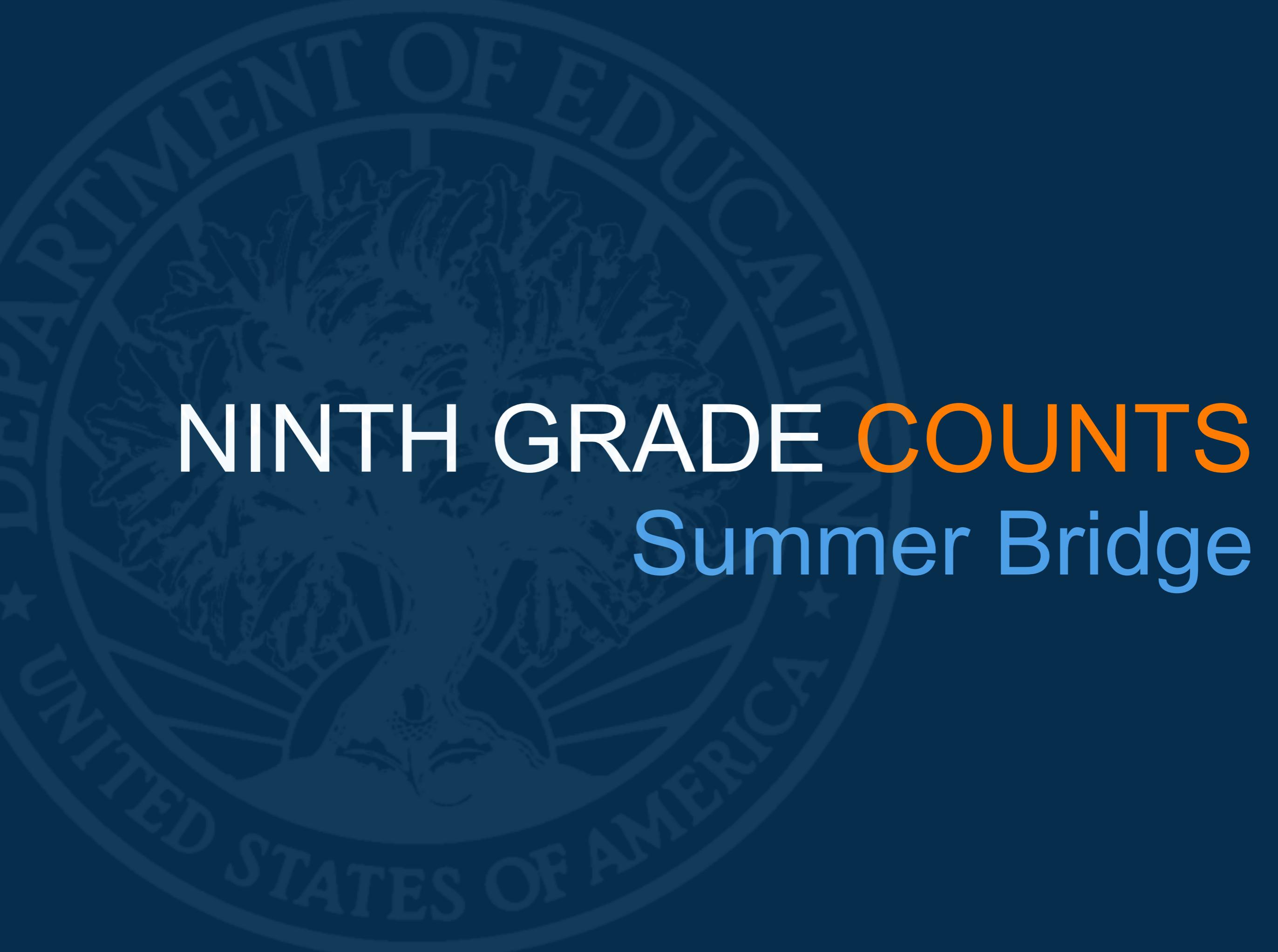




A Smaller Learning Communities Program  
**WEBINAR**

U.S. Department of Education  
January 16, 2013 4:00 PM EST

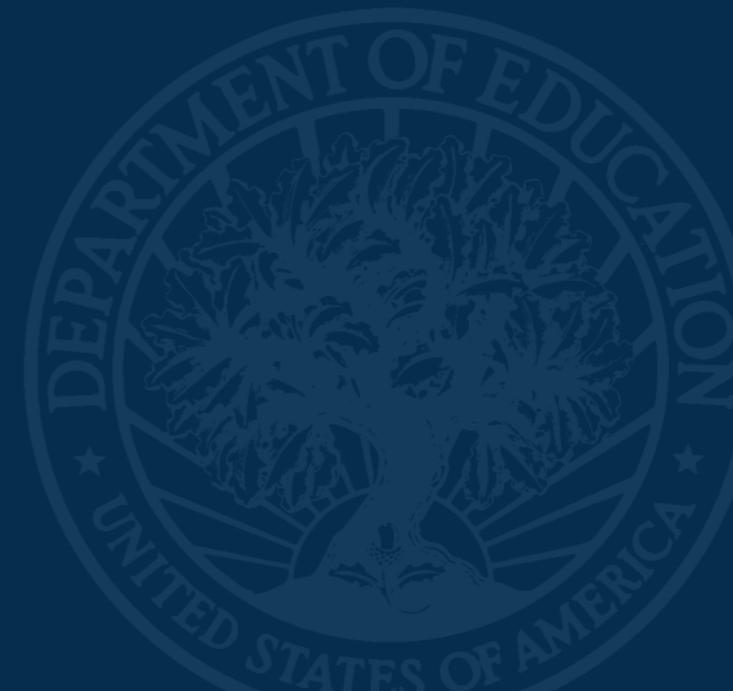
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# NINTH GRADE **COUNTS**

## Summer Bridge

# HOUSEKEEPING

To ask a **question**, please type your question using the CHAT FEATURE and click enter



# HOUSEKEEPING

## NINTH GRADE COUNTS

Strengthening the Transition  
Into High School for  
English Language Learners

Attendees (2)

▼ Hosts (1)

👤 Gwen Merrick

▶ Presenters (0)

▼ Participants (1)

👤 Mary Hastings

Chat (Everyone)

Gwen Merrick: Welcome everyone!

Everyone

# HOUSEKEEPING

If you are disconnected from the online webinar or conference line, please contact technical support:

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# HOUSEKEEPING

The webinar slides will be posted on our website by 5:00 p.m., EST, on January 18th

[greatschoolspartnership.org/ninth\\_grade\\_counts](https://greatschoolspartnership.org/ninth_grade_counts)



# Your Technical Assistance Team

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Center for Secondary School Redesign

[cssr.us](http://cssr.us)





# Today's Presenters



# Hanif Fazal

Director, Step Up  
Portland, OR



# Katie Gipson

Advocate, Step Up  
Portland, OR



Your Facilitator

Ken  
Templeton

Senior Associate  
Great Schools Partnership  
Portland, ME



# Goals for Today's Webinar

# Goal #1

Share a few **research findings** that will help you reflect on the strengths and areas for improvement in your summer bridge program, or to help you develop and plan a new program.



# Goal #2

Share **high-impact strategies** that will help your district or school develop or improve your summer bridge program, and enable more students to succeed in ninth grade, high school, and beyond.



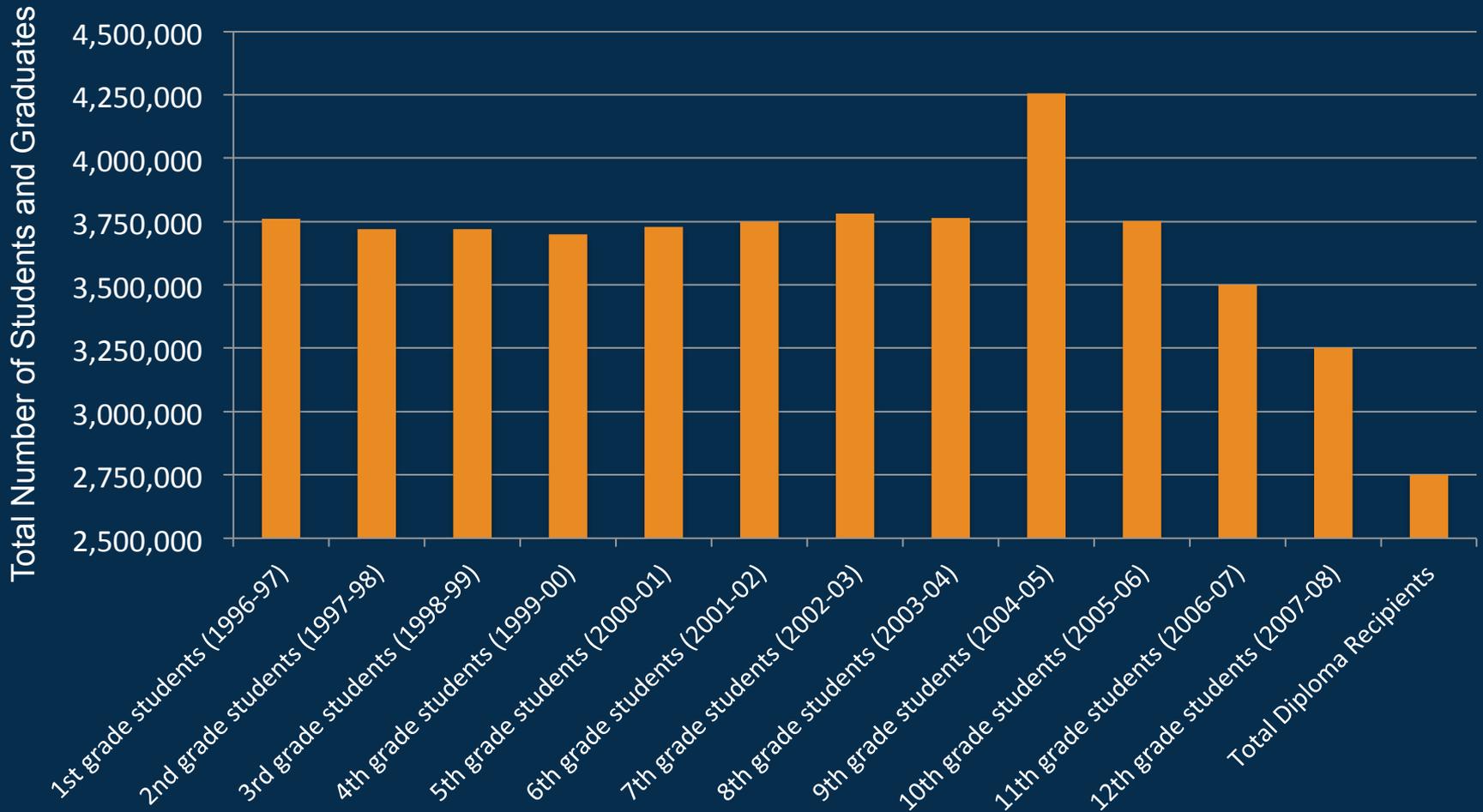
# Goal #3

Introduce a **new resource** designed to help your district or school take a proactive approach to the implementation of summer bridge as part of a ninth grade transition program.



