

Ninth Grade Count Summer bridge

(Slides 1-3)

Ken T: Hi, everyone. Thank you for participating today, we are really excited about this webinar, brought to you by the Smaller Learning Communities Program, U.S. Department of Education.

Today's presentation is focused on how to make the most of the summer to improve ninth grade transition.

(Slides 4-5)

I've got a couple of housekeeping things. You're phone lines are muted, so if you'd like to ask question or make a comment, please use the Chat feature on your screen and click Enter, so that's shown on this slide here, the Chat is there and you can see that my colleague Mary Hastings has already welcomed you and given you a phone number there for technical assistance.

That number is here, in larger print if you want to take a minute to jot it down. If you're disconnected or need support in any way, feel free to call our office at the phone number there, but if you lose that number then it's there in the Chat history, and you can scroll back to find it.

Just so you know, this webinar is being recorded, the webinar slides will be posted on the Great Schools Partnership website by the end of the week at five o'clock, and in the near future we will have a transcript and a recording of the webinar available as well.

(Slide 7)

Your technical assistance team, we are collaboration between four groups dedicated to educational reform, both locally and nationally. We coach in schools, we support schools, we organize and facilitate the project director's meeting and create tools for the Smaller Learning Communities Program.

(Slide 8-9)

Today's presenters for the webinar, we are really excited to welcome the staff from Step Up Summer Bridge Program in Portland, Oregon, the Director, Hanif Fazal. It's a program that's been operating since 2003, and focuses on students most likely to drop out of high school.

(Slide 10)

Katie Gibson who is an advocate in the Step Up Program and an advocate role which you'll hear much more about later in the presentation, as really the key role for the academic and social emotional support that is the foundation of the Step Up Program.

(Slide 11)

My name is Ken Templeton; I'm the Facilitator for today's presentation. I visited Summer Bridge programs over the summer, I've researched the Step Up Summer Bridge Practice, and I'm the lead author of our Summer Bridge Guide.

I'm joined also by Mary Hastings, my colleague at Grades School Partnership, who will be monitoring our chat room, responding to your questions and making sure that we address your needs today.

I'm also supported, Technical Assistance by Gwen Merrick, and Becky Vance [00:02:48].

(Slide 12-13)

We have a few goals for today's webinar; our first goal is to share some research findings that are going to help you reflect on the strengths and areas for improvement in your Summer Bridge program, or if you have a Summer Bridge program to develop a new one.

(Slide 14)

We want to share high-impact strategies, some of that comes out from our site visits and our research, but also, this is a key place to really attend to what the Step Up folks have to say about lessons that they've learned about the best ways to leverage the summer for ninth grade success.

(Slide 15)

Also we've created a new resource that's going to help you continue this conversation in your schools, to take a proactive approach to Summer Bridge as part of your larger ninth transition.

(Slide 16)

We are going to start with some of the important research on ninth grade transition. We know a lot of these numbers, we know that a third of dropouts never pass ninth grade. We know that ninth grade has the most course failures out of any grade in high school and this graph that we are looking at demonstrates ninth grade retention. You can see this is about the Class of 2008, and they were first graders in 1996 and there were 3,750,000 kids,

approximately, in first grade. The number stay pretty steady through elementary school, and through middle school, and then the ninth grade you can see this huge spike in numbers, and the reason that there are that many more, about half-a-million more kids there, is that those are kids who fail to pass ninth in high school and were retained for a second year.

You can see that the numbers steadily drop in tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades and the total diploma recipients from ninth to twelfth grade graduation rate is about 74 percent for that class.

(Slide 17)

We know that kids are on track to graduate. If they come to school, like they're passing their courses, if they are supported at school to have ... to stay out of trouble and behave themselves, we know that kids were on track. They have an 81 percent graduation rate, and they are on track in ninth grade. Kids who are off track in ninth grade have a 22 percent graduation rate.

(Slide 18)

All of us know the importance of high school graduation, we know why this matters, but it's helpful to have some numbers around it and particularly around it and particularly around the late outcomes for kids. These are important numbers to talk with students and families about, that the average person in 2005 without a high school diploma earned a little over \$17,000 a year and almost a \$10,000 a year difference if you were able to get that high school diploma and then we can also see how much that impacts if you have that high school diploma then you have opportunities for post secondary success. Another \$10,000 a year gap for the associate's degree and it multiplies for the bachelor's degree as well.

(Slide 19)

Let's think about some of the factors that contribute to the challenges of ninth grade transition. We know that there are generally higher academic expectations in ninth grade; that there's more work defined, and particularly the reading that's in ninth grade, in high school is of a greater complexity across subject areas. It's not just about English; it's also social studies, science, et cetera, et cetera.

We also know that one of the big things that the Smaller Learning Communities program has tried to impact is that the organization of high school that have generally, historically, not been organized for student support. A lot of students shift from smaller, middle school, or elementary schools, to larger high school

where they have more autonomy and anonymity, and are less likely to be noticed for those off-track behaviors.

Then we have the social transition, particularly around expectations for independence. Expectations for independence from teachers, from parents, even from students themselves, they skyrocket and not all students are really prepared for that.

We've got a physical transition of schools to a large high school, we've got higher academic expectations, we've got this huge social transition and on top of all that, we have the typical two to three months of summer learning loss where some of the skills and knowledge accrued in middle school are [inaudible 00:07:12] right before high school.

(Slide 20)

Thinking about summer learning loss, there's some research indicates that middle-class children do not lose any ground over the summer in reading, which is one of those key skills, as we know, across content areas; but students in poverty lose approximately two months of learning each summer. For math, regardless of demographic groups, research indicates that about two months are lost each summer.

(Slide 21)

But Summer Bridge is not really just about summer learning loss, it's about targeting all of those challenges from ninth grade transition. It's a part of a comprehensive plan to address all of the transition areas.