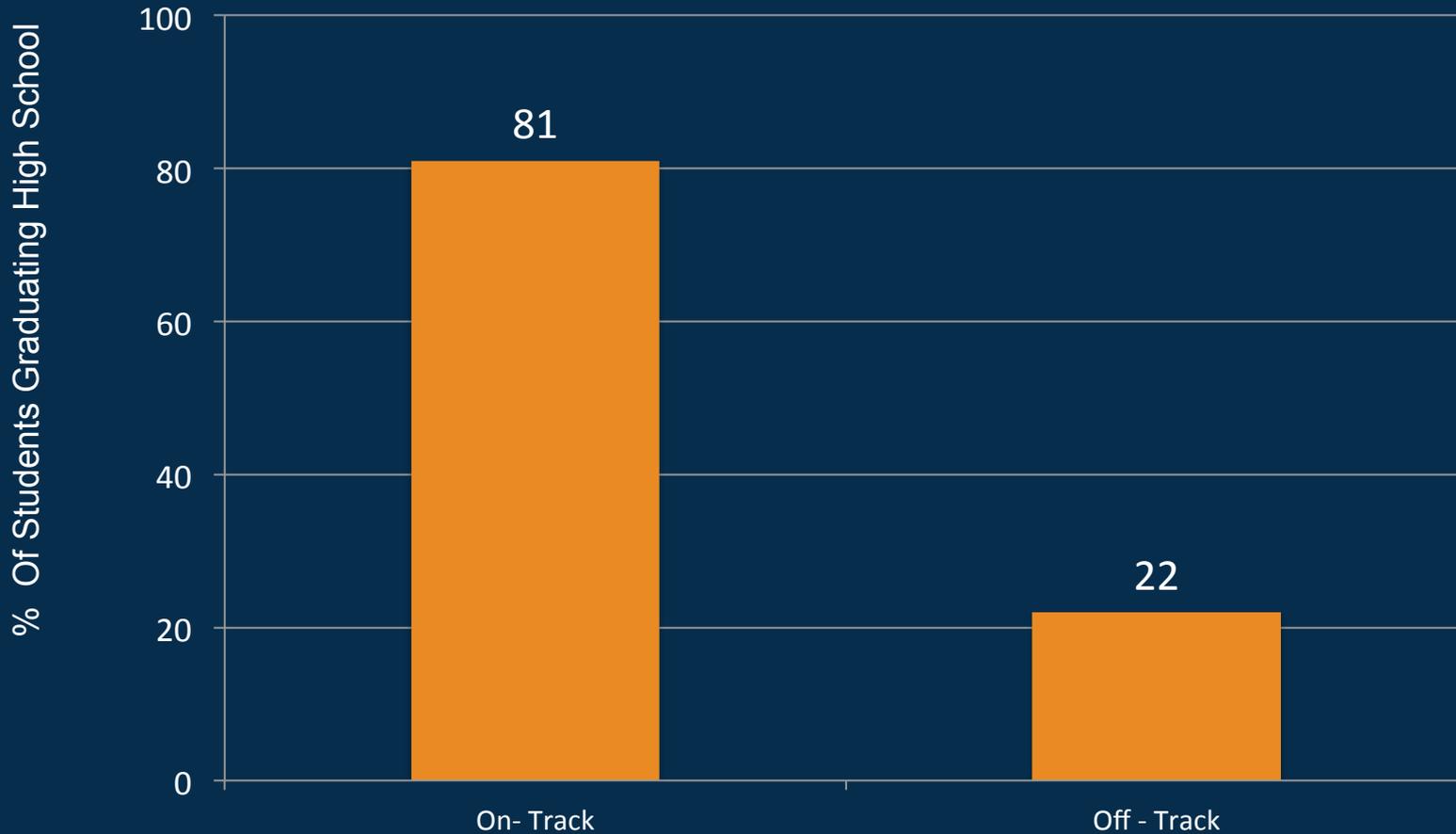
# The Ninth Grade Transition

Figure 1: Class of 2008 Grade Enrollments and Graduates



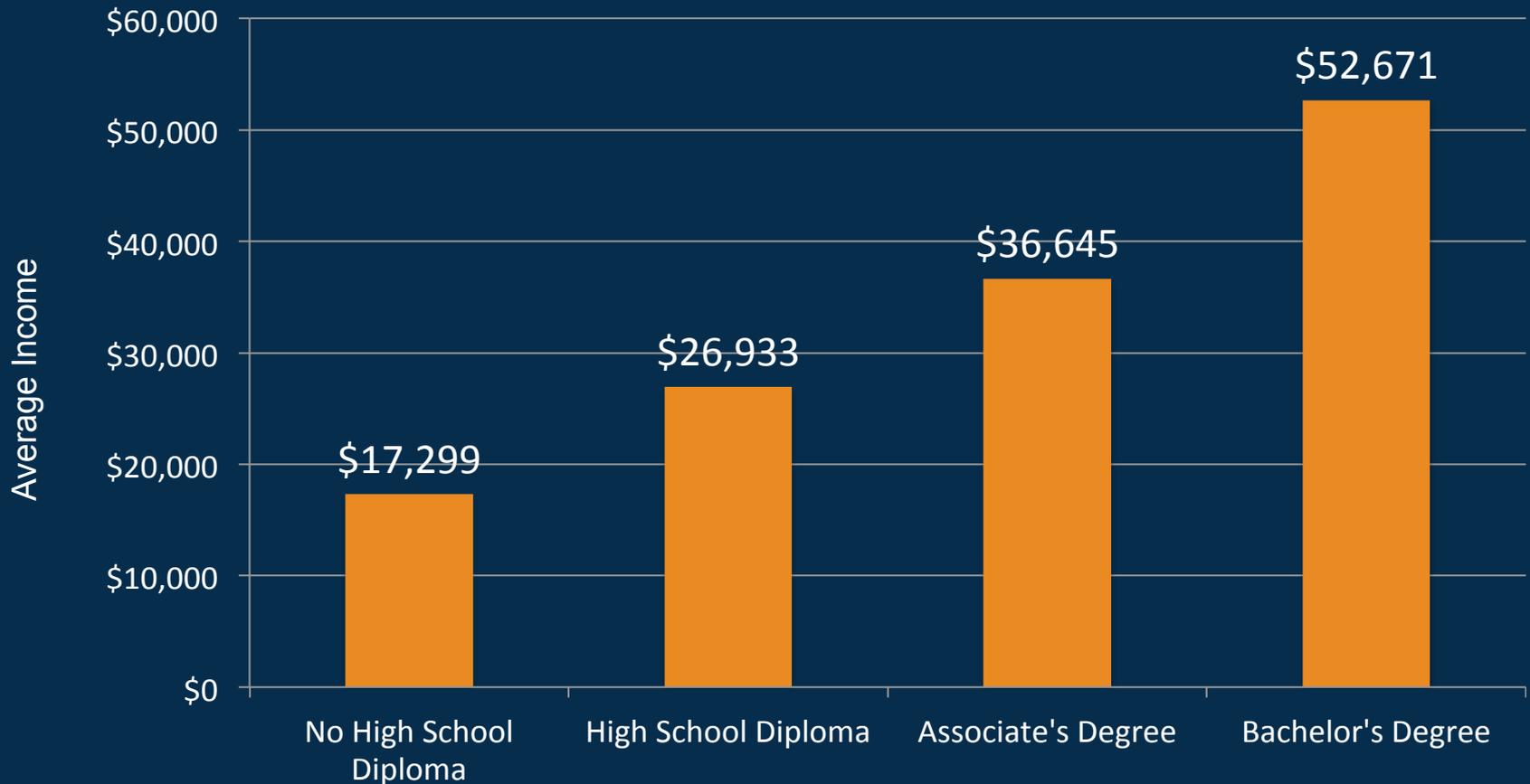
# The Ninth Grade Transition

Graduation Rates for On-Track + Off-Track Ninth Grade Students



# Importance of High School Graduation

2005 Average Income by Educational Attainment



# Factors Contributing to the **Challenges** of Ninth Grade Transition

Higher academic expectations

Schools not organized for  
student support

The social transition

Summer learning loss



# Highlighting Summer Learning Loss

Some research indicates that middle-class children do not lose ground in reading, but children in poverty lose approximately **two months of learning** each summer.



# Summer Bridge is NOT Just About Summer Learning Loss

Effective summer bridge programs are part of a **comprehensive plan** to address all areas of ninth grade transition challenge.