(Slide 22)

In addition to the greater complexity of content, students encounter more teachers, and sometimes those teachers have very different expectations for what success looks like in ninth grade. One of the things that's challenging for students to navigate is, they've got more teachers and they have to navigate all those different expectations, and because we work in schools, sometimes we can assume that students know things that we know. Like, you to accrue credits in order to graduate, but there's good research that says that a lot of kids don't actually make that connection until they're way, way, behind.

Some of the simple things that we assume that all students know, or all families know, we have pretty good evidence that we can't make those assumptions.

(Slide 23 - 24)

Students in middle school attribute ... they predict that the most important thing for them in high school success will be academic ability, but high school students they say, "Yeah, academic ability, but you also need time management, you need to stay on task and your behavior and social skills matter;" so students coming into high school don't necessarily ... they're not necessarily aware of exactly what it takes to be successful, but they are very aware after they enter high school of what it takes.

(Slide 24-26)

Adding these things together the academic ability and the time management skills, et cetera, this is one of the reasons that middle school grades are one of the best predictors of success in high school and you're high school grades are one of the better predictors of success in college, because oftentimes those grades combine both your academic skills and what's referred to as your non-cognitive skills.

There's a really, really wonderful report from the Consortium on Chicago School Research about non-cognitive skill sets which was released last year, and this goes along with a lot of our current conversations about grit and persistence, and some of those things that a lot of educators are trying to instill in their students.

These reports also challenge our assumptions. One of the core assumptions that most educators assume about course failure in ninth grade, is that high rates of course failure are due to low academic skills and that's true for some kids, that is absolutely true for some kids. However, the research on non-cognitive skills says that the high rates of course failure are more due to a reduction in academic behaviors between eighth and ninth grade. An example of that is in Chicago, absenteeism triples between eighth and ninth grades, and so you explain a lot of course failure just through looking at some of the academic behaviors, like coming to school and doing your work.

It also talked a little bit about anonymity in high school and the sense that students are sometimes not known, and this is one of the other pieces that comes out of this non-cognitive research is that because of these multiple relationships with teachers, and sometimes the failure in ninth grade to connect students with adults for consistently in charge of noticing them, noticing when they're there in school, and noticing when they're not. Following up with them in a personal way, we see a decline in student-teacher trust.

(Slide 27-29)

What can Summer Bridge do about these challenges for ninth transition? That's the core thing we want to think about today.

The key thing is to focus on relationships first. In the programs we visited students who are really quick to develop bonds with the high school staff that was there over the summer, there to support their transition. There was one school where they were stretched for staffing so they had an eleventh grade English teacher in the Summer Bridge program, and she said that in the past ninth grade kids came to her for support, they came to her to check in during those first few months of ninth grade. It's indicative that the students want to develop these relationships and bonds with your staff.

It's a great opportunity to develop connections between students and teachers, the teacher is one of the recommendations to the research is to try and keep the student/teacher ratio below 18 to 1, and you can really find out about students learning preferences, their interests, their strength that they are bringing to your school.

It's also a great time to connect advisors with their advisees, a lot of SLC schools have really well developed advisory programs, and the summer is a great time for a few quick check-ins with the student advisor who will help them with that transition in ninth grade. Think about what their goals are and what they want to get out of high school and what the steps are going ... what steps they can take to make sure they meet those goals.

Also a common on Summer Bridge programs to have, challenge courses, field trips or college visits. A college visit can just be you get off the bus and you take the tour, or it can be really a chance to build relationship between students and teachers; for teachers to share their own experience and their own process in meeting the challenge of planning for post-secondary success.

We also want to leverage those relationships, to develop academic awareness and work habits so it's not just relationships for relationship sake, but we are trying to combine those social-emotional and relationship skills to support academic success.

It's a great time to practice time and task management with the kids. The assigned extended work that takes one or two weeks to complete, let students plan for it, practice, reflect, fail a little bit over the summer, reflect on their failures, reflect on their success, so that they are better positioned to make that transition in ninth grade.

One of the key pieces too is to think about connecting students with upper class mentors. At one of the sites that we visited there was a kid who really ... he was a junior in high school he was volunteering in the Summer Bridge program because it had such an impact on his success in high school. He came back, of his own free time over the summer, to connect with kids and try and help them navigate the transition. As we all know adults can tell students over and over

about the things they need to do but it's sometimes more powerful to hear it from a peer.

As we talked about before, just tracking progress and thinking about the things ... the credits that you have to accrue, helping students understand their growth and progress towards success is a key thing that you can do during the summer.

(Slide 31)

Also in terms of academic preparedness we want to think about this from two sides. We want to think about from student preparedness so you can use incoming student data to identify skill or knowledge gaps, and really personalize instruction over the summer. You can preview the ninth grade curriculum over the summer and help students get a sense of what that will be like and what they'll need to focus on. It's also preparedness from the teacher side as well.

It's a critical opportunity to gather information about the students who are coming to you in ninth grade, to get that personal experience with them, and to be able to communicate that to their ninth grade teachers.

(Slide 32-34)

One of the ongoing challenges for schools that operate Summer Bridge program, is really distinguishing them from summer school, or orientation. This chart compares the three different summer opportunities, and the core difference, one of the core differences is thinking about what you're preparing kids for, so that first piece on what the focus is on, Summer Bridge is focusing on preparing for ninth grade, while summer school is on credit recover from eighth grade, or orientation is just: here's what you need to get the high.

Thinking about the post-secondary planning, it's a major component of many Summer Bridge programs whereas it's not generally a component of summer school or an orientation program.

There's a lot of variance in Summer Bridge program around the country, but we found that there were some core components that were true for all Summer Bridge programs. They are at least one week long, with some programs as long as eight weeks. They have an academic focus on reading, writing and math skills that are foundational in all content areas, and they're taught by teachers who will teach the ninth grade curriculum where possible.

(Slide 35)

There's time dedicated to helping students understand and reflect on the social and emotional challenges of transitioning from middle school to high school, and usually that's accomplished during an advisory period of some kind.