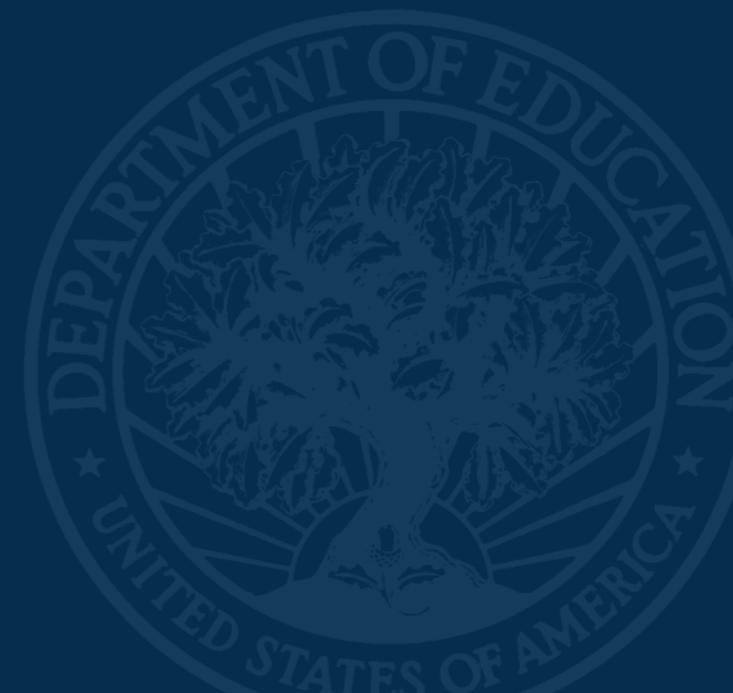


# Ninth Grade Transition: Higher Academic Expectations

More complex content

More teachers

Necessity of credits



# Ninth Grade Transition: Understanding the Challenge

## MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS:

Academic Ability

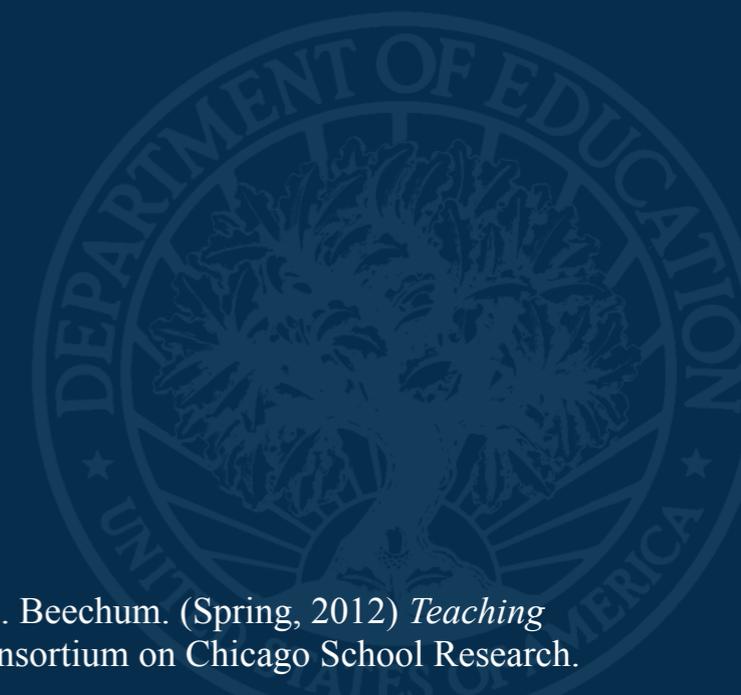
## HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS:

Time Management,  
Time On-Task,  
Behavior, and Social Skills



# Ninth Grade Transition: Understanding the Challenge

Students' reflections on high school success center on the **non-cognitive** skills needed for high school success.



# Ninth Grade Transition: Understanding the Challenge

**Most Educators Assume:**

High rates of course failure are due  
to low academic skills



# Ninth Grade Transition: Understanding the Challenge

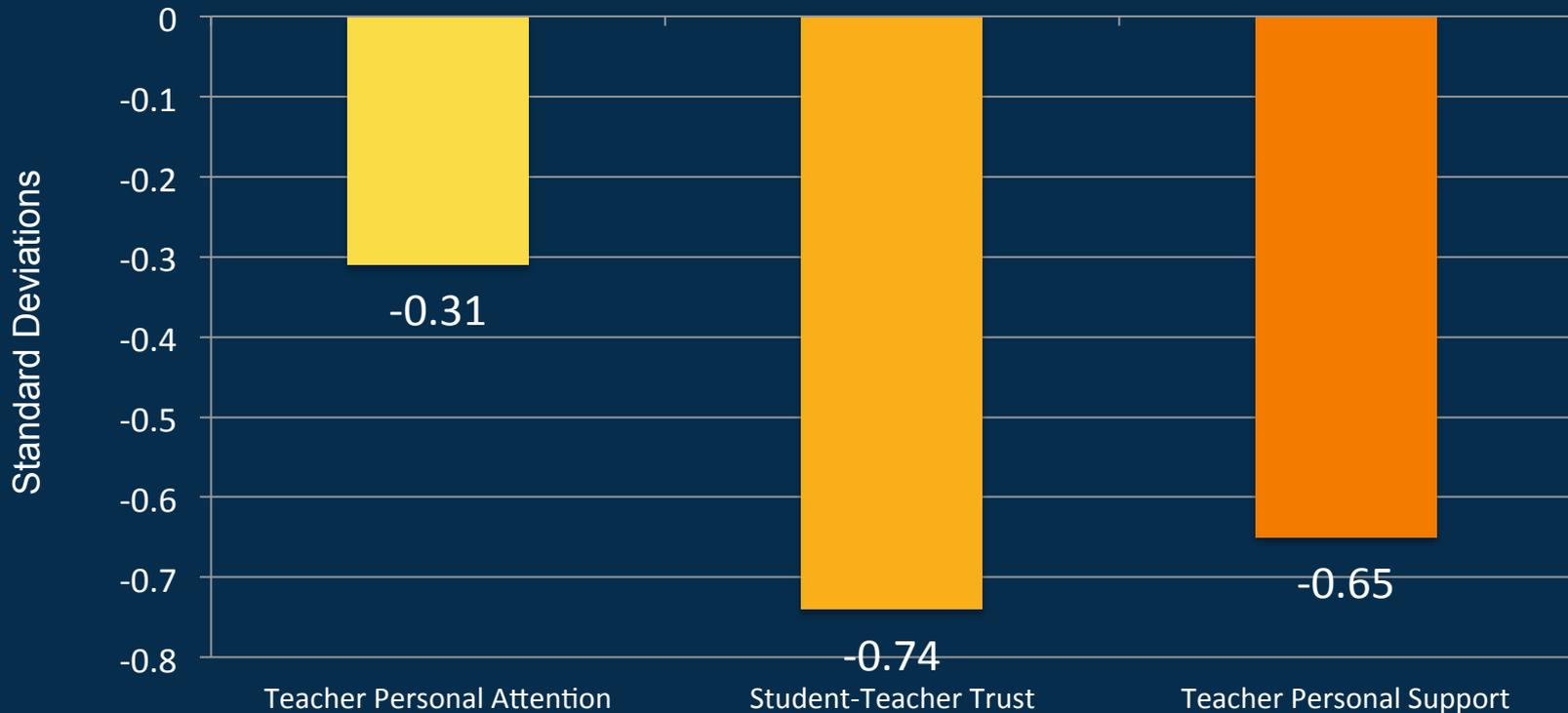
## Research on Non-cognitive Skills:

High rates of course failure are due to a reduction in academic ~~skills~~ *behaviors*.



# The Ninth Grade Transition : Understanding the Challenge

Differences Between Middle Grade + Ninth Grade Student Perceptions



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What Can Summer Bridge Do?

# What Can Summer Bridge Do?

Relationships First

Develop connections between  
students and teachers

Advisor/Advisee

Challenge courses, field trips,  
college visits



# What Can **Summer Bridge** Do?

**Academic Awareness and Work Habits**

**Practice time and task management**

**Upperclass mentors**

**Tracking progress**

# What Can Summer Bridge Do?

## Academic Preparedness

Use incoming **student data** to identify skill gaps

Align summer bridge content and skills to **ninth grade curriculum**

Help ninth grade teachers **prepare** for their students.



# Comparing Summer Bridge, Summer School, and 9th Grade Orientation Programs

<b>Summer Bridge</b>	<b>Summer School</b>	<b>Orientation</b>
<b>1-8 Weeks</b>	<b>4-8 Weeks</b>	<b>1 Day/Evening</b>
Focus is on preparing for ninth grade and a pathway to postsecondary opportunities	Focus is on credit recovery	Focus is on ninth grade information
Includes academic and social support	Academic support / instruction only	Academic and social support are limited to advice and expectations
Teachers use data to plan for successful transition	School or district uses data to identify failing students	Data is not used
Introduces students to long-term, postsecondary planning	No postsecondary or long-term planning	No postsecondary planning
Includes families as partners in student success	Communicates results of summer school to families	May communicate information to families
Connects students to community through service-learning or community partnerships	Concerns school-based experiences only with no community connection	No community connection

# Core Components of Summer Bridge Programs

At least **one week long**, with some programs as long as **eight weeks**.



# Core Components of Summer Bridge Programs

An **academic focus on reading, writing, and mathematical skills** that are foundational to success across content areas in high school, with teachers who instruct the ninth grade curriculum.



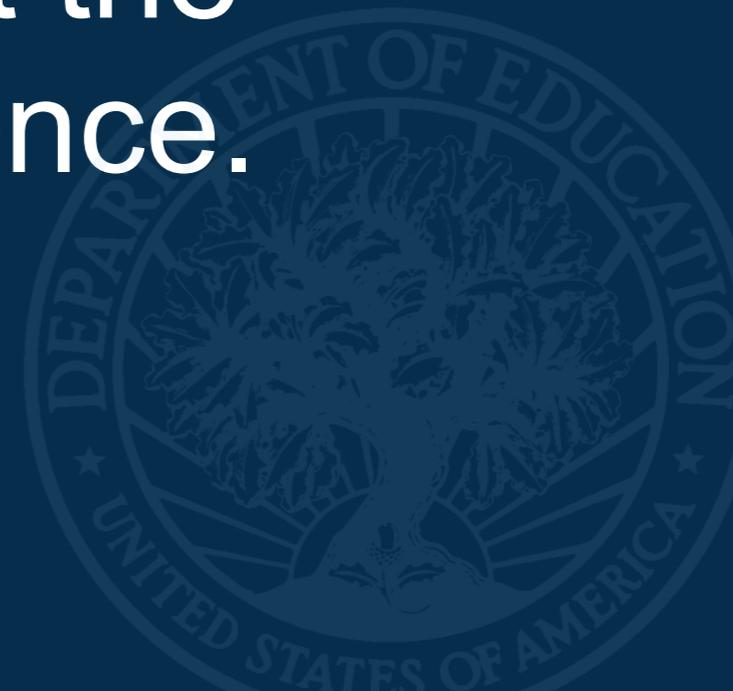
# Core Components of Summer Bridge Programs

Time dedicated to **helping students understand and reflect on the social-emotional challenges** of transitioning from middle school to high school.