(Slide 36-37)

There's a strong emphasis on building relationships between students and adults, teachers, counselors, advisors, and advocates. There's a clear use of data to identify the students who are mostly likely to benefit from Summer Bridge and really target them to recruit them for Summer Bridge participation.

(Slide 38)

There's also a great opportunity here to reach to families, and so Summer Bridge is an opportunity to communicate that key information about high school transition and also the beginning of conversations about postsecondary success with students and their families.

(Slide 39-41)

Thinking about putting the pieces together for a transition timeline: when we are thinking about a bridge there has to be things in eighth grade as well ninth grade, as well as the summer. All too often in high schools we overlook the contributions that middle schools can make to an effective transition, and the high school is going to run the Summer Bridge program but when the students are in eighth grade, it's the middle school that has the relationships with families and students in order to recruit them, give them information and make sure that they can sign up effectively.

It's also a great opportunity to have students come up and visit the high school, shadow high school students, connect them with mentors and give them a sense then of what their transition might look like.

We've talked a lot already about what the core components of Summer Bridge are, one of the key things is that there's this opportunity really to pivot from middle school to high school, to really think about this as a transition point to build on the success that you may have had in middle school, or to leave some challenges behind.

Also with the different schedule during the summer, there's a greater opportunity to do service learning or community-based learning opportunities, or to do some of those visits to colleges.

(Slide 43)

Then there's a bridge, there has to be a foundation in ninth grade as well, and if there isn't a clear hand-off here we are really missing one of the best opportunities to help students succeed. A ninth grade teacher should meet with Summer Bridge staff to understand student performance. This is both quantitative data and anecdotal data. Then many of the key features of the

Smaller Learning Communities in ninth grade transition is important, the common planning time and routinely monitoring attendance and grades to make sure students are supported as they move through ninth grade, and as we know that's a make or break here for high school graduation.

(Slide 44)

A lot of Summer Bridge programs find success in getting the students back together in ninth grade one or two months in, so the students continue reflecting on the transition and advisors can continue to support their move towards high school success.

(Slide 45)

Now we are really excited to welcome Hanif Fazal and Katie Gipson from Step Up, in Portland, Oregon. They are educators who have really committed themselves to helping the neediest students beat the odds and realize their goals, and just to be clear on this piece.

You can enter questions during the ... in the Chat field, but we are going to let Hanif and Katie present their work and their lessons and we'll gather questions for them to address at the end of their portion of the presentation.

Hanif, and Katie, I'll turn it over to you.

Hanif Fazal: Thanks, Ken. Thanks, everyone, for tuning in. I'm hoping that we'll be able to be of some support to the work that you all are doing. I'm sure everyone out there is doing some really good work in this area for sure.

I just want to do a very, very brief overview of the history, and the general program format, so we can just get into the nuts and bolts of how the program is working and where it's landing with kids in terms of outcomes, both in the present and over time.

(Slide 46-47)

Let me just do a quick history here when it comes to Step Up.

It was launched in 2003, by Open Meadow Alternative School, and in partnership with the local high school in our area, and I think what is important to note here is Portland has a really robust and effective alternative Ed system, here and typically what would happen is students who were not making it at Roosevelt High School would find their way into Open Meadow.

That was developed with the idea of: how do we take the best of what is happening at our alternative Ed system and bring it back to the public school

system, so that students ... schools like Roosevelt could hold onto their students longer, and used some of the stuff that was really working in alternative Ed, put that around relationship based with education, combined with regularly supports students and staying at their home school. It really was developed from the start as a partnership at a time when Roosevelt was one of the lowest achieving high schools in the State, and the District was having a very difficult time, as you can see, graduating students.

2003, we began an overtime, because of the effectiveness of the program we were able to expand to two additional high schools in the district, and then finally to another high school in a neighboring district. All of this, which leads up to this point, in the beginning when we first started, we started with 37 students, and now 10 years later, we are at 400 students at four high schools in two different school districts.; a brief of the trajectory and growth of the program.

(Slide 48)

A very general overview of the programs looks like ... Portland has developed at early-warning indicators which we'll talk about in a few moments. We use the list of students that Portland has defined as academic priority students, that our population seem to serve, we do some intensive Summer Bridge work, that involve family engagement and culminating in a leadership camp, and then transitioned into year 'round academic and social-emotional support for kids in a very intensive manner.

From here on out we'll just break down how this program rolls out and this just gives you a very quick overview of how it's structured.

(Slide 49)

When we talk about recruitment and how students entering our program, Portland, as I noted earlier has developed a set of early-warning indicators based off of the work of Mary Beth Sewell's [00:23:57] Research and Report.

Generally it's focused on three criteria that focus around attendance, state assessment and pass in classes. Students who meet criteria in those three areas, and in any specific combination, get put on a list called Academic Priority and coming off of research, which is stating that kids meet this criteria are three times ... at the eighth grade, three times likely to not graduate high school. We are already working, we enroll kids already who are falling behind and are predicted to not graduate on time, or more likely not to graduate on time.

Part of that report also emphasizes, as you saw earlier, some of the same data that you saw earlier around the importance of this transition and the importance of students finishing ninth grade, on track to graduate with all their credits.

The idea behind this is, identify students early and then begin to wrap around supports for them as early as spring of eighth grade year through summer and throughout the ninth grade year.

(Slide 49)

I'm going to let Katie talk a little bit about recruitment, specifically outreach to family, because that's specifically when the program starts, so we get this list of kids in the spring, and then we begin our personal outreach with them, enrolling them in the program which will start officially in the summer.

Katie Gipson: The summer before ninth grade, as advocates, we do a lot of personal outreach in families, and mainly in the form of home visits. What we do is either meet with the families at their homes in the community or at the school, and our main goal is to build the foundation for a great relationship with that family, and really start a conversation about what that family wants for their child in high school and beyond.

Also to build a trusting relationship with the families to make them feel like they have an advocate and someone that really help them navigate through the high school system, and the school system in general. Then we use that relationship that's built during the summer as a launch pad or starting point for advocates in the school year to continue to develop those relationships throughout the year, and keep those going.

Hanif Fazal: Two things that are important to notice: if you saw the picture of ... you noticed that Katie has white skin, and I think this is important to note that the population of students that we serve are predominantly kids of color, and our staff is a really multicultural staff. The majority of our staff; are staff of color. We also have staff coming from all different backgrounds.

Part of why I say that is, we spend an intensive amount of time in staff development, helping our staff figure out what does it take to build relationship cross-culturally, with families and students. How do you work with students who have been traditionally, disengaged from school, and have a history of not being successful, and who show up with an array of attitude and beliefs about school and school success, that make it really difficult to work with them.

We spend an enormous amount of time with our staff trying to figure out how to build that relationship, so that a Katie can go into a home, of someone who comes from a different cultural background, different socio-economic background and learn how to effectively build family relationships and where that leaves them with feeling included, understood and a willing partner in their child's success.

A tremendous amount of time built into that, which leads to some really amazing and fruitful family partnerships. That gives you a kind brief sense of our recruitment. We spend a lot of time with students as well, working with them, and orienting them to what the program was about, and what will be required for them to be in the program, and spend a lot of time over the summer creating specific learning opportunities for families and students to come in and engage. Not just with what is going to be expected of them in the program, but get a sense of what can be expected for them in high school and how, with support and the right support, that they'll be able to successfully navigate their first year of high school, and longer; so a lot of work done in the spring and actually really through the summer to engage families and students into the process.

(Slide 50)

All of that work leads to what we call our main component of our Summer Bridge work and that cumulates in a leadership camp for students. Students, once enrolled in the program, will actually participate in about four weeks of summer school, where they are getting some academic remediation working on some of that summer learning loss that we impact our kids in significant ways, as well as help them build relationship with each other, and working from the school success build that they are going to need.

They spend about four weeks doing that and they enter into a leadership camp, which we call leadership camping. Camp is really putting it very lightly. It's five days, it's residential, overnight, kids are up as early as about 8:00 in the morning and are working as late as ten, eleven o'clock at night. The idea behind camp is really a couple of things.

One is an opportunity for students to really develop a sense of relevancy between ... for them in school. What is the rule? Why should I care about school when it traditionally hasn't worked for me? Does the school have any usefulness in my life? There's a tremendous amount of time to ask kids to think about: what is it that they want for their lives.

We do it in the form of dreams and dreaming big, but not just what do I want in my life, but then begin to see school as the avenue to help get them there. At the same time we are going to ask students to take a look at the attitude and belief systems that had limited their success in and out of school, and that traditionally shows up all the time in the classrooms, in the hallways, and some of the behaviors it fueled in and out of school.

Then begin to figure out what would a new set of attitudes, and new set of more empowering belief systems be, that would support them in engaging and staying engaged in school in a more purposeful manner, let's just put it that.

Finally, the two other pieces that really at camp is they need their advocate at camp. An advocate is going to be someone who is going to work with them over the entire year, and Katie will, in a little while, talk a little bit about her role as an advocate and what they do.

The camp process really serves to accelerate the relationship-building process between students and advocate; and finally the students are building a community for themselves and among themselves, that's really focused on making school a priority. Focused on making choices that work for them, both in a short and long-term, and focused on being a place where they can find themselves and begin to grow in a really positive manner; both at the character level and at an academic level.

What ends up happening, generally speaking, is you have a kid coming in who traditionally felt: I don't want to have anything to do with school, I'm done with it, and showing up with all kinds of attitude that reflect, and leaving camp saying: "I'm willing to give it another shot, ready to recommit my role in my education, and I feel like I have people along the way who can really support me in navigating all of the choices and all the systems that are going to be confronted with that traditionally I really struggled engaging with."

It's an amazing experience for kids and one that I feel ... our experience has been, it's been pretty empowering for them in all kinds of ways. We know that even given all of the support that they're going to get over the summer and throughout the school year, that students are coming in so far behind and so disengaged that really time is one of the biggest pieces that we have with our students, and so how do we ... time for us shows that both in our summer work and how do we extend the year, and in our year-around program, how do we extend the day.

Even given all the support that we have with our kids we know kids are still going to fall short ... some of our kids will still short at the end of the day, so we may have kids who in sixth, seventh and eighth grade fail all of their classes, and if they move into ninth grade they're now not failing all of their classes, failing just two classes.

(Slide 51)

What we work with at each of our school sites with the District, is creating a really strong proficiency-based summer school in which students who are falling behind or haven't met ... haven't been able to get all of their grade-level core credits have an opportunity to regain [00:32:52] that credit, so they can start doing do during the year, on tract to graduate.

We work intensively with teachers and administrators to take a look at our students, and identify, if they fail, for instance, history, or they fail biology or math, not having them have to take the entire math class over, over summer, but what learning targets were they missing, and how do we create a summer learning experience in which they are able to show proficiency and meet the learning targets.

We spend a lot of time in the spring; really, working with administrators and teachers in developing that from the school process and kids then, individually, get those needs met and are on track ... and have a better chance to get on track in the ensuing year with all core credits.

The other piece with is it's really focused on the summer between ninth and tenth grades, so our pre-ninth grade is really focused on summer and remediation in summer learning loss post-ninth grade is really focused on ensuring that they are on track to graduate with all credits as they enter into their sophomore year.

(Slide 52)

Katie talked a little bit ... the slide here says: academic tutoring during the school year, it really is that and a whole lot more, and I'll let Katie talk a little bit about what happens as an advocate throughout the year.

Katie Gipson: As Hanif said earlier, advocates are matched up with students at camp, and usually their groups are around 10-12 students, and it does figure that we do academic tutoring which is available four days a week after school, but our job is much more than that.

As advocates we tutor after school, we also built strong teacher partnerships; we are in constant communication with teachers about our students' grades and academic performance, as well as their other behaviors in the classroom. We also sit in on classes during the week, and make sure that we also know what's going on with classes. Not just teacher partners, but we are also school partners, we attend IP meetings, ESL transition meetings, disciplinary hearing, parent-teacher conferences, and anything really that you could think of in that regard.