# Core Components of Summer Bridge Programs

A focus on **building relationships between students and adults**—teachers, counselors, advisors, and advocates—who will serve as supportive guides throughout the students' ninth grade experience.



# Core Components of Summer Bridge Programs

Use of **data to identify students likely to benefit** from summer bridge and support in ninth grade.



# Core Components of Summer Bridge Programs

The use of **summer bridge as an opportunity to communicate key information** about high school and postsecondary success to students and families.





# Transition Timeline: Putting the Pieces Together

# 8th Grade

Students **visit high school**, shadow high school students

**Families visit** high school, meet staff, receive critical information.

High school and middle school staff **coordinate information to families** regarding summer bridge

High school and middle school staff **use key indicator data to recruit students** and families to summer bridge program.



# Summer Bridge

Students **pivot from middle school experience to high school** by setting goals, identifying challenges and strategies for success

Students gain exposure to **key academic skills and knowledge** that will be emphasized in ninth grade courses

Teachers and advisors **build relationships** with students to ensure smooth transition to high school



# Summer Bridge

Students **visit colleges** and begin postsecondary planning process

Students experience their community through **service learning or community-based learning** opportunities



# 9th Grade

Ninth grade teachers **meet with summer bridge staff** to understand student performance.

Teachers meet in **common planning time** sessions to support student transitions.

Attendance and grades are **routinely monitored** to ensure that students receive support before they fail.



# 9th Grade

**Students continue reflecting** on transition, on what has led to their success, and how they can improve.

**Advisors support students'** social/emotional development and habits of learning.





Step Up

Portland, Oregon

# History

Launched in **2003**, by Open Meadow Alternative School, with Roosevelt High School

**2003**: 53% high school graduation rate for PPS students.



# History

**2007 - 08:** Step Up expanded to two additional PPS High Schools

**2009-10:** Step Up expanded to another High School in a neighbor school district (Gresham Barlow School District)

**2011-12:** Step Up serves 400 students at four high schools in two school districts

# Program Overview

Identification of **Academic Priority** students in 8th grade.

Pre-Freshman Year **Leadership Camp** designed to develop social-emotional competence.

9th and 10th Grade **Extended-Day Tutoring**



# Recruitment

Starts with **identifying students** – using data to identify Academic Priority students.

**Personal outreach** to families: home visits, school gatherings, community gatherings, phone, email.

**Family night** for students participating in Step Up prior to and upon return from camp.



# Pre-Freshman Year Leadership Camp

Dream BIG—and be realistic.

Strengthen your locus of control and resiliency.

Build the Step Up community.



# Proficiency-Based Summer School

Step Up Advocate works with students and teachers to identify specific proficiencies for students to learn and demonstrate.

Step Up covers half of the students' \$100 tuition for summer school.

Grant funds from Portland Children's Levy and 21st Century Learning grants mitigate costs to students.



# Academic Tutoring During the School Year



After school tutoring from Step Up advocate, combining social/emotional and academic support.

Advocates support 10-12 Step Up students.

Meetings with Advocate and classroom teachers to identify areas for students to work on.

# District Commitment

Step Up is a proactive investment strategy.

Up-Front cost: \$5,000 per student

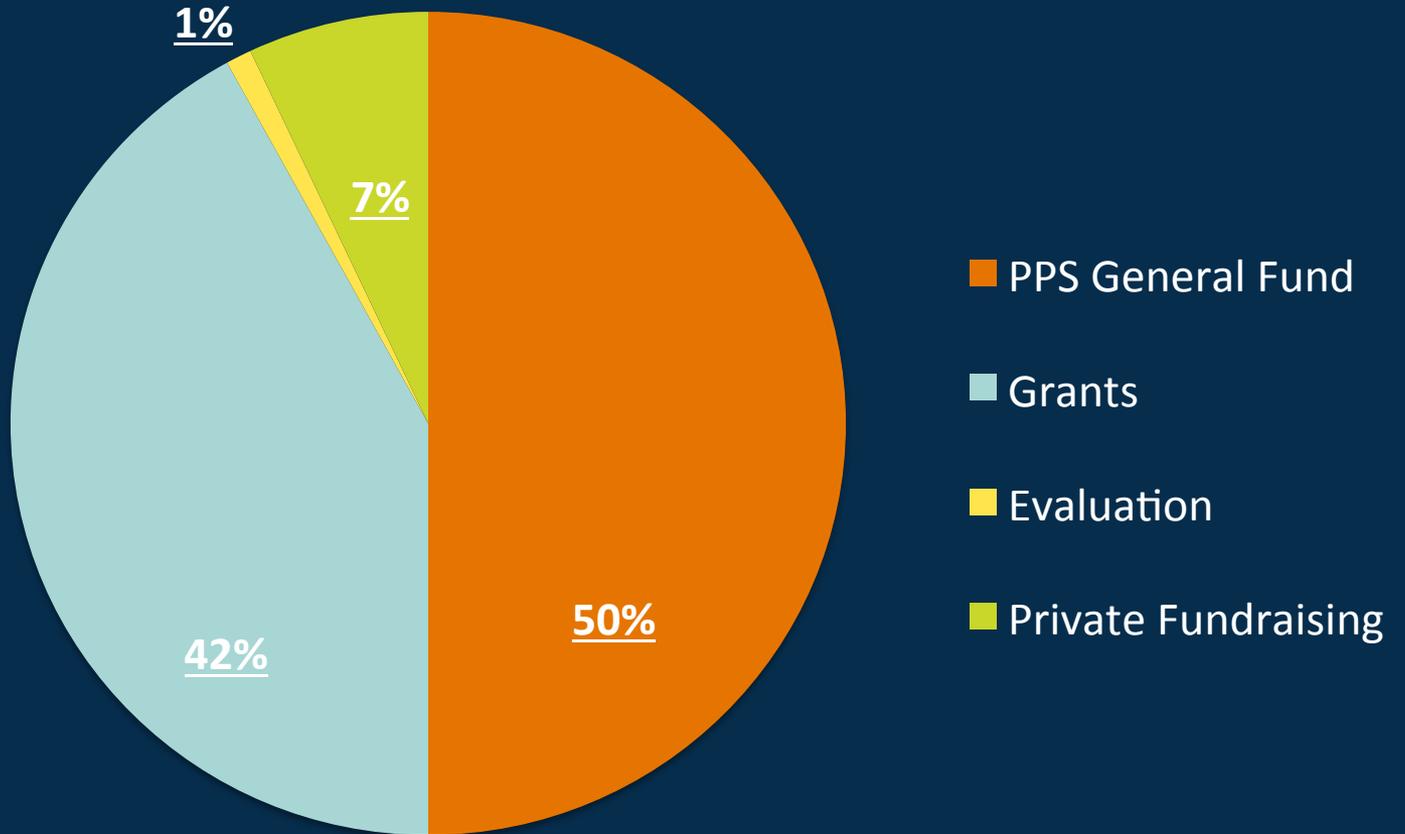
District benefit from keeping students enrolled:  
\$7,000 per student, per year.

Communicate support for the program and recruit investment and support from the community.

Be visible supporters of the program.