We spend a lot of time mentoring and advocating for our students outside of school, outside of an academic setting. We like to take our kids out to eat, to the movies, we like to go to community events with them, and really build strong relationships with them, that last well beyond the time that we spend with them in just one year. Advocating for our students doesn't always occur inside school but occurs outside of school as well, and a lot of times that means connecting students who are homeless, or in need of food with the proper resources, that also means if our students are in legal trouble, being there for them and helping

them navigate that process as well as any family disputes, and that goes back to our strong family partnerships.

Our family partnerships that are built during the summer and don't just end after camp, and they continue throughout the whole year and we are really there to sort of bridge that gap that might exist between families and what's going on at school with their child.

A lot of times that blossoms into something greater and you spend a lot of time eating dinner with families or going to birthday parties, or spending holidays with families sometimes, even, and it's really just a great experience and it's more of a holistic approach instead of just a tutoring approach to our relationship.

Hanif Fazal: A different kind of logistics around it, and an advocate work about 25 hours a week, they have an additional hour a week that we set aside, that is focused specifically for professional development that this year ... over the last two years we've been really focused on building relationships across racial differences, but it goes into everything from tutoring to family engagement to working with the kids.

Totally they have really 26 hours a week, we've set aside one hour, and each advocate has anywhere from really 10 to 15 students in their advocate group that they work with. The piece you're also hearing is really important about the work, and you heard earlier about the important Summer Bridge program is: how do you connect what's going on over the summer with the school year, and so there is a lot of intentional work that is done to integrate this program as part of the school day.

Each side has a coordinator and coordinator is meeting weekly with teachers and administrators, and once they can share information back and forth about homework that's due around student performance and behaviors, around issues that are happening in and out of the classroom, and advocates are meeting as well with teachers doing the same thing.

This is a place where we want to almost have the feeling be that it's like it's an extra period in the day, that kids are going to, and the thought being that: if you build the relationships up front, and if you can engage kids in really feeling like school is relevant. Kids will traditionally would be engaged through school, will actually go to school longer, because our fundamental belief is that kids want to be successful, and have a deep desire to find success in and out of school, but we haven't found a way to really effectively set them up or to engage them.

I think part of what we've learnt here is we are finding some of the ingredients that really work to do that, and yes, kids are staying longer.

(Slide 53)

I see lots of questions about funding which tends to be our number one question when it comes to this program. A couple things; it's about \$5,000 per student cost, when you look at this the District benefits from keeping [inaudible 00:38:49] so there's \$7,000 per student, per year, that when you think about a student who ends up dropping without the support is revenue lost.

I think the most important thing to think about when it comes to our funding is this: our District was looking at a significant drop-out rate and was looking at this particular population of students not finding success at all. What they realized early on was the traditional school day in the traditional school format was never going to be enough for these kids to find success academically. What the District decided to do is make a very significant investment in community-based support. The idea being that an investment with a community-based support was at the same time a very highly-accountable community-based support.

We are held to very high levels of accountability, our outcomes look like we have to have 80 percent of our kids passing all their core classes. We are held to attendance standards and retention standards, so every year we report on outcomes, really every quarter, we report on outcomes at the site level. Every year we are reporting at the District level and we know our ability to hit these outcomes, or moved towards are going to be what sustains the funding.

From a strategic vantage point the District understood that this would eventually be a cost savings initiative if we are able to do it, and at an ethical level, that for these kids to succeed we have to extend their academic day and extend their academic year. We have to give them more time to figure out how to find success and support them with not just the academic supports but the social-emotional support that they're going to need to be successful.

(Slide 54)

It was a significant investment that the District made, and on our end, we wanted to be able to balance out some of that investment, so all of our funding doesn't just come from our PPS General Fund, the benefit from the District and partnering with a community-based organization was that we would come in and have our own fundraising capacity as well.

We do our own level of personal fund raising, as well as work, so you can see there where you can see funding coming from grant sources, funding coming from private funding, and then we have some City funding that's a part of this as well. Step Up is this mixture of funding, it comes from a mixture funding both from the PPS side and from the nonprofit side of raising dollars.

(Slide 55)

When we talk about results, I think this is probably the most important place that how is this really working. When you're looking at, here is a graph when it looks at outcomes, so every year we are being measured in a couple of areas, we are measured on school attendance, core credit attainments, student retention and then we have some other measures around GPA, packing all classes of [inaudible 00:41:51] better, and all that kind of stuff.

Our big outcome is around poor credit attainment because this is the one you see nationally predict on-time graduation rates. Here you can see the graph that looks at the District's average for the student population we are serving is at 50 percent in their freshman year with all four credits intact.

Step Up students are outperforming that by a significant amount as you can see, 75 percent of our kids are doing that. You can look at our kids outperforming in attendance as well. The big number though for us is how does this all wind up when it comes to graduation rate. Here you get to see over a ... we did a four-year study with an outside evaluator who looked at our students and then took very similar population of students who actually were just performing.

If you look at the data, we performed a little better than our students in eighth grade, and we measured the students who didn't receive Step Up support after four years and where were our Step Up kids and where you saw which is really interesting is the research teams to be really panning out that 70 percent of our kids graduated on time, versus 52 percent District average.

It would be 76 percent if you counted graduation from alternative education sources, so really the numbers are surprisingly ... not surprisingly, really incredibly backed up the research that this ninth grade transition time has a real impact on graduation rates. Our ability to support that transition is a really meaningful endeavor on our end.

(Slide 56)

It doesn't mean that there weren't challenges and there aren't continual challenges all along the way, and I'll just do a very quick example here. We moved to a comprehensive high school in a neighboring school district called Gresham, and what you're looking at in is this graph: in 2009 again we had a very embarrassing moment when we looked at outcome and found that only 25 percent of our kids actually attain core credits. One of the challenges I think the extended day providers have or community-based partners have at school, is actually building that partnership.