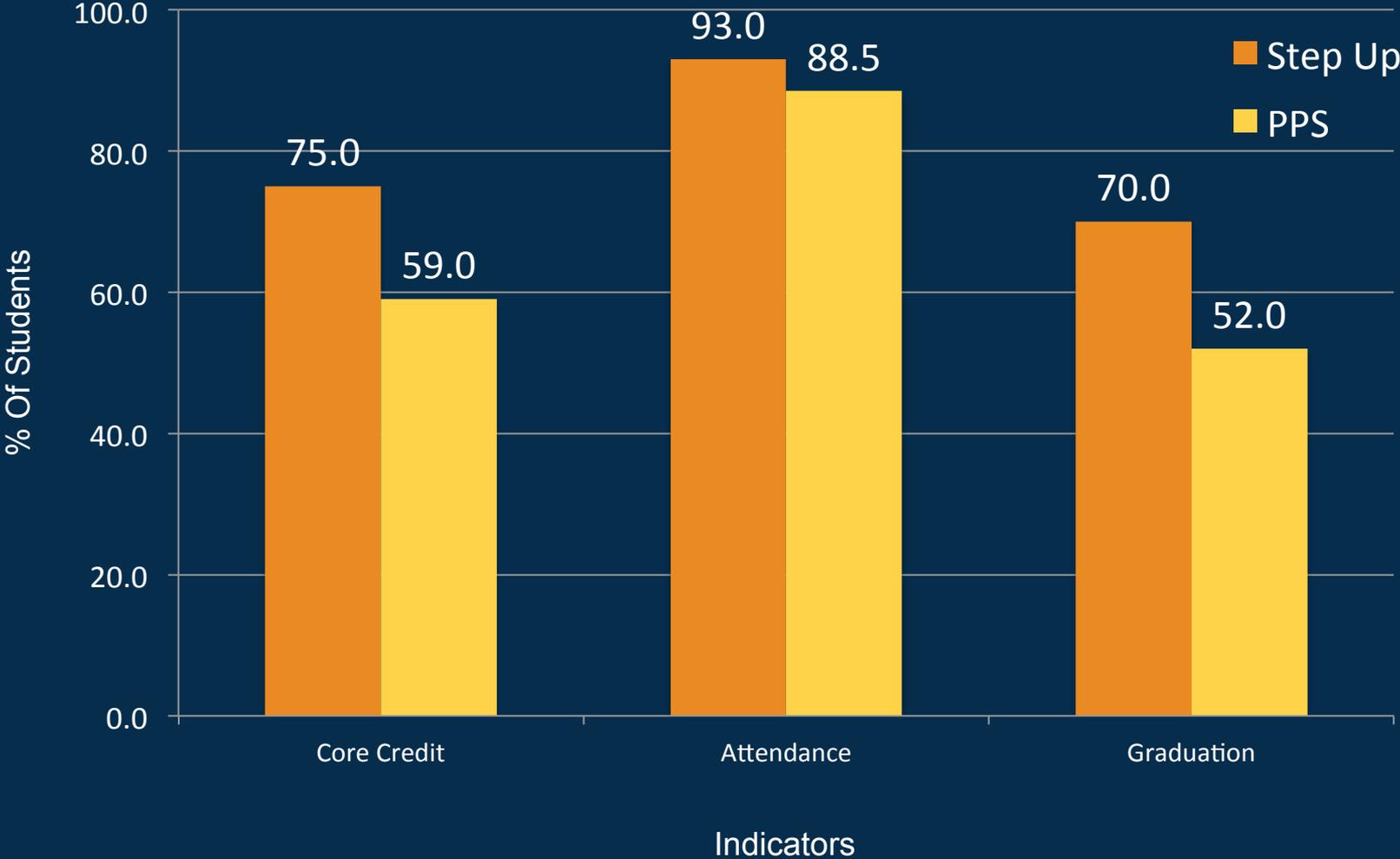


# Step Up Funding Streams



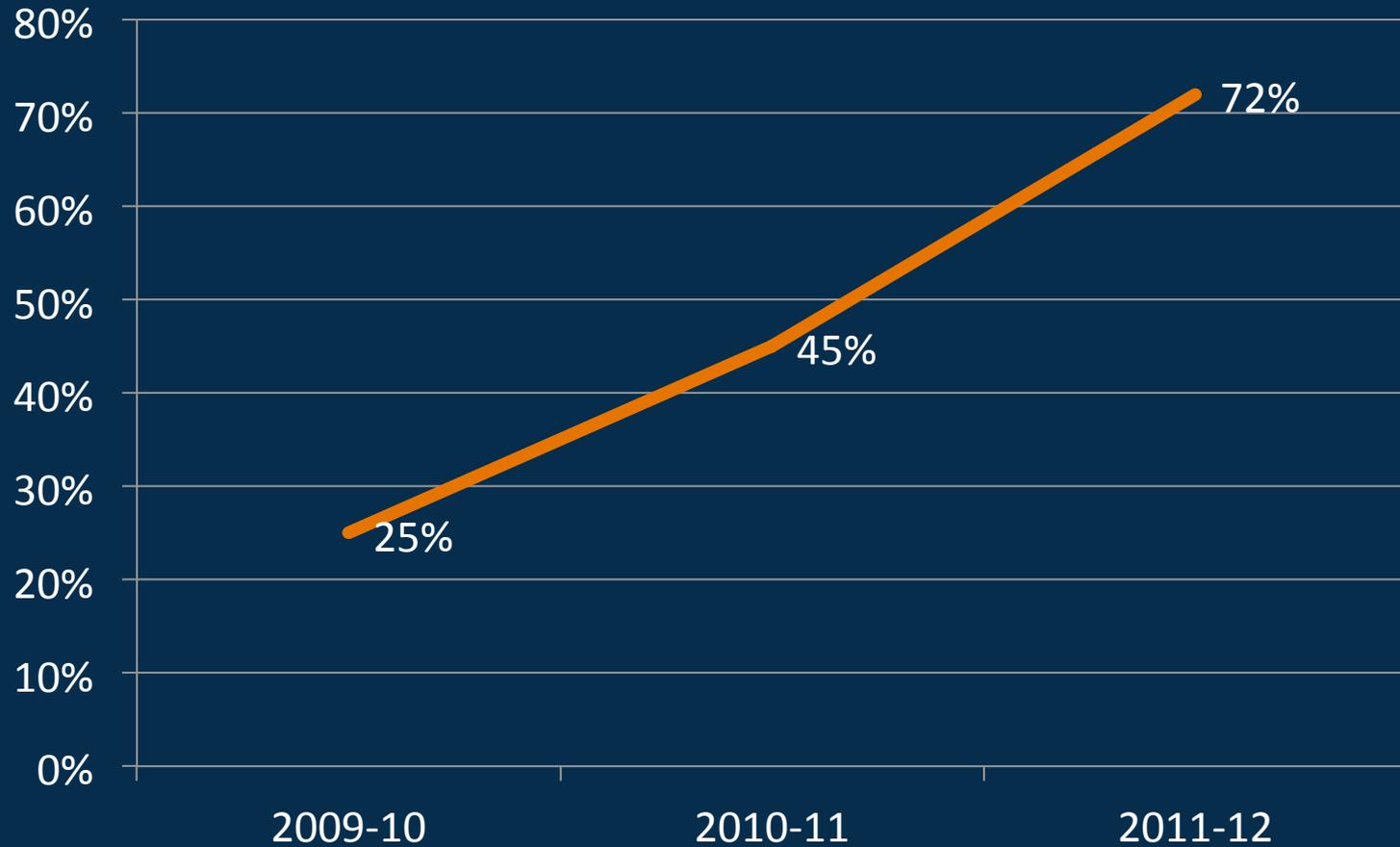
# Results

Step Up Impact on Educational Outcomes



# Challenges and Persistence

GHS Step Up Students On-Track to Graduate



# Lessons Learned

Targeted intervention during the summer before ninth grade is critical.

Extended day and academic year, with trained staff.

When school is relevant to goals, attitudes change.



# Lessons Learned

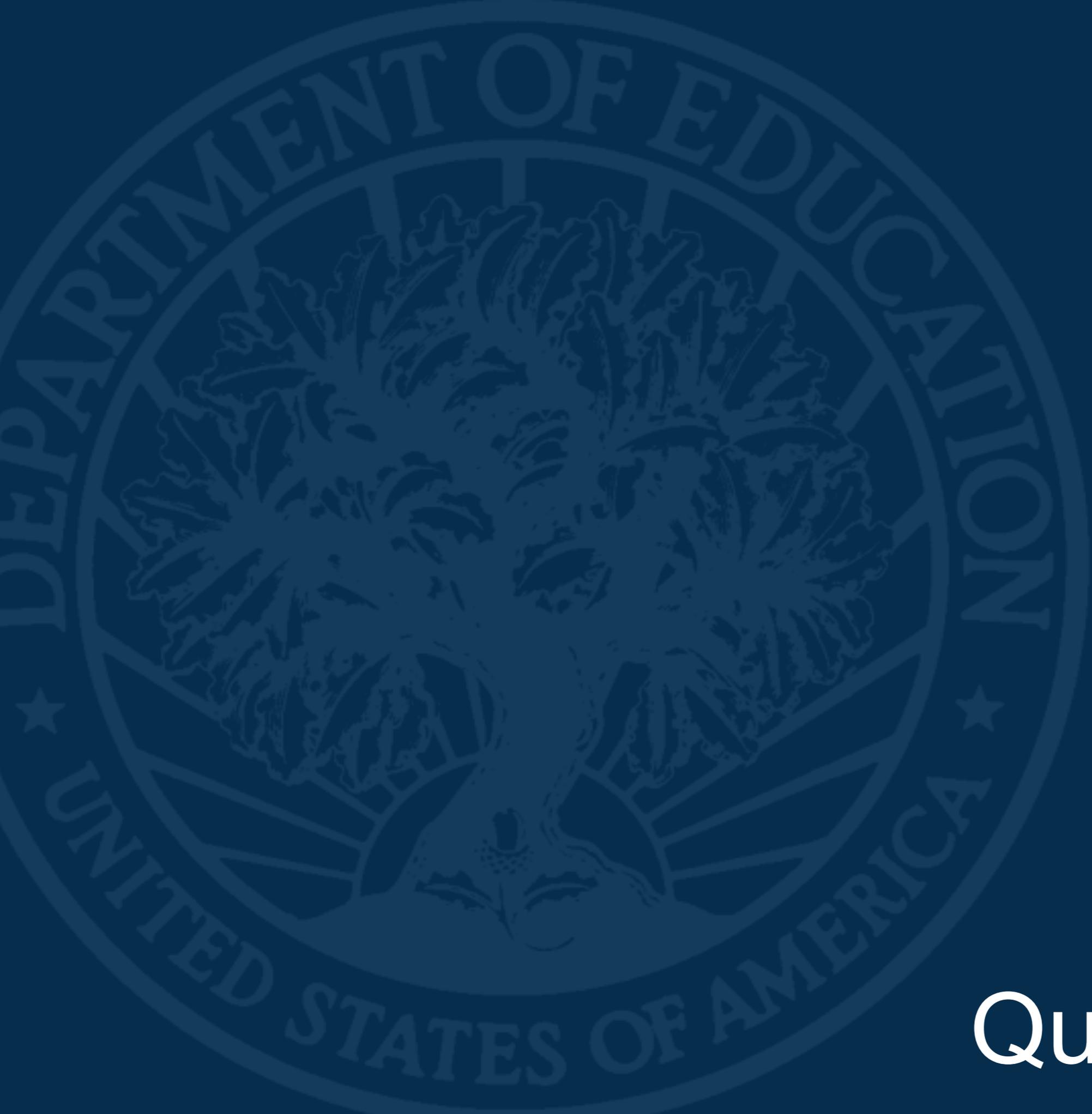
Technology can be a pivotal tool for monitoring student progress and success

MS to HS transition is actually a two-year process.

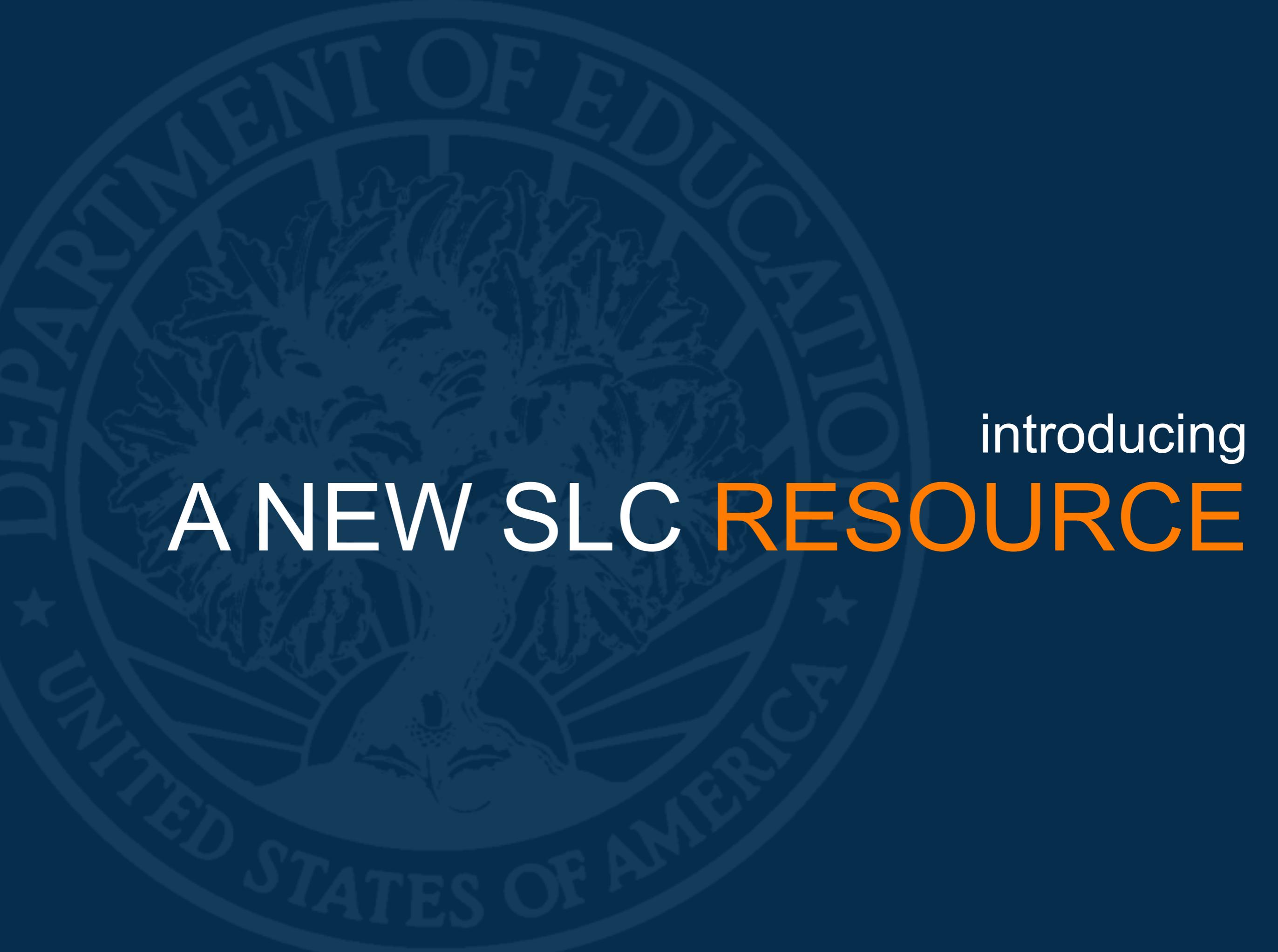
Family engagement is possible and essential.

Courageous Conversations: invest in the cultural competence of the staff.





Questions?

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introducing  
**A NEW SLC RESOURCE**

# NINTH GRADE COUNTS



Using Summer Bridge Programs to  
Strengthen the High School Transition

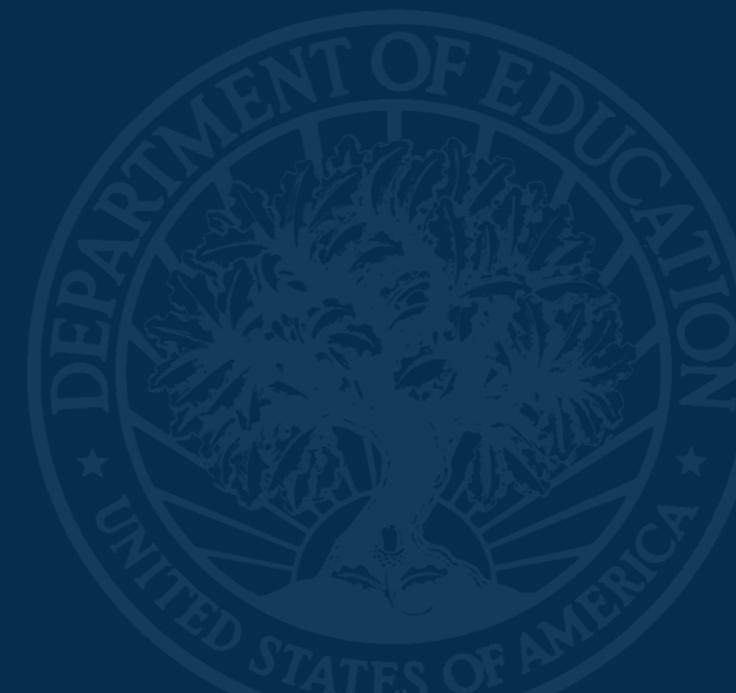
A THREE-PART GUIDE

**3** Systemic Transition Strategies  
English Language Learners  
Summer Bridge Programs

# NINTH GRADE COUNTS

## A three-part resource

1. Systemic transition strategies
2. English language learners
3. Summer bridge programs



# NINTH GRADE COUNTS

## Sites Studied

Crossland High School + Suitland High School  
Prince Georges County, MD

Roosevelt High School  
Portland, OR

Antioch High School  
Antioch, CA

# NINTH GRADE COUNTS

## How it works

Self-Assessment Activity

Best Practice → Current Practice →  
Prioritization + Planning

Vignettes

ALSO: Introduction, High Impact Practices,  
Research



# NINTH GRADE COUNTS

## How it works

### District + School Conditions

- Culture + Expectations
- Partnerships + Resources
- Professional Development
- Policies + Accountability



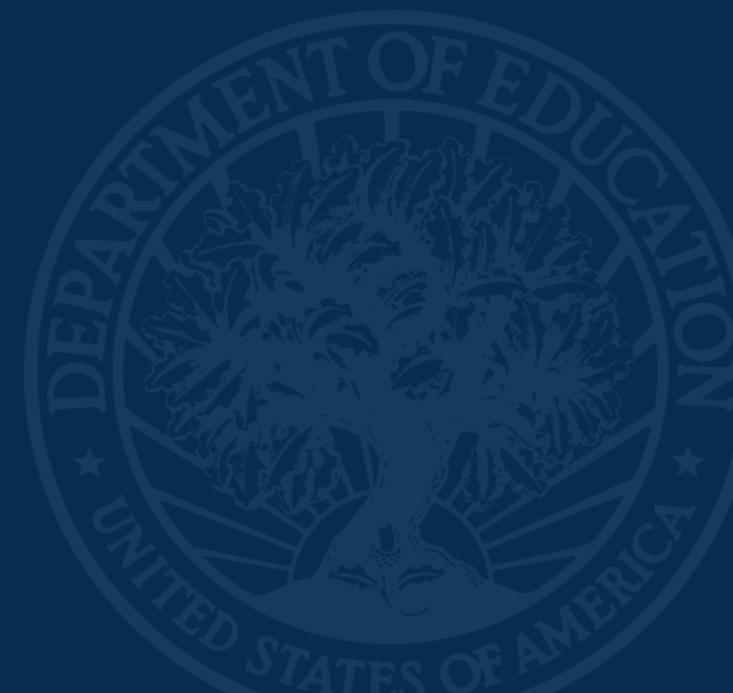
# NINTH GRADE COUNTS

## How it works

### Planning + Orientation

- Data Collection + Analysis
- School Collaborations
- Student + Family Orientation

### Postsecondary Planning



# NINTH GRADE COUNTS

## How it works

### Instruction + Intervention Programs

- Academic Preparedness
- Student Engagement + Enrichment
- Social + Emotional Development



## HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES

While summer bridge programs reflect a wide variety of operational configurations, instructional philosophies, and learning goals, the most effective and high-impact programs—those designed to eliminate skill gaps, accelerate learning, and prepare all participating students for success in high school—share a few common characteristics identified by research:

- 1 Student-performance data are used to identify students who are at greater risk of failing, dropping out, or struggling emotionally, socially, and academically in high school, and identified students are proactively targeted for participation in the program.
- 2 Student data are provided to teachers before the program begins, and teachers personalize instruction and support to address identified learning gaps.
- 3 There is an intensive academic focus on the foundational reading, writing, math, and academic skills that are critical to success in high school and in all content areas.
- 4 Courses and learning experiences are taught by experienced, skilled, and qualified teachers—ideally, the same teachers who will instruct program students when they enter ninth grade.
- 5 The curriculum is based on clear learning goals and expectations that have been aligned with ninth-grade courses and learning standards.
- 6 Teachers, counselors, and advisors embed social and emotional development into all learning experiences, and they help students prepare for the challenges they are likely to encounter in ninth grade.
- 7 The curriculum also includes orientation activities for both students and families, assistance with study skills and organizational habits, and proactive postsecondary-planning guidance.
- 8 Educators and support specialists intentionally build relationships between students and adults—specifically, between students and the teachers, counselors, advisors, and mentors who will instruct and support students in ninth grade.

## Self-Assessment Protocol

The following protocol will help district and school teams engage in a self-reflective conversation about summer bridge programs and ninth-grade transition strategies, particularly for students who are at greater risk struggling academically, failing, or dropping out of high school. The goal of the activity is to examine your district or school in terms of three different approaches to summer bridge programs: *Passive*, *Reactive*, and *Proactive*. When it comes to successful transitions, proactive strategies are essential—a district or high school that strategically plans and prepares can help all students successfully transition into ninth grade and graduate on time prepared for college, careers, and civic life. We strongly encourage school leaders to include students, families, and local cultural leaders in the self-assessment activity.

### Purpose

To identify strengths and weaknesses in existing or proposed summer bridge programs.

### Structure

Break up into groups of four and assign the roles of facilitator, recorder, and timekeeper.

### Time

Between 60-90 minutes.

**Protocol** [Adapted from the School Reform Initiative's Save the Last Word for ME protocol]

- 1 Individually, read the three descriptions—*Passive*, *Reactive*, and *Proactive*—on the following page. Keep in mind that these descriptions are merely concise, illustrative profiles that are based upon a synthesis of observations, research studies, and reports from schools. Your district or school may closely resemble one of the descriptions or it may reflect elements of all three. The goal is to provoke thoughtful, self-reflective discussions about how your school is addressing student success in ninth grade. While reading, participants should identify the specific features they believe accurately describe their school, district, or summer bridge program, and then select two or three passages they consider particularly important.
- 2 When the group is ready, a volunteer reads one passage that he or she has found to be the most significant. [NOTE: The volunteer should not reveal at this time why the passage is significant.]
- 3 After pausing briefly to reflect upon what has been said, the other three participants will have one minute to respond to the selected passage and express what the text made them think about and what questions it raised.
- 4 After the three have spoken, the first participant has three minutes to explain why he or she selected the passage.
- 5 The group conducts four rounds of seven minutes each. The same process is followed until all members have had a turn.
- 6 Participants share their opinions and thoughts about the district or school's general approach to ninth-grade student success, making sure to base their comments on concrete evidence, observations, and hard data as much as possible.
- 7 Each group makes a collective determination about where the district or school falls on the passive-reactive-proactive continuum and cites three specific supporting examples that came up during the session. One group member should be the recorder for this exercise. The group may use a flip chart or computer to record the examples.
- 8 The groups reconvene and share their results with the larger group.
- 9 The large-group facilitator collects the results and examples for future planning, making sure that all participants receive copies.