You can see our data really reflected that. It took time to get teachers to figure out how to value, or what the value was of extending the academic day. It took time for administrators to get on board with supporting students in staying in school, or finding alternative ways to keep kids in school rather than just simply expelling or suspending our students, and really utilizing what we have to offer in terms of relationship building, family engagement, extended academic support, all of that took time for educators in a school to get connected to.

Here you get to see a really good example of that over a three-year trajectory where, in our first year, 25 percent of our kids on track to graduate after ninth grade, the second year building partnership and momentum moved to 45 percent. Then our third year we are at 72 percent; with teachers overwhelming saying we need this program, and are continually figuring out how to work effectively with that school.

(Slide 57-58)

Finally, I'll wrap up here. Part of our partnership with the District isn't just to report on our outcome but to actually put out a report to them on: what does it exactly take to support who come in with these early-warning indicators to be successful, and how do you best position an extended day provider to do this work.

Here is a sample of some of the lessons learned that we included in our report, and you've heard earlier that targeted intervention during the summer before ninth grade is absolutely critical. Doing this over 10 years now, I can't imagine our kids coming into school without any relational support, without any support to help them to navigate the system they're about to encounter. Without any relationships with them to help figure out how to deal with the homelessness situation that they have currently as they enter into ninth grade, and anybody to help motivate them and support them in staying engaged.

Summer provides the flexibility to do that. At our Summer Leadership Camp, not only is our staff there, but we have principals from the schools show up, teachers are showing up, counselors are showing up, all because it is the best relational time with students that you can have. No real requirements other than, let's just build some relationships with kids.

That an extended academic year is essential, but you have to have staff who are trained to do it well. As we mentioned earlier, an enormous amount of time ensuring that we have a trained-level staff who have the ability to tutor, engage families, engage students that have been traditionally marginalized, and that when school is relevant to goals and dreams, attitudes change.

That kid who comes in and says like, "I don't care about school, I ain't going to do this, or I don't ever care, I don't want to do anything with my life," we fundamentally believe that that's more or less just a front, and that when you can work to make school relevant to kids, that their attitudes will change. These are not hardened attitudes, and the: I don't care; I don't want to, are not hardened belief systems with our kids. They are actually really easily molded, and you can move kids in actually the opposite direction.

Finally a few things here, that technology has been a tremendous tool, and one that was unexpected as we did this. Our advocates have access to online database where they can work with teachers and see all of the homework that's due, what tests students have to try to make up, or what tests are coming up, how well they did on the test. Advocates don't necessarily have to go to every single teacher, they can get online and we can share information online about students' progress. It saves an enormous amount of time.

We've found that the middle to high school transition is actually more than just a ninth grade transition. Therefore a handful of our kids are ready to transition after that ninth grade year, and engage autonomously or using some of the more traditional support in the school. For about 35 to 40 percent of our kids, they need an additional year of academic support. Those are the kids who went from failing all to failing two.

The family engagement, if possible, we put this here, I think there is a belief in some ways that our families won't engage, or they don't care, or only certain families will engage, we've found that to be completely not true. We can get our families to engage, it's absolutely possible and it is essential for this population of success that we have their buy in, their partnership and their commitment to success and they are all working together.

Then finally, that you cannot work across culture, across race without doing some very intensive focus and work and training with staff on the impact race place in our ability to connect and engage students that come from different racial backgrounds than them. We expect some intensive energy focused specifically on the area of race, and we are finding it really paying off.

(Slide 59 - Questions)

I went as quickly as I could to open up some questions and I'll leave it to the moderators to help us in that pursuit.

Ken T: Thanks Hanif. I think we should just note that I think this might be the first webinar that we've that we've gotten an "amen" in the chat box.

(Laughter)

I don't know if you picked up on that, but yeah.

Hanif Fazal: Way to go, Holly.

Ken T: We've had a little time in ... you've got a little amen from Holly. Hanif, I'm going to ... we've been keeping track of the questions here and Mary is going to monitor us as more come in.

There is some sort of quick questions that I think you can answer, and we'll start with those, and then maybe some of the broader ones. One of the questions was just around the number of students, and I know there are 400 kids now served in four high schools, so that breaks down to about 100 school, or is it different for each...?

Hanif Fazal: It is. It's different for each site in terms of funding. For instance at our Roosevelt site we have about 150 kids, and at our Gresham site we have about 40. I think our smallest program is 40; Roosevelt, 150-plus kids.

Ken T: There was a question about the annual reports, and as you were talking about accountability: are those available online or are those public documents that folks can look at?

Hanif Fazal: We could absolutely make that possible, and I think one of the nice things that would do is, I think, we didn't really talk about that in the presentation, but the Annual Report will definitely highlight how data-driven we actually are. We spend an enormous ... we use data at almost every level of programs, so every advocate knows exactly how many kids are failing one class, failing two class, failing three class. Weekly supervision around that data point, we know at a quarterly basis the grade point average of our kids in comparison with their [cohort 00:50:57] kids.

Everything all the way down to how many family contacts each advocate is making, and so we use data for two reasons. To really look at where the holes in our program are and continue an ongoing conversation and work in developing the program. The second is to be accountable, one of the things, I think, that data has allowed us to do is build a trusting relationship with our administrators and [inaudible 00:51:23] when we are not doing well, we do not hide that.

When we had 25 percent of our kids failing our core classes, we didn't try to nice that data point up, we just brought it to them and said, "Here is where we are, here is our plan to get better. Here's how we can work more effectively together and move these results." The data has been a great program development tool, it's been a great tool to isolate kids and figure out where and which kid needs support, and it's been an amazing trust-building tool between us and the school.

Ken T: Great.

Hanif Fazal: Around accountability.

Ken T: We did have a question about the early-warning system too, and to what extent do you use behavior data as part of your early-warning indicators.

Hanif Fazal: I saw that and they don't, and so behavior ... the biggest behavior piece of data that they use is attendance, and so they are not looking at suspensions and expulsions, our experience has been those kids ... the kids who are getting suspended and expelled are failing classes as well. It ends up getting wrapped up in that ... John Hopkins [Inaudible - 00:52:34] in his work, how behaviors as definitely one of the early-warning indicators, and I think it's definitely a legit criteria.

Important when they're just choosing to use the work of Mary Beth Sewell [00:52:43]; we are finding that there's no shortage of behavior issues with our kids, and it seems to be getting wrapped up in how they're performing academically. [Inaudible 00:52:58] for us knowing and behaviors that ...

Female: That's eighth grade [whispering 00:53:02]...

Hanif Fazal: Yeah. One thing to note is counselors in eighth grade, we get this list from the District Council's Review, and sometimes ... and oftentimes will try to prioritize kids with that and as a kid was ... for whatever reason, found a way to spend a lot of times or having all kinds of behavior issues in class, but somehow we are meeting State benchmark, having all their classes and having good school attendance, but the Council felt really strongly this kid should be in the program, we would be able to put the kid in the program. It's not hard and fast rule.

Ken T: We've got a few questions that have just come in, and we'll get back to some of the others as well, but just based on employment and how the advocate interacts with teachers and how long students are on an advocate's case load. Maybe, Katie, you can speak to some of those pieces. Or, Hanif, you can chime in, with that in terms of: is this a District employment piece, and how the advocate interacts with students and with teachers?

Katie Gipson: All of the advocates are employees of Open Meadow, and so we are a badge through the districts that were just contracted from our Open Meadow employment, so we are not actually district employees. Also, students are on an advocate's case load for one year, and like I said, that's our official caseload but oftentimes our relationships extend beyond that year.

We meet with teachers during prep periods and after school, but most of the times once we set up that initial meeting with teachers, we then set up a

schedule with that teacher and decide on which days and times we can come sit in on their class, and oftentimes you become part of that class period and our regular face in there.

Plus students are included in our program, sometimes we have to evaluate to what level students could be in need of other resources. For example, if a Step Up student needs accommodation such as an individual one-on-one tutor, Step Up isn't necessarily the place where they can get that, and so we really just have to take that on a case-by-case basis and see what their IET includes.

As far as curricula use for the proficiency, the summer school, we work in conjunction with the school and teachers in order to develop what types of assignments or assessments the students would be doing during the extended year of summer school. Oftentimes the teachers do short at the beginning the actual work from the school year, and so it's more of an extended year of a brand new ... I guess, brand new lesson plans or something like that.

Hanif Fazal: One of the nice things I think about parts of the CBO is that by having non-district staff, they provide a little flexibility to the school that they sometimes don't always have and so our staff can work weekends and go later at night, can do home visits at eight o'clock clip in, and again how we extend ... it just provides a level of flexibility that they don't always have.

Ken T: Hanif, there's a question about family engagement and I'd like to combine this with the question before on recommendations for professional development around racial and cultural proficiency.

"You mentioned courageous conversations, is that referencing the Glen Singleton and Curtis Linton work, and are there other recommendations you might make?"

Then Beverley Evans asked a question about: what's the success rate for students whose parents are not easily engaged?

Hanif Fazal: Both questions: yes, it is referencing Glen Singleton's work, for public schools about four years now I think; four, five years ago, took on this initiative completely, and it's a definite tribute to the Superintendent; that she was willing to stand behind this entire process, which is literally every single staff member in the District. From classified staff, to teachers, to counselors, to every level of administration, to Board, school Board members, are engaged in this conversation curriculum, and the whole courageous conversation process.

We have at Open Meadow, gone right along with that with them in what they would call one of the beacon schools, it's the highest level of work that these conversations doing. We are taking that. At the same time we have a lot of in-

house expertise, and so we've taken that and added our expertise onto that and so it's courageous conversation-plus, let's put it that way.

In terms of family engagement ... we haven't tracked, that's one piece that we haven't really tracked, of data, in terms of students who are engaged, student successes, parents aren't engaged, my experience of that would be, I would flip it. When families are engaged, my gut and best experience that I've experienced on this, as our kids are achieving at a very high clip, and when they're not my bet is that it's 50/40, 50/50 kind of deal.

When you have an engaged parent, grandmother, aunt, whatever, the work just becomes exponentially easier to do that, and for sure we have families who are not engaging, and our work even then, is not to say that they're not engaging, our work is to say: we have not found a way to engage them yet. Our whole tenor, the way in which we talk about families is we refuse to believe that they will not engage. We are committed to figure out exactly what it will take to engage them at a level, at least, that they are ready to engage at.

For sure, I wouldn't feel confident about families that are engaged, and at the same time we know we have families who are engaging students are being successful.

I'm sorry I'm not being super exact with the data on that one, because we don't have, it's a great question.

Ken T: I think you got a few more "amen" there, Hanif, on that point. Just so folks know, what we are going to do is, just in the interest of time, we are going to continue with the presentation and share the new SLC Resource, but the chat window is going to stay open, and Hanif and Katie, if you wouldn't mind responding to some of these questions in the chat window as we continue. Folks are going to have an opportunity to download the resource and review this webinar if they need to, but they are not going to have an opportunity to chat with you in the future.

If folks want to continue to enter questions in the chat window, Hanif and Katie, are you willing to respond there?

Hanif Fazal: Absolutely.

Ken T: Okay, great. We are going to try and meet our third goal and we are going to try and do this relatively quickly just because we know this is such a busy time of year for you all, and thank you so much, Hanif and Katie for sharing your work with the Step Up Program, where it's really inspirational and we feel really lucky that everyone was able to learn with you today ... learn from you today.

(Slide 60 - New SLC Resource)

Ken T: Now we will address a new tool that can help all of you develop or improve your own Summer Bridge programs as well. If you're familiar with our other ninth grade counts guide: strengthening the transition to high school and English Language learners, this is the third part of those guides. It's a three-part resource that really thinks about systemic transition strategies, strategies specific to English Language Learners and strategies specific to making the summer a productive time.