## Passive

- The program is elective and open to all students, and recruitment efforts do not target specific high-need students or student subgroups. Some middle schools only recommend the program to high-achieving students, since it is largely perceived as an optional summer-enrichment opportunity.
- The summer-bridge program relies solely on unreliable, short-term funding streams—such as year-to-year allocations, grants, or donations—that do not lead to sustainable programming.
- The program has experienced high turnover rates among teachers and staff, many of whom are not experienced or certified, and there is little alignment between academic-year and summer bridge teaching responsibilities.
- Guidance counselors and support staff have little or no formal role in the summer bridge program, and contact with students and families during the summer is negligible.
- Teachers are given instructional materials and general guidelines, but the program does not have a clearly articulated curriculum or explicit learning goals. Individual teachers are largely left to teach on their own with little oversight, collaboration, or accountability.
- Advisory time is built into the program, but there is little direction about the purpose of advisories, how the time should be used, or what skills and knowledge students should gain from the experience.
- Achievement data on summer-bridge students are rarely provided to teachers, complicating efforts to personalize instruction and support. Program leaders have not established clear progress indicators or monitoring procedures, and ninth-grade teachers rarely receive data on summer-bridge students before the academic year begins.
- The summer bridge program is rarely mentioned in descriptions or discussions of ongoing school-improvement work, and the summer-bridge staff does not believe that school or district leaders value the program or understand how it can benefit students.
- A majority of the staff, students, and parents in the district are unaware of or uninformed about the program, and communication, marketing, and recruitment efforts tend to be halfhearted, inconsistent, and poorly executed.

## Reactive

- The district and school have identified the student populations that would benefit most from the program, but there is often little correlation between program goals and the students who enroll in the program.
- The summer bridge program is primarily funded by the district, but it is largely seen as an optional expense; consequently, the program is continually in danger of losing funding during budget negotiations.
- While there is some degree of continuity among summer-bridge faculty from year to year, fully staffing the program is an ongoing challenge, and program leaders are often forced to hire less qualified staff members.
- Guidance counselors and support staff are introduced to students during the summer, but they are given few opportunities to build relationships with students or provide guidance on the transition into high school.
- Teachers use a collaboratively developed curriculum that emphasizes the foundational literacy and mathematical skills that will be assessed in ninth grade, but the curriculum tends to promote whole-class instruction, leaving little time for the kind of personalized instruction and support that can accelerate learning growth and close learning gaps.
- Advisory time is largely used to teach study skills and organizational habits that will help students succeed in high school, but social-emotional issues and long-term college-and-career planning are rarely addressed.
- Summer-bridge teachers receive student data at the beginning of the program, and the faculty meets informally with ninth-grade teachers before the academic year to discuss high-need students. Teachers typically track student learning progress on their own, but no formal performance-monitoring systems, policies, or expectations are in place.
- District and school leaders meet with both summer bridge staff and students, and the program is routinely discussed or profiled in district meetings, events, and communications materials.
- Program leaders attend parent information nights at sending middle schools, during which they distribute materials and answer questions. Middle school teachers remain largely uninformed about the program, however, and they do not actively encourage students or families to consider it.

## Proactive

- The program is specifically designed to serve students who are at greater risk of failing, dropping out, or struggling academically in high school, and both district policies and program communications actively target these students for program participation.
- The program is jointly funded by the district and community partners, such as local businesses, foundations, and parent groups. The program has a long-term budget, a development director, and an active fundraising program.
- Administrators have recruited and assigned highly effective teachers to ninth-grade and summer bridge teaching positions, and teaching in the summer bridge program is built into teacher contracts.
- Students are connected throughout the summer with guidance counselors and support specialists, and they regularly meet in small groups or one-on-one sessions.
- The curriculum is based on explicit learning goals aligned with ninth-grade academic expectations and standards. Students receive intensive instruction in foundational academic skills and content, and personalized, project- and problem-based learning strategies enhance student engagement, skill acquisition, and relevance.
- Social-emotional development is integrated into advisories and instructional time. Advisors and teachers help students stay organized, plan ahead, set goals, practice communication skills, and build relationships with other students and adults.
- The program staff meets with eighth-grade teachers to discuss specific students, and detailed student-data reports are provided to all teachers. Program leaders have established progress benchmarks, and the entire summer bridge team meets weekly to discuss individual student progress and learning needs. A report on each student is prepared for ninth-grade teachers.
- District and school leaders are visible supporters of the program, and they actively contribute to its success by promoting the program to sending schools and communities, communicating results to the school board, and advocating for funding and resources.
- Several community partners actively promote the program and contribute staffing and resources—for example, by hosting field trips, pairing students with mentors, or providing experiential learning opportunities.

# NINTH GRADE COUNTS

## PASSIVE

Advisory time is built into the program, but there is little direction about the purpose of advisories, how the time should be used, or what skills and knowledge students should gain from the experience.

## REACTIVE

Advisory time is largely used to teach study skills and organizational habits that will help students succeed in high school, but social-emotional issues and long-term college-and-career planning are rarely addressed.

## PROACTIVE

Social-emotional development is integrated into advisories and instructional time. Advisors and teachers help students stay organized, plan ahead, set goals, practice communication skills, and build relationships with other students and adults.

## PHOTO

### COLLEGE READINESS ACADEMY

#### ANTIOCH HIGH SCHOOL

Three years ago, 35 percent of the student population at Antioch High School in Antioch, California, qualified for free or reduced-price lunch—but today more than 70 percent qualify. Yet according to principal Louie Rocha, the school's summer bridge strategy has remained the same because "students and parents have the same aspiration: to go to college and be successful." The College Readiness Academy is a nine-week summer program that provides intensive instruction in the essential math and English skills students will need to succeed in high school. The program also helps students and their families both understand and begin taking the critical steps necessary for college matriculation and success. With additional support from two Los Medanos College student tutors per classroom, each academy teacher works with approximately 25 students, using pre-assessments to personalize instruction and monitor student learning growth over the summer. Participating students also go on three college visits with their families. "It's important to expose parents and families to the opportunities students will have in college," says Mr. Rocha. "By visiting the schools themselves, they can see firsthand the doors that will open for their children." Participating students can enroll in one of four career academies: Engineering; Environmental Studies; Media and Technology; and Leadership and Public Service. Historically, incoming students only had the opportunity to choose either the high school's general education courses or the Engineering Academy in ninth grade, but the program students who enrolled in Engineering Academy experienced such success on high school exit exams—97 percent proficient in English language arts and 98 percent in math—that Mr. Rocha expanded the career academy options available to participating students. In many ways, the program serves as an extended induction to Antioch High School.

### Academic Preparedness

- Instruction is intensively focused on the foundational academic and metacognitive skills essential to success in high school, such as ninth-grade-level mathematics, reading and writing across the content areas, critical thinking and problem solving, and strong habits of work. Students have ample opportunities to practice skills and receive feedback from teachers.
- Discussions about study habits, planning strategies, and organizational skills are prioritized in both advisory periods and academic time. Students reflect on their work habits and attitudes about school, and instructors guide them to a greater understanding of how work habits, self-beliefs, and character traits will contribute to or inhibit their success in school.
- Program teachers and support specialists use all available middle-level assessment data, such as NWEA or state-assessment scores, to establish baseline student achievement in reading, writing, and math. When achievement data are unavailable, diagnostic assessments are administered during the spring semester of eighth grade or on the first day of the program.
- Summer bridge students are connected to appropriate support opportunities in ninth grade, including peer tutoring and mentoring, before-school and after-school programs, literacy and math labs, or counseling from social workers and school psychologists. The knowledge of students gained by the summer bridge staff is used to match students with support opportunities that will address their specific needs and increase their chances of success and persistence in high school.
- Prior to the beginning of the school year, all ninth grade students participate in a "ninth grade only" day at the high school, where they meet all of their teachers and experience each classroom setting. Teachers offer short lessons to introduce themselves and their learning expectations to students, and advisors meet with students to reflect on how high school differs from their middle school experience. Upper-class students formally welcome ninth graders to the school and discuss the school culture, academic expectations, and learning opportunities, including co-curricular and extracurricular programs.

### Student Engagement + Enrichment

- Teachers use a diverse repertoire of instructional practices to engage students, including flexible grouping strategies, one-on-one support sessions, and whole-class discussions, while direct instruction is limited to short intervals and appropriate lessons. Students are given a degree of choice over learning content, processes, and products, and culminating demonstrations of learning are used to ensure that students have achieved expected academic standards.
- Long-term investigative projects, service-learning opportunities, interdisciplinary teaching, and other innovative strategies combine rigorous academic standards with authentic learning experiences. Academic learning is intentionally and strategically connected to real-world contexts, issues, and events, and visiting experts and field trips to colleges, museums, or historical sites expose students to novel learning experiences.
- Community- and character-building experiences—such as ropes courses, outdoor challenges, and friendly academic competitions (debates or math contests, for example)—promote social-emotional development, cultivate leadership abilities, and develop teamwork, communication, and interpersonal skills.

### Social + Emotional Development

- Social-emotional development is a foundational part of the curriculum, and students are routinely encouraged to advocate for themselves and take greater responsibility for their own education. Teachers embed self-advocacy messages and guidance, such as locus-of-control strategies (refocusing students on what they can change or do to fix a problem, for example), into all learning experiences, and student surveys and other evidence indicate that students consistently ask for extra help when they need it and request support services.
- Program leaders have sought out local experts on social-emotional development—psychologists, social workers, college professors—to review and strengthen the curriculum, train or program instructors, and provide direct support to students.
- Adult advisors are assigned to each summer bridge student to monitor both academic achievement and social-emotional wellbeing. Advisors receive both guidelines for and training in basic counseling strategies, including when they need to refer students to social services or counseling specialists.

# NINTH GRADE COUNTS

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT + ENRICHMENT

Teachers use a diverse repertoire of instructional practices to engage students, including flexible grouping strategies, one-on-one support sessions, and whole-class discussions, while direct instruction is limited to short intervals and appropriate lessons. Students are given a degree of choice over learning content, processes, and products, and culminating demonstrations of learning are used to ensure that students have achieved expected academic standards.

Long-term investigative projects, service-learning opportunities, interdisciplinary teaching, and other innovative strategies combine rigorous academic standards with authentic learning experiences. Academic learning is intentionally and strategically connected to real-world contexts, issues, and events, and visiting experts and field trips to colleges, museums, or historical sites expose students to novel learning experiences.

## What Leaders Can Do

- ✓ Determine explicit learning goals and progress benchmarks for the program, and clearly communicate these expectations to all teachers, staff, students, and families. The goals and benchmarks should inform every dimension of the program, including instruction, support, and assessment strategies, and all staff, students, and families should be able to describe the program goals and why they matter.
- ✓ Establish clear professional expectations and guidelines for evidence-based instruction, proactive curriculum planning, formative assessment, and student learning growth. Provide a clear instructional mission and road map for all teachers and staff, and regularly review both teaching resources and results to ensure that students are receiving high-quality instruction and meeting growth benchmarks for academic performance.
- ✓ Monitor classroom instruction with brief walkthroughs. Collect evidence—formally or informally—on student-engagement levels, instructional practices, grouping strategies, the cognitive demand of lessons, and program-specific instructional goals, such as the use of specific literacy strategies, learning technologies, or specific messages (for example, evidence that teachers are actively promoting a “growth mindset” approach to learning). Review observation data regularly with the faculty to help them reflect on their instructional strategies and on how well they align with the program’s mission and objectives.
- ✓ Build a curriculum that intentionally celebrates local history and cultures, particularly in communities with larger populations of minorities, English language learners, and recently arrived immigrant students. Create experiential learning opportunities that both reflect and utilize local cultural assets and “funds of knowledge.”
- ✓ Meet with community-based organizations and cultural centers and ask them to display or share student work from the summer bridge program—particularly work from project-based, community-based, or service learning projects that reflect community values or needs.
- ✓ Host a culminating experience for summer bridge students to celebrate their matriculation into high school with the full support of staff, family, and community volunteers. Use student speakers to reflect on the importance of the summer program, and have students share their work, learning progress, and projects.

## What's Working

## What's Not Working

## Priorities + Next Steps

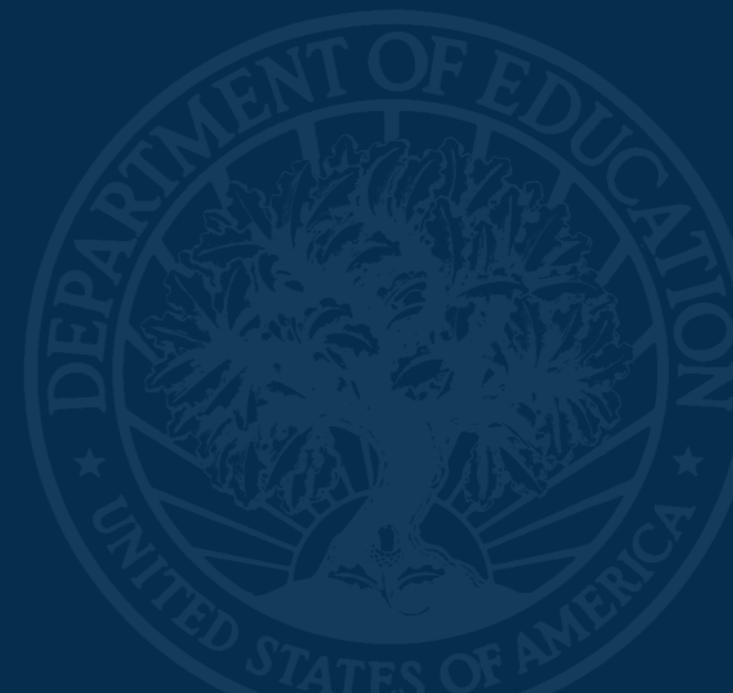
# NINTH GRADE COUNTS

## WHAT LEADERS CAN DO

Monitor classroom instruction with brief walkthroughs. Collect evidence—formally or informally—on student-engagement levels, instructional practices, grouping strategies, the cognitive demand of lessons, and program-specific instructional goals, such as the use of specific literacy strategies, learning technologies, or specific messages (for example, evidence that teachers are actively promoting a “growth mindset” approach to learning). Review observation data regularly with the faculty to help them reflect on their instructional strategies and on how well they align with the program’s mission and objectives.

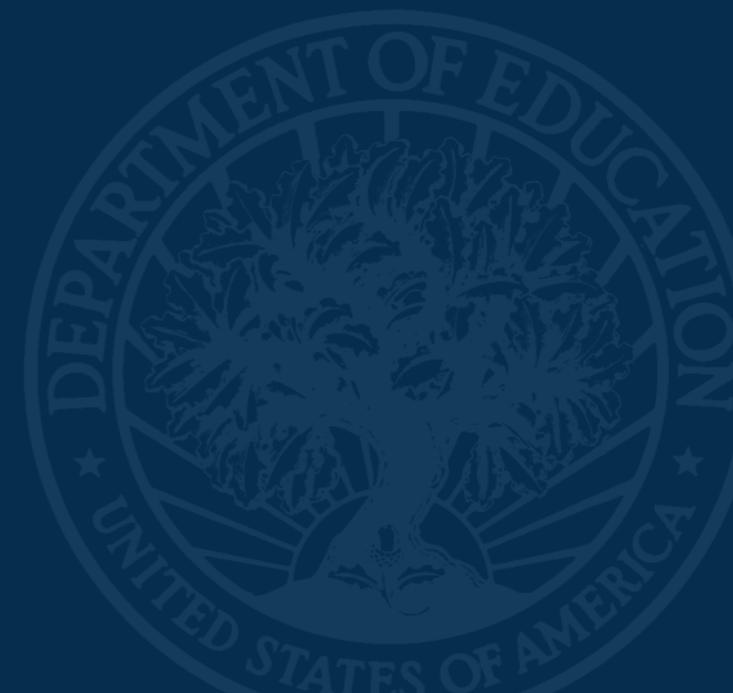
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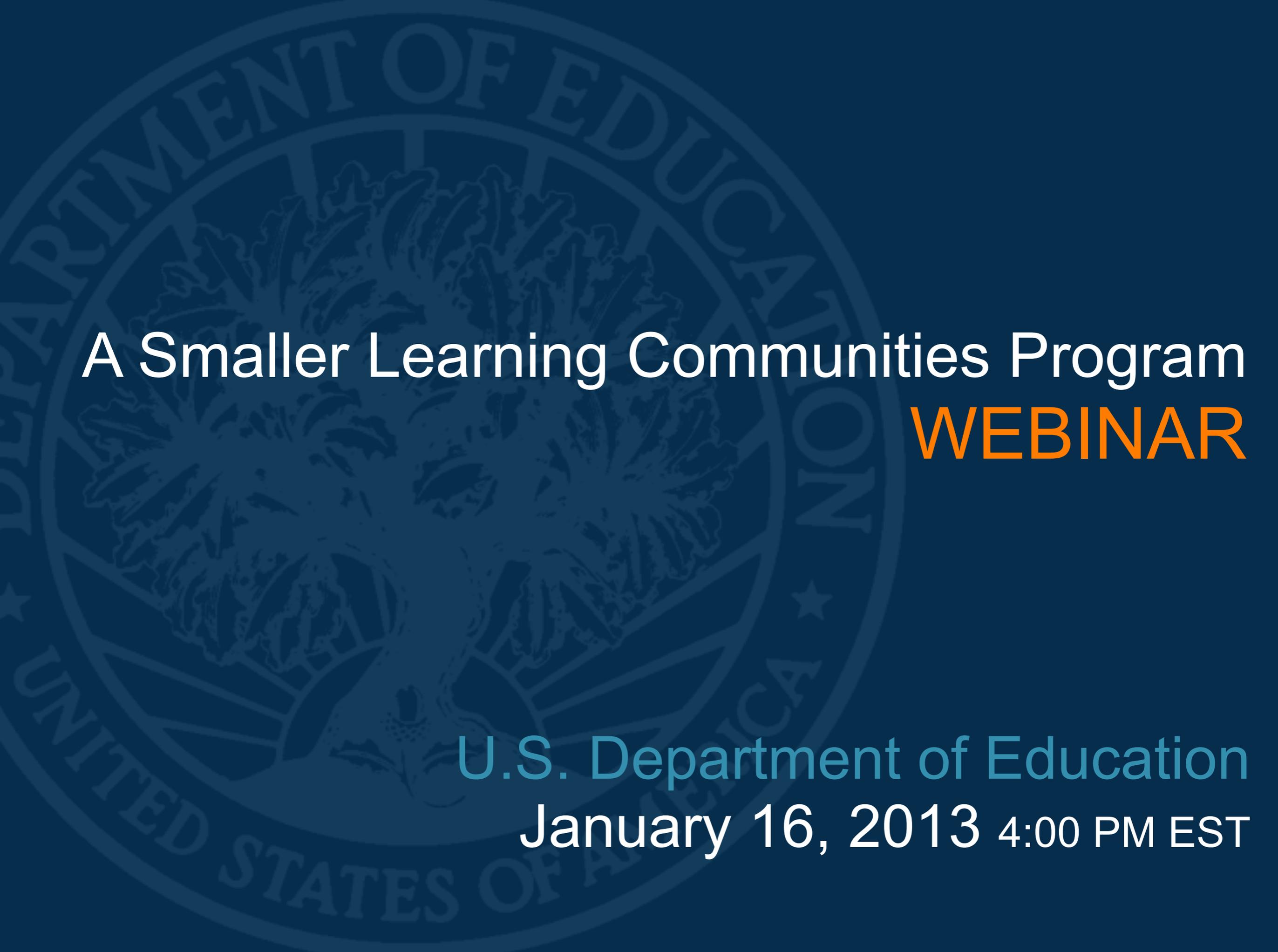
Questions for the  
presenter?



# NINTH GRADE COUNTS

Thank you for  
participating today





A Smaller Learning Communities Program  
**WEBINAR**

U.S. Department of Education  
January 16, 2013 4:00 PM EST