We visited sites: we visited Step Up out in Portland, Oregon, at Roosevelt High School. We visited Crossland High School and Suitland High School, in Prince Georges County. We talked with folks at Antioch High School in California. Also Dr. Leslie Rennie-Hill who was instrumental in helping Step UP get off the ground in Portland, reviewed our guide and gave us invaluable insights.

Same thing as the first two installments of ninth grade counselors, the self-assessment activity, and we are trying to take a simple step-by-step process that you can use with your school leaders and faculty. To take an honest look at where you are and where you'd like to go to better utilize those summer months to improve ninth grade success. All of these strategies are based on research and effective programs. It's not an academic study; it's a practical self-assessment and planning process that you can use to work through in a few hours.

(Slide 64)

The guide has three major components: a self-assessment activity, a series of three planning roadmaps and three vignettes that provide brief profiles of effective Summer Bridge strategies and action.

The guide also includes an introduction to Summer Bridge programs a list of high-impact practices that all Summer Bridge programs share, and a list of useful research that schools can consult to dig deeper into research-based summer learning strategies.

(Slide 65)

One roadmap is focused on district and school conditions. What you can do is set the stage for and sustain a successful Summer Bridge program. As we know less concrete factors such as the relationships amongst teachers, the messages students receive, or the policies in place at the district level can have a big impact on the effectiveness of any school improvement process.

The second roadmap identifies the proactive preparation and planning activities that will define the students' first experiences of high school life, summer learning, collaboration between middle and high schools, using middle school performance data, et cetera, et cetera. To make sure that the student's high school experience, that they enter with enough support to make post-secondary education an option following high school.

(Slide 67-68)

Finally we have a roadmap on Summer Bridge instruction, the foundation of any effective ninth grade transition, and this is even more so the case of Summer Bridge programs that target students most at risk of dropping out of high school.

I'm going to quickly walk you through the guide's major sections. Here, we have the first half of the self-assessment activity, on the left-hand side of this slide you can see that we've included a list of high-impact strategies that all successful Summer Bridge programs share. You can use this as a quick reference to inform teachers, students, parents and community members about the core components necessary for success.

On the right side you'll find the self-assessment protocol, the directions are pretty self-explanatory, it's based upon a protocol adapted from the school reform initiatives, the activity is designed for small groups of four or five and it should take between 60 to 90 minutes.

It's a warm-up activity designed to get your school or district thinking critically about how you utilize the summer to improve ninth grade transition.

(Slide 69)

This is a second part of the self-assessment activity, the self assessment reading, the language of the three sections, passive, reactive and proactive, comes out of an in-depth study conducted by members of our technical assistance team, and one we dug into research on ninth grade transitions this patten began to emerge, the most successful ninth grade programs were the most proactive when it came to data collection, personalization, interventions, orientation and communication.

The goal of the self-assessment is to activate self reflection and dialogue, not to force your district or school to fit into any one of these boxes.

In this slide I've extracted some language from the self-assessment reading to give you a sense of the content. In this case the reading describes different ways in which a school may or may not use advisory time during Summer Bridge to

improve students' understanding of the non-cognitive skills we mentioned at the beginning of this webinar.

We have passive here, that advisory time is built in but there's not really a lot of direction about how it's used. We have reactive, but it's basically thinking about just the studies, skills and organizational habits, but thinking about some of those long-term plans aren't really addressed. Then we have proactive: that social-emotional development is really a foundational piece about advisory program.

(Slide 71)

I'll walk you through one of the planning roadmaps which was designed to focus your school's action planning, planning in the preconditions that need to be in place to create a strong Summer Bridge program, how to induct ninth grade students and families during the summer and how the teaching supports them once they come through your doors.

All of the roadmaps include three brief profiles of effective strategies from real schools around the country. In this case we describe Antioch High School's efforts to link its Summer College Readiness Academy to their Smaller Learning Community Career Academies. This is a great example of Summer Bridge leading directly to systemic change at a school.

The sub-sections feature a selection of essential practices that research site visits and interviews have revealed to be effective, so you can think of this section as an idea-generator not as a check-list. The goal here is to help you zero in on a few things, that work, and that can really make a difference for your students.

Here are a couple of examples of the kind of content you'll find in the planning roadmaps and in this case I've extracted examples of about effective instructions that we know is the cornerstone of any successful program.

(Slide 73)

In each of the three planning roadmap sections you will also find a column called, "What leaders can do," and three blank work spaces. The guidance for school leaders offers a few things to think about that go beyond specific action plan strategies. Again, this part of the process is not a check list, but a way to get school leaders thinking about the intentional strategies they are using to shape their ninth grade work.

The last part of the process is getting some thoughts down on paper. When you write things down it gets easier to see how everything fits together, so the goal is

to give you a much clearer sense of the direction you need to take and what your most urgent priority areas are.

In the last column you begin to map out these priorities so they can be addressed in your school or districts action plan.

In here you'll see a few examples of the kind of content you'll find in the Advice for School Leaders. In this case the example is focused on two important dimensions of leadership, the impact of an invested leader on the instructional quality that happens in classrooms, and the ability of leaders to connect their Summer Bridge program to community organizations that will help build support for the program and provide students with authentic opportunities to demonstrate their learning.

(Slide 75)

I'm happy to take questions about how to use this tool in your school or district. Again, this tool is going to be posted on our website along with the archive of this webinar, and we can also take a few more minutes for questions for Hanif and Katie; and I'd like to thank them, again, for their participation today.

(Pause)

Ken T: Just a reminder, a second live presentation, Angela Hernandez-Marshall from the U.S. Department of Education reminds us that there is another live presentation on this webinar on January 30th; it's a great opportunity for you to recommend this to your colleagues, connect them with Hanif and Katie. Hanif and Katie will, again, be presenting with us during that webinar time.

We thank you for your participation, and at this point we'll close the webinar. Thanks, again, to Hanif and Katie for your excellent work and to all of you around the country for what you're doing on behalf of students